In Nomine™



SiRoz Productions

STEVE JACKSON GAMES

They are very much like us.

Some seek to do good, others corrupt and destroy. Some set out to do one thing, but accomplish another.

Some are fiercely devoted to their work. Some doubt that they really make a difference. And some wonder, in the small hours of the night, if they picked the right side.

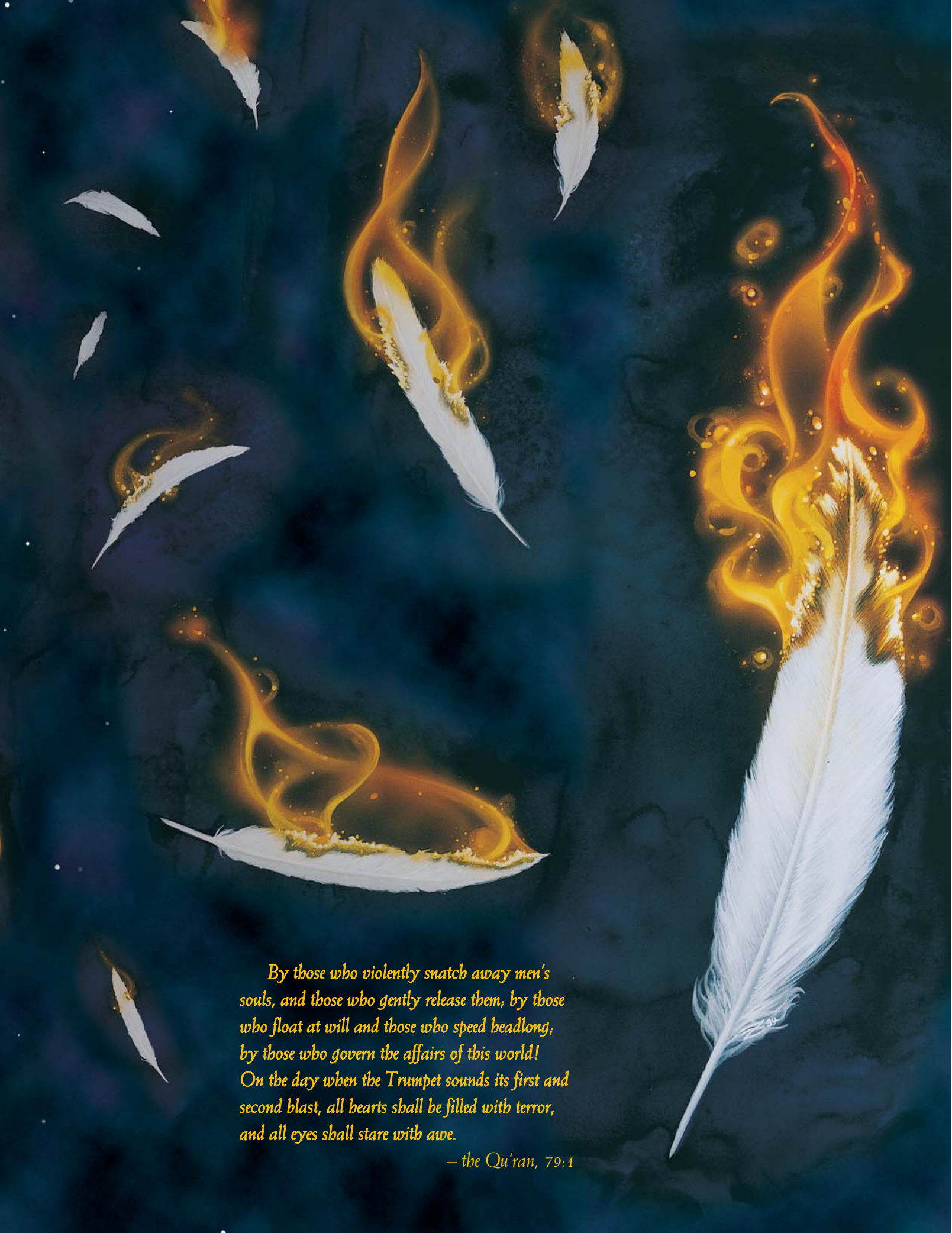
They have great powers, for good and evil, but they are merely pawns of greater powers still.

They are very much like us.

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WARNING:
This book is intended for mature readers. It contains interpretations of religious themes which some readers may find unsettling.

STEVE JACKSON GAMES®



By those who violently snatch away men's souls, and those who gently release them, by those who float at will and those who speed headlong, by those who govern the affairs of this world! On the day when the Trumpet sounds its first and second blast, all hearts shall be filled with terror, and all eyes shall stare with awe.

– the Qu'ran, 79:1

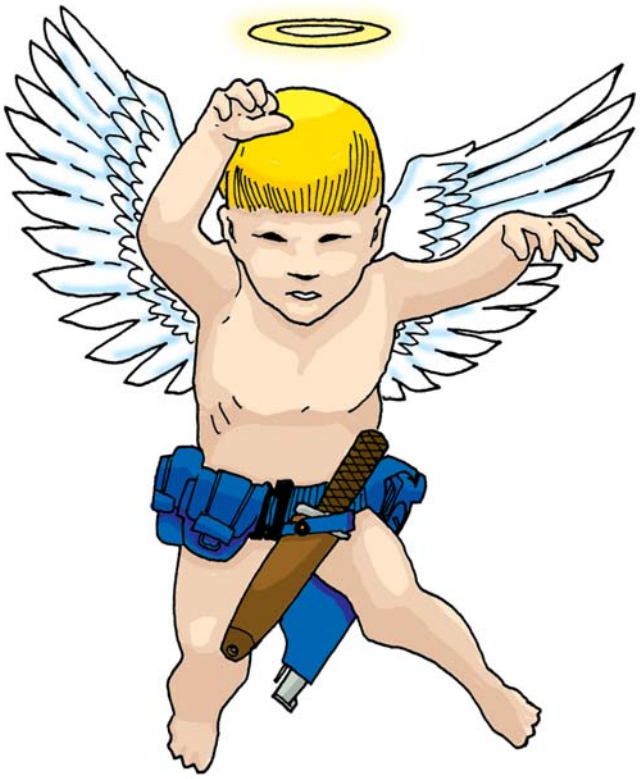
Based on and inspired by the original French roleplaying game by Croc

Don't play this game backwards.

Written by Derek Pearcy

Satanized for your protection.

Game Development by Steve Jackson



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"If I should die before I wake,
I pray in Hell my soul won't bake."

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THE OVERTURE

The Symphony is everything. The lives we live and the reality we feel are just hints of its ultimate complexity. The pattern of the Symphony is inescapable, written in every blade of grass and every star in the sky. In writing the Symphony, God created the heavens and the earth.

And as long as God was making a universe, He took advantage of the opportunity to create Himself as well.

The *bene-elohim*, the angels, are the intermediary beings, set between God and His creation, formed from the light of divinity but clothed in the firmament of reality.

Angels hold a special place the Symphony. They are God's instruments, charged with nurturing His creation in accordance with their natures. An angel's nature is his resonance, his deep attunement to certain aspects of the patterns of creation. Like finely crafted crystal, their actions ring through reality in cool, clear tones.

But when an angel acts against his basic nature, it creates jarring notes of dissonance. The more dissonance an angel holds, the more likely he is to fall from grace.

Ages ago, one-third of the divine chorus rebelled against their Creator, their companions and – worst of all – themselves. No longer satisfied as merely instruments of the Symphony, they wanted it to serve them instead. The rebels embraced their new dissonant natures, replacing their selfless divinity with the black evil of selfishness. They were defeated, hopelessly outnumbered by the loyal celestials. The self-proclaimed Diabolicals, the demons, were cast into the celestial realm of Hell, from which they continue to plot the eventual subversion of the Symphony to their own dark vision.

Watching the demons spiral away into blackness taught a harsh lesson to the loyal angels, but even that painful example hasn't kept the bene-elohim pure. Sometimes an angel cannot help but go against his nature. The lucky ones are able to rid themselves of their dissonance in time, while others seem determined to fall from grace.

The Fallen angels found themselves changed, better suited to evil. But darkness has a resonance all its own, and denying their selfish nature brings painful dissonance



to even the darkest of themes. A Diabolical full of dissonance is a pitiful creature. Most are killed by their own kind. A tortured few survive to aspire toward redemption, hoping to regain the divinity they once disdained.

All knowledge is contained within the Symphony, but even the celestials have only the vaguest of access to its mysteries. Their relative clarity of vision only reminds the angels and demons how little they can ever know, and of how uncertain the future really is. Angels act as their natures require; most avoid the pain of questioning their greater purpose. The demons, likewise, relentlessly pursue their selfish aims, pushing away the constant fear of having chosen the wrong side. All a celestial can do is act as his nature requires, and pray he makes the right decisions.

The War for the Symphony rages as the celestials play their parts – shattering souls and breaking hearts, hoping for the best. God help the rest.


YOU'RE BUSTED
HIS BLUD BREW
TOXIC

THE SYMPHONY



Book I



Every angel is terrifying.

— Rilke

A Bright Dream

Patricia held the angel in her arms until he died.

The demon had just bitten my thumb off, and he sat there looking at me with this "I just bit your thumb off" grin on his face like I was a moron or something. But I was about three steps to the left of what you'd call a state of shock, so maybe I wasn't an unbiased witness at that point.

It was the first time I'd ever thought seriously about The Meaning of It All. I remembered what Patricia had told her angel as the life bled out of him.

"This is not really you," she'd said as she cried, more for herself than for him, "this body is just a vessel. This is just a vessel."

This is not really me, I thought to myself, trying to staunch the blood from my right hand with the grip of my left. *This body is just a vessel. This body is just a vessel.*

Didn't help much. Just because I'd talked to angels didn't make me feel any better about life.

There's probably a lot you don't understand. I mean about the angels and all, not stuff like quantum physics and economics. Nobody understands those yet, not even the angels. But I didn't know anything about the celestial realm until recently, so maybe I'm a good person to explain it to you.

Let me tell you about the first time I met Nicole, my angel.

Shuffling down an empty city street after an evening of weeknight drinking, I heard this strange noise coming from an alley. No particular kind of noise – it was more like I'd remembered having heard a sound where no sound had actually been. Like I said, it was strange. Normally, I keep on walking when I pass an alleyway, no matter what I hear, but this time I was curious. It was only a few hours away from the midnight of my birthday, and I'd made a promise to take a few more chances this year. I remember thinking, "I want to start a new life." That, and I was pretty well plastered, so I was feeling artificially brave anyway.

Standing halfway down the brick-lined alleyway, leaning against a misshapen brown dumpster that didn't look like it'd been emptied this decade, was this beautiful blonde girl in a sparklingly clean overcoat. Well, she looked like a girl. Really, she was an angel whose corporeal vessel happened to look like that of a young human girl, but I'm getting ahead of myself.

While I was staring at her, this guy darts out from the other side of the alley. I don't know if he'd been hiding in the garbage or what, but before I knew it he was on me.

And then, just as quickly, he was thrown back across the alley by some invisible force, knives spinning out of his hands as he hit the brick wall and slid down, landing face-first on the pavement.

The girl winced and dropped to one knee like she had been punched in the gut, but quickly composed herself. "Look," the girl said tersely as she approached me, pausing briefly to pick up the two knives. "We don't have a lot of time here."

"Who are you?" I demanded somewhat shakily. "Did you just take that guy out?" She was a tall girl, but she looked pretty wispy to me, not at all someone who could just pick a guy up and launch him across the alley, and certainly not from twenty feet away.

"I'm an angel," she said. "You can call me Nicole. I took him out because he was going to kill you for the eight bucks in your wallet left over from the ten you stole from your boss before going out drinking." That threw me.

"What do you want?" I asked more calmly. I was a little drunk, but I wasn't going to just lose it in front of a stranger, especially if this was some elaborate con game. "How, how did you –"

"I'm an angel," she said matter of factly. "I'll prove it to you in just a moment." By now she was very close, so close I could smell her breath. Peppermint.

"And that piece of shit at our feet who's about to regain consciousness," she whispered into one ear, "he would've killed you if I hadn't stopped him. I took a chance saving your life, I changed your fate. I removed you from the Symphony, at least for now."

"The what?" My world whirled at right angles to itself.

"The Symphony," she repeated. Her voice grew musical and hypnotic. She leaned more closely, but without actually touching me. "It's what we angels call God's pattern of reality. The Earth, and everything on it, is part of the Symphony. You see, angels aren't supposed to be on Earth. We don't want to be here, most of us. It's just our job. But while a celestial being, like me, takes up space in the real world, I'm bumping into all sorts of atoms and spinning them all crazy from where they would have gone if I hadn't been there. Celestial intervention sets the Symphony out of balance – it makes all sorts of complicated ripples. The larger the change, the more noticeable. Other celestial beings can hear the ripples. And track down their source."

"Wh-what are you getting at?" I shivered, realizing that I was no longer merely standing close to her, I was paralyzed by her proximity.

"You're a human. You belong here on Earth. I'm an angel – I'm not supposed to be here messing things up even worse than they already are. Killing a human is one of the most dramatic changes anyone can make to the Symphony. But you, as a human, can do things very simply that are very difficult for me. If you're quick and clever, no one will ever know." She pulled away from me and held out the mugger's knives. I took them.

"There's nothing I can say to convince you I'm an angel," she said, backing away slowly, "there never is. But relax, empty your mind and decide for yourself whether or not I'm telling the truth. Then I'm going to ask for a little favor."

Her body began to unravel, not in pieces, but in a flurry of strips, like pages of sheet music falling from a conductor's hand. When her clothes and her flesh had been stripped away, only a dim glow remained in front of me – but if I relaxed, and let the glow take its own form instead of forcing my mind to give it shape, I could make out the vision of the pure *her*: smooth-skinned and wiry thin, with wings of light and eyes full of strength and passion and nobility. No one could ever have eyes like that – no human, at least. Her mouth, bordered top and bottom by perfect purple lips, opened enough to let the soft tinkle of music escape.

"Kill him," she sang, and so I did.

I drained a few pints of the dead man's blood into the plastic sacs she'd brought. It never occurred to me to ask what they were for – I just saw them sitting on the ground and I knew. I assume she recorporealized while I set about my grim task, because there she was when I was through, standing in the darkness with her overcoat open to receive the precious pints. I certainly didn't feel like I'd just killed someone. It was a miracle no one had passed by.

"So what now?" I asked.

"I'm an angel," she said. "You can join me, work with me, if you want to."

"That's it?" I asked, suddenly feeling more sober than I've been my entire life. "All I have to do is say, 'I'm in,' and you'll be my guardian angel?" I thought back on what she'd said, and rational thought returned. "You've removed me from the Symphony; wouldn't it screw with everything if I said no?"

"Well," she said quietly, scrunching her eyebrows together, "I got what I needed, the blood of this wretch, so I suppose I could remove your memories from tonight. You'd probably assume you went to the bar, got drunk and passed out. You wouldn't remember me, you wouldn't remember about the Symphony or anything. And maybe tomorrow or maybe the next day, the cops would get the knives in the mail, covered in blood, with your fingerprints on them."

You know, I'd always heard the phrase, "Chills ran up my spine," but I'd never truly known what it meant until then. I also never knew guardian angels stooped to blackmail. I pulled a cigarette out of my jacket and lit it.

"I mean, come on," she smiled, trying to make light of an obviously dark situation. "Right now, your life's a dead end – and I mean that in the nicest way – but it's a dead end with potential. So you can either help me out, or you can go on about your mundane life, however short it will probably be." I stared at the nameless body at my feet. Nicole extended one long leg from beneath her overcoat and with a single expert kick rolled it over into the garbage, where it would probably remain unnoticed until it started to smell.

"And come on," she pointed out with a chuckle, "you can hardly claim it was self-defense. You drained his blood."

That certainly put things in a different perspective.

"Well," I said through a tight jaw, "you sure have made it sound like the safe thing to do."

"It is. More importantly, it's the right thing to do."

We stood in silence for a moment. "Of course, there is a downside," she added.

"I knew it!" I shouted, tossing down my cigarette.

"It's really not that big a deal," she said.

"Oh, what, do you want my soul?!" I shouted.

"Only your help," she said calmly. "But when you work with us, you're no longer just a part of the Symphony, you're a performer in it – and you shouldn't do bad things. Like stealing from your boss."

"No bad things," I shot back. "Like, say,



killing someone."

"That was different," she snapped. "It served a purpose." Suddenly, Nicole's expression changed. She smiled, slapped me on the back and let out a little laugh. "Cheer up. Even though you're part of the armies of God, you're allowed to have fun, you know."

I shuffled out of the alleyway, shell-shocked, rejoining the world. It hadn't changed much in the past five minutes, but I had.

"I didn't think angels were supposed to tell people to kill each other," I said.

"I bet you think we all like to wear white, too."

"Do you?" I asked.

She grimaced, pulling her overcoat tight.

"There's nothing wrong with white," she said.

"Okay," I said, barely cracking a smile, "I accept that you're an angel. And, since I don't happen to have anything better to do, I suppose that the least I can do is hang out with you. Do you like to dance?"

Nicole laughed like a crystal chandelier dropping from the sky. "You read my mind," she said. "Lead the way."

Here's something about angels – there's always something they forget to mention. Almost always. I've never had an angel actually lie to me, but there's always all sorts of important stuff that they just don't seem to think is very important until you start shouting and throwing things at them.

We went to an early-'80s New Wave retro joint. My angel – that is, Nicole, the spooky chick I had every reason to believe was an angel – said she liked that sort of thing. We danced for a couple hours,



almost nonstop. It felt great to let my consciousness fall away and allow my body to move to the rhythm, sweating out the fear I'd felt in the alley. Anyway, my brain started to return to normal, and I'd gotten to thinking about what might happen if, as her servant, I did bad things. After all, nobody's perfect. So I steal occasionally. It's never from anyone who doesn't deserve it. And maybe sometimes I lie. Big deal. Who doesn't?

When we got tired, we left the dance floor. As we pushed our way through the crowd, I asked her what would happen if I did bad things.

"Eventually," she said, "bad things would happen to you. That's karma."

"I thought karma was a Buddhist thing. Aren't angels Christian?"

"No more than the universe is Christian," she said. "Karma is a universe thing. If you do bad things, eventually bad things will happen to you."

I nodded. "Karma is the Symphony."

"Sure," she shrugged. "I guess you could look at it that way. If you do bad things in the Symphony, it echoes back on you."

"But working with you, an angel, you said I'm no longer trapped in the Symphony, I'm a player in it. I have some control over it."

She nodded. "I'll teach you some things. Now that you're outside the Symphony, you're already controlling it more than you imagine, but soon you'll be able to do it consciously. Maybe I'll teach you some Songs."

Now, I've spent my entire life looking for loopholes. I'm not a slacker or anything, but loopholes make your life easier and I thought I'd found a big one.

"But if I can control the Symphony, I could prevent these bad things from happening to me."

She smiled at me, wider than I'd seen her smile before. It wasn't a nice smile. It was the smile of a cat looking at a bird in an open, unattended cage.

"It's not that simple," she said slowly. "In Heaven, we look at everyone as an investment. We saved your life, so it'd be nice of you to help us to further the general purpose of selflessness in the world. If you do bad, you're not helping us out and we'd have to withdraw our support."

"My project would lose its funding."

"That's one way to look at it," she replied.

"And I wouldn't get to hang out with an angel anymore."

"More importantly, you wouldn't have the protection of an angel anymore."

"Protection?" I asked. "From what?"

"When you're out messing with the Symphony, it's good to have protection."

She caught a passing waiter's eye and got a drink. Vodka and tonic, I think it was. Celestials, I've found, are big on dramatic pauses. My angel turned back to me, stirring her drink in its little plastic cup with its thin red straw.

"Protection," I nudged her.

"Yes," she said. "Protection."

"Protection from what?"

She sipped from her drink, then one side of her mouth curled up in a little smirk.

"You're not going to like this," she said.

"I'm ready for it," I said, rubbing my palms down my jeans.

"Demons," she said.

I didn't start screaming right away. I built up to it. First, I said, "Demons" back at her, just to make sure I heard right. Then when she nodded, I said it again, but louder, just in case she didn't hear me right. She nodded again and I said it louder, then shut up when I realized that even over the club's triple-decibel sound system people were starting to turn and look at me. By this time, Nicole had pulled me by a belt loop to another, more quiet part of the club.

"Demons," I whispered.

"Demons," she said.

"You forgot to mention the demons part before," I pointed out.

"Hey, when you've got angels, you've got demons," she said. "It's that simple. You make it sound like it's a big deal. Truth is, I seldom have to mess with demons."

"Demons," I said.

"Almost never."

That didn't make me feel any better. "So I should be scared of demons, but not too concerned. But if I can control the Symphony, couldn't I avoid demons and still . . . maybe . . . not exactly do good things all the time?"

Nicole sighed, looking up at a far corner of the room and running a hand through her long, blonde hair.

"Okay," she conceded, "okay. You don't have to do good things all the time. It wouldn't kill you, you know, but you don't have to help every old lady across the street or feed every starving child. Humans have to do things for themselves or what's the point? We're just here to help things along.

"But you can't go around doing openly bad things," she finished.

"Because bad things would happen to me if I did."

"Bad things would happen," she said, sipping her drink.

"And I wouldn't be able to stop it."

"And you wouldn't be able to stop me," she said, and that ended that conversation.

We left through a back door that no one seemed to be paying attention to. Nicole was careful to maneuver her white heels around the puddles of day-old rain that sat stagnating in the back alley.

"Why were you so hot to dance?" I asked.

"It's one of the ways I regenerate Essence," she said. Before I could open my mouth, she continued. "Essence is the energy of the universe. Everything that lives generates Essence, one way or another. You know how marathon runners talk about the 'runner's high'? That's how those kind of people generate Essence. Dancing works for me. We celestials use Essence to control the Symphony, however we can. Remember when that guy flew away from you in the alley? I used Essence to throw him – in fact, I used the last bit I had."

"Angels spend a lot of time in alleyways," I noted.

"Some do," she replied. "I have a house. It has pink trim and a white picket fence. You'll like it. But going dancing gave me just enough Essence to run a quick errand, so right now I'm going to drop you off with a friend of mine."

"Oh, great," I said. "I just met you, and already I'm getting handed off like an annoying pet."

"You're only annoying when you act annoying," my angel chastised. "I'll see you soon." She stopped at the mouth of the alleyway. "Tell me when you see a purple car. You can't miss it." I did as requested, and within a few minutes the ugliest, most horrendously – well, *purple* – car I'd ever seen crept around the corner. I signalled her and she stepped out of the alley, flagging it down like you would a taxi. It stopped instantly, the smell of burnt rubber lingering in the air.

The car's rear door opened, and Nicole pushed me toward it.

"He's a friend of mine," she called, retreating into the alley. "I'll catch up with you guys in a jiff."

I stumbled in, and the ugliest car in the world took off so quickly I fell into the floorboards.

When I crawled up, I saw two other people in the car, both in the front seat. A woman was tied and gagged, but safely strapped in, on the passenger side. The driver was a large man, and I mean large as in both muscular and fat, with red tufts of hair sticking out from the many holes in his worn leather jacket. We made eye contact in the rearview mirror. He wore wind-worn aviator goggles. He nodded a hello. The girl and I made a much more awkward eye contact as she squirmed around in her seat to get a better look at me. The driver, gently but forcefully, grabbed her bound hands and pushed them back into her lap, turning her back around.

"Hey," I said, waving, trying to break the ice.

"So you're Nicole's new friend," the driver said.

"Uh, yeah." The car was positively silent.

"How long you worked with her?" he asked.

"A couple hours," I said.

"Aw, hell," he shouted, slamming the heel of his hand against the steering wheel. "Isn't there anyone with any experience nowadays?"

"So, you're an angel?" I asked, not wanting to drift back into painfully uncomfortable silence.

"I'm a Cherub," he corrected. You could hear the capital letter.

"What's the difference between a Cherub and a normal angel?"

"Hey, hey," he said, furrowing his brow, "a Cherub is a normal angel. No, scratch that, a Cherub is a kind of normal angel. See, there are different Choirs of angels. I belong to the Choir of Cherubim. Your angel, Nicole, she's a Mercurian."

"So, um, how many angels are there?" I asked the Cherub.

"Lots," he said.

"How many demons are there?" I asked hesitantly.

"Lots and lots. Demons of every shape and size, working to promote every kind of evil you could imagine. There're about a gagillion demons of hyperbole. Speaking of demons, do you know happened to Nicole's other servant?"

"Dunno," I shrugged.

"She probably killed him. Better yet, let



me guess. She's pretty sneaky. I bet she had you kill him so it wouldn't send out any funny vibes, and now she's gone off to use a couple pints of his blood to summon her Archangel."

Just when I was getting to the point that I thought nothing would shock me anymore, blammo.

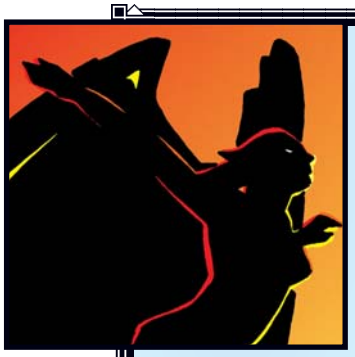
"She did!" I shouted frantically. "She did! She made me kill this guy, drain out his blood, and then –"

"Hang on, hang on," he shouted over me. I shut up. "Nicole's old servant was a hard-core suck-brain, see? The boy blew our cover to a pair of demons who just about killed us. "

"Why did she need the blood?"

"You ever tried to get the attention of an Archangel?" he asked sarcastically. "Hey, it's a pain in the ass. Their minds are all over the place, all the time. Even their favorite servants have to jump through hoops to get them to listen. In her Archangel's case, the blood of your

INTERLUDE



Nicole wrenched the handlebars to the left, forcing her motorcycle off the road like a racehorse toward a finish line. After getting what she'd hoped was well into the woods, she killed the bike's engine and headlight and glided through fallen leaves, coasting to a stop in the darkness. She kicked the bike's stand down, walked a few feet away and began to pull off her sweater as she slowly twirled in place. Her blonde hair fanned away from her body while her head turned upward, focusing on the circling tree tops and the stars beyond them.

She twirled faster and faster, one hand flashing open with a Zippo and carving patterns in the air with its flame as her tempo increased. She began howling, the sound merging with the whirling flame – stopping abruptly when she heard two hands clapping.

"Nice," said Gabriel, the Archangel of Fire. "I presume you have the blood?"

"Bike," said Nicole, pointing over her shoulder as she looked down to button her blouse. They stood in silence while Nicole picked the leaves off her sweater before wrestling it back over her head. It was autumn, and the evening air was losing its heat.

"So?" said Gabriel, raising her eyebrows.

Nicole chuckled while she fished around on the ground for her boots. "I guess you'd like to know why I called you."

"Yes," said Gabriel coldly, weighing the bags of blood in her hands. "I was curious. Is this how you got that note of dissonance?"

"Not the blood," she said slowly, "the blood is from my servant. My late servant. I had to strike him, despite the dissonance, to save an innocent's life. But I've recruited–" Nicole snapped her mouth shut at a sharp glance from the Archangel of Fire.

Gabriel looked at the bags more carefully, holding them up to catch the dim starlight.

"Also, there're some demons in town, but I think I've got them at each other's throats."

The Archangel nodded.

"But," Gabriel said.

"But I need some Malakim. Just in case. Just for a day."

Gabriel frowned. "I can't do that. There are other things going on."

"Then give me back my gun," Nicole said, staring down her Superior. "At least give me a fighting chance."

"You'd like a fighting chance?" Gabriel laughed, a sneer spreading across one side of her face. "What, are you out of Essence? Why don't you go dance a few more hours?"

Nicole turned her head as if slapped. "It was just a little favor," she murmured.

"A little favor," Gabriel spat, flames leaping behind her eyes. "A little favor. You did a little favor for the Archangel of Flowers, and she rewards you with a Rite – the very Rite you used to generate the Essence to summon me here, to this place, tonight."

"Look," Nicole said, her voice wavering. "Please. It was for a friend. I had to help him out. He was in trouble, and I wasn't just going to let him die. So Novalis showed me how to generate Essence by dancing. I'm sorry I didn't summon you with Essence from one of your own Rites, but between my servant betraying me and my artist overdosing on demonic heroin, maybe I haven't been thinking entirely straight."

The sounds of the city echoed throughout the woods. A cigarette materialized in Gabriel's hands, lit. She inhaled deeply, consuming almost half the cigarette in one breath.

"I beg your forgiveness," Nicole said. Gabriel bowed her head low, blowing smoke at her angel. Nicole bent over, her body shaking from the force of her coughing.

"You are one of my most favored servants," she intoned, rolling the cigarette between her fingers. "It would displease me to see anything happen to you.

"But," she continued, "you know Archangel Dominic is always on the lookout for heresies among my servants. Now his eye is on Eli and Novalis. By helping them, we increase the chances of the divine inquisition refocusing their scrutinies against us."

"That was a thousand years ago!"

"That was yesterday," Gabriel said with a mad scowl, pressing the cigarette coal deep into her corporeal vessel's cheek. "But you were right to help the servant of Novalis. I'm merely saying be careful who you accept gifts from."

"Yes, my mistress," Nicole said, bowing low, trying to avoid the smell of burning flesh.

"You'll find your gun in your pocket. I don't think you have time to ride back to town. Assume your celestial form, and I will mask your presence as you move through the Symphony."

"Yes, my mistress."

"Anything else?" the Archangel said expectantly, pressing a finger against the hole in her cheek.

"Yes," Nicole whispered as her flesh turned to light. "Thank you."

betrayer, with a stylish little ritual, works nicely."

"So why couldn't I go with her?"

"Wouldn't work," the Cherub said. "You remember when you were a kid, and you'd get in trouble, that if you brought a friend home with you, your parents wouldn't yell at you as bad as they would if you were alone?" I nodded. "It works the opposite way with Archangels."

"So what are we doing here?"

"We're the decoy," he said, rolling down his window to spit into the street. "Inviting an Archangel to tea can make big ripples in the Symphony, so we're driving around sending up little Essence signal flares that say, 'I'm here,' so the demons won't figure out what we're up to."

I held my head in my hands and rocked it back and forth. "If you don't mind," I said, "could you back up just a bit and tell me what's going on? I mean, the current plan of action?"

"Nicole, she's uncovered this painting from, well, I wanna say it's from the Middle Ages, but I don't remember good paint being around much back then. Let's just say it's old. And in the hands of an artist, a true artist, this particular painting can be used to trap a celestial."

"Trap?"

"Yeah. If the celestial's in his presence, the artist can paint the demon – or, I guess, angel – into the image, trapping him inside there, undetectable, until either someone else is painted in his place, or a different artist paints over it, freeing the prisoner. Of course, both sides have been looking for it for awhile – private Japanese galleries, the Vatican basement, the usual places."

"Where'd she find it?"

"I don't know," he said. "But we've got it now. We're supposed to arrange a delivery. But the artist she'd set up to work on trapping our victim is, well, indisposed."

"Indisposed?"

"Dead, actually. He overdosed this morning, real suspicious-like. We suspect the Diabolicals."

"The demons," I said.

"Yeah. Your predecessor ratted on us."

"Hell, give me a brush," I said, "I'm on it."

"No, no, no, it doesn't work for just anyone. You have to get an artist attuned to the painting, which takes a whole lot of time and effort – not to mention finding the right chump, first."

"So, what now?" I asked. "Where are we going?"

"No place," he said, "we're just driving around right now. Times like this, I wish I had some Ofanim around."

"Ofanim?"

"They're the Symphony's agents of motion. Each Choir of angels has its own special way of perceiving the Symphony, its own resonance with reality. Ofanim have the knack of motion. They never stop. If there's a way to carry on, they'll instinctively know what it is."

"Sounds cool."

"Yeah, it's useful. Mercurians, like Nicole, know all sorts of things about a person just by lookin' at him."

"What about you?" I asked. "What do you do?"

"I'm a Cherub – we protect things. Like Patricia here. She's an important girl." The Cherub patted his passenger's knee as we pulled up to a red light, but she stayed staring straight ahead.

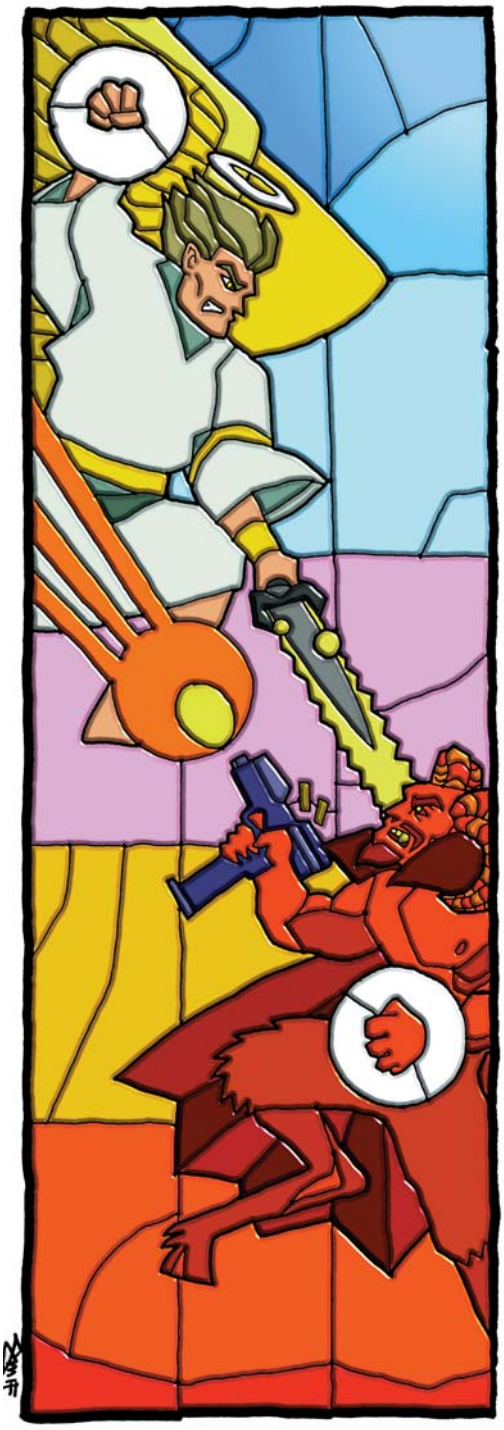
"I'm attuned to her, see? Just like that artist was attuned to that painting. She's ignoring me right now 'cause she knows it drives me crazy, but no matter where she goes or what she does, I'll know it because that's my resonance."

"She's not going anywhere like that."

He winced. "Yeah, that's the problem. Times like this, when there're demons crawling around every door, you gotta take a few precautions. When I say I'm attuned to her, it's not just that I have some connection to her, it's that, literally, she's a part of me." He reached over with a fat, hairy hand and turned her face toward him. She violentely whipped her head back and forth until he grabbed her jaw and held it tight. When their eyes met, she stopped struggling. "I love her more than I love anything else in the whole Symphony, and even though she hates me for doing this when things get a little tense, I have to."

"Why?"

"If I didn't, and something happened to her, it'd destroy me – literally. It's just the way we are. I'm supposed to protect her, see? It's my nature. And allowing anything – anything at all – to happen to her, that would throw my resonance with the Symphony out of whack.



"The more distant you get from the Symphony," the Cherub said, his eyes narrowing and his voice growing low, "the more you get to thinking that maybe there's something else out there, right? Maybe there's a greater good besides the one you've been protecting all this time.

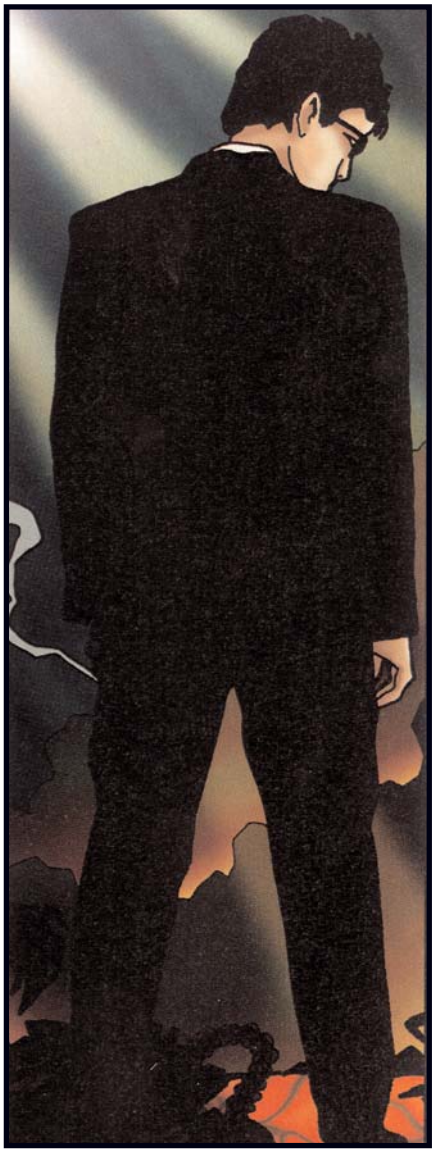
Maybe all your pallies on the other side were right.

"And then you Fall." He illustrated this by slamming a fist into an open hand, and I jumped so high I hit my head on the ceiling of the car. The Cherub laughed. Patricia did too, coughing loudly through her gag.

"But don't get all freaked out," he said, pulling away from the stoplight. "We've managed to stay away from the demons so far."

And of course, it was just about that instant that the little red sports car slammed into us, spinning us across the street and into a telephone pole.

Speak of the devil.



When I gathered up my brains, the driver's seat was empty and Patricia looked pretty damn groggy. She had a nasty gash on her forehead, bleeding the way head wounds tend to bleed. I glanced out the window. The sports car, which looked surprisingly undamaged, was parked across the street. Two figures strode toward our vehicle. I could see the Cherub standing between us and them.

"Not like you drive an inconspicuous car, man," said the first figure, a thin rakish guy in a black suit, smoking two cigarettes from one hand and holding a long, sharp knife in the other. He took a deep drag, threw his head back and let out a cloud of smoke that almost obscured the sky.

The other figure was huge. Much larger than the Cherub, I was scared to see. Leaning forward, I started untying Patricia. They were good knots – it took almost a minute. I could hear fighting outside while I struggled. Once her hands were free, she worked on her feet while I removed her gag. Before I could say anything, she bolted out of the car and started screaming.

Goddammit, I thought to myself. *Now I'm going to have to get out of the car.*

Patricia was holding the Cherub, and he was coughing blood all over her. His chest moved a bit, and then stopped. I could just barely make out a misshapen mess that must've been the larger figure, because the thin guy was on me in a flash, grabbing my right hand and biting down hard. I could feel the joint pop, and I thought, "Surely he didn't just bite my thumb off." I looked down at my hand. He'd bitten my thumb off. Blood dripped down his chin from a vicious, savage smile.

Obviously, I thought to myself through a shock-addled brain, *this is a demon.*

"Where's the painting?" he shouted in slow, measured tones, spitting my blood all over my face.

"I don't know," I said. He slapped me around, and through it all the only thing that registered was Patricia mumbling her mantra to the dying Cherub – "This is only a vessel, this is only a vessel."

"You have *no idea* how bad my day's been," he said, kicking me in the side after I fell to the ground. Luckily, he got tired of abusing me and decided to check out the car. It didn't take him long to get around to looking in the trunk, from which he pulled out a long, flat package wrapped in brown paper.

"Oh, this is sweet," he said, kissing it. Even reclined on the pavement, I could see a big bloody lip-print on the package as the demon walked past me, like a love note from a demented girlfriend. He walked calmly to his car, put it in the passenger's seat and sped away, leaving Patricia and me shaking and sobbing. Just a few hours before, I kept thinking, I'd been happily drunk.

A glowing shape appeared out of the night sky, drifting down to us. Nicole coalesced into her corporeal form, seething.

"He got the painting," Patricia told her between sobs.

My angel picked me up, threw me into the Cherub's car and peeled away from the scene of carnage, leaving Patricia to cradle her angel's body like a modern-day pietà.

"Did Tariel fill you in?" she asked as we flew down the highway like, well, like a bat out of hell. I shook my head, still a little weak from blood loss. "Tariel," she prompted. "The Cherub."

"Yeah," I nodded, shaking my head to stay awake. "Artist, Archangel, Choirs."

"Good. I figured he'd give you the low-down." We drove a few moments in silence. "Sorry about your thumb. I can fix that when I get some Essence back."

"What happens to Tariel?"

"Oh, I suppose he'll wake up in Heaven any time now, feeling pretty low. He must've really gotten his ass kicked by the big demon, but I noticed the other guy wasn't exactly standing up. Soon, he'll earn enough Essence to make another corporeal vessel for himself, then he'll be back, prowling the streets again. And don't worry about Patricia. That's a co-dependent relationship if I've ever seen one; it'll do her some good to be free from him for a little while. Tariel'll be back soon, and he'll have her happily tied up in some basement again. She says she doesn't like it, but I think she'll miss him. Humans can get used to almost anything."

"What did you get from your Archangel?"

"A little time. And because I asked her nicely, she gave me back my itty-bitty gun."

"Your what?"

"It's a tiny little pistol, with a blessed chamber just large enough to hold a single

holy bullet. It's not very accurate, but if you get a good enough shot off you can take out a demon. If you're lucky. My Archangel – Gabriel – took it away because she said I was relying on it too much. She gave it back to me for finding the rat in our little organization, my old servant." We were both silent for a moment. "I suppose Tariel told you about that, too." I didn't say anything. "Well, anyway, we've got that going for us and only one more demon to hunt down, as far as anyone knows. But no more miracles tonight – I'm out of Essence."

"Couldn't you have asked for more Essence from your Archangel?"

"When you ask for more from the Archangels," she said as though reciting a popular saying, "they expect that much more from you." I must've looked puzzled, because she added, "And that can be bad. But – if we can make it until sunrise," she said, coaxing the dead angel's car off the interstate, "we're in the clear."

"What happens at sunrise?"

"I get some Essence back. I blew what I had summoning my Archangel, but every morning, as the sun creeps over the horizon, angels recover some of their spent Essence. With a bit of Essence, I can toast that demon. Lucifer's forces depend on their numbers, not their strength."

"And if not?"

Nicole laughed. "If not, then we have to hope our demon gets close enough to be shot with my itty-bitty gun before he tears both our heads off."

"And if that doesn't work?"

"Then I'll see you in Heaven," she said, whipping the car into her driveway. As she got out of the car, I grabbed her by the wrist.

"Wait a second," I shrieked. "How do we know he's not in there waiting for us?"

"We don't," she said. "In fact, he probably is. I gave him a key the last time I saw him."

"Don't you have some kind of built-in demon detector or something?"

She shrugged. "No more than demons have built-in angel detectors. But if it makes you feel better –" she closed her eyes and put a hand on her forehead "– mmm, nope, no demons here."

"Are you sure?"

"No," she smiled. "Come on."

"Damn it," she said, whipping through the door, grabbing a plastic-wrapped dress hanging from a hook in the hallway and whirling it around the room. "Laundries. They call this white? I knew I should've picked it up myself. I'd have made them do it right."

"Hi, honey," said the demon, showing all his teeth as he emerged from the darkness of her kitchen. "Glad you could drop by."

She dropped her laundry. "You again?" she asked. He walked toward us, out of the shadows. He had his knife out again, which implied to me that he was out of Essence or he'd have tried to fry us when we walked in. Inwardly, I felt proud of myself for catching on to how things were done around here.

"This is going to be fun," he said. "I haven't done anything like this in, oh, half an hour or so."

"Try me," she spat.

"Come on, baby," he leered, lashing out with his empty hand and grabbing her arm, pulling her close. "Give me a kiss and call me Jesus."

Faster than I could even see, she pulled the itty-bitty gun from her coat and made an itty-bitty hole in his chest.

"You are . . . the biggest bitch," he said, his grin freezing on his face as he fell to his knees. She planted a white spiked heel on his bleeding chest and gently pushed him backward to the ground, so he wouldn't fall butter-side down, as it were, and bloody her carpet.

"See you later, pumpkin," she said, blowing him a kiss, and with one great heave his vessel expired.

"That was anti-climactic," I said, trembling.

"I can gut him later, if you'd like. I'll probably do it anyway. It would give me pleasure."

I shuddered and shoved my bloody hand in my pocket.

"Go home and get some sleep," she said, turning to me and reloading her tiny pistol. The bullet chanted whispers of eternal devotion as she slid it into the firing sepulcher. "Tomorrow's a busy day. You have to pick up some blood from a friend of mine, and then find me another mediocre artist with an unconventional reputation. I'm sure there are a lot to choose from in this town."

"But why do I have to do the footwork, here? I thought you were supposed to be my guardian angel."

Nicole laughed. "My, you are just the cutest thing. I've got to keep you around. Sure, you could think of me as *a* guardian angel, but I'm not *your* guardian angel. It's actually more like you're my guardian human.

"Now go," she said, fixing me with a hard, cold stare, "do what I say."

"Good things," I muttered, thinking about my predecessor.

"Only the best," she lilted. "Now get this body out of here, and don't get any blood on the carpet. It's a foul creature we disposed of this evening."

"He seemed to think he was your boyfriend," I pointed out.

"He was," she said, staring at the corpse. "A long time ago." Nicole looked up at me with a smirk that might almost be called evil. "Ex-boyfriends turn up in the lousiest places," she explained. "Now please, get to work."

"Sure thing," I said, growing resigned to my fate. I'd promised myself a new life, hadn't I? It looked like I'd found one.

I looked down at the demon's twisted corpse. His death grin leered up at me. In a way, I had a certain sympathy for him. He didn't mean to be evil, it was just his nature. Suddenly, I didn't feel like turning over a new leaf by handling another dead body on my birthday.

"I'm going to get some sleep first," I said, zipping up my jacket and heading quickly for the door.

"Fine. Call the police and see if dead boy's car has turned up parked in a handicapped space or something. It'd be just like him. We – and by 'we,' of course, I mean 'you' – can break into the police impound tonight and steal back the painting. And go to the fine arts library on campus while you're out. Find another artist we can con into trapping a demon."

"Anything else?" I asked.

"Have a happy birthday," she grinned through perfect, pearly teeth.

"Sure thing," I said, stumbling out the doorway. I was beginning to have some sympathy for my predecessor, too. The pre-dawn air of the city felt clean and clear. I stretched my arms toward the horizon, yawning, yearning for the bright dream of the sunrise, the temporary rest of freedom.

"And would you take my laundry back?" she shouted through the door. "I can't *believe* they call this white."

A Dark Dream

"I'm not crying," I snapped at Charlie.

"That's cool," he said, calming down as his hooves reverted to pink, fleshy feet. "You just sit there not crying while I shove my guts back where they belong." Even though that angel had torn him up pretty badly, he stood like a mountain, holding his intestines together while he used his last bits of Essence to heal his wounded body.

"Goddamn it," Charlie spat after fiddling with his guts for a few moments. "This isn't working. Look, I'm going to high-tail it back to my garage and get another body. Get there when you can."

"No, no!" I shouted, waving my arms madly to keep him from leaving. "After you're all set in your new body, come over to my place. We still have a whole other problem."

"What," Charlie said. It wasn't a question, it was a demand. I had to stall until I figured something out. Charlie's a badass, but if I told him right then about the hit squad of avenging angels arriving in the morning, he might suddenly remember an out-of-town engagement – then what would become of me?

"I'll tell you when you get there," I blurted. He glared at me through narrowed eyes, then sighed and nodded. His eyes unfocused before rolling back in his head. There was a thud as two hundred and fifty pounds of dead meat hit the pavement.

I wiped tears from my eyes and took in the scene. We'd killed the angel – somehow! – and since they were cowering in fear, odds were high that the two people hiding in the Cherub's car were just humans. I pulled my tie straight and shook my head. Humans I could handle. It's what was on the way that I didn't want to hang around for. All around me, the Symphony throbbed like a hammered toe from the chaos we'd caused. My heart rate doubled. After the Symphony takes a beating, you can bet that both sides are on their way to check it out.

The Symphony is what we celestials – which is to say, angels and demons – call the background structure of reality. And while reality is a tough nut to crack in some ways, we'd whaled on it pretty hard that day: throwing Essence around wildly, shapeshifting right and left, leaving a trail of evidence that a bunch of angels could easily follow to our back yard. You know, all the stuff they tell you in demon school is bad – not bad as in "evil shoots, evil scores," but bad as in "decidedly awful for my cause in general and genuinely terrible for me in particular."

So the question wasn't whether my Prince had noticed the Symphony's jangling, but when he would take a moment to ask me about it himself. The downside of occasionally having the undivided attention of a Demon Prince is that you occasionally have the undivided attention of a Demon Prince. I shuddered quietly, tried to calm my racing heart, and began to put my story together.

"It's no big deal, oh darkest of dark, dark lords," I imagined myself saying as the screws tightened. "It went down something like this . . . "

Let me get right to the point. None of this was my fault. I'm not responsible for any of this. I swear to . . . I swear, I didn't know what was going on. I just had one lousy evening, and now everything's gone to hell.

I've been on Earth for three years, although I'm older than I care to think about. It all becomes a blur after a while.



But in those three years, I've only dealt with the demons I was assigned to: Adam, Sabrina and Charlie. At first, all I knew about them was that they, like myself, were "in favor" with their respective Princes. We knew we were pawns, so even though we'd been assigned to work together there was little trust between us. They never told me who they worked for, and I never asked. If someone knows your agenda, they can predict your actions. Not all the time, but often enough to make your life miserable.

Adam's a Balseraph, a typical head-shrinker of a demon. Balseraphs are the Seraphim who've fallen from grace. While Seraphim are Heaven's truth detectors, Balseraphs are Hell's greatest liars. Adam tries to come off as modern-but-cultured – he wants you to think he's an old-world demon in a young-looking body. I always thought he was just another pretentious fool with a ponytail. At different times, Adam gave me reason to believe he worked for half of the diabolical royalty, in the hopes that I'd open up to him. I never did.

At the other end of the cool scale, there's Sabrina. She's one of the Lilim, and a real piece of work at that. Lilim can make almost anyone do almost anything. I'm proof of that, I guess. And I'm nearly positive she works for the Princess of Nightmares, Beleth, although Lilith is always a safe second guess with those types. She was always good for conversation, but I rarely saw her apart from Adam.

Adam and Sabrina had a rocky relationship, the kind where the only thing keeping it going was mutual disdain for the rest of the world and the universal force of inertia. For demons, this can be a healthy sort of relationship. It was certainly one I envied. I'd always felt an unhealthy attraction to Sabrina, even when she wasn't exerting her diabolical charm upon me.

Then there's Charlie. He and I work for the same Prince. I can always call on him to save the day, and Charlie seldom asks questions. He'll do practically anything as long as it serves our side, which usually means making things bleed, explode, burn up or turn to salt. I'm glad Charlie's on my side – he's damn violent, even for a Calabite.

We each had our own schemes, but we helped each other with this plot or that. There could have been other demons in town, but we never heard from them. Or at least *I* didn't. I got the impression Charlie's strong-and-silent act was just that – an act – and that he knew a hell of a lot more than he let on, but he's cool. And while I wouldn't confess it even under torture, I might trust him a little bit.

Adam, Sabrina and I got together every Thursday night at a little coffeehouse downtown, and I met with Charlie at his cycle repair shop every other Sunday. As far as I know, Charlie never encountered Adam and Sabrina outside of a job. The only other times I'd see any of them was when we were working together on some project: following a suspected do-gooder, framing celebrities who didn't further our plans or tracking down the occasional benevolent menace – the usual.

Actually, there was very little activity on the part of the Host. Every once in a while, we'd pick up an echo of something stinking of divinity, but we could never track it down. Over and over again, we ended up getting all excited for no bad reason. Nothing looks better on a young demon's record than wrangling credit for rooting out a previously-unknown heavenly threat, and we all knew it. It's a good way to get noticed. That's why it didn't surprise me that Adam didn't tell me about the angel until his plans blew up in his face.

Adam had asked me to meet him and Sabrina in the Rocko Taco parking lot. I don't really like Mexican food, but I went. Like I said, we had to help each other out. Our Princes had ordered us to aid one another, within reason. If Adam wanted me to meet him in front of a holy church, I'd ask which one. Once, I asked him to meet me behind a morgue with a set of bolt cutters and three glossy fashion magazines and he didn't even blink. So Mexican it was.

He was already there when I arrived, perched on the trunk of his swank red convertible and admiring his fingernails. Sabrina sat in the front seat, fixing her makeup in the rear-view mirror.

"Here's the deal," Adam said to me as he hopped off his car. "It's a petty job, but I have to do it. These guys are understaffed late at night, especially tonight. We go in, we each order a ton of food and slow the place to a crawl. The idea is to get people pissed off from waiting, destroy the staff's confidence in themselves and finally turn them on one another." He threw me a fifty and turned to walk toward the restaurant. "And I mean a *lot* of food," he added over his shoulder. I made eye contact with Sabrina as she stepped out of his car, but she only gave me one of her carefully-practiced shrugs.



"Excuse me," I said, putting up a questioning finger. "Why don't I order at the drive-thru? Three-pronged attack and all."

Adam smiled at me as though I was a simpleton. "I disabled their drive-thru's microphone while we were waiting for you," he said. "They've put a 'Closed' sign on it, but why don't you go get the sign and meet us inside?"

I sighed loudly at him.

"Besides," he added, growing sober, "we need to talk." Uh-oh.

When I came in, deftly cramming the sign into a trashcan near the door, Adam was arguing with the cashier. There was a sign dangling from a string over the counter which read, "Rocko Taco! We put the *fast* back in fast-food! You'll get your food in five minutes . . . or your money back!"

"So for the rest of the order, you wanted five half-chickens, six beef fajita tostadas with the works – no tomatoes and extra sour cream – three taco salads with no guac, a large tea, and a flauta." The harried clerk took a quick mental inventory, and wiped his forehead with a greasy palm. "Ah, look, this might take a few minutes –"

"You forgot the cheese enchiladas," Adam monotoned, glancing briefly at the promise of free food which literally hung over the man's head. The cashier got the creeps at that point, rang up the order and moved on to Sabrina. As Adam's order registered on the computer display in the back room, you could see the one guy staffing the kitchen explode into action – and it looked like he was already several orders behind.



"The same thing," Sabrina said to the shocked cashier, dropping some bills on the counter without even looking at them. Instead, she shot a dirty look at Adam as she got her change, then walked away with her tea. Sabrina rarely said much, but her expressions were priceless.

"Make that *seven* half-chickens," I said, smiling as I approached the counter.

After ordering, I joined Adam and Sabrina on the patio. We sat at one of those uncomfortable round metal tables with the logo of some strange Mexican beer painted across its top. *Well, well*, I remember thinking, *it's not entirely unlike Hell.*

Uncharacteristically, Adam came straight to the point.

"There's an angel in town," he said, "and it knows about us."

"God . . . dammit!" I shouted.

"But it's all right," he said quickly, waving his hands, "it's going to be okay."

Okay? Okay?! I shut my eyes and clawed at the air, speechless.

"It's going to be okay," Sabrina said, reaching across the table and touching my hand with her own. "Really. But until Adam takes care of the problem, we have to lie low."

"I can call Charlie," I offered. At that point, I was probably going to call him anyway, just to watch my ass.

"Let's not call your friend unless we think we're outgunned," Adam said. "If it's just the one angel, I'll be able to handle it without lifting a finger." He took a moment to look across the patio, back into the restaurant. The cashier had moved to the back to help prepare our food and frustrated customers were waiting at the register.

"Look," we could hear the cashier shout, "it's going to be a couple minutes before we can take any more orders." Adam smiled.

"So how did you find out about the angel?" I asked. Adam and Sabrina exchanged glances.

"I've been watching an artist," Sabrina started, "a man named Rudolph Sorenson." She paused to see if I responded to the name. "He's a bit of an eccentric," she continued. "He creates elaborate glass-and-copper fountains which pour blood instead of water. I felt he had a certain . . . diabolical perspective." She downed the rest of her tea and then folded the straw in half, then in half again, and so on.

"This guy was being manipulated by our angel," Adam finished for her. "She wanted to use his art to establish a divine Tether." I could feel the blood leaving my extremities as he spoke. The scenario Adam and Sabrina painted was just too horrible.

"A divine Tether," I said, trying hard to remain calm, "in our back yard. Lovely."

"We thought so, too," Sabrina said, sharing my sarcasm. "That's why we're taking her out tonight, before she has a Tether to hide in."

"Hide?" I said, sneering. "She won't be hiding! She'll invite the whole goddamn Host over for barbequed demon. We're screwed."

"Not entirely," Adam said quietly, leaning forward with a smile on his face. "I've corrupted her servant." Adam and I laughed – it's so delightful to use an angel's own servant to stab it between its pretty white wings. Sabrina just smiled her inscrutable little smile and lit a cigarette.

"Please," Adam implored me. "This one time, help me by not doing anything – don't spend any Essence for any reason. I want the Symphony to be as uncluttered as possible while I hunt."

"So you're going to take care of this yourself, Adam?" Sabrina said after a pause.

"Yes," he said, turning to face her, "yes, I am. Do you have a problem with that?"

"No, no," she said, holding up a black-gloved hand. "No problem. Go ahead and take the credit. It's just not the first time that I've had to sleep with some wretched servant so that another, less-talented creature could make the kill and take the glory." *Well*, I thought, *that's Adam all over.*

"Listen, Sabrina –"

"I said it's fine, I can spend the evening with Marcus," she said, gesturing to me. "He and I will just lie low this evening." She turned around to face me, blowing low coils of smoke from her nostrils. "Since we're supposed to be sitting on our hands, how about we do it over at my place?"

"Sure," I said, imitating her practiced shrug. "That sounds cool."

If Adam were an egg he would have cracked. As it was, he just sat there like a big demonic dope and examined his manicured fingernails. I had no idea what Adam and Sabrina's actual relationship was, but I'd always assumed they were a pretty tight couple, girlfiend and boyfiend. Not that it kept me from wanting her. Demons, I thought to myself, you gotta love 'em. My heart beat faster.

"Too bad you've already got something to do tonight, Adam," Sabrina said. "You know I'd love to have you over."

"But of course," he said, turning his attention to the clamor coming from inside. Evidently there'd been a nasty fight

in the drive-thru when the cars backed up. While a frantic couple tried to call 911 on the pay phone, their voices were drowned out by angry customers demanding their money back.

"Meet you over there?" she asked, smirking as she picked up her purse.

"Sure," I said. "What about the food?"

Sabrina laughed, rolling her eyes. "Let Adam take care of it. You don't even like Mexican food, do you?"

I let myself in. Sabrina never locked the door. I mean, who's going to get very far breaking into some demon chick's place? Anyway, before long we were talking about work. I swear, when demons get together it's always work, work, work. It is cool, though, that whatever you've done, you can tell your friends and it's okay. There have always been people in my life, like Sabrina, who I felt really close to from the first moment we met, people I could tell anything. And since she liked that blood artist, I thought I had just the story for her.

"I sold this vet some defective stitching," I said.

"You what?" Sabrina lilted, calling from the kitchen. It was a nice pad, her place. She was cooking something that smelled great, either spaghetti or an even more diabolical meal – lasagna. Demons like Italian food, but they *love* lasagna. Consider a demon who likes to cook Italian food to be your very best friend.

"I sold this vet some defective stitching," I repeated, "and he used it on this dog. Well, it wasn't so much defective as it was just the wrong kind. He thought it was the normal stuff, but I gave him the kind of stitching they use inside mouths. It dissolves much more quickly."

"Go on," she said, closing her eyes as she tasted her work.

"So picture this," I said, making little Ls with my hands at arm's length and squinting through one eye, as though framing a shot. "Mom and Dad come home from work, they fight out who's going to make dinner, and afterwards the little family's sitting in front of the television for their daily dose of Lucifer – "

"So," Sabrina interrupted, punctuating her speech with a long wooden spoon, flicking tiny drops of tomato paste at me, "are we really influencing people through the television?"



"Like, hello," I said, blinking and shaking my head, as though I really knew. "Why do you think they call it network *programming?* Look, just assume everyone you see on TV is working for us, whether or not they know it. That's not the point of the story."

"Well, I didn't know that about television. I mean, you hear a lot of stories about what we're doing on Earth, but you never really know which ones are true."

"Yeah," I shrugged. "Demons. Lying sons-a-bitches. Anyway, so they're watching TV. They're settling down."

"Who?"

"The family. The point of the whole story. This family, they had these two kids and a dog."

"What kind of dog?"

"It doesn't matter. Maybe it was a wiener dog. It was hurt real bad, and the vet had to cut him open from his neck to his navel, then sew him back up."

"Where is this going?" she said to the air, fanning steam away from her pot with a Tupperware lid.

"Just wait," I said. "So, everyone's sitting around, enjoying the evening, when the dog barks."

"It barks."

"Yeah, just this little 'yip.'"

"So that's it? The dog barks?"

"No, that's not it," I said, frustrated. "I wish you'd shut up. I can never tell you anything."

"Well, you stopped. I thought you were done."

"I was not done," I said, straightening my tie. "That was a dramatic pause."

"So the dog barks," she sighed, fishing around in a drawer.

"The dog barks its little yip, and everyone turns to look at it. It's just sitting there on the couch, up on its hind legs. It yips again, then totally comes undone." I crossed my arms and smiled broadly.

"It what?" she asked, finally stopping what she was doing to look at me.

"The dog," I said, smiling and laughing, "*totally* comes undone. From stem to stern the little thing unzips from the lame stitching, and spills its doggie guts out in front of the whole family."

Sabrina put one hand to her mouth and leaned against the Formica countertop with the other. She looked to her left, then to her right, then back at me – and I'm laughing.

"So then, they all completely freak," I said.

"You're a sicko," she said.

"No, no," I said, laughing, "no, not really. I just have fun with my work."

"Yes, really," she said, dishing out some lasagna into a Tupperware bowl. "So what is your Word, anyway – Domestic Animal

Disembowelments? Are you 'He Who Disfigures Small Animals' or something?"

"I don't have a Word," I said, and she shot me this look that said, "If you believe I thought you had climbed so high up the diabolical ladder that you had become an incarnation of an immortal Word of the Symphony, you are totally wrong."

I decided to change the subject.

"Hey, do you mind if I smoke in here?" I asked, patting down my jacket for a lighter.

"Why don't you go?" she said. "Here, take some lasagna. I don't think I'll be having any."

And just like that, I'm standing outside holding a plastic container of rapidly-cooling Italian food, alone. I swear, you can't tell anyone anything any more.

Normally, I prefer to hang out with demons. Demon chicks are different from human girls . . . they really understand what you're going through. *But if I'm not going to spend the evening letting some cute young diabolical thing tie me to a chair and smear ice cream on my back*, I thought to myself, *I could always go over to what's-her-name's house. That's why she's there.*

And I'm telling you – the best way to discover how humans tick, to learn for yourself how fragile and insecure they really are, is to date one.

It didn't take me more than five minutes to get to her house. That's good, since I was already two hours late for our date that evening.

"You're late," she said slowly and coldly, refusing to remove the chain on her side of the door.

"Aw, come on," I stumbled, "what're you talking about? Let me in. Please? I was busy and, uh, I had work stuff." Holly pouted briefly – wait, Holly? Is that right? Heather, Haley, Holly . . . right. Holly. Anyway, she was never mad at me for very long.

"Aw, come on," I repeated. "You know I wanted to be here." What I wanted to do was reach through the opening and steal some Essence from her. That's my resonance – I'm an Impudite, the kind of demon who gets close to humans and occasionally sucks their souls dry. Invoking my resonance doesn't stir up any nasty vibes in the Symphony, so I could charge up on Essence and not disturb Adam's stalking. The problem is, she has to let me. If I just barge in and drain her of Essence, I might attract angelic attention and that would be bad news.

"No, I'm mad at you," she remembered. Now, Holly's always been stupid – but she's seldom stubborn. Why the sudden change?

"Besides," she said, growing sober, "we need to talk." Uh-oh.

"I want you to move in with me," she said. "I know it's sudden, but I just want to know we're on track, relationship-wise, you know?"

"Aw," I said noncommitally, "I don't know." *Christ*, I thought, *it's already been a long night.* "I'm just too busy to deal with moving. I mean, I like seeing you when I do, but it's just not the sort of thing I have time for on a daily basis." She pouted even more, backing away when I tried to touch her through the small gap allowed by her door chain. "I hope you understand," I added, withdrawing my arm. Damn. I could tell I wasn't going to get any Essence out of her.

"But why don't you want to move in with me?" she insisted.

"I just don't," I said, backing away from the door and jingling my keys in an "I'm leaving now" fashion. "I like my privacy, okay?" I didn't know what her problem was, but resisting the temptation to force my way in and suck delicately at the energies of her soul was becoming too much trouble. My palms grew sweaty.

"Are you afraid of 'living in sin'?" she giggled chidingly.

"No," I chuckled. "That's not it. Look, I'll leave you alone. Get some sleep. Talk to you soon?"

I went home. My place was a wreck, but then I've never cleaned it. As soon as I discovered that to best fit in among humans as a single male in my mid-20s I must keep a filthy and disorganized household, I resolved to do my duty to my Prince. I live in a sty.

But I like it that way. I know where everything is. My problem recently had been animals – one animal in particular. An orange cat had just adopted me as his new human and spent every evening meowing outside my sliding glass door. It had been raining the night before, so I'd let him in and promptly forgot about it. I don't know why I let him in; I hate cats. When I made it home that evening, the cat sat on the floor, in the middle of all that crap, meowing up at me.

"Cat," I said to him in what I hoped was a stern voice, "you have to leave." Then the phone rang.

"This had better be good," I muttered, digging for the phone. "Hello?"

"Marcus," gasped Sabrina on the other end. I put on my sexy voice.

"This is he," I purred back.

"Get over here," she said. "And stop it with the voice, it's not like that."

"What's it like?"

"I just got a big, you know, feeling. Something just happened, but it's sort of fringie." Ah, technical terminology. The Symphony just exhibited some minor deformation, and she was picking up on it. "I think it's trouble," she insisted.

"I'll be right there," I said, and was almost out the door before the phone hit the floor.

Sabrina sat in a green leather chair, elegantly perched and biting her fingernails.

"Did . . . did you like the lasagna?" she asked me first. It was a strange question, but she looked upset and I didn't want to hurt her feelings.

"Sure," I lied. "It was great." She beamed a weak little grin back at me.

"So what's up?" I asked, sitting on the couch opposite her.

Sabrina pulled a length of her hair between two fingers and twirled it eight or nine times.

"This – this angel," she mumbled. "We didn't just seduce her servant."

"What did you do?"

"We also sort of killed the artist. This morning."

I snorted. I was awake this morning and I think I would've heard it in the Symphony if a human had prematurely gotten the axe anywhere near our side of town. She must've read the look in my face. "He was a junkie," she continued. "Adam made a delivery the night before. You get it?" I got it. Since Adam didn't directly kill the guy – the artist ODed by himself from the sound of it – it didn't screw up the Symphony as much.

"So what about it?" I demanded.

"So what if they tracked it back to Adam," she rushed, "and that chaos, that was them doing him in – and what if they can use Adam to find me?" I didn't say anything. This was starting to sound more

and more like a paranoid's bedtime story, and when the line someone's feeding you gets that bad you can be sure there's a Balseraph behind it. I wondered where my favorite Balseraph was hiding.

"I'll find him," I said, standing up. "I'll call Charlie and we'll find Adam. Then we'll kick the ass of whatever angel thinks she can just set up shop in our town."

"I'll be okay here," she said wearily, curling up in her chair. "I'm not going anywhere."

On the way back to my house, I whipped out my cell phone and called Charlie, navigating through busy streets like a madman while waiting patiently for the other end to ring.

"Speak," Charlie answered.

"Hey, it's me. Did you just . . . feel something?"

"Yes," he said. "Something big."

"Great," I choked, punching the steering wheel, "that's just great. Listen, be ready in about half an hour, we may have a problem. I'll call you back."

"I'm ready now," said Charlie, and hung up.

In almost no time at all, I made it back to my house. Holly's car was out front – damn! Then I reconsidered. She probably wanted to make up, and as long as I was going after Adam I could at least load up on Essence first.

The orange cat was outside, waiting by the front door. She must've put him out when she went in. He meowed up at me, and meowed and meowed. *What a selfish creature*, I thought. *Perhaps I'll keep you.*

I walked in quickly, closing the door to keep the cat outside and whipping past Holly before she could say a single word. I went straight to my bedroom and grabbed the gray duffel bag from under my bed, the one with all my special hunting crap in it – unholy water, a knife, a compass and I don't even know what else.

"Going somewhere?" she asked.

"Listen, honey, I don't have time for this," I said. Holly took a deep breath.

"Well," she said, clicking with her tongue, "I just thought maybe you'd want to see this painting." I looked up, and my world flipped 180 degrees.

"Do you know what this is?" I heard her ask.

I gawked. I mean, I openly gawked.



Imagine you've spent your whole life studying Impressionists. And you think you've seen every single stroke ever made by a master's brush on canvas, until one day someone walks into your office and hands you a Monet he found in his attic.

It was a relic . . . one of a set of paintings which, among other things, could trap a celestial's soul between the layers and folds of its paint and canvas. All of them were thought to be owned by the major celestial powers – Demon Princes and Archangels. The problem is that you need an artist of a peculiar bent to actually use one. Now granted, there are probably a lot more tortured artists today than when the Medici ruled Italy, but you might be surprised at how few of them are genuine about it.

What this added up to about my girlfriend, I didn't consider until it was too late to run. I stood motionless while her face rearranged itself, eyes widening and cheeks narrowing, her hair turning blonde, until . . .

"Nicole," I murmured, my heart racing. There before me sat not only the avenging angel I'd been warned about, but my ex-girlfriend from way back. *Way* back. *At least*, I thought, *it can't get any worse.*

"I don't want you," Nicole said matter-of-factly. "I just want your friends."

"My friends," was all I could say.

"Don't think you can get away. I've had a Cherub following you for weeks, looking for your weak spots. I know where you go. I know who you see. I know what you do." She narrowed her eyes at me. "I know what you did to that dog." Great, like I wasn't in enough trouble. Value judgments suck.

"Here's the deal," she continued. "If you help us take out your two friends, I'll only destroy your corporeal vessel. I'll leave your soul intact. You shouldn't have much trouble clawing your way out of Hell again."

"You flatter me," I said.

"It's only flattery if it's not true," she smiled. "And really, don't think you're going to get a better deal than this. I'm not bargaining, I'm telling you how much you can get away with – which is to say, your soul – and you should be on your knees kissing my heels for that. There's a cadre of Malakim showing up tomorrow."

"M-M-Malakim!" I squeaked, unable to remain calm. They're the nastiest Choir of angels. Malakim never, ever let demons get off easy. If Nicole was telling the truth, she was doing me a huge favor by merely killing me.

"Malakim," she repeated. "I was supposed to do this quietly, but now Laurence is sending in the hit squad."

I gulped. Archangel Laurence *commands* God's Army . . . and he's a vindictive little bastard. His *personal* Malakim squad?

Nicole was on a roll now. "You know Eli left all kinds of relics just lying around. A lot of them have weapon potential. Laurence wants them. And he really doesn't want any demons picking them up."

"Or any other Archangels," I pushed.

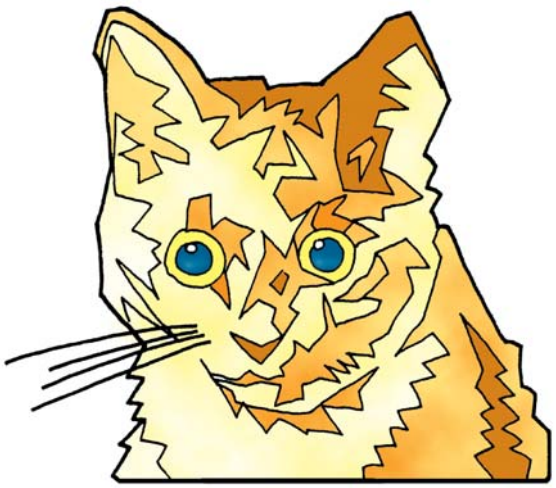
Nicole fiddled with one of her earrings – a silver cross. "I wouldn't know about that," she said.

"So what does this relic thing have to do with your Tether?" I asked. She blinked twice.

"My Tether? What are you talking about?"

"Your Tether," I shouted, "you putting your silly little mark on our territory –"

Nicole started laughing. "*My* Tether? No, I'm afraid our artist was playing both



sides against the middle. His sculptures generated so much disgust and horror in his exhibit hall that he could've established a new *infernal* Tether. But I'd have been done with him well before then."

"Sadly," she concluded, "he introduced a servant of mine to his two diabolical patrons, your friends, and they've been plotting to maneuver me into their smiling jaws."

"Buuut," I mumbled, running my hands across its textured, ruddy surface, "does it work?"

"The painting?" she asked, forcing a bitter smile. "I don't know. I never got a chance to try it, thanks to your friends. I'm one dead artist away from testing it." She drew me directions to the place her Cherub last spotted Adam. "If he's doing what I think he's doing, out there in the woods, you should be able to find him pretty easily."

"What do you think he's doing?" I asked. She shrugged. Goddamn it, I hate when people just shrug.

"Kill him," she said, "then kill that other thing masquerading as a human and bring their heads to my house in the morning." She tossed a key at me.

"Show up without their heads, and I'll throw you to the Malakim without blinking and they'll have your soul for brunch. Show up a moment before sunrise, and I'll kill you myself."

"But tell me though," I said, lowering my voice as I moved closer to her, staring up at her with what I hoped were puppy-dog eyes. "How long have you, you know, been my girlfriend again?"

She pursed her lips together. "Not that long, ice cream boy."

Adam wasn't hard to find. The previous disturbance was only the precursor to a much greater one – by the time I'd made it halfway through the directions Nicole'd given me, I could feel the Symphony drawing me the rest of the way. I parked my car what I hoped was a quarter mile back and walked the rest of the way.

I found him standing on the hood of his little red convertible, arms stretched out toward the sky. Five road flares had been arranged in an upside-down star pattern around his car, and an incredible amount of Mexican food lay in a pile just outside the crude pentagram. Adam was performing an invocation ritual – he was summoning his Demon Prince.

"Haagenti!" he called out to the night. "Your humble Servitor requests your attention!" Oh man, how cheesy – though I guess that's to be expected from someone working for Haagenti, the Demon Prince of Gluttony. Servants of Gluttony are rarely known for their good taste, though Adam had managed to fake enough style to keep me clueless. The Mexican food was the primary component to his ritual – which didn't seem to be working.

Well, I decided, brushing the dirt off my hands, *it's time for me to rock your world, Adam.*

It's easier to surprise people if they don't know who your powers come from. Me, I work for Saminga, Demon Prince of the Dead. He knows all sorts of secrets about how souls attach to bodies, and he taught me this one particularly cool trick once when we were partying in New Orleans, back when I first came to Earth.

I balled up a bunch of Essence, leaped out of my body and forced my way into his. I could taste the shock in his mind before my consciousness drowned him out.

Taking over another body isn't really much different from trying on a new suit. Some places feel tight and strange, other places feel loose and odd, but you get used to it quickly. I clenched my/Adam's jaw, snapping quickly at the air. Some of the servants of Gluttony can eat just about anything, from what I hear. That could come in handy.

Using the strength of Adam's vessel, I carefully laid my unconscious body in the trunk of his sports car, then peeled out of the forest as insects struggled between their attraction to the flares and their hunger for the heap of cold Mexican food, rotting slowly in the night.

I called Sabrina. Even without Adam's vocal cords, it wouldn't be too hard to imitate him. "Darling," I said when she picked up the phone, "we're in trouble."

"Trouble?!" she howled across the line. "What's this 'we' shit? Have you seen Marcus yet?"

"It's a long story," I said, holding back a laugh.

"Did you slip up with that idiot? You were just supposed to stake him out and leave him for the angels! But it's okay, we're cool, I already asked him if he'd eaten the lasagna and he said yes."

"He said what?"

"Yes! He said yes, he'd eaten it! So when the angels attune themselves to the artist's corpse to find his killer, they'll be pulled toward the blood I put into his lasagna! They'll hunt him down like the dog he is and –"

I didn't need to hear anything else. "Don't worry about Marcus," I said, hoping I was doing Adam's low, gravelly tones correctly. "He and I will see you in Hell." That would give her something to think about. I hung up and called Charlie.

"What's the deal," he said.

Talking at my usual rapid pace, I gave him the rough outline: there's at least one angel in town who needs to be put down like a British cow. Charlie says to swing by and pick him up. Remembering Nicole's little stunt, I started working on Adam's face. The only time I stopped for a red light was to look in the mirror and see how convincing it was – pretty damn convincing, I decided. It wasn't permanent, so Adam would still wake up looking like himself, if he woke up again.

I screeched up to Charlie's place, and before I could unfasten my seat belt, he emerged from the shadows and hopped into the convertible. He did a double-take when he looked at me, so I guess my disguise wasn't perfect, not to mention the fact that I was wearing Adam's clothes and driving his car. But if Charlie had a problem with the situation, he sure didn't say anything. I'm sure he knew what I was up to. Zooming away into the night, it occurred to me that maybe he trusted me as much as I trusted him – which wasn't much, but at least it was something.

"So where's this angel," Charlie grinned. I gunned the engine.

"You tell me," I said. He's much more perceptive about Symphony things than I am. We drove around for almost half an hour before Charlie started picking up hints of the divine. In an unusual moment of civic loyalty, we slowed at a stop sign and he took the opportunity to unfasten his seat belt and lean forward, sniffing the air. The car approaching from our left had the single ugliest paint job I'd ever seen. Charlie pointed to it, and as it passed under a street light I could make out three figures inside.

"You're sure?" I asked. He nodded, so I floored the accelerator, aiming straight for the side of the uglymobile. We slammed into it hard.

As I crawled free, knife at the ready, I noticed Adam's car was miraculously undamaged from the impact. Now *that's* not normal. I made a mental note that Vapula, Demon Prince of Technology, must be in this somehow.

But what got out of the other car was not Nicole. It was a huge hulk of corporeal force, red meat and red hair, moving slowly and silently. *Only angels ever look that cool*, I thought. *This must be the Cherub.* He sized up Charlie, then pointed at me. "You're next," he mouthed in my direction.

"Not like you drive an inconspicuous car, man," I said to the angel, pulling two cigarettes out of Adam's jacket – do all demons smoke? – and performing a Song of Shields, amplifying the cigarettes' smoke to cover the area. What was going to happen would be nasty, and I didn't want anyone checking out the action who didn't already have a front-row seat.

Charlie hauled off and punched his opponent once, a good solid blow to the jaw. The Cherub stood there and took it.

"So are we going to keep this flesh-and-bloody?" the angel asked Charlie. He answered by kicking off his boots with a fluid motion and turning his feet into hooves. I didn't know the last time Charlie had gone one-on-one with an angel, but he sure was enjoying it.

I watched them as they launched themselves at each other, Charlie grabbing the Cherub in a tight wrestling hold just as the angel reached inside his jacket for something bright and shiny. Even though he was trapped by my friend's massive arms, the holy boy could still move his hands around, as though tickling Charlie's belly. Charlie made several painful grimaces before falling to his knees, but he kept his hold.

The Cherub, pinned beneath him, choked out a chuckle.

"You must be the boy with the ice cream fetish," he said. In typical corporeal response, I clenched my fists and bared my teeth.

As his own answer, Charlie tightened his grip around the angel, shattering his holy rib cage, but this only made the Cherub laugh again.

"Mighty sweet girl you were with," he managed to get out. "Didn't care for you very much, though."

"What?"

"Didn't care for you, I said. That's how Nicole got to impersonate her – your girl went camping for the weekend with a college boy who doesn't eat little pieces of her soul."

"That's it," I said, turning on my heel, dropping my knife and stomping back toward Adam's car. "You're dead." I dug around in the trunk, careful not to bang my original body around too much, before finally coming up with a tire iron. I slapped it against my palm a few times to get a feel for its weight, then dashed like a madman over to the Cherub and began whacking all the parts of him that Charlie's wrestling stance didn't cover – his feet, his shins, his neck, his head. More than likely, I was yelling something like, "Who's laughing now, funny boy? Huh? Who's laughing?!" but I don't really remember. I do remember hearing some ugly cracking noises before the angel finally gave in.

And boy, did he give in – but he didn't give up. He blew what was surely the last of his Essence in one powerful Song. I don't know what it was, but it knocked the hell out of me. I was blinded by a topaz brilliance, stunned – the world disappeared beneath me. Every moment of my life before then seemed like a senseless wandering, a dark dream I'd been shamefully stumbling through, earnest in the thought of selfish rapture. I felt very humble there, before the Symphony in its purest form.

I felt like I was gliding, my dirty black tie floating out in front of me like a prehensile tongue. As I drifted, shapes began to form out of the greens and pinks that licked at my eyes, until my mind fully awakened and I realized I was seeing Charlie holding me at arm's length, shaking me by my shoulders. He didn't look well. For instance, his intestines lay in loops around his ankles.

"The angel's finished," Charlie said, blood bubbling from ears, mouth and nostrils.

I heard him as well as you hear someone talking to you on the phone while you're watching something really interesting on television. As I tried to collect myself, my life snapped back sharply into focus – Sabrina, Adam, their setup, my betrayal. Man, I really did like her.

"Don't cry or anything," Charlie said, setting me down to collect my wits while he groped for lumpy coils of intestine.

"I'm not crying," I shot back at him. You know what happened after that.

So as soon as Charlie's soul vacated his damaged vessel, first one human and then another came running out of the car. The first, a woman, ran over to the angel and started getting all weepy. The other, a wimpy-looking guy, stopped when he saw me, and started making these burbling noises as though his mind just wasn't willing to process the scene. What I didn't need was for him to spiral up into a full-scale freak out, especially since my smoke screen had almost completely run out.

At that point I was thinking, *I could always bite his ear off. That'd shut him up.* Then it occurred to me that he wouldn't be able to see the absence of his ear, greatly reducing the horror factor. *What about a finger?*

A thumb presented itself more easily than a finger, so I leaped forward and bit it off. It was incredible – I just leaned over, and snap! there it went. It was a really powerful feeling, thinking that I could eat anything. I must've been grinning like a loon. Thumb boy looked to be in shock, but I didn't have time to fool around.

"Where's the painting?" I said as slowly as possible, because I wasn't in a mood to repeat myself.

"I . . . I don't – don't – I don't know," he sputtered. See? Humans are weak. I slapped him around a little, kicking him once or twice after he fell to the ground.

"You have *no idea* how bad my day's been," I told him. There was no point in roughing him up any more, and he didn't

have any Essence in him, so I stomped over to the car with the hope that Nicole had given the painting to her Cherub friend for safe keeping. I found it in the trunk, gave it a big sloppy kiss, and split before anything else happened to ruin my mood.

For the gajillionth time that night, I pulled into my driveway, but this time there was a dull "buh-dump" as I stopped. Getting out, I saw I'd run over the orange cat – the selfish animal had been sitting there in the driveway, waiting for me to come home and feed it. But I knew a trick or two to do with dead cats, so I picked the poor guy up and carried him inside.

Hmm, I thought as I dropped the kitty corpse into a burlap sack, tied it off and shoved it up into the chimney. *I wonder if I could wrangle a promotion out of this mess? "He Who Disfigures Small Animals?"* I shook my head. Too over-the-top.

It took another couple of minutes to hide the painting in the back of a closet. That Cherub had probably attuned himself to it, but it was going to be a little while before he got back from Heaven and created a new vessel for himself. If I saw Prince Saminga in the next day or two, which seemed likely at this point, I could hand the relic off to him, move all my crap to another house and feel reasonably safe.

Satisfied that at least one part of my improvised plan was going well, I got to work on my corporeal vessel. It looked fine, lungs breathing and heart beating just like usual, though my cheek and forehead were bruised from all that bouncing around in the trunk.

I set my body across a long couch, then as an afterthought went into the kitchen and hunted up a towel and a six-pack. I placed the towel across my forehead, opened a beer and put it in one of my body's limp hands.

"Don't go anywhere," I told my body, blowing it a quick kiss. "I'll be right back."

Blazing a trail back across town, I found a 7-11 near the address Nicole had given me and abandoned the car in the parking lot. I used to be the kind of demon who'd park in handicapped spaces, but I've come a long way since then. Humans find it much more annoying to see a car taking up two legal spaces, as opposed to just one space most of them can't use anyway.

Okay, I thought to myself while lobbing Adam's keyring as far as I could across the parking lot – *what to do*, *what to do*? I still had to find some way to draw a Malakim hit squad off my back. If I could convince them I was dead, that would help, but even if I provided them with a corpse they'd still look for the painting. If I could distract the angels with someone else, I could get the painting to my Prince and win a few points. *What to do?*

So I showed up at Nicole's house – very "her," white picket fence and all. And just then, the ugliest car in the world clunked into the driveway, with Nicole at the wheel and thumb boy riding shotgun. I



snuck around back, let myself in. When she came in, I accosted her and the bitch shot me, as promised. I think I gave a pretty convincing death scene. The last thing I saw was a white heel on my chest, pushing me over onto my back . . .

With a start, I woke in my own body with a wet towel on my forehead and a beer in my hand. *Mmm*, I thought, *someone likes me*. The scratching from the chimney said that my latest project was finished. A few minutes later, my new undead servant clawed its way out of the bag and stumbled into the living room, covered in soot and sneezing little cat sneezes. Cats, you gotta love 'em.

I don't know how long I lay there before Charlie kicked my door in. I swear, I go through more doors. I'd ask Saminga for a door budget but he'd think I was being insolent.

My friend was loaded for bear, with large and nasty guns in each hand and countless rounds of profane ammunition strapped to his chest in long belts.

"What's the other problem," he demanded.

"It's not that big a deal anymore," I said, dismissing it with a wave of my hand. "There's another angel in town, a Mercurian, but I think she's taken care of now." He stared at me for a moment in obvious disappointment, before pawing at the rest of the six-pack I'd left on the floor.

I started going through my duffel bag, sorting out things I needed to throw away versus things I needed to get as far away from me as possible. The Tupperware went in the latter pile. Charlie opened it up and inhaled the thick aroma.

"Lasagna," he murmured, fingering the plastic container. I told you, demons love lasagna.

Let's see: Adam's toast, the angels think I'm dead – at least until that miraculous disguise wears off – Sabrina thinks Adam betrayed her and Charlie's going to eat the lasagna. He could take care of the Malakim, probably. Things might turn out okay after all. My throat caught for a moment as I thought about Sabrina. I really liked her. She was truly, truly evil. *It's a small world*, I thought to myself, *I'll run into her eventually – with a flaming diesel truck, God willing.*

"You hungry?" I asked Charlie with one of Sabrina's trademark shrugs. "Take it. My good deed for the day."

PLAYING THE GAME

INTRODUCTION

In Nomine is a roleplaying game – that is, the players assume the roles of characters, also called *player characters* or PCs, who are the "stars" of the story that emerges during the game.

One of the players has not just one character, but many. This is the Game Master, or GM, whose primary function is to arbitrate game play (much like a referee), and who also assumes the roles of everyone the PCs meet – the non-player characters, or NPCs, for short.

The GM organizes the scenario – the background of the adventure. Players announce their characters' actions to the GM, who (after considering both the rules of the game and the story's plot) tells them the results of their actions. When the GM and the players want an impartial arbitrator, they may roll dice to resolve conflict.

The game isn't so much a simulation as a story. The game mechanics, which consist of nothing more elaborate than rolling three dice, have been purposely kept simple. Since the average character has incredible, celestial potency, the rules could not precisely simulate "real" events and remain even remotely simple. Instead, the rules provide guidelines to determine what might happen in a variety of circumstances. The GM and the players must decide the details for themselves.

THE CHARACTERS

What Are They?

Characters are the most important elements in the game. Like characters in a story, each has unique feelings, motivations and capacity for action. Most of this information is recorded on a character sheet.

In the course of play, the players make decisions for their characters, choosing what actions they will take. These actions move the story forward, as the GM tells the players the results of those actions.

Turn to the blank character sheet on p. 26, and compare it to the sample on p. 37. As we build the sample character on the next few pages, we will go from an empty form to a fleshed-out, well-developed denizen of the celestial plane . . .

What Are All These Numbers?

As far as the rules of the game are concerned, characters can be described by several *characteristics* – such as Strength, Will and Perception – each with a numerical value. These numbers show a character's standing in relation to other characters in the game.

Conflict is the primary motivator in any story – conflict between people, ideologies or even within oneself. It's the give-and-take between opposing forces that make an action-adventure story exciting. The numbers on the character sheet serve as a framework, allowing the players and the GM to quickly and easily determine the results of a conflict, either by comparing two numbers (such as two characters' relative Strengths) or by rolling dice to simulate the randomness of a real conflict.



But more important than the numbers themselves are what they imply, and these implications truly form the character. For example, a Strength of 10, which is an impressive amount, doesn't just mean an angel can pick up far more weight than most people . . . it will also be reflected in his personality. He may carry his huge frame with pride or he may be shy about his stature – words which tell more about him than any single number.

It is important not to let rules ruin the fun of the game. Numbers should take a back seat to imagination. For examples and advice on when to use dice and when to wing it, see *Game Mechanics*, which starts on p. 38.

In Nomine isn't about math – it's about entertainment. If your group feels that a rule or a number doesn't work, you should change it. Rule interpretations should generally be left to the GM, but if all the players want a change, the GM should follow through. Take a hint from the demons – sometimes it's more important to have fun than to follow the rules.

In Nomine

Name: _____ **Choir:** _____

Archangel: _____ **Word:** _____

ESSENCE

Corporeal

vessel — *Body* — hits

vessel — *Body* — hits

vessel — *Body* — hits

Strength

Agility

Ethereal

Mind — hits

Intelligence

Precision

DISSONANCE

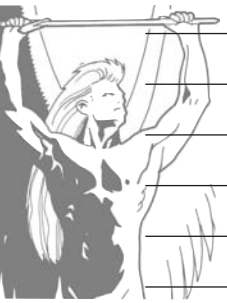
Celestial

Soul — hits

Will

Perception

Attunements & Distinctions



Discord

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ESSENCE

Name: _____ **Band:** _____

Prince: _____ **Word:** _____

In Nomine

Corporeal

vessel — *Body* — hits

vessel — *Body* — hits

vessel — *Body* — hits

Strength

Agility

Ethereal

Mind — hits

Intelligence

Precision

DISSONANCE

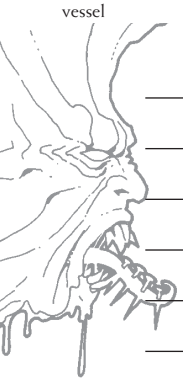
Celestial

Soul — hits

Will

Perception

Attunements & Distinctions



Discord

What Does All This Mean? or, God's in the Details

Okay, so that's why the numbers are there. But if they can be ignored, why bother to include them at all?

A player and a GM can easily get bogged down in arguments over a storyline that might work against that person's character, and numbers serve as neutral arbiters. The difference between free-form, no-rules group storytelling (a roleplaying game with no real numbers) and a structured roleplaying game is like the difference between playing cops and robbers using fingers as guns, and playing cops and robbers with paint pistols. Someone may yell, "No, you didn't hit me!" – but when he's dripping with paint (or staring at an unlucky die roll), there's less room for argument.

A good GM can find the subtle balance between numbers and imagination. A good player knows when the balance is working and when to object.

The Game Master

The GM must create the structure of the story (that is, write the plot, or adapt an existing adventure to his players' characters), assume the roles of the NPCs, and describe the ongoing events as engagingly as possible so the players stay interested.

Running a good roleplaying game is a social skill, and every GM runs his game differently. We're not about to dictate how someone should or shouldn't run a game. This book is background for the Game Master – guidelines and a little advice. The game is what he puts into it.

Character Creation

There are a few simple steps to creating an ***In Nomine*** character. We'll walk through them over the next few pages, but here's the rough outline.

Character Concept

- Discuss a character concept with the GM (below).
- If the character is a celestial, choose his Choir or Band (pp. 32-33).
- Select his Superior, either an Archangel or Demon Prince (pp. 33-34, 107, 155).

Character Development

- Allocate Forces (p. 34).
- Select levels of Characteristics (p. 35).
- Pick Attunements (p. 36).
- Select Resources (p. 36, 70).
- Develop the character's background (p. 36).

That's it. These steps will be explained below as we create a sample character.

Character Concepts

When creating a character, many players may already have a solid idea of "who" they want to play: the brave investigator, the rebel, the lover, the doubter – these stereotypes and many others can make good characters. Think of a character in a book, a movie or your own imagination, and put your own spin on the idea.

Talk to the GM, and make sure your idea meshes with the campaign he plans. No ideas? Ask the GM; he'll know what sort of character would best suit his plot. He may have a good part in mind for an angel, a demon, a Soldier or a mundane human.

Try to keep a clear vision of the character's concept, and make choices that will further amplify and complement that vision.

Angels and Demons

These celestial beings, the heart and soul of the game, are the default ***In Nomine*** player characters – movers and shakers in the netherworlds and the heavens. There are several types of celestials: the *Word-bound* and *Servitors*, who serve higher powers; and the *Outcasts*, *Renegades* and *Remnants*, who don't. While angels and demons may be the most powerful PCs, they are still only servants to even more powerful beings, the Archangels and Demon Princes.

All true angels serve an Archangel, directly or indirectly. They are the greatest crusaders for all that is good and right in the Symphony. Those who don't serve Archangels are Outcasts, stuck on Earth.

Demons are a mixed lot. Not all demons would seem especially "evil," by human standards . . . while some are monsters, many look like "just people" with their own style and their own agenda. But they all work to further the cause of selfishness in the world. All demons, from their creation, are expected to serve a Demon Prince in some way, if only by virtue of the Principality of Hell they inhabit. Demonic Servitors may switch Superiors, although it is not done often (and suggests a knack for betrayal). Those demons who refuse to serve are Renegades, shunning the company of other Diabolicals and hiding out on Earth, where they inflict their own dark philosophies on humanity.

The relationship between a celestial and his Superior is delicate, at best. Complete devotion can be stifling. Angelic and demonic player characters spend most of their time running errands for mightier beings – errands which can prove fatal. But complete loyalty is rewarded handsomely, and as long as the advantages of service outweigh the disadvantages, celestial society is unlikely to change.

The other major type of celestial is not really celestial at all. These are angels and demons whose Forces have

been struck such a blow that they are stripped of almost everything divine or infernal. They are Remnants – vestiges of angels and demons whose minds strain to encompass the vastness of their former selves.

• Angels and demons start the game with 9 *Forces*, any of which may be Corporeal, Ethereal or Celestial (see *Forces*, p. 34). Angels and demons must have at least one Force of each type. The rules for Remnants are different – see pp. 30, 68.

Servitors

This includes most of the celestial population. Assume that, unless otherwise specified, all celestial characters are Servitors.

An angel owes his loyalty to his Archangel, and must follow both his immediate Superior's and his Archangel's instructions to the letter, even if that means being assigned to work for someone else. An Archangel's favored Servitors (such as the player characters) have a little leeway, but even they can't push things very far. Archangels are notoriously narrow-minded when it comes to disobedience – imposing Discord or stripping away an attunement – but it depends on the Archangel. For example, Archangel Dominic would as soon kill one of his angels as watch one disobey him, but Archangel Eli will actually praise an angel for personal initiative . . . as long as he likes the final result. Angels are not *supposed* to change their allegiance from one Archangel to another, but it sometimes happens.

An angel's devout service is rewarded with new attunements and a more intimate relationship with his master's Word. A typical angelic Servitor may ascend through three ranks, or distinctions – Vassal, Friend and Master – each of which brings increasing levels of power and responsibility. See p. 108.

A demon owes his loyalty to his Demon Prince, who rules the Principality which that demon calls home. Only a handful of demons are allowed Earth-side for corporeal duty. These are generally the Prince's favored servants, the ones he can trust to roam freely without either drawing too much attention or going Renegade.

Loyal demons may also be granted distinctions. These vary with each Demon Prince, but Knight, Captain and Baron are typical. Every rank grants a demon a new attunement to his master's Word, increasing both his power and his responsibilities. But Demon Princes are even crueler tyrants than Archangels. Disobedient demons are stomped quicker than cockroaches.

Word-Bound

Even more important than distinctions, in terms of status, is a Word. When a celestial is given a Word, his whole purpose becomes to protect that Word, to increase its importance, and to move the reality of that Word toward the service of good or evil, as the case may be.

The holder of a Word gains a new level of *personal* importance in the celestial scheme of things. Celestials with Words have a unique link with the Symphony. In game terms, this grants special attunements to the holder of the Word, abilities which may be passed on to his servants as well. And each Word-bound celestial has unique Rites to let him regain Essence. For instance, the demon of Pipe Bombs gets a point of Essence when he spends half an hour showing a group of kids how to make a pipe bomb.

The Word-bound are both the celestial world's harshest masters and its most powerful slaves, for as a Word loses importance in the Symphony, so does its holder. Angels and demons without Words serve the Word-bound, helping to achieve greater goals, and lesser Words often serve greater ones.

The best examples of Word-bound celestials are the Archangels and Demon Princes. Each is a manifestation of a particular Word of the Symphony. Their Servitors include other angels and demons with related, but lesser, Words. For example, Blandine, the Archangel of Dreams, is served by various angels of Hope, while Beleth, the Princess of Nightmares, commands various demons of Fear. Beneath Belial, Demon Prince of Fire, are thousands of demons of destruction (the demon of Bombs, the subordinate but hard-working demon of Pipe Bombs, the grinning Calabite who is the demon of Unexpectedly Short Fuses, the Balseraph demon of Union Carbide, and so on).

Words run the gamut of physical objects and locations, social concepts, cultural phenomena and natural forces. Each Word is unique; there are many angels and demons, but only one angel, or one demon, for each Word. (But often, Heaven and Hell grant the same Word. The relationship between their holders – for instance, the Angel of Cities and the Demon of Cities – is complex, and not always completely hostile. The Word is their battleground, but they mustn't destroy it as they fight over it.)

Characters should not start the game with a Word. Words should be obtained through campaigning and roleplaying, not just by spending points.

The process of obtaining a Word, although arduous, is worthwhile. With greater responsibility comes greater power, as well as greater respect and recognition from others.

Eventually, if a celestial serves his Word well and prospers, he will gather Servitors of his own. Other celestials may seek him out, or be assigned to him, to help him protect the growing importance of his Word. He may, if he chooses, grant them access to his Rites.

Divine Words

An angel who wants to embody a vacant Word must first discuss the matter with his Archangel. If the Archangel agrees that the Word is complementary to his own, then the servant must petition the Seraphim Council (see p. 137) and defend his strength and capacity in a public hearing. Anyone may speak, either for or against the petitioner, to sway the greatest of the Seraphim.

There may be other beings who wanted that Word but hadn't mustered the courage to ask. Those who wish to compete for the Word will be given an appropriate quest to perform. The Council members, who are not stupid, may assign similar quests to the different competitors, or they may allot a single quest which could be completed in several ways. The specific way a contestant succeeds or fails will influence the Council's final decision.

After everyone has finished his quest or been written off, the Council will listen to final petitions from the surviving entrants. As before, comments are accepted from the congregation at large. Each angel is expected to speak eloquently on his qualifications for the job, as well as describe his quest and its resolution.

When the Council decides who will carry that theme of the Symphony, then the pattern of that angel's Forces is bonded to the thought of the Word, and the angel is bound to protect that Word as much as (if not more than) he protects his own existence.

Infernal Words

The process of obtaining a Word is similar for a demon, if a little more stringent – he asks for the "blessing" of his Superior, then quickly gathers political support and rallies his friends to his side. But without the infernal counterpart of a Seraphim Council, the last step is a tricky one.

Regardless of how many other demons back him and how much he grandstands to show how well-suited he is to the Word, the only thing that really matters is the opinion of Lucifer himself. After all is said and done on a political level, and any other contenders for the Word have been disposed of, the applicant for the Word is granted a brief, private audience with the dark lord of dark lords, who alone will judge his merits.

Lucifer has the power to make anyone bearing diabolical Essence an infernal manifestation of any Word in the Symphony. To ensure the validity of his instincts, Hell's master generally requires the hopeful demon to fulfill a quest. In the end, Lucifer may still decline to grant the Word. Occasionally, he may offer a Word which he thinks would be more appropriate. If he's annoyed, Lucifer may inflict a darkly insipid Word – at the Lightbringer's whim, the petitioner could find himself the next demon of Stale Bong Water.



Outcasts

Outcasts are angels who have lost the favor of their Archangel after too many failed missions. They are not truly Fallen; they have not become demons. But their light no longer shines as brightly as once it did.

An angel can become Outcast in play by accumulating too much *dissonance* (p. 56) – or just by offending his Archangel so greatly that he is cast out! A PC may start as an Outcast.

Outcasts begin the game with three levels of one type of Discord, determined randomly or selected with advice from the GM. Outcasts cannot summon their Archangel, ascend to Heaven or use their Superior's Rites. They still get a point of Essence each day at sunrise. On the plus side, they're no one's servants but their own.



Other angels run a risk when associating with an Outcast – their Superiors may disapprove of them for consorting with an angel on the brink of Falling. Dominic's servants may feel torn between helping a troubled friend and turning him in for his failings.

Outcasts may still travel through the Marches (p. 51) and make use of any Songs and attunements they know.

Since it can be difficult for Outcast angels to redeem themselves, many volunteer as Servitors for other, more fortunate angels, hoping that their good deeds will eventually work them back into the celestial ranks. Sometimes they're right – but in general, angels in good standing are encouraged to stay away from Outcasts.

Playing an Outcast

As an Outcast, watch out for demons. Of all the things the Fallen enjoy, terrorizing Outcasts is high on the list. They sarcastically refer to Outcasts as "the Tripped." For an angel who holds any hope of getting back into the Heavens, taking up with demons jeopardizes what divinity he has left.

And what now? Is the angel despondent after being kicked out of the Heavens? Does he have a plan to get back in, or want revenge? Unless he's in the right, that last option may seal his fate and send him spiraling down to the domain of the Diabolicals. Maybe that's what he wants; maybe he just doesn't care.

Once an Outcast rids himself of all dissonance, he regains the ability to ascend to Heaven. He also regains the ability to summon his Archangel . . . who will more than likely restore his Rites, at least temporarily, and offer a chance at redemption. The angel's first new mission will be to prove himself. If he succeeds, his only reward will be forgiveness. Some Archangels will forgive and forget completely, welcoming the prodigal back into the fold, while others have very long memories.

Renegades

Demons are never Outcasts. Hell's rulers would rather roast their servants on spits than let them roam across the Earth unchecked – and usually that's just what they do. But more frequently than anyone would care to admit, demons rebel against their Superiors and hide out on Earth, doing exactly as they will. Such a demon is a Renegade, and hordes of demons do nothing but run around hunting the rebels' rebels.

Player characters who are Renegades start the game with three levels of one type of Discord, determined randomly or selected with advice from the GM. Renegades cannot summon their Demon Prince. They cannot use the Rites of their Superior, but still regenerate Essence at sunset.

Playing a Renegade

Construct a Renegade character like any other, but consider his background carefully. Many Renegades take Roles (see p. 43) in human society, to blend in better. Decide which Demon Prince he rebelled against and come up with a solid rationalization as to why he did it. What does he feels so strongly about that he put his existence on the line?

As a Renegade, merely surviving is a victory. By helping or serving other demons, you may win tolerance and even some rewards. (But be careful about who you approach, as few demons wish to be associated with Renegades, and many will turn you in to Asmodeus.)

The greatest achievement for a Renegade is to be vindicated in his rebellion, recognized by Lucifer as usefully selfish and truly evil, and granted his own Word.

Remnants

Remnants are what survives of angels and demons whose Celestial Forces are lost in battle. A being who had a physical vessel will manifest on Earth to live out the rest of his mundane life, cut off from the brilliance of Heaven or the comforting darkness of Hell. Most celestials avoid Remnants; they're considered bad luck.

Remnants have lost their divine or infernal natures. Frequently they retain a meager repertoire of Corporeal and Ethereal Songs, or even their Rites and attunements, but they cannot use them in a directed manner. They cannot move to the celestial plane or listen to the Sym-

The Remnant

The tangle-bearded man walked down Fourth Street. All he needed was some water, and everything would be just fine.

Eating never helped. As long as he took it easy through the day, he would not need to eat and he'd have enough energy to keep himself through the night.

He'd tried the seminary first. After the seminary kicked him out, after the colleges and the research facilities showed him the door, after the shelters and the churches and the soup kitchens turned him away, he took up begging. He couldn't bring himself to hustle, like the homeless under the bridge, so he survived by parlaying his meager talents at parlor trickery into anything to keep his mind off the clouds and the skies.

The bearded man no longer cared about changing the world; he no longer cared about setting an example. He just wanted to find a dark, dark hole and get very, very drunk.

Water, he told himself over and over. *All I need is some water.*

The coffee shop. The new coffee shop at the end of Fourth Street, they have water. The bearded man shuffled across the street, steeled to ignore the pushy automobiles, but it was late at night and there were few about, just the slow taxis picking up the last of that night's club denizens.

The coffee shop was always open. At any hour, someone, somewhere, wants coffee. He dragged himself up the short flight of stairs and went inside, shielding his eyes from the bright light and the cheery smiles of coffee drinkers.

"Good evening!" said the middle-aged woman behind the register, "Can I help you?"

"Water," he said. She smiled back at him, cocking her head to one side.

"No problem," she said, pulling a paper cup from behind the counter.

The bearded man waved his arms. "No, no," he said, carefully pulling a large greasy bottle from underneath his jacket like stolen property. "In here."

She looked at the bottle, cocking her head to the other side. "Well, it's a bit irregular . . . "

"Aren't we all," he smiled, a prepared expression. She smiled back, taking the bottle. It disappeared beneath the counter. All the tension left the bearded man's face when he heard the sound of running water, echoing as it filled the plastic container. It almost made him smile naturally – it was almost that good.

"So, what do you do?" she asked him, putting out a cigarette against the side of the counter. *This is called polite conversation*, he reminded himself. *Say something polite.*

"You're looking very nice tonight," he said quietly, then remembered he didn't answer her question. "I mean, I don't do much," he stumbled, glancing dowm guiltily at his dirty fingernails. Her nails, he remembered, were clean, but her hands were worn from a lifetime of minimum-wage jobs and guilt-inspired wringings. He didn't know why little details like that kept entering his mind, but they occasionally did. "I try to be polite," he explained with great seriousness. "It's important." He couldn't find it in himself to meet her eyes. "Um, you, you do look nice tonight."

"Oh, I wish we got more folks like you in here," she said with a sigh, handing the bottle back to him in a brown paper sack. "Aren't you just an angel?"

The bearded man twitched, like he'd stepped on a live wire. "Ah," he said, jerking the bottle under his arm. "Ah, please," he said, holding up one hand, blinking uncontrollably and backing away slowly. "Please don't call me that." The tangle-bearded man covered his face and ran away from the coffeehouse, its shiny lights, its blissful patrons.

He found a nice, broken alcove in the alley out back and reverently took the greasy bottle from its paper sack. With a wave, the tangle-bearded man turned his water into wine and proceeded to get divinely drunk, dreaming of spirits far removed from the cold, hard ground.

phony any more easily than any other human. And celestial Perception abilities don't work on them.

The minds of Remnants are small and confused. They can't quite remember what it was like, being so grandly celestial – they can no longer hear the Symphony – but they know that they've lost a huge part of themselves. Some Remnants, a rare few, may know that they sacrificed everything for what they thought was a good cause. Others don't remember what they did, or who they were, and some don't care.

Most Remnants in a game will be "wild card" NPCs, of unknown origins and abilities, but, with the GM's permission, a player can start as a Remnant.

• The forces available to a Remnant vary, depending on the circumstances of his "death." A Remnant PC starts the game with no more than 5 Forces, of which *none* may be Celestial. See p. 68 for more about Remnants.

Soldiers and Undead

Soldiers in the War are supernaturally-enhanced humans. They may look and act like ordinary mortals, but they've been deeply touched by the Symphony and are aware of realities beyond the world they knew before.

While a very strong human might wrestle an average angel to a standstill, he probably couldn't come out on top in a celestial fight. Few Soldiers can win a slugging match with a healthy angel or demon – but that's not their job. Their Earthly natures give them freedoms unknown to celestials. Ignore them at your peril.

Soldiers may be couriers for the divine, priests for the diabolical, serial killers for the side of good or hackers with dark secrets. A Soldier has something inside, something bright or dark, clawing its way out. See p. 190 for more about Soldiers of God and Soldiers of Hell. Also, see p. 192 for information on the undead.

• Soldiers start the game with 6 Forces, more than a normal human but enough to get them in trouble. They must have at least two Corporeal Forces and at least one Force each of Ethereal and Celestial. A Soldier will report to an angel or demon, instead of an Archangel or Prince, and cannot (normally) summon Superiors. However, he can control his use of Essence (see p. 46).

Anchored primarily to the earthly plane of existence, average Soldiers may only learn Corporeal Songs, like Numinous Corpus, but may purchase any attunement belonging either to the Superior under whom they serve or, for Soldiers of God, to Laurence. Soldiers, unlike spirits, may earn distinctions for valiant service.

Undead – from mummies to zombis – each have their own special advantages and disadvantages; see p. 192.

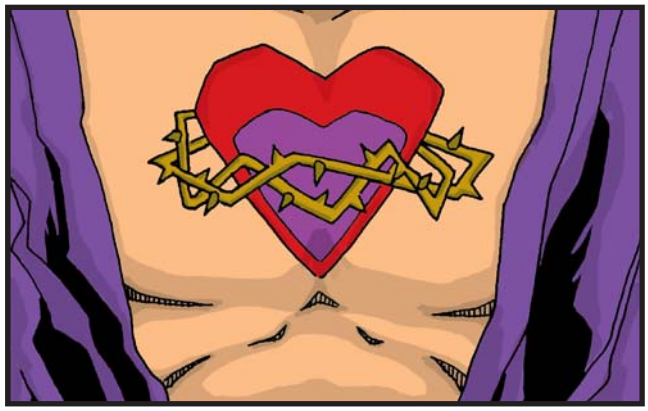
Mundanes

Celestials and their Soldiers refer to the unenlightened mass of humanity – good, evil and confused – as "mundanes." A mundane is a human with 5 or fewer Forces. Such a person, even if he knows that angels and demons are real, cannot use Songs, and spends Essence only unconsciously (see p. 46).

This game revolves around the exploits of fantastically powerful angelic and demonic creatures, and their superhuman lieutenants. Mundanes can play vital parts in the War, and many do – but in game terms, playing a mundane character has *no* advantage over playing a Soldier. The only reason to take a mundane as a player character is just because you want to play that role. But then, roleplaying is the point of the game!

One very good way to start a campaign is with most or all of the PCs as mundanes, about to encounter the Celestial. They'll be swept up in the War, to choose a side and serve it. Those who survive will eventually be granted a sixth Force and *become* Soldiers of God – or of the other side, as the case may be.

• Mundane PCs begin the game with 5 Forces, with at least one of each type. Out of touch with the pure Symphony, mundane humans cannot learn *any* of its Songs.



Choirs and Bands

For an angel or a demon, his *Choir* or *Band* determines what celestial race he belongs to. The Choir or Band to which a character belongs can be thought of as the kind of instrument he is in the Symphony, from a light, airy woodwind to a deep bass drum.

Each Choir and Band has a different physical appearance in the celestial realm, a distinct manner and appearance and a special ability, a *resonance* to a certain aspect of the Symphony. A celestial's resonance also defines his nature, the core of himself. Angels and demons must avoid *dissonance*, the negative energies generated when a celestial acts against his nature and betrays his resonance. Dissonant actions vary for each Choir and Band.

Choirs of Angels

The major choirs of angels are (in order of descending divinity) the *Seraphim*, the *Cherubim*, the *Ofanim*, the *Elohim*, the *Malakim*, the *Kyriotates* and the *Mercurians*. Brief descriptions appear below. Detailed Choir descriptions begin on p. 92. There are many other Choirs . . . these seven are only the most important.

The *Seraphim* are the most divine of the Choirs, creatures of truth. In the celestial realm, a Seraph looks like a giant, winged serpent.

The *Cherubim* are the most gentle Choir, but stouthearted and stubborn protectors of things held dear. In their celestial forms, they are winged animals or sphinx-like crossbreeds.

The *Ofanim* are the celestial Easy Riders, seldom sleeping in the same place twice, resonating with movement. In the celestial realm, Ofanim appear as large, rotating wheels of non-consuming fire. They have a keen sense of direction and an innate knowledge of the lay of the land.

The *Elohim* appear as beings of pure light in their celestial forms. Creatures of judgment and balance, Elohim have a resonance for emotion, and can see the colors of a human's emotional state.

Malakim are the sharpest of the divine instruments. Not one of these warriors has ever dropped into the Abyss. In their celestial forms they appear as shadowy human forms with jet-black wings.

The *Kyriotates* are capable of splitting their Forces across a number of physical forms, animating several corporeal hosts at once. A Kyriotate could manifest as a large bear, a pair of humans, three or four deer, a small flock of ducks or a vast cloud of bees. Their celestial forms are insane, changing collections of eyes and limbs.

Mercurians are the closest to human in both attitude and appearance. Their celestial forms look most like what Western civilization considers "typical" angels – perfect bodies, halos and bright, colorful wings.

Bands of Demons

The demons of any one Band vary more among themselves than the angels of any one Choir do, but the major Bands are – from the farthest from humanity to the closest – the *Balseraphs*, the *Djinn*, the *Calabim*, the *Habbalah*, the *Lilim*, the *Shedim* and the *Impudites*.

Six of the major Bands first appeared during the Fall — for instance, the Impudites started as fallen Mercurians. Later-created demons were often "built" along similar lines; thus, most modern Impudites never saw Heaven, but are still recognizably Impudites. However, there are many, many minor Bands. This book details only the seven most important, beginning on p. 140.

The *Balseraphs*, the greatest liars of the Abyss, are the Seraphim who Fell. Their plots range across thousands of years, and their greatest creation, Western civilization, is only now reaching its apex.

The *Djinn*, once Cherubim, are guardians who have forsaken love. They are the stalkers of the celestial realm, implacably drawn to patterns to which they've been attuned.

The *Calabim*, fallen Ofanim, resonate with chaos and destruction. They can focus the whirlwind of their Forces to create a field of entropy which little can resist.

The *Habbalah*, who were once angelic Elohim, can control emotions, even if they can't always control their own. Against all evidence to the contrary, the Habbalah believe they still work directly for God, forging perfect souls for a perfect new world.

The *Lilim*, devilish tempters all, have a resonance for desire – they know what a person wants, and they'll give it to him if he'll do as they ask. They are not fallen angels; they are, one and all, the creations of Lilith.

The *Shedim* are corruptors, perverted Kyriotates. They steal the bodies of others, then force their hosts to perform acts both despicable and destructive.

The *Impudites* are the most human of the Bands. Like the Mercurians they Fell from, they delight in mankind – but they'll steal not only their hearts but the energies of their souls. Impudites prize their closeness to humanity and avoid members of other Bands when possible.

A Divine Example: *Carin, playing an angel, decides she want to be a fighter, a Malakite.*

A Diabolical Example: *Matthew wants to be (more or less) human, but he still wants a piece of the action – he decides to become one of the undead, a mummy.*

Superiors

Each Archangel and Demon Prince holds sway over a particular aspect of the Symphony. Some nurture their own private goals for the human race, while others – on both sides – wouldn't mind seeing mortals wiped from the face of the planet.

While a celestial's Band or Choir defines some very fundamental things about his character, *who* he serves is in many ways far more important. It defines not only what type of Earthly missions he'll be assigned, but his perspective and to some degree his motivations. If his Choir or Band represents what sort of instrument he is, his Superior could be thought of as the style of music he plays.

Since there are countless celestials, Archangels and Demon Princes don't have the time to orchestrate the comings and goings of all their servants. For some reason, the PCs have caught the personal attention of their Superiors. They don't report through a chain of command or deal with the mundane issues – making rainbows, planting DNA evidence, helping grass grow – although they may do any or all of these things in the course of their duties. The player characters deal with their Superiors directly, as ambassadors, arbiters, messengers and pawns in the high-stakes game between the Archangels and Demon Princes.

Celestials may summon, or invoke, their Superiors (and, with great difficulty, other Archangels or Demon Princes, as the case may be). This should never be done lightly; see pp. 109 and 157.

With the personal attention of a cosmic being comes great power – and great risk. The missions given to a favored servant will be dangerous in the extreme, and the underling may not realize just how dangerous until it's too late. In addition, a "task force" of angels or demons will rarely be working for the same Superior, which can lead to interesting political infighting as they struggle to discern each other's motivations and secret agendas.

There are many more advantages – and disadvantages – to each Superior's service, like attunements and distinctions. Each Superior will give certain powers for free, and make it possible to earn others.

Note that most angels of Eli (p. 116) are on indefinite loan to some other Archangel, while a Lilim (p. 147) might be doing a favor (or paying off a geas) to almost anyone. This gives the players and GM more flexibility when creating a group for play.

An Outcast (see p. 29) or a Renegade (see p. 30) should choose which Archangel or Demon Prince he served while a member of celestial society, if in fact he ever swore an oath of fealty, and build a background story about how he came to be a "free agent."

The Archangels

The Archangels rule the Heavens, though they pull in many different directions. Yves is the elder statesman, Laurence the keen young general of God's Army with strong Michael at his shoulder, Dominic the stern Inquisitor who roots out heavenly heresy . . . There are

many other Archangels besides the ones listed on p. 107, but these currently define the Heavenly spheres of politics and culture.

The Demon Princes

The Demon Princes, Lucifer's lieutenants, war openly among themselves. While an Archangel's arch-foe is a Demon Prince, a Prince's worst enemy is likely to be another Prince.

As with the Archangels, the list on p. 155 only catalogues today's major powers. There are many would-be Princes in Hell, circling around the infernal courts waiting for the right moment to strike.

A Divine Example: *Carin, the fighting Malakite, wants to serve a warrior Archangel. Reading the descriptions, she picks Michael, the strongest of all.*

A Diabolical Example: *Matthew has an undead character; it makes sense for him to serve Saminga, Demon Prince of the Dead. He notes that any Lilim of Saminga automatically get undead servants; if he can convince another player to take a Lilim of Saminga, he can be such a servant, and have a defined relationship with another PC.*

Forces

Characters have three different kinds of Forces: Celestial, Ethereal and Corporeal. A player character may have from 0 to 6 of each kind of Force. The number and balance of a character's Forces will greatly influence the range of his abilities.

The Three Forces

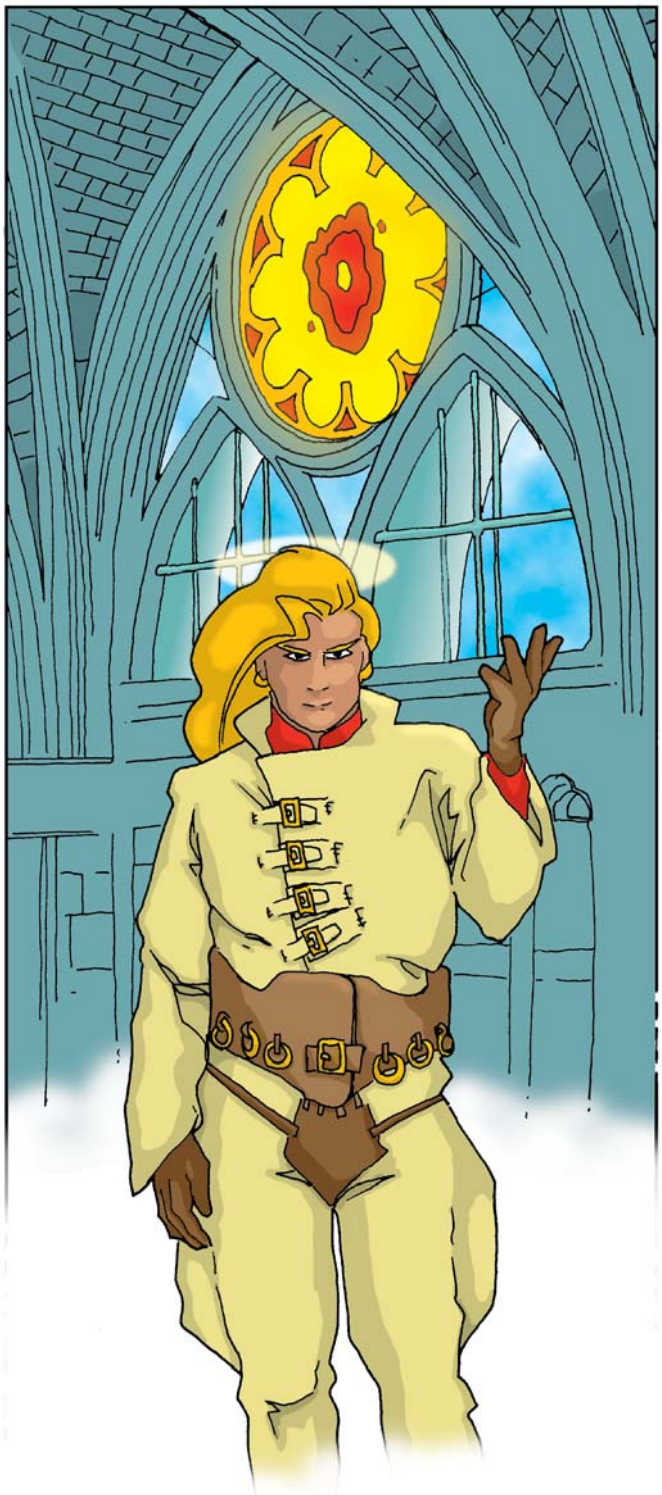
Look at a character sheet. Notice the three circles under the names of the three Forces. Each circle has six segments to fill in; each filled segment represents 1 Force of that type. A character with the whole rim of the circle filled in has 6 of that Force – the highest possible for a player character, though of course the great celestial powers have many more.

Corporeal Forces determine how well the character can interact with base physical matter. The more Corporeal Forces, the stronger and more agile his physical presence will be, on Earth and elsewhere. Also, the more Corporeal Forces he has, the better he will be at utilizing the Symphony's Corporeal Songs.

Ethereal Forces are the incarnation of sentience, the mind separated from the base demands of the body. The more Ethereal Forces a person has, the more intelligent he will be and the more precise his actions, as well as the greater control he can exert over the Symphony's Ethereal Songs.

Celestial Forces are the greatest of the three, forces of pure being. These Forces provide the driving power to existence and open the mind to the Symphony – creatures without Celestial Forces have no link to the celestial plane. The more Celestial Forces a character has, the more strong-willed and perceptive he will be, and the greater skill he will have with the Symphony's Celestial Songs.

Check to see how many Forces your character type has (see box, p. 36), and then allocate them.



A Divine Example: *Carin checks the character guidelines on p. 36 and sees that angels have 9 Forces to create a character with. She decides to distribute them evenly, 3 in Celestial, 3 in Ethereal and 3 in Corporeal.*

A Diabolical Example: *Matthew, as a mummy, gets 6 Forces. He decides to put 3 in Corporeal, 1 in Ethereal and 2 in Celestial.*



Characteristics

Look at a character sheet again. Each circle of Force contains two different spaces for more notes – these are the *characteristics.*

Corporeal Forces grant Strength and Agility, Ethereal Forces grant Intelligence and Precision, and Celestial Forces grant Will and Perception. The definitions of these characteristics, and how they affect game play, are listed below under their respective Forces.

Every Force of a given type grants 4 levels to spend on its two characteristics, and only those two. For instance, levels from Corporeal Forces cannot be spent on Intelligence, because that is an Ethereal characteristic.

So two Ethereal Forces give 8 (or 2 × 4) levels to divide between Intelligence and Precision. That could mean an Intelligence of 6 and a Precision of 2, or vice versa, or an even split of 4 in both – any combination adding up to four times the number of Forces of that type is fine, as long as there is at least 1 in each characteristic.

Characteristic levels range from 1 to 12. Characteristics may only be 0 if a creature has none of that type of Force.

Characteristic Rankings

Value	*Significance*
1	Miserable
2	Poor, or Human Child
3	Low-Average Human Adult
4	Above-Average Human Adult
5	Low-Average Celestial
6	Average Celestial; Excellent Human
7	
8	Above-Average Celestial; Exceptional Human
9	
10	Human Upper Limit; Excellent for a Celestial
11	
12	Spectacular, even for a Celestial

Corporeal Characteristics

Strength determines raw physical prowess. As the primary Corporeal characteristic, Strength helps determine how much physical damage your body can endure. See p. 61 for combat rules.

Agility is a measure of characters' relative speeds, as well as how graceful and dextrous they are.

Ethereal Characteristics

Intelligence is raw mental capability. As the primary Ethereal characteristic, it is affected by all damage from ethereal sources (such as that from dream combat).

Precision rates how well someone can focus himself on one task, and also influences skills that require exacting patience like Electronics or Ranged Weapons.

Celestial Characteristics

Will is the character's mental stamina, and as the primary celestial characteristic it can be reduced by celestial attacks. If a character's Will is hurt enough, he will die forever – the Forces that composed him will disband. (See p. 64 for celestial combat.) For demons, in trying to inflict their own personal symphonies upon the rest of creation, Will is the most important characteristic.

Perception is a rating of how well a character processes his sensory input in all three realms, as well as how sensitive he is to the fluctuations of the Symphony at large. For angels, trying to make sense of the many patterns that exist in reality, Perception is the most important characteristic.

A Divine Example: *Carin, with 3 of each Force, has 12 levels for each type of characteristic (3 × 4 = 12). As above, she decides to spread them all out evenly, giving her a rating of 6 in every characteristic – a truly average angel.*

A Diabolical Example: *Matthew, with 3 Corporeal Forces, takes 7 levels in Strength and 5 in Agility. He only has 1 Ethereal Force – something he may regret later – so he concentrates 3 levels in Precision to help any Precision-based skills he might want later, like Electronics or Mechanic, with only 1 level in Intelligence. He won't be a smart one, that Matthew. That leaves his 2 Celestial Forces to be dealt with. Being an evil creature, he thinks it might be best to emphasize his Will, but as dumb as his character already is, he'd feel even worse if an angel was standing right in front of him in his celestial form and he didn't even know it. He puts 5 levels in Perception and 3 in Will. In the end, Matthew turns out to be very strong and pretty fast, not very bright and only reasonably precise, not entirely without will but pretty perceptive to make up for it.*

Character Points

At character creation, players have as many *character points* to buy attunements and Resources as they have levels of characteristics – that is, 4 times their number of

Character-Creation Quick Reference

To design an ***In Nomine*** character, follow these steps.

1. Think about whether you want to play:
- a *celestial* (very powerful);
- a *Soldier* or an *Undead* (supernatural humans);
- a *mundane human*; or
- a *Remnant* (the earthly body of a celestial).

Discuss your ideas with the GM.

2. If your character is human, skip to 4. If he is a celestial, decide whether he is an angel or a demon. Then choose his Choir or Band, and his Archangel or Demon Prince. Check to see whether his ultimate Superior grants him any special Resources or attunements. If his immediate boss is not an Archangel or Demon Prince, note that superior's Word.

3. If your character is an Outcast or a Renegade, determine what type of Discord he has (randomly, or with the GM's advice), and give him three levels of it.

4. Allocate his Forces:

Celestials: 9 Forces; at least 1 of each type of Force.

Soldiers and *Mummies:* 6 Forces; at least 2 Corporeal and 1 each Ethereal and Celestial Forces.

Remnants: 5 Forces, none of which may be Celestial.

Humans: 5 Forces; at least 1 of each type of Force.

The total number of Forces also determines how much Essence your character can hold.

5. Choose levels of characteristics, 4 levels per Force:

Corporeal Forces control Strength and Agility

Ethereal Forces control Intelligence and Precision

Celestial Forces control Will and Perception

6. Select Resources. You have (4 × your total number of Forces) character points to spend on up to 6 levels each of artifacts, Roles, servants, skills, Songs and vessels. You may take Discord if you like, to get extra points.

7. Develop his background: think about his appearance, the kind of food and music he likes, the hobbies he's picked up, how he gets along with others, etc.

8. Show the character to the GM for approval.

9. Play!

Forces. More character points can be earned later (see p. 202) to spend on further attunements and Resources, and also to improve Forces and Characteristics.

Attunements

Attunements are special powers granted by one's Superior. They are different for every Superior, and are described under the listings for those celestial beings.

There are two basic kinds of attunements.

Choir/Band Attunements are granted automatically at character creation, free, based on the Choir or Band you belong to. For instance, any Mercurian in the service of Gabriel gets Gabriel's Mercurian attunement free. At character creation – or afterward, with your Superior's permission – a celestial can buy other Choir/Band attunements *of that same Superior* for 5 character points each, as long as the attunement's ability does not depend upon the resonance of its intended Choir or Band.

For example, it is the attunement of Archangel David's Malakim that they may, once per day, stand on firm ground and become immovable objects. This ability, at David's (and the GM's) discretion, may be given to any other angel who proves himself worthy of the gift. On the other hand, Archangel Dominic's Mercurians can expose a person's deviance, but since this ability works in conjunction with their own natural resonance it could not be granted to any other Choir of angel.

Servitor Attunements may be granted by the Superior to any celestial of any Choir or Band – even those who serve other Superiors. These gifts are never automatic. They cost 10 character points each, at creation or afterward. Or, by doing a service for a Superior other than your own, you might earn one . . . if your own master does not object. At creation, you may not buy Servitor attunements from any Superior except your own!

A Divine Example: *Carin, as a Malakite angel of Michael, gets the Malakim of War attunement for free.*

A Diabolical Example: *Matthew, as an undead, receives no free attunements from his dark lord.*

Resources

Resources include the skills, Songs, possessions and other tools that help a character complete his missions.

Each resource corresponds to one kind of Force (Corporeal, Ethereal or Celestial) and has a level from 1 to 6. On the character sheet, a resource is recorded with a slash between its name and its level (i.e., Driving/6, Role (Nun)/2, Celestial Song of Light/3, etc.).

The level of a resource determines its cost, and represents its general effectiveness; details depend on the type of resources. Point values and game mechanics start on p. 40. The *Resources* chapter (p. 70) gives many examples.

Description

What clothes does your character wear? What social circles does he hang out with? Which of his Superior's philosophies does he disagree with? How does he feel about the War, the Opposition, and the mortal realm? Thinking about the details often gives players valuable insights into their characters.

Now he's done! Show the character to the GM to make sure he accepts it; then it's time to play.

In Nomine

Name: Carin **Choir:** Malakite

Archangel: Michael **Word:** War

ESSENCE 9

Corporeal

Human/2

vessel — 30 Body — hits

vessel — Body — hits

vessel — Body — hits

Strength 6

Agility 6

Ethereal

18 Mind — hits

Intelligence 6

Precision 6

DISSONANCE

Celestial

18 Soul — hits

Will 6

Perception 6

Attunements & Distinctions

Malakim of War

Proficiency (Pistol)



Corporeal Artifact/1 (.44)

Corporeal Song of Thunder/4

Corporeal Song of Healing/2

Dodge/4

Ranged Weapon/3 (Pistol)

Celestial Song of Light/6

Discord

ESSENCE 6

Name: Matthew **Band:** none (Mummy)

Prince: Saminga **Word:** Death

In Nomine

Corporeal

Human/3

vessel — 42 Body — hits

vessel — Body — hits

vessel — Body — hits

Strength 7

Agility 5

Ethereal

1 Mind — hits

Intelligence 1

Precision 3

DISSONANCE

Celestial

6 Soul — hits

Will 3

Perception 5

Attunements & Distinctions

Rite: Pallbearer



Fighting/3

Dodge/4

Tongue/6

Corporeal Song of Healing/5

Status 2 (skilled laborer)

Charisma +2

Mechanic/4

Celestial Song of Healing/5

Discord

Game Mechanics

The life of this world is but a sport and a pastime.
– Cattle 6:32 (The Qu'ran)

Conflict is not just natural to a roleplaying game; it is encouraged. If it weren't for the drama caused by conflict, we wouldn't have a game.

The rules are designed to let players get to the business of playing as quickly as possible, rather than flipping through books, checking charts and working on their higher math. ***In Nomine*** presents a simple method of resolving conflict, in the hope that a character's troubles don't result in real-life headaches.

Dice – The d666

God does not play dice with the universe, but we do. Dice resolve conflict in a random enough fashion to satisfy both players and GMs. ***In Nomine*** uses traditional six-sided dice.

In most cases, players will make their own rolls. This not only gives them a greater feeling of control over their character's actions, but increases the tension of the moment. There are times, though, when a character should not immediately know the result of an action. In these cases, the GM may make the roll and keep the results secret.

Sample Die Rolls

1d *means:* Roll one die

2d *means:* Roll two dice and add the results

1d+2 *means:* Roll one die and add 2 to the result

2d-4 *means:* Roll two dice, add them and subtract 4 from the result

d666 *means:* Roll three dice as described below.

For example: *You roll a 2d, which is two six-sided dice, and come up with the numbers 5 and 4. Adding the numbers gives you 9, your final result.*

Another example: *The rules specify 1d-3, and you roll a 3. Taking the modifier into consideration, the result is zero.*

The d666

This is the commonest type of die roll in ***In Nomine.*** Each player will need three six-sided dice – two similar, and one that is markedly different. You *must* be able to tell this third die apart from the other two. A roll of these three dice is called the *d666.*

The d666 will produce two results. The first result is the total of the two similar dice – this determines success or failure. To succeed, you must roll a given number (the *target number*) or less, so *roll low*. If the action is intended to be easy, the target number will be high; if it should be hard, the target number will be lower, with a correspondingly lower chance of success.

The second result comes from the different die; it's called the *check digit.* The check digit indicates the *degree* of success or failure. A low check digit (1 or 2), indicates a marginal success or failure. A check digit of 6 is a success or failure of great proportions.

Example: *On the d666, a player rolls a 1 and a 2, with a 6 on the third, different die. Add the 1 and the 2 together to get 3 (a good roll, because you want to roll low). If the target number was 3 or higher, this roll is a succss. The 6 is the check digit, and implies a* ***spectacular*** *success.*

Setting the Target Number

Many d666 rolls will be made against one of the basic characteristics (Strength, Agility, etc.). The value of that characteristic becomes the target number – the player must roll that number or less on the d666. Suppose someone tosses your character a gun. Can he catch it? The GM would reasonably rule that Agility is the appropriate characteristic here. "Roll against Agility," he tells you. If your Agility is 8, for instance, you'd need an 8 or less to succeed.

Many situations call for the use of a skill or a Song. All such abilities are based on a characteristic, and the target number becomes your level with the skill or Song, *plus* its base characteristic. For instance, Fast-Talk is based on Will. If you have a Will of 7 and Fast-Talk/3, your target number for a Fast-Talk roll is 10.

Difficulty Modifiers

If the GM feels that the situation is not an "average" use of the characteristic or skill, he may assign a modifier for its difficulty. This is added to or subtracted from the target number. Suggested levels of difficulty are:

-2 .....Very Tough
-1 .....Tough
0 .....Average (no modifier)
+1 .....Easy
+2 .....Very Easy

Example: *Paul's character, a human Soldier of God, is chasing a demon through a building. With one well-timed leap down the approaching stairs, he might be able to narrow the 7-yard gap between himself and the evil creature.*

The GM tells Paul to roll against his Agility, which is 7 – very good for a human. However, the GM also rules that the difficulty of lunging down a staircase is -1. Paul must roll a 6 (7-1) or less. He rolls a 2, a 2 and a 5 – and successfully leaps down the long stairwell. The GM rules that he manages to gain 5 yards (the check digit of the d666) on his quarry.

Another example: *The demon Mynofrigith is trying to break a cane that a priest is using to block his way. The difficulty is +1 (Easy) and the demon's Strength is 11, meaning he has to roll a 12 or less! Success, in this case, is automatic. (There is nothing special about this cane that would give it "hit points" of its own.) Mynofrigith rolls anyway, to get the check digit, check for Intervention, and generally mock both the priest and the GM, getting a 2, a 4 and a 4. The cane snaps like a twig into four pieces (a detail invented by the GM from the check digit).*

Many abilities, especially the celestial resonances and attunements, will have specific modifiers. For example, a description might say "the user's Will, aided by his Celestial Forces." So his target number becomes his Will, *plus* the number of Celestial Forces he has.

Favorable modifiers may be seen as improving the skill or characteristic rolled against, or raising the target number (same thing). Unfavorable modifiers may be seen as reducing the characteristic rolled against, or reducing the target number – again, the same result; the roll is harder.

Risk

With the GM's approval, players may choose to increase or decrease the risk of an action they attempt. In these cases, the GM should require the player to describe *exactly* what his character is doing to make the task more or less risky. If he approves, he raises or lowers the target number by 1 (no more).

Increasing the risk will also add 1 to the check digit of the roll, resulting in grander success or a bigger flop. Making the risk less *subtracts* 1 from the check digit, making failures less severe and successes more mundane.

Example: *Thomas, playing the demon Mynofrigith, tells the GM he wants to shoot at a fleeing car in an attempt to stop it. He asks to accept an additional level of risk, explaining that he's aiming for the vehicle's tires. The GM is satisfied with that explanation – tires are a harder target, but will sure stop the car if he hits them – and allows the modifier. Thomas will* ***subtract*** *1 from the target number and* ***add*** *1 to the check digit, for better or worse.*

Automatic Success

If the final target number is over 12, the roll cannot fail (barring *Intervention*, see p. 40). The amount over 12 adds to the automatically-successful roll's check digit. For example, with a Strength of 8 and a Fighting skill of 6, you'd have a target number of 14 to hit someone – an automatic success with +2 to the check digit.

The Contest

Sometimes two characters want to use their skills against each other – a familiar trying to sneak past a guard, or an angel and a demon wrestling for control of a gun.

These situations are resolved with a Contest. Each PC rolls against the appropriate skill, Song, or characteristic (as determined by the GM). In the first example above, the familiar would make a Stealth roll (his Precision plus his Stealth skill), while the guard would roll against his Perception. The GM may modify either side's target roll to account for the difficulty of the attempt.

If neither side succeeds in the roll, then nothing happens. Neither side gained an advantage (the familiar stepped on a twig and had to stop, but the guard didn't notice; or the grapple for the gun continues unresolved).

If one side makes the roll and the other fails, treat this as one would expect: the successful roll indicates the victor.

If both sides make their rolls, then the check digit determines the winner of the Contest. The roll with the higher check digit is successful, with the other roll being treated as a failure for game purposes.

If the check digits are the same, the Contest is a draw. The opponents may choose to continue the Contest, rolling again for the same action the next round, or one of the contestants may choose a different action.

An Intervention (below) will indicate a spectacular success for one side or the other. In the unlikely event that both sides roll an Intervention, the GM should decide what happens . . . Good luck.

Using the Check Digit

The third die of the d666 is useful not only as a number, but also to guide the GM in adding depth to otherwise bland situations.

Frequently, the check digit indicates something defined by the rules, such as the amount of damage done by a weapon or the duration of a miracle. But what happens when definitions aren't given?

The GM should simply apply the check digit in a logical and interesting manner, based on the situation. For example, if someone tries to jump from one rooftop to another, the check digit of a failed roll could represent the number of inches by which his grasping fingers missed the second rooftop, or the number of hits of damage he took from his two-story fall. Or both.

Each situation is different; the examples in the main text can act as guidelines for the GM. When used creatively, the check digit can bring an extra level of depth and vividness to the game. It's a "wild card" provided to the GM to spur his cinematic imagination.

Intervention

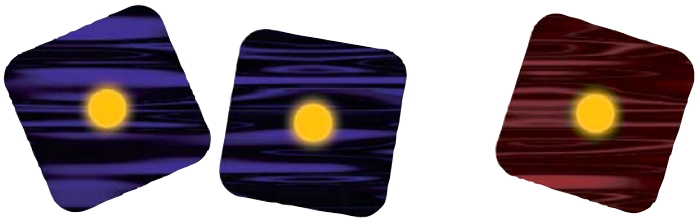
Here is wisdom.

Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is six hundred three-score and six.

– Revelations 13:18

There are two specific results of a d666 roll that require special explanation: 111 and 666. These two numbers hold a special significance for both celestial camps, one symbolizing the Holy Trinity and the other representing the legendary Number of the Beast.

Every time a character (run by either a player or the GM) rolls an *unmodified* 111, the Holy Spirit intervenes. A 111 is a blessing for those on the angels' side, but a curse to demons and their supporters. The Holy Spirit will always grant an advantage to its servants, and hinder the forces of evil.



Likewise, an unmodified roll of 666 indicates the personal intervention of infernal forces. Whatever the situation, the malevolence of Lucifer will grant demons and their servants an advantage over the forces of good.

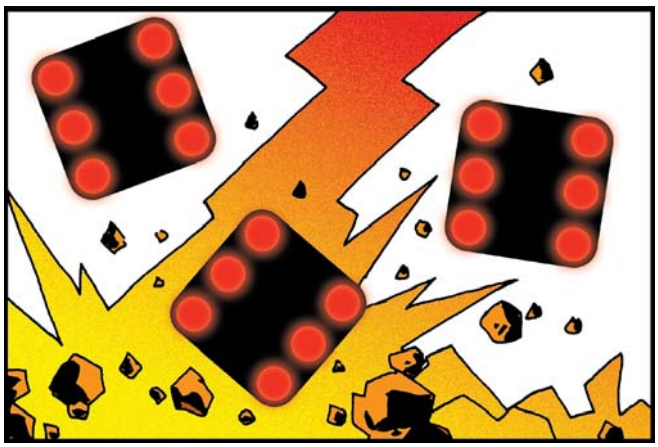
When the value of a check digit is altered by a modifier, the *unaltered* value is all that counts for purposes of 111 or 666. Modifiers, either way, do not cause or prevent the Intervention.

An Intervention's effects will be overtly supernatural in nature. The exact effects of an Intervention are left up to the GM to describe – but they must be spectacular.

The more important the roll, the more important the Intervention. A 111 on a trivial roll will yield a dramatic, but essentially trivial, Intervention. A 111 on a vital roll should be remembered for the rest of the campaign. However, Intervention should never destroy a PC, unless the roll already held that PC's life in the balance.

Example: *At the climax of an adventure, a young teacher stands bravely to face the demon who has been tormenting her children . . . and falls mortally wounded. Once the demon is dispatched, Carin the Malakite invokes the Corporeal Song of Healing to heal the dying mundane. She rolls a 111. Amidst a pearly light, the wounds instantly close, and the sufferer is granted an extra Force, becoming a Soldier of God!*

Another example: *The demon Mynofrigith, lured to a meeting in a deserted office building, finds his way blocked by two skinhead thugs serving Archangel David. He fires his pistol at one of them, and gets a 666. The infernal whim of Lucifer intervenes. Frig's target lurches back through a window (which mysteriously opens), grabbing at his friend for support, and the two fall six stories to their doom!*



On the other hand, a player might roll an Intervention by the opposition.

Example: *Sabrina, the Lilim, has cuddled up to a college student in a bar to ask a little favor. She opens her eyes wide, puts her hand on her target's knee, makes a suggestion in her huskiest voice, and invokes her resonance . . . and rolls 111.*

Her victim sees Sabrina for what she is, and understands what the demon really wanted. White-faced, she walks out of the bar. Sabrina's whole plot has collapsed – she will never be able to use her wiles on that girl, or on anyone in her circle.

Another example: *The angel Orc, in the form of a pack of wolves, is baying at the heels of two wounded demons. A Contest of Agility (p. 39) is rolled to see if he catches up . . . and he rolls 666. The GM decides that the demons' last, failed attempt to summon their Demon Prince takes delayed effect (note that since a Contest was involved, it doesn't really matter which side rolled the 666). Belial appears in a puff of brimstone, and Orc is forced to flee in all directions.*

Interventions can affect all characters, not just angels and demons. Mundanes, Soldiers and spirits might not seem to be significant enough to receive personal help from greater powers, but those who fight in the War and associate with celestials seem to draw the attention of both the Holy Spirit and the One Below.

Resources

A *Resource* is anything that a character can use to carry out his mission. You can solve problems by learning skills, by using blessed or unholy artifacts, by performing Songs which manipulate the very fabric of reality, or even just by having friends to rely on.

Resources fall into six categories: *Artifacts*, *Roles*, *Servants*, *Skills*, *Songs* and *Vessels*.

Listed after the normal Resources are *Discords* – flaws in a character's interface with reality. Think of these as "negative Resources." Characters with Discord get more character points to spend on other things. Discord also adds to the roleplaying possibilities of a character.

Getting More Resources

Earned character points (p. 202) can be spent on new or improved Resources at any time the GM permits it. But if you suddenly want to improve a skill or Song, right in the middle of a game session, you should offer the GM an entertaining explanation of how you're doing it! Otherwise, he may require you to wait until the end of the session or even the end of the adventure.

Resource Mechanics

Artifacts

Angels and demons aren't generally materialistic; they leave that to humans. But some things are either necessary for their jobs or so damned useful that they can't do without them. Physical items bought with character points are called *artifacts*. These can be ordinary corporeal objects, like guns and cars; ethereal *talismans*, which improve the user's skills; or celestial artifacts – relics and reliquaries – that perform Songs or store Essence.

Most artifacts will be created by players or found during the course of an adventure, but descriptions of several sample artifacts start on p. 70. A player who wants to create a new artifact for his character must okay it with the GM before bringing it into play.

Artifacts vary in cost; see below. The GM may grant a player a good deal on an otherwise expensive artifact if the player can come up with a good enough story about its history and how he acquired it!

Using Artifacts

Most artifacts can be used by anyone who picks them up. Some are attuned only to certain types of users, or can be used only by those who know the appropriate blessing or curse.

But the *owner* of any artifact – the character, if any, who paid points for it – is celestially *attuned* to it. A celestial can roll against the level of his artifact, plus his number of Forces of the same type, to hear its current location in the Symphony. So if an angel has 3 Ethereal Forces, and he's lost his level-2 ethereal artifact, he'd need to roll a 5 or lower to divine its location. Use the Cherubim resonance table on p. 96 for the check digit results. A failed roll means the owner cannot try again for a full day.

Corporeal Artifacts

Objects found during the course of an adventure are *not* corporeal artifacts. The only advantage to paying

When to Roll

One of the biggest problems facing a roleplaying GM is when to make the players roll, and when things just happen. When an obvious Contest is occurring in the game, there's no problem. But when something would be more interesting just roleplayed, don't feel tied to the dice if they might stop the action or move the plot in a direction nobody wants to go. It's really a matter of personal preference and group consensus – like the customs of scattered tribes, those of roleplaying groups vary from place to place. But whatever the GM decides, he should stay consistent to be fair to everyone.

Often, there's no need to roll dice at all. If someone with a Strength of 10 wants to lug a small TV into the living room, the GM can rule that action a success without touching the dice. Actions like this are automatic and don't require a d666 roll – not even to check for the possibility of Intervention. What, he picks up the TV and the dark forces of the Abyss smile upon him? This is the Game Master's prerogative, but automatic actions should only be used to speed up play, not to steer the game in any particular direction.

On the other end of the scale, the GM should always allow someone to attempt something, no matter how improbable it seems – there's always that chance of divine or infernal Intervention (see p. 40). If there's ever a disagreement over whether or not an action should require a roll, let the players decide – after all, their characters are the ones who will burn in Hell if they make the wrong decision.



Identifying Artifacts

Artifacts, except for the oldest and most precious, rarely look especially unusual. Any ordinary item can become an artifact, and many do.

Any character except a mundane may recognize an artifact as an artifact when he first sees it. Roll against Perception plus the character's appropriate Forces (Corporeal for a corporeal artifact, and so on.) Each character gets another roll, with the same target, on first *touching* the item. The check digit determines how much is learned. (Angels who have an attunement to create artifacts of the same type add 2 to both their Perception and to the check digit.)

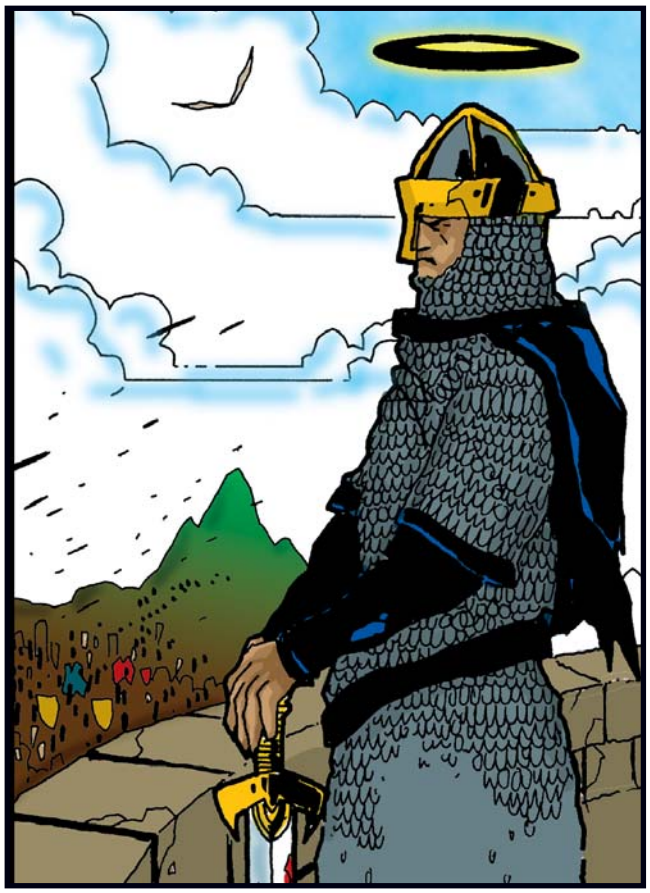
1 – Yep, it's an artifact all right.
2 – You know whether it's Corporeal, Ethereal, or Celestial.
3 – You know the above, and its level, and the general nature of the being that created it.
4 – You know the above, and its owner (if it's a corporeal artifact); or the skill it contains (for a talisman containing a common skill); or the Song it contains (for a relic that contains a commonly-known song); and/or the fact that it is a reliquary (if it generates its own Essence).
5 – You know the above, and the general nature of what it does, even if it deals with a skill or Song you never heard of before.
6 – You know who created it and when, and everything that it does, and the last person who handled it and when.

points to have some object as a corporeal artifact, versus picking up the same object at the corner store, is not having to worry about where to find one in the first place, and always knowing where it went if it's lost or stolen. Only celestials may pay points for corporeal artifacts. They may be bought at character creation, or (with the GM's permission) later . . . but to turn an ordinary item into an artifact, the owner must spend a great deal of time with it, either making it, or attuning or "bonding" to it by use. Thus, corporeal artifacts are created only as a gift from a Superior or by the owner himself.

The character point cost of a corporeal artifact is equal to its level as a Resource.

Ethereal Artifacts

Objects can have ethereal Resources – skills – added to them; such an object becomes a *talisman*, an ethereal artifact. The character point cost of an ordinary talisman is twice its level as a Resource, though many have special abilities that increase their cost; examples start on p. 70.



Ethereal artifacts enhance one specific skill of the user. The level of an ethereal artifact is added to the skill roll. For example, a pistol may be imbued with the Ranged Weapon (Pistol) skill. It gives its user a skill bonus when he fires the gun – if it's a level-3 artifact, it gives a +3. Each ethereal artifact may enhance only one skill. If the the user doesn't have that skill, he still suffers the default penalty even though he gets a skill bonus!

Use of ethereal artifacts does not create a false note in the Symphony, unless Essence is spent to help them.

Celestial Artifacts

These come in two general categories: relics and reliquaries. The cost of a normal celestial artifact is *three times* its level as a Resource; see the examples on p. 70.

Relics contain Songs. Of course, many relics have arcane or mysterious Songs that can only be used through the relic, but most relics contain the everyday Songs whose descriptions start on p. 78.

When someone tries to use a relic, add the relic's level to his appropriate Forces to get the target number to use that Song. For example, a level-3 relic imbued with the Celestial Song of Healing, used by someone with 3 Celestial Forces, could be used successfully by rolling a 6 or less. You don't have to know that Song, but you do

have to be able to learn it. So Soldiers can only use relics that hold Corporeal Songs, and mundane humans can't use relics at all.

The Songs in relics still require Essence to fuel them. Any relic can hold as much Essence as its level, or as its Song is capable of using, whichever is lower.

For example, a level-2 relic imbued with the Celestial Song of Light could hold only 2 Essence. Yes, that Song can be performed with more Essence – but not by this relic, because it's only level 2. The same relic, as a level-4 Resource, could still hold only 3 Essence, since that's the *most* Essence that can power the Celestial Song of Light.

When a relic is used, it spends *all* of its Essence performing its Song. If a relic does not contain enough Essence to do its job, the holder may add Essence of his own – but, again, only up to the relic's level.

Anyone but a mundane can put his Essence into a relic, but Essence in a relic cannot be removed. It must be spent powering the relic's Song. See *Using Songs*, p. 46, for more information.

Note that a Relic does not give a bonus of any kind to someone who already knows its Song, nor can similar relics be combined for a greater effect. If you know the Celestial Song of Light at level 1, and you have the relic described above, you can perform the Song yourself, or you can use the relic, but you cannot combine them.

Reliquaries can generate and store Essence. A reliquary's level is the amount of Essence it can store at one time. Anyone capable of storing Essence may pull Essence from it or put Essence into it, but he must be in physical contact with it. Some reliquaries are attuned to specific relics, serving as celestial rechargers for these divine or infernal weapons. And some reliquaries are also relics – that is, they are self-powered devices.

Reliquaries typically regenerate a point of Essence once a day – at sunrise or sunset, depending on whether they were created by divine or infernal hands.

Roles

Roles represent positions which celestial characters may hold in human society. They're very useful, since a celestial's actions in the course of playing out his role may not unbalance the Symphony as much as they might ordinarily. Humans don't need roles; they're *already* part of the worldly Symphony.

Each role is linked to a single human vessel (p. 48). Only human vessels can possess roles. An animal could not take a role in human society!

Note that anyone could (for instance) impersonate a policeman as part of his celestial mission. That costs no points. But if you buy the Role of a policeman, there will be a coffee-cup at the station house with your name on it, and no amount of "checking up" will reveal you to be anything but a real cop. You *are* a real cop.

The cost of a Role depends on its *status* and its *level* (see below). Multiply status by level, and divide the result by two (round fractions up). So, for instance, a Status 4 role, at Level 6, costs 12 points.

Roles can only be bought outright at character creation. After that, the player must both spend the required character points for a desired Role *and* earn it in the course of the campaign.

Role Levels

The *level* of a Role determines how firmly it is worked in to the Symphony. A level-1 Role is fairly sketchy . . . the "person" will be recognized by those around him, but could vanish without being missed. At level 6, the Role is as firmly knit to the Symphony as any real mortal life.

The higher a Role's level, the more famous that Role *can* be, and the more Status it *can* have. If you want a worldly identity as a cardinal, a movie star, a Nobel

Status

From the celestial viewpoint, the complex web of mortal society can be reduced to six status levels. None of these levels is intrinsically more worthy than any other, but they vary in their ability to affect the corporeal world.

Every role in society has one of these status levels. When choosing a status for a role, a servant, or a human character, use these guidelines:

1 – Unskilled laborer (janitor, ditchdigger).
2 – Skilled laborer (truck driver, electrician, cook) or student.
3 – White-collar worker (accountant, middle manager). This is a generic upper-middle-class social level.
4 – Successful creative worker (graphic designer, chef).
5 – Professional (airline pilot, engineer, college professor, state politician).
6 – Wealthy professional (doctor, top executive, national politician) or anyone at all who is "filthy rich."

Cost and Effect of Status

For a human being, Status costs 2 character points per level, but level 1 is free. So Status 4 would cost 6 points.

For a celestial, Status is merely part of a Role, and affects the cost of that Role.

Each level of Status gives +1 on a reaction roll (see p. 44).

The player or GM should include Status level in the character story, and make sure the character has skills to support it.

Reaction Rolls

When the GM hasn't already decided what a non-player character's reaction to a PC will be, a reaction roll is a nice random way to paint the initial introductions. A reaction roll determines the NPC's initial response to the character. This adds flavor to the game, and helps set the mood.

The GM makes all reaction rolls. The target of a reaction roll is always 6, *plus* the Status (p. 43) and Charisma, if any (p. 48) of the PC or his physical vessel. However, the Fast-Talk skill can be substituted for a "normal" reaction roll. The GM may allow other skills to be substituted as well, such as Seduction to talk your way out of a traffic ticket.

The GM can modify the roll according to the NPC's personality, the situation, and the roleplaying approach the PC takes.

GMs – again – don't let dice rolls get in the way of the action. When an NPC needs to react in a certain fashion to further the plot, he does. Reaction rolls are a tool for quick improvisation.

On a Successful Roll's Check Digit, the NPC . . .

1 ....is mostly apathetic, but will grant any requests that don't inconvenience him.
2 ....is friendly and will grant any requests that won't get him in trouble.
3 ....is very friendly, might offer suggestions, and might even bend the rules a bit.
4 ....as above, and would use his influence on the PC's behalf if they need help from someone else he knows.
5 ....as above, and will continue looking out for their best interests even in their absence.
6 ....as above; would do almost anything the PCs ask, and tries to think of more ways to help.

On a Failed Roll's Check Digit, the NPC . . .

1 ....shows obvious distaste for the PCs, but may be convinced to aid them through inaction.
2 ....doesn't like the PCs, but may accept a bribe.
3 ....doesn't like the PCs, and won't deal with them.
4 ....really doesn't like the PCs, and will work against them.
5 ....will betray the PCs to their enemies.
6 ....is directly opposed to the PCs and will oppose them directly, by whatever means are convenient.

winner or an NFL quarterback, take it at level 6. A space-shuttle pilot, TV starlet or big-city mayor had better be Level 5 at least.

Level 1 is suited only for the most anonymous, faceless roles, requiring little attention . . . just another janitor, soccer mom or IRS auditor. But it's important to note that these salt-of-the-earth roles can be taken at any level! Taking a janitor role at level 6 does not make you a world-famous sanitation engineer. It just means your janitor is as "real" a person as any celestial can ever be.

Maintaining a Role

Players should develop their Roles as much as possible, tying them into the campaign. Roles should be used both to carry out the missions assigned by Superiors and to further the cause of good or evil in everyday life.

They can even create pictures, press releases and newspaper articles about their exploits. The more creativity the player shows, the more character points he should earn at the end of a session.

If the GM feels that the Role is not being maintained, things done in the name of the Role (see below) *do* affect the Symphony. And the Resource level of a Role may never be increased unless it has been well-roleplayed!

Using Roles

When a Celestial performs an action which would normally upset the balance of the Symphony (see *Perceiving the Symphony*, p. 54), the GM may roll against the level of the character's Role plus his Corporeal Forces, if a case could be made for the action occurring "in the line of duty." If the roll is successful, then the celestial's Role has successfully masked his meddling from the attention of other divine or infernal forces.

For example, an angel who holds a Role as a private detective is staking out a Soldier of Hell, and is seen. The drunken Soldier gives chase, and shortly dies in a fiery car crash. Normally, this would send out all sorts of ripples through the Symphony, since it wasn't supposed to happen: 2 Corporeal Forces in that human, +10 because a human died, plus (the GM decides) enough collateral damage to bring the total to a "false note" with a strength of 20!

But since that could have happened to any private detective hired to watch that man, the GM rules that the angel's role might mask his actions. He has 2 Corporeal Forces and a level-4 Role, so he must roll a 6 or less. The player rolls a 5 – success! His actions go unnoticed by the celestial community at large. Had the angel decided to kill the Soldier, unprovoked, that wouldn't fit the role of an ordinary detective, and he couldn't rely on the power of his role to muffle the resulting chaos.

Also, a Role includes the skill of Knowledge [How to be a (whatever)], at a level equal to its Resource level. Therefore, the GM may roll the level of a character's Role, plus either his Intelligence or an appropriate skill, to see if he knows anything useful about a relevant issue. The check digit indicates how much he knows.

Servants

Celestials serve their Superiors, but they may have servants of their own – humans, animals or spirits who will (sometimes) help them out. The player of a celestial with a servant should come up with a story explaining how he acquired his helper. The relation between celestials and their servants can make a nice subplot in an adventure, and the GM should reward players who excel at roleplaying the dynamic between a character and his servant, by granting character points to the servant.

A servant will need his own character sheet, because he's created by the standard character creation process. If a servant works out well and takes on a personality of its own, you might consider giving the character to a friend as an introduction to the game!

The cost of a servant depends on his Resource level (which affects the chance he'll follow dangerous or offensive orders, as described below) and how powerful he is (his Class). Multiply the servant's Class by his level as a resource, and divide by 2, to get his character point cost. Round up to the next full point.

You will not be able to create an angel or demon, or a dragon, or the President of the United States, as a servant to a beginning character. That's intentional. If you want more, it's up to you to sing it out of the Symphony.

Classes of servant available to a beginning character include:

1 – A Zombi (p. 193) of 4 Forces, or an ordinary animal of 4 forces or fewer (see p. 191), loyal to the PC and following orders as it understands them. The GM need not allow an animal (or even a Zombi) to be as smart as Lassie.

2 – A Reliever, Imp or Gremlin (p. 192) with 4 Forces.

3 – As above, but a Familiar, with the extra Familiar powers described on p. 192, or a human with 4 Forces.

4 – A human being with 5 Forces, or a vampire (p. 193).

5 – A Soldier (see p. 190), or undead (see p. 193), with 6 Forces . . . or a human with 5 Forces, created with 20 *extra* character points for skills, Status, Charisma, etc.

6 – An experienced Soldier or Undead, with 7 Forces.

Unwilling Servants

A servant's Resource level reflects how much control his master has over him. When the master asks him to do something that he doesn't want to do, roll against the servant's Will, *minus his Resource level*, to see if he complies. A servant's Will may be modified by the GM in extreme circumstances – the more dangerous or offensive the deed, the higher the modifier – but not more than doubled for any one roll. If a servant successfully resists, his master cannot try again for 10 minutes, minus the servant's Resource level.

Example: *Mario, a priest, serves the demon Braxious. Braxious wants his servant to mix a little blood in with the sacramental wine, which Father Mario is loath to do. The servant's Will is 4, and as this is the most offensive thing Brax has ever asked the padre to do, the GM doubles it. Luckily for Braxious, his player shelled out the points to buy the priest as a servant at level 5! To resist the demon's demand, Father Mario must roll a 3 or less (which is his Will doubled, minus his level as a Resource). The GM tries the roll – and fails. Glumly, knowing he's digging himself a deeper pit in Hell, the priest sets about his dark work.*



Losing and Replacing Servants

The character points spent on a servant can be considered as the cost of your Superior's permission to have a servant. If you lose a servant, you may start the next *adventure* (not just the next game session) with another one of the same value. Your Superior, or the GM, may send help more quickly if you seem to be deserving – or deny you a replacement if you lost the original foolishly. Acquisition of a new human servant must be roleplayed.

Exception: If your servant is turned against you by the foe, you may deal with the problem yourself and immediately recruit a replacement (again, roleplay it!) as Nicole did in "A Bright Dream."

Skills

Through talent and perseverance, people can get really good at some things, such as running, driving, and beating people into bloody pulps. These learned abilities, unlike Songs, work *within* the Symphony – immune from celestial sensing – and do not require Essence to perform. Humans can become the equal of angels and

Using Essence to Improve Luck

Even if a task seems hopeless, characters have one other option: spend Essence, the energy of the universe itself. Every point of Essence spent before the roll raises the target by 1, improving the chances.

Even mortals can do this, though it is normally unconscious. When a mundane *really wants* to do something, he *automatically* spends any Essence he has, *all at once*, to help himself. The GM will decide when this happens.

A human Soldier or undead learns how to spend Essence a point at a time, at will. Most spirits, and all angels and demons, can also control their Essence use.

When a *celestial* spends Essence to improve a roll, something "otherworldly" occurs. It might be a flash of diabolical flame, the distant ringing of church bells, or an overpowering smell of incense. The GM decides on the effect, but inevitably some obvious, strange circumstance accompanies the expenditure of Essence to affect a roll. This is often a mundane's first hint that his companions are otherworldly.

For example: *George needs to get past the password on someone's computer. Since he doesn't have the Computer Operation skill, which has a default of -3, and his Intelligence is 7, he has to roll a 4 or less to succeed! But this is vital. George spends 3 points of Essence – all he has – to raise his target number to 7 . . . rolls, and succeeds! To the observers, he appears to touch the computer's monitor; for a moment one of them thinks he hears the sound of a thousand Cherubs singing in harmony. Then the sound is gone, and he's through the machine's security.*

Normally, this special effect will be noticed only by those who are actually present. But celestials can detect Essence expenditure from farther off (see p. 54).

demons in some ways by purchasing skills to counterbalance their low characteristics.

Each level of a skill costs 1 character point.

Using Skills

A skill's level determines the user's chance of performing it correctly. Its check digit indicatess the user's degree of success or failure. A list of basic skills starts on p. 73.

Each skill works with (and adds to) a particular characteristic, as shown in its description. The target number for a skill roll is equal to the user's skill level plus his level in that characteristic, modified at the GM's discretion by the action's difficulty.

Example: *Paul's Soldier of God doesn't make it outside the building before the demon steals a boat from the dock and attempts to escape. Paul's skill with a Ranged Weapon is 4. The Ranged Weapon skill works with the Precision characteristic. With a Precision of 2, Paul needs a 6 or less to peg the fleeing Diabolical. He rolls a 3, a 3 and a 2 – so he hits, and pops the demon's naked back for 2 points of damage as he flees.*

Another Example: *After escaping the building, Mynofrigith finds that his motorcycle has been sabotaged. He has an Engineering skill of 3 and a Precision of 6. To successfully get his bike running before the skinheads realize he escaped the trap upstairs, he'll need to roll a 9 or less. He rolls a 3, a 1 and a 5. The sum of the first two dice is only 4, so with a check digit of 5 (a great success!) he screeches off into the darkness before David's army can close on him.*

Skill Defaults

Sometimes a character is forced to try a skill he doesn't know. The roll is still based on that skill's pertinent characteristic, but instead of adding a skill level to the characteristic, *subtract* the amount listed as the skill's "Default." This represents the difficulty of performing that skill without training.

Only skills may be rolled for at default.

Example: *Paul's shot knocked the fleeing fiend into the water. Unfortunately, he can't swim. The demon's Agility is 7, and the default for the Swimming skill is -2, so he'll need a 5 (7-2) to stay afloat. He rolls a 3, a 1 and a 4; he succeeds in dog paddling, and he can chug in any direction for 4 minutes (the check digit) before he must make another default skill roll . . . provided Paul's revolver doesn't do him in first.*

Songs

Songs are complicated themes that can change the Symphony – miracles on call, fueled by Essence. They affect the Symphony directly, with effects ranging from the sublime to the fantastic.

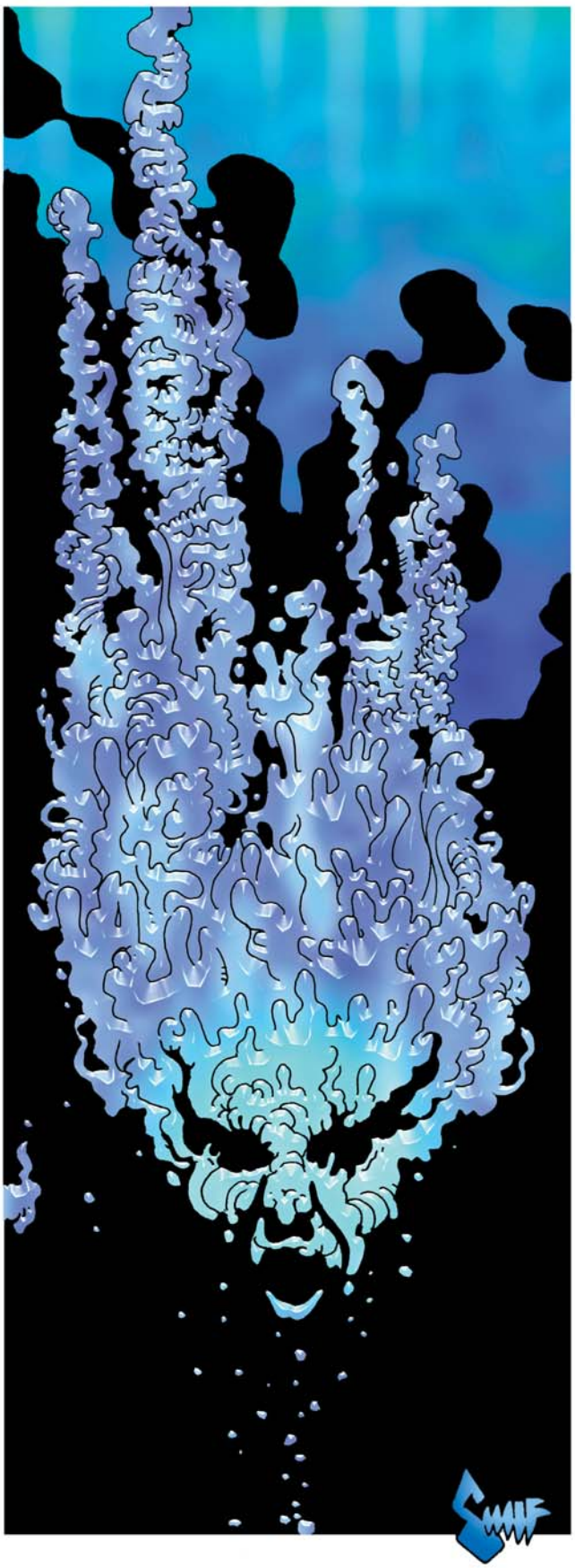
Songs cost 1 character point per level. Unless specified otherwise, any celestial can learn any Song.

Using Songs

Songs require Essence to perform. In general, the more Essence spent performing a Song, the more incredible its effects. If the d666 roll fails, the Essence is still spent! It's sometimes prudent to spend *extra* Essence to improve your chances of success (see box above).

When a character invokes a Song, his target number is the level of the Song *plus* the number of Forces of that type he has.

Example: *You're trying to possess a human. Possession is a Celestial Song that you know at level 2. With 4 Celestial Forces, you must roll no higher than a 6 (4+2) to succeed. You roll a 3, a 2, and a 5, successfully controlling the vessel of your victim for 5 minutes (the result of the check digit) plus 10 minutes times your Celestial Forces.*



Success, Failure and the Check Digit

If a song fails, the only effect is that the Essence is lost. If it succeeds, something happens . . . the degree of success is determined by the check digit. Most Songs give specific directions on interpreting the check digit.

If you know two Songs of a given type (e.g., both the Celestial and Ethereal Songs of Healing) your check digit is improved by 1 when you succeed with either one. If you know all three Songs of a given type, your check digit gets a +2 on any success.

Performance – "Hail Mary!"

The physical ritual of performing a Song, and the time it takes, depend on the level at which that Song is known.

At level 1, a Song takes requires both hand motions and vocal performance. With a successful performance, the Song will take effect that round. If the user is gagged or bound, he won't be able to perform a level-1 Song. GMs may impose a difficulty modifier when a caster is only partially incapacitated.

At level 2, the Song still requires either physical or verbal rituals, but not both. It takes effect the same round.

At levels 3 and 4, the Song will take effect the same round as the gesture or spoken invocation, or on the following round with only a mental invocation.

At levels 5 and 6, the performer may execute the Song mentally, without gesture or spoken invocation, and it takes effect instantly.

Relics follow the same rules. For example, a level-2 relic would require its user to make some kind of physical or verbal invocation.

Taking Extra Time

Even a poorly-known Song will have a better chance of success if the user takes extra time to prepare and perform it, without interruption and with both audible song and physical motion.

Two extra rounds: +1	Five minutes: +3
One extra minute: +2	A full hour: +4

Controlling and Cancelling Songs

While the check digit (in most cases) defines the duration of a Song's effects, the performer may choose to limit its scope. For example, if the Song is described as lasting over an hour, the user (at the time he invokes the Song) may choose to limit its effects to minutes or seconds, depending on the outcome desired. This does not strengthen the Song's effects.

Unless specified in a Song's description, the performer may cancel it at any time, just by a Will roll. This does not undo any effects, such as damage, it has already caused. The display of power will subside almost instantly (in 1 round, which is roughly 5 seconds).

Celestial Vessels

A celestial's vessel looks like a normal body, but it isn't. It does not need to eat, drink, sleep, or bother with similar basic human concerns, though it can do all these things if its owner wishes. It does not suffer from age, though its owner can elect to have the vessel appear to age at a normal human rate in order to maintain a Role. Celestials who know the Celestial Song of Entropy (p. 80) can make their vessels seem older or younger at will. In addition, vessels inhabited by celestials heal more quickly than ordinary mortal bodies; see p. 62.

A vessel does breathe, though . . . it is, after all, still physical flesh, and it must be nourished somehow. Thus, a vessel is normally susceptible to drowning, tear gas and vacuum. Also, celestially-generated vessels have navels. You don't think they'd overlook that, do you?

The strength of a vessel is determined by the Strength characteristic of the celestial. A Strength-8 celestial in a little-girl body can outwrestle a Strength-4 celestial in a bruiser's body. Likewise, its "dexterity" is governed by the celestial's Agility, its IQ by his Intelligence, and its senses by his Perception.

Kyriotates and Shedim use their own Strength and Agility, not that of whatever host they happen to inhabit; thus, the host may show incredible physical strength while possessed. Similarly, the host vessel of a Kyriotate or a Shedite will not require basic human maintenance (eating, sleeping, etc.) while it's possessed by the celestial.

Vessels in animal shape look like normal animals, but they have been modified so they can talk – after all, the celestial may need to communicate!

Sex and the Single Celestial

Angels and demons on Earth, like all beings, have been known to fall in love. While not all celestials express their affection through sex, they can when they want to. It doesn't weigh on their divine (or infernal) minds the way it seems to constantly creep into human thought, but it does come up on occasion and it bears mentioning because humans always ask.

Many angels believe that such activity interferes with contemplation of the divine. Regardless, few of them abstain entirely, believing that God wouldn't have given them the inclination unless He didn't mind it happening, from time to time.

Learning New Songs

After character creation, a character may only learn a new Song if he can convince his Archangel or Demon Prince that he needs it. (A Soldier cannot ask directly, but may communicate though his celestial contact.) Some Superiors are more generous than others, and the GM may always limit availability of a Song for dramatic effect. However, no permission is needed to improve a Song that is already known.

The point cost of the new or improved Song must be spent between sessions (some practice is required).

Vessels

A vessel is the form a celestial wears in the corporeal world. A typical vessel is human, but angels and demons may create animal vessels to inhabit as well, and the servants of some Archangels and Demon Princes have the ability to form vessels out of plants, rocks or even pure energy. Shedim and Kyriotates cannot create vessels at all, unless a special attunement from their Superiors allows it – they possess existing mortal bodies instead.

Some celestials don't spend much on a body – after all, it's just for getting around in. Others might own several strong or attractive vessels, for whatever reason.

Vessels are Resources, costing 3 points per level, plus any Charisma you choose to add (see below). Animal vessels are also available; see p. 191 for a few examples. The higher the level of a vessel, the more physical damage it can take. See *Combat and Healing*, p. 61.

A celestial's human vessel may have a Role (p. 43) attached, but that is not necessary. If a vessel is "killed" in public, its Role is lost; that "person" is dead. If a celestial can conceal the loss of his vessel from mundane society, and replace it quickly with one that looks identical, he need not buy the Role again. He *will* have to explain where he was, if he vanished for very long!

Human characters, of course, get a body for free – as do all creatures born into the corporeal world. The level of this "vessel" equals the human's Corporeal Forces. Humans and Undead *can* buy Toughness, at 4 points per level, but no more than two levels. This adds to Body Hits (see p. 62). Extra character points may be spent to add Charisma.

Charisma

"Charisma" is the catch-all term for any vessel quality that generally affects reactions. If you want your human character, or your corporeal vessel, to get a better reaction from most people, buy some Charisma and describe it in your character story.

You may take up to 3 levels of Charisma, costing 2 character points each. Each level of Charisma gives you +1 on most reaction rolls. (The GM, as part of his story,

can always say that a particular person isn't impressed by you, or is *especially* impressed. It should even out.)

Charisma could come from any combination of great looks, winning personality, blatant sex appeal (if it only affects one sex, pay 1 point per level), an appearance that commands respect (schoolteacher, priest, master-sergeant, German shepherd), an appearance that inspires protective instincts (cute kid, fat little puppy), obvious power (but *Status*, p. 43, is different, and only applies to mortals and Roles) . . . and, of course, fame!

You may also take one or two levels of *negative* charisma, each of which *gives* you 2 character points, for ugliness, bad breath, or whatever. If the body with negative charisma is just a vessel, these points may only be spent to improve that vessel's level or its Role.

Changing Between Vessels

Celestials may buy more than one corporeal vessel, though only one can be worn at a time. Normally, when a character is using one vessel, the others have only potential existence; they are "alternate forms" he may take, rather than separate bodies that exist at the same time. There are exceptions, of course. Kyriotates (p. 101) may occupy many hosts at once, and some artifacts (p. 70) let a spare vessel maintain a corporeal existence till it is needed.

To switch forms, simply spend a point of Essence. The celestial seems to shift and change shape over a period of one round, taking the new form. The new vessel may act on the next round.

Discord

Sometimes there are flaws in the way a being interacts with the Symphony. These flaws manifest as Discord – a fingernail across that great chalkboard in the sky. Discord can greatly affect a person's attitude and ability.

Discord is also treated as a Resource – a negative one. Like other Resources, Discord can be bought in levels from 1 to 6 unless otherwise noted. Types of Discord are described beginning on p. 85.

Every level of Discord taken during character creation gives 3 character points to spend elsewhere. Also, 3 notes of *dissonance* (p. 57) can be converted at any time into 1 level of Discord, chosen by the GM. Discord cannot be converted back into dissonance, or disposed of in any way except the gracious intervention of a Superior.

Corporeal Discord

Corporeal Discord affects the sufferer physically. Some of its manifestations reduce his characteristics, though never below 1. Others merely affect other people's reaction rolls toward him. The GM may reduce any *human* reaction roll (see p. 44) toward the afflicted character by the level of the Corporeal Discord. Double this for angels. Ignore it for demons; they don't react to the visible signs of corporeal discord. Some Corporeal Discord can be hidden temporarily, at the GM's discretion.

Ethereal Discord

Ethereal Discord causes emotional urges – such as anger, fear or paranoia – which can be suppressed. A successful Will roll, minus the level of the Discord, can temporarily push away the effects of the affliction. The check digit of the roll tells the GM how many hours the character suppresses his Discord. The check digit of an unsuccessful roll, plus the level of the Discord, is the number of minutes the afflicted person gives in to his feelings.

Example: *An Angry demon is trying to talk his way backstage at a concert. His Will is 6, and he has 3 levels of Anger – he must roll a 3 or less to suppress his feelings. He rolls a 5, with a check digit of 4 – his Anger controls him. With his Strength of 10, the demon picks up the bouncer and (assuming the bouncer fails his Strength roll) tosses him aside. The GM notes that the demon will stomp around in anger for the next 7 (check digit of 4, plus 3 levels of Anger) minutes of game time.*

Depending on a celestial's Choir or Band, certain forms of Ethereal Discord (see the descriptions, starting on p. 87) will count toward his dissonance total when making a dissonance roll (see p. 57).

Celestial Discord

Celestial Discord is like Ethereal Discord in that it can generally be suppressed. However, characters with Celestial Discord have other problems – see *The Effects of Discord*, p. 60.

A Divine Example: *Carin, playing our Malakim servant of Michael, has 36 points to spend on Resources. After examining a few of her options, she decides to purchase a .44 as a Corporeal Artifact at level 1 (1 point;, so she won't have to worry about tracking one down when she needs it. Then she buys the Ranged Weapon skill at level 3 (3 points) and one of Michael's Servitor Attunements, Proficiency (10 points), toward using her weapon. With her Precision of 6, she'll have to roll a 9 or lower to use her pistol – which is pretty good. And if she makes her Precision roll toward invoking her Proficiency attunement after firing her gun, she stands a chance of doubling the damage it does!*

Continuing to bulk up her ability to make things get out of her way, Carin takes the Song of Thunder at level 4 (4 points), the Celestial Song of Light at level 6 (6 points) and, just in case, the Corporeal Song of Healing at level 2 (2 points). She doesn't know the Song of Healing very well (she'll have to roll a 5 or lower to successfully perform it), but checking the chart on p. 47, Carin notices that if she takes her time

and gives herself an extra minute, she can raise that by 2 – and if she takes five minutes with it, she can increase it by 3.

With 10 points left to go, she puts 6 points into a level-2 Human vessel, and spends the rest on the Dodge skill.

***A Diabolical Example:** Matthew has 24 points to spend on Resources, plus 10 points of additional supernatural powers for being a mummy. Born naturally into the corporeal world, he gets a free human vessel equal to his Corporeal Forces. He puts 4 points toward Charisma, getting a +2.*

He decides to take the Mechanic skill at level 3 (3 points), as well as make himself a skilled laborer with a Status of level 2 (2 points). Then he takes Dodge/4 (4 points), to give him an even chance of getting out of the way, and Fighting/3 (3 points), for when he can't. Looking at supernatural powers, he puts 5 points in Tongue/5, giving him a good chance to freak people out. He'll hit with his Numinous Corpus: Tongue on a 15 or less (including +2 accuracy for Tongue). In a bare-handed attack, his Strength of 7, plus Fighting/3, plus Corporeal Forces of 3 equals 13! Then he drops 10 points on Songs of Healing (Corporeal/5, Celestial/5), since if he dies he's dead for good!

Looking at the description of mummies on p. 193, he notices that he can spend 3 points on a special rite which will allow him to regenerate an extra point of Essence each day. Reflecting upon the nature of his Superior, and with the GM's approval, Matthew decides his character may act as a pallbearer for an extra point of Essence. He'll spend a lot of time hanging out in churches, very charitably offering to help out at poorly-attended funerals.



On Being Celestial

Essence

Essence makes the world go 'round – literally. It is the energy of the universe, the backbeat of the Symphony. Essence can be used for any number of things, from fueling a Song to temporarily increasing a skill. Players should be careful when spending Essence: just as a human can hear a gunshot, or smell that a candle's been extinguished in an empty room, other angels and demons can tell when Essence has been spent. The game mechanics for this are on p. 54.

A character may never hold more Essence than the total of his Forces. For example, a beginning PC angel is composed of 9 Forces and cannot hold more than 9 points of Essence. If someone tries to absorb more Essence than he has the capacity for, it merely spills back out and returns to the Symphony.

Celestials may freely give Essence to one another. It's the celestial currency. When someone does you a favor, the "thank you" sounds so much more sincere when it comes with a bit of Essence. However, under normal circumstances, characters cannot *combine* their Essence. You can give someone else your Essence, but you can't spend yours at the same time he spends his in order to increase the effect, nor can you pour your Essence into him at the same time he spends his own. It just doesn't work. Two characters with 9 Essence each cannot spend it all at once in a combined effort of 18 Essence.

Reliquaries (see pp. 43, 70) are artifacts which generate and hold Essence; they are much in demand. Reliquaries have a limit on the amount of Essence they can contain, and no normal reliquary ever has a limit higher than 6. Someone holding a reliquary may spend its Essence as though it was his own. So a starting character with 9 Forces, full of Essence and holding a full Reliquary/6, could spend 15 Essence all at once if necessary!

Regaining Essence

Angels generate 1 point of Essence every morning at sunrise. Demons and the undead are given 1 point of Essence every evening at sunset. Spirits (pp. 52, 190) regain 1 point of Essence a day, at sunrise for angelic spirits, sunset for demonic ones and midnight for others.

Soldiers, humans and other corporeal animals generate 1 Essence at noon, and can earn extra Essence by using their greatest gift. In game terms, a human can, once a day, gain 1 point of Essence by succeeding at a skill roll with a skill known at level 6. (But few humans know how to *use* their Essence skillfully – see p. 46.)

Celestial Discord, especially a Need, may interfere with natural Essence regeneration; see p. 60.



Rites

There are other ways to regenerate Essence. An angel or demon working directly for a Word-bound celestial can always resort to one of his Superior's *Rites*, privileged methods of Essence regeneration – see pp. 109, 157. These methods usually reflect the Superior's sphere of influence. For example, the servants of Dominic, the Archangel of Justice, regain Essence by bringing people to justice; the creatures of Belial, Demon Prince of Fire, regenerate Essence by immolating their victims; and players whose characters work for Kobal, Demon Prince of Dark Humor, can regain Essence by making the GM laugh!

Outcasts and Renegades lose access to any Rites except those they might have had for their own Words (and it is rare for a Word-bound celestial to stray that far).

The Three Realms

The Symphony has three levels of reality: the *Corporeal* (Earth), the *Ethereal* (the Marches, containing the dreamlands, pagan gods and creatures of myth) and the *Celestial* (Heaven and Hell). Each realm must be handled differently from the others, requiring a celestial to garb his Forces in different forms.

The Corporeal – Earth

To manifest on Earth, a character must have a vessel. Earthly creatures, such as humans, don't have to worry about this – they're born into vessels and spend their lives trapped in them. But angels and demons must spend character points to buy a vessel before beginning their service on Earth.

The default ***In Nomine*** game should begin on Earth, with characters in their corporeal vessels.

The Ethereal – The Marches

The mythic dreamlands of the Marches are the echoes of the Symphony, its haunting reverberations. They're still a vital part of What Is, yet very different in tone and texture from the corporeal realm. The ethereal world is composed of a near-infinite number of half-realities, separating the corporeal from the celestial.

Theoretically, the Marches are divided between the lands of Blandine (the Archangel of Dreams) and Beleth (the Demon Princess of Nightmares). But the ethereal realm stretches far beyond the areas which either Beleth or Blandine control. There are some dreamscapes angels never tread, where the remnants of myth still wander freely.

The Marches are home to many different kinds of spirits, including the souls of those whose bodies died but whose minds chose to keep dreaming. But the natives are outnumbered by the nightly visitors. When you dream, you go to the Marches.

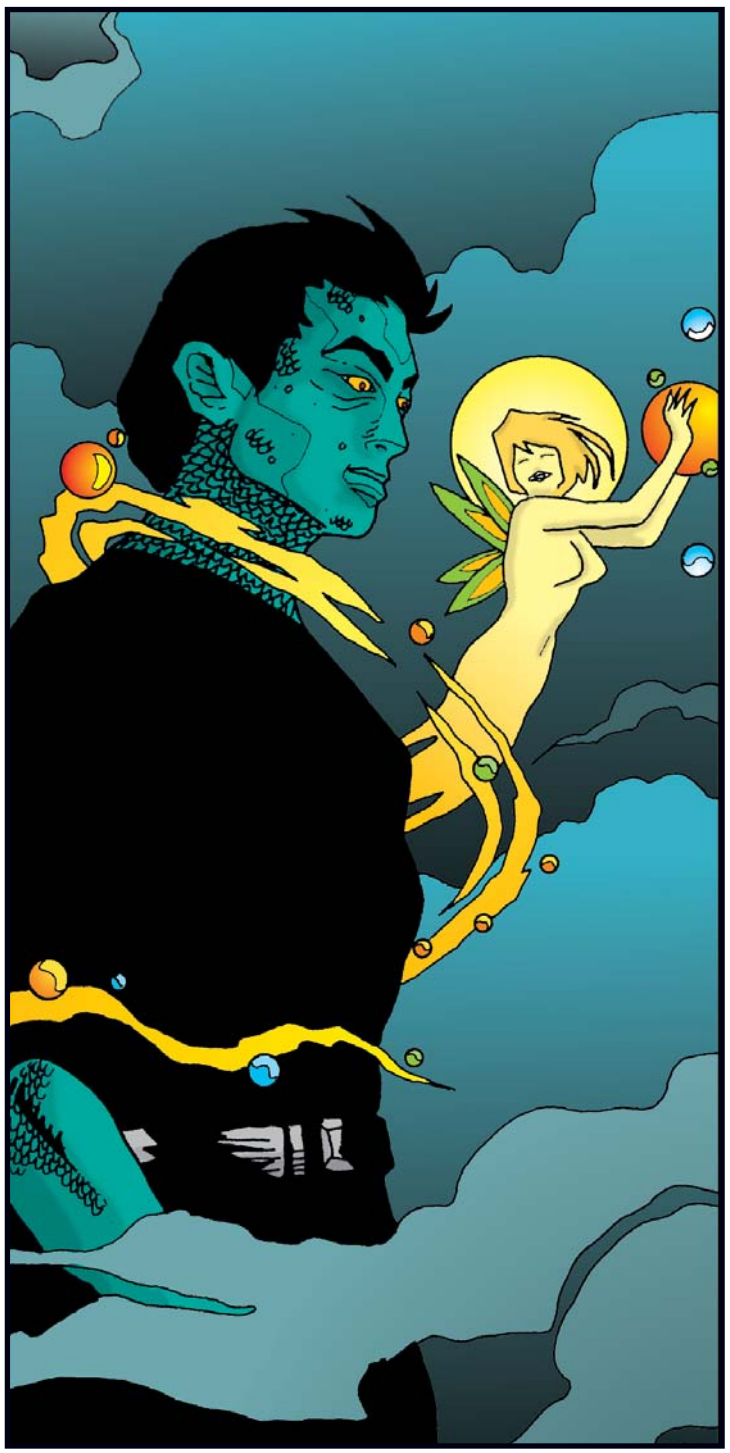
Entering the Marches

When humans sleep, their minds enter the Marches. Everyone has his own dreamscape, drifting through the Marches. The sort of dreams a person has depends on which side of the Marches his mind travels through. If a person had a good day or otherwise went to bed with a feeling of hope for tomorrow (GM's decision), he begins his evening's journey on Blandine's side of the Marches, amidst fanciful visions of hope and peace. Someone who had a bad day, or went to bed with feelings of trepidation or fear, begins his evening on Beleth's side of the Marches, and his dreamscape fills with shocking visions of horror and despair. Once in Blandine's realm, a dreamscape can be reached and affected by her angels. Likewise, Beleth's demons can reach and affect the dreamscapes which drift through her domain. Daring angels and demons cross the invisible (and, some say, nonexistent) line that divides their mistresses' lands, hoping to help or harm the dreamers.

While a human is awake, his dreamscape cannot be found. If he awakens while visitors are present in his dreamscape, they awaken as well (or are otherwise ejected). When a human dies, his dreamscape vanishes – though perhaps Blandine and Beleth can still find it.

Dream to Nightmare to Dream

Skill rolls may be required in dreams – for example, a dreamer might "see" a charging rhino, and attempt a Dodge roll. If a dreamer on Blandine's side of the Marches fails a skill roll in a dream with a check digit of 6, he is instantly transported to Beleth's side of the Marches, along with any visitors to his dreamworld – his dream has become a nightmare. If a dreamer on Beleth's side of the Marches succeeds in a skill roll with a check



digit of 6, he is instantly transported to Blandine's side of the Marches; his nightmare becomes, for the moment, a peaceful dream.

GMs may allow a human's dreaming activities to influence his overall emotional state. Someone who ended his evening of dreaming on Blandine's side of the Marches will be pleasant and hopeful the following day. If he ended his dreaming on Beleth's side of the Marches, he'll be apprehensive and generally weary until he gets a good night's sleep.

Celestials in the Marches

Angels and demons, unlike humans, do not have their own dreamscapes. When they fall asleep (a Will roll is required; if it fails, wait a half-hour and try again) they walk the overarching dreamscape of either Beleth or Blandine's March, surrounded by pools of water, floating mirrors, translucent spheres and other objects representing humans' personal dream worlds. They may observe the dreamscapes of actively-dreaming humans, but may not affect them. Only the Songs of Dreams and various attunements granted to Servitors of Blandine and Beleth allow a celestial to interact with a person in his dreamscape. Waking up merely requires another Will roll.

If a nonhuman enters the Marches through the mind of a human dreamer, his corporeal vessel (if he was corporeal at the time) will remain asleep until his return. While in the Marches, if something happens to a nonhuman's vessel he will awaken immediately.

If he enters the Marches some other way (such as through the temple of an ethereal spirit; see below), his physical vessel will vanish, forcing him to find a direct route back to Earth before manifesting again.

The towers of Beleth and Blandine each contain many exits into the Marches. When an angel or a demon passes through such a door, his celestial form vanishes, reappearing when he returns to the Tower. There's no such thing as an "ethereal form." While cruising the Marches, most visitors look like the last physical vessels they inhabited, whatever they were.

Unless he serves Beleth or Blandine, a character will rarely have cause to be ethereal – most of the action in ***In Nomine*** takes place in the corporeal realm.

A mortal's dreams may give a celestial insight into his character, at the GM's discretion.

Ethereal Spirits

Beyond the realms of Dream and Nightmare lie stranger lands. Here wait various pantheons of gods and goddesses, created through the power of humanity's collective dreams and nightmares. Uriel, the Archangel of Purity, was recalled to the higher planes of Heaven almost 1,500 years ago for slaying all of Earth's creatures of myth, as well as "purifying" most of Blandine's side of the ethereal realm. Beleth offered refuge to many, both in hopes of recruiting the more nightmarish of the old gods, and just to vex Uriel. Some of the survivors now make their home in Beleth's realm and aid her demons, while others have fled to the Far Marches and are rarely seen.

Many of these gods are supported by human worshippers even to this day. Compounding their heresy, these pagan spirits claim that God, the deity of the Christian, Hebrew and Islamic faiths, has not always been the omnipotent being He is today, but that as His power grew He rewrote the history of the universe to suit Himself. Heaven rejects this claim outright, of course. Dominic has yet to find another Uriel, someone willing to mount a holy crusade against the spirits of the Marches; most angels agree that while the ethereal spirits are annoying, Heaven has plenty of other problems to worry about.

From Earth, the only direct path to the Far Marches home of a pagan spirit is through a temple consecrated to that spirit. The ritual for ascending to an ethereal dreamscape varies from god to god, from offering food to performing incredible physical feats – sometimes even human sacrifice – but angels and demons seldom bother themselves with these "third world" forces in the War for the Symphony.

The Celestial – Heaven and Hell

The celestial realm, containing Heaven and Hell, contains many planes, of which the characters may reach only the lowest. The "Earthly" Heaven, the abode of those angels who concern themselves with the lower realms, is the least divine of the Heavens. All of Hell is likewise on this lowest celestial plane.

In the celestial realms, angels and demons take on their true appearance. Each Choir and Band has a different celestial form. In his celestial form, any Discord a character has will still be brutally apparent.

Outcast angels and renegade demons may still assume their celestial forms, but may not travel to Heaven or Hell. Humans do not have celestial forms. Some spirits do; others do not.

Heaven and Hell play little part in the day-to-day duties of angels and demons on Earth. Earthly duty is a great responsibility, and a celestial agent had better have a very good reason for showing up on his Superior's doorstep when he should be busy on Earth.

Ascending to the Celestial Plane

To ascend, the angel or demon must already be in celestial form (see p. 54). An angel at a heavenly Tether, or a demon at his master's Tether, may ascend automatically. Anywhere else, he must make a Will roll. If the Will roll is failed, the celestial may not try again for (10-Will) hours – minimum 1 hour.

Normally, when angels and demons ascend to their celestial homes, they manifest beside their Hearts (see p. 137 for angels and p. 185 for demons). Someone who ascends to the celestial plane within a minute of another character, starting within his Celestial Forces in yards from where that character ascended, may choose to "follow." With a successful Perception roll – after making the Will roll to ascend – the follower will manifest in the celestial realm near the person he followed. Of course, this will not let demons ascend to Heaven, though angels may travel to Hell if they follow a demon.

Returning to the Corporeal Plane

Returning to the corporeal plane normally takes no time, Essence, or Will rolls. When a celestial returns to Earth, he reappears near the place he left it, unless his Superior sends him somewhere else, or he is accompanying someone else to the place *they* left from.

The celestial appears on Earth in his mortal vessel (his choice, if he has more than one). Without a corporeal vessel, he cannot come to Earth. *Exception:* Kyriotates and Shedim will manifest in celestial form, and have (10 times Celestial Forces) minutes to enter a host. If they fail to find one, they get yanked back to the celestial realm to face an angry Superior.

Celestial Forms on Earth

But even in the corporeal realm of Earth, an angel or demon will occasionally need to assume his celestial form – as a precursor to an attempt to visit the celestial realm, or for some other reason.

Celestial forms are not made of corporeal matter. A being in celestial form continues to see, hear and smell the corporeal world around him, but he is insubstantial and unaffected by gravity. He cannot touch anything, nor can he be struck by physical weapons, or damaged by any earthly force. He may fly and pass through solid objects – his speed is (Perception × 6) yards per round. He may also engage in celestial combat – see p. 64.

Perceiving a Celestial Form

Celestial forms do not reflect photons, and thus cannot be perceived by normal means. Only characters with high Perceptions can "see" beings in their celestial forms! Even angels and demons, while corporeal, can easily overlook a celestial form nearby.

When a being in celestial form is within "sight," let each possible viewer make a Perception roll, plus the spiritual being's Celestial Forces. The more Celestial Forces a being has, the easier his celestial form is to see. A viewer who is himself in celestial form adds his *own* Celestial Forces. Give a +2 to see a celestial form leaving a *mortal host*.

If a celestial form attempts to use a Song, resonance or attunement on a person, that person gets another roll to perceive it. A celestial form is *automatically* perceived by any creature that it actually attacks, whether it does damage or not.

A being in celestial form may speak to anyone who has perceived it. He may only communicate with others if he can use the Ethereal or Celestial Song of Tongues (see p. 85) or a similar effect. Any being that "hears" him gets another chance to perceive him.

Once a celestial form has been perceived, physical obstacles will not "hide" it, even within the earth. No matter what is in the way, a human will know its exact direction until it is (Perception + Celestial Forces) yards away. A celestial or spirit will "see" it with clarity until it is twice that distance away, or until it would be out of mortal sight, whichever distance is longer.

Taking Celestial Form

In game terms, this requires a Will roll, modified positively by his Celestial Forces. A successful character must pay 2 Essence. Except for Kyriotates and Shedim (see below), a celestial may maintain celestial form for a number of minutes equal to the check digit of the roll plus his Will, unless he ascends to the celestial plane, returning to corporeal state earlier if he chooses. If the roll fails, he may try again in a number of minutes equal to the check digit of the roll, minus his Celestial Forces.

When a character "goes celestial," his corporeal vessel vanishes, along with whatever he was carrying (clothing and up to Corporeal Forces × 10 in other items). These items return with the mortal vessel, when and where the character returns from the celestial state – they do not become celestial themselves. *Exception:* Celestial artifacts enter celestial state with the person who carries them. They can even be taken to Heaven and Hell, and returned as well.

Angels and demons can go celestial in the Marches, but their sleeping corporeal vessels don't vanish. If the celestial then ascends to Heaven or Hell, he may choose to reappear either in the Marches *or* in his corporeal vessel upon returning. While on the celestial plane, if anything happens to his vessel, he will know it immediately.

If a celestial (usually a Kyriotate or Shedim) is occupying an earthly host, rather than a corporeal vessel, there is no Essence cost to leave the host, and the host will not vanish when its "possessor" takes celestial form! Those with high Perception (see above) may even see the possessor leave the host. On leaving his celestial form, he does not automatically re-occupy the same host. He must find a host within (10 × Celestial Forces) minutes, or be forced back to Heaven or Hell.

Perceiving the Symphony

Angels and demons hear the Symphony far more clearly than mortals – so clearly that they can detect extemporaneous changes in the music. Their actions interfere with the Symphony, and they can detect interference by others. Humans who serve celestials directly, having become aware of the Symphony, may also detect celestial goings-on, but since their Perceptions tend to be very low, it's far less likely.

Everything that celestials do on Earth creates foreign notes in the Symphony. Most are small and easily overlooked. But certain actions, if taken by a celestial, will create dramatic reverberations which can draw attention.

When a celestial makes a major change to the Symphony, all other celestials in the area may make Perception rolls to detect it, using the modifiers listed below. The chances of a change being heard depend on both the degree of change and the physical distance from the event. The more extreme the change, the easier it is to detect and the farther away it can be detected. Noticing that an angel across town just spent a point of Essence is impossible, but hearing a demon kill a human a mile away is possible for the perceptive.

Spending Essence *+1 per point of Essence*

Every time a celestial spends a point of Essence, this sets the Symphony out of balance in some way, however slight. This includes use of Essence to affect die rolls and to perform Songs (even using a relic).

Resonances and attunements do not affect the Symphony in and of themselves . . . but any Essence spent to fuel a Resonance or attunement creates a disturbance.



Using Songs *+Degree of Disturbance*

Each Song has a "Degree of Disturbance," given at the end of that Song's description. This is the amount by which that Song changes the Symphony, *in addition* to the number of points of Essence spent on it.

Entering/Leaving the Corporeal Plane *+number of Forces entering or leaving*

It goes without saying that manifesting or vanishing sends ripples through the Symphony. The same is true for assuming celestial form on earth without actually leaving the corporeal plane.

Appearance of a Superior *+20 or +30*

When an Archangel or Demon Prince appears on the corporeal plane, the modifier is +20 for a corporeal vessel, +30 if they appear in celestial form. If this was the result of an invocation, remember to account for the Essence used in the summoning.

Destroying *+1 per Corporeal Force or 4 hits of physical damage*

Every 4 hits of physical damage done to a corporeal object (or being!) sends out a small ripple in the Symphony. (Few celestials are so perceptive that they can pick out the damage done by emotional or mental trauma, though.) Injury to the corporeal vessel of another celestial does *not* disturb the Symphony – but injury to mortal *host* (animal or human does!

Killing a Human *+10 per human*

Humans are the most sophisticated natural constructs of the Symphony, and destroying one before its time creates a thunderclap of celestial noise, above and beyond the destructive damage done. Also, as with the deaths of animals (see *Destroying*, above), there is an additional +1 disturbance for each Corporeal Force possessed by the dead human(s).

Detecting a Disturbance

The basic range for detecting celestial intervention in the workings of the Symphony is equal to the Perception roll's modifier in yards, times the perceiver's Celestial Forces. The more Celestial Forces a character has, the farther away he can detect a disturbance. Every increment of this basic range from the disturbance reduces his chances of success by 1.

The GM should not tell his players what they need to roll, as this would tell them too much about the disturbance's distance and intensity.

Example: A demon gives in to his Anger and strikes out at a fast-food clerk, killing him instantly. The victim had 3 Corporeal Forces, and the Perception modifier for a human's murder is +10. If we assume that the average angel or demon has 3 Celestial Forces, that makes his base range to detect this 39 yards (13 × 3). If we also assume that the average angel or demon has a Perception of 6, that means that, within this range, he can sense the ripples in the Symphony on a roll of 19 (6 + 13) or lower. This would be an automatic success.

For every additional 39 yards that our average celestial is standing from ground zero, his Perception roll is reduced by 1 – from four football fields away, the average angel or demon still has a good chance of detecting a human's untimely death.

When several Symphony-changing actions take place together, or nearly together, in space and time, treat each one as a new event that includes all the preceding ones. For example, if an enraged and unsubtle Cherub destroys the three muggers who threatened the child she was guarding, the first "ripple" she creates is equal to one killing . . . then there's a second ripple, equal to two killings . . . then a third one, taking into account all three deaths! A celestial brawl with a lot of collateral damage can literally echo across town.

Echoes

Once a celestial perceives an especially loud note in the Symphony, he can hear its echoes for a number of minutes equal to his original base roll to detect it *had he been standing beside it.* So, in the example above, our average angel would be able to hear the echoes of the disturbance for 19 minutes, no matter how far away he was when it happened. Those who did not detect the disturbance originally will not hear the echoes!

As long as he can hear those echoes, the celestial can go toward the disturbance, and he will know its site and/or its maker when he sees them! At the GM's discretion, the tracker may be led to the physical site of the disturbance, or the celestial who caused it, or to both in succession.

What Happened?

Merely knowing that a change was made to the Symphony is important, but knowing *what* change was made is even more vital. The check digit of the successful Perception roll determines how much information the celestial picks up from the "sound" of the change:

1 – Direction of the disturbance.

2 – That, and its size, rounded up to the nearest 5.

3 – That, and its general nature: "Someone pushed a skill roll." "Someone took celestial form." "Someone died."

4 – Distance away, to the mile.

5 – Distance away, to the yard.

6 – A detailed description of the event, naming Songs, skills, etc., but not naming anyone or revealing whether the deed was done by an angel or a demon.



One thing that can't be perceived, unless you can track the echoes, is what manner of being made the change. To all but a few gifted celestials, a change made by an angel sounds exactly like the same change made by a demon.

Resonance and Dissonance

Celestial beings resonate with universal patterns, beautiful and terrifying. The *resonance* of a celestial Choir or Band is a way of perceiving and manipulating the world with celestial senses, and cannot be taught or explained. Some hold a resonance for truth and cannot be lied to, while others may hold a resonance for particular people and always know where they are. But a celestial's resonance is more than just his special way of seeing things – it's who he is. It defines his very nature. Denying this nature causes *dissonance* – see p. 57.

Infernal resonance acts through a demon's **Will**, reflecting his ability to impose his diabolical perspective on the rest of the world. The stronger a demon's Will, the more likely he is to get his way.

Divine resonance acts through an angel's **Perception**, reflecting his ability to attune himself to the Symphony and see meaning in its myriad patterns. The greater an angel's perceptive senses, the more likely he is to pull signal out of the noise of existence.

Resonance Mechanics

An angel's resonance comes from his Choir; a demon's resonance comes from his Band. In general, a resonance can be used at any time, though some resonances have special limitations.

To invoke a resonance, a celestial must make a d666 roll equal to or lower than his Perception (for Lilim and most angels) or Will (for Kyriotates and most demons), *minus his current dissonance*, with other modifiers for difficulty as the GM sees fit.

A resonance, of itself, does not disturb the Symphony. If any Essence is spent to use the resonance or to increase the chance of its success, this *does* disturb the Symphony and may be noticed by other celestials.

Opposing Resonance

Demonic resonance is easier to oppose than angelic, because, like any other Will-based conflict, it can be fought. Any creature with more than 4 Forces may make a Will roll to resist the intrusion. Like a normal Contest, the check digit of the subject's successful Will roll must be higher than the demon's check digit. For game purposes, this does not turn the demon's resonance roll into a failure – it just wasn't a great enough success to have any effect on the strong-willed target.

On the other hand, the passive nature of angelic resonance makes it difficult to deflect.

Results of Resonance Failure

For some demons, a badly-failed resonance roll may lead to dissonance; see the individual Band descriptions, starting on p. 140, for more information.

For angels, a failed resonance roll usually has no adverse effects – his celestial senses do not "lie," he just doesn't get any feelings on a celestial level. But on a failure with a check digit of 6, his Resonance becomes useless for (6 minus Celestial Forces) hours . . . or 10 minutes even for angels with 6 Celestial Forces.

The check digit of a *failed* resonance roll determines how many hours the celestial must wait before he may try his resonance again for that specific purpose and

target. In the meantime, he is free to use his resonance toward other ends, unless it was a 6 – see above.

Check Digits

The effect of a *successful* roll's check digit varies with the resonance being invoked; see the individual Choir and Band descriptions for more details. Check digits for resonance rolls involving a subject – whether failed or successful – may be modified at the GM's discretion by one of the factors on the chart below. (For example, if a character's resonance requires that he be in physical contact with the subject, the GM should not give him a bonus for doing so.) The GM and the player should decide whether or not to apply check digit modifiers *before the roll is made*.

Celestial Resonance Check Digit Modifiers

+2 .....physical contact with the subject
+1 .....within 1 yard of the subject
-1 .....direct line of sight, from 10 to 50 yards away
-1 .....audio and video reproduction
-2 .....audio reproduction only (phone conversation, tape recording)
-3 .....visual reproduction only (photo, video)

Technology has given angels and demons sophisticated ways to use their celestial resonances, at the cost of reducing their effects. When using a resonance through a technological medium, GMs should always apply the appropriate check digit modifiers – except for the Cherubim and Djinn, to whom the modifiers don't apply.

Using a divine resonance on a mechanical reproduction (such as looking at a photo or talking to someone on the phone) will give information about the subject's state when the reproduction was made. Will-based resonances can also work through mechanical mediums, but not on recordings – such as photos, videos or audio tape. But they do work through live transmissions – satellite broadcasts, phone conversations, and so on.

Dissonance

A celestial, whether angel or demon, must act as his nature demands, or risk disturbing the delicate harmony between his resonance and the rest of existence. This loss of celestial balance is called *dissonance*. The more dissonance a celestial has, the harder it is for him to use his resonance, and the farther he moves from the clarity of extraordinary perception.

Each Choir or Band, according to its nature, acquires dissonance in different ways. Each Superior also sets certain requirements on his servants, and failing in these things brings dissonance.

For an angel, dissonance comes from denying his true nature or acting against it. Very dissonant angels may become *Outcasts*, unable to ascend to Heaven or use the Rites and rituals of their Superiors. Extremely dissonant angels can lose their friends, their purpose, and their grace. *Falling*, as the angels call it, is how demons came to be in the first place.

For a demon, dissonance comes from a failure to enforce his selfish will upon reality. Grave dissonance can lead to *Discord*, a painful fracture between the evil soul and his personal symphony. (See p. 60 for details.)

Demons may seem more likely to be dissonant than angels, but demons don't have the cushion of the Symphony to protect them when they fail. They're playing with celestial fire, and it's easy to get burned. For angels, becoming dissonant is more of a moral decision, a choice. It's easier for angels to avoid dissonance, but angels have more to lose and farther to fall.

Celestials may choose to reduce their dissonance by trading it for Discord; see p. 59.

Dissonance Mechanics

Immediately after a celestial does something dissonant, the player must use the d666 to determine how profoundly this affects his character. Dissonant angels run the risk of becoming Outcasts, or even of Falling – losing their divinity and becoming demons. Dissonant demons may acquire Discord (see p. 60). The GM and the player should conduct a dissonance roll in private, and need not reveal its outcome to the other players.

Dissonance rolls may not be modified by outside forces (such as difficulty or spending Essence). At least one of the three dice must equal or exceed the amount of the character's *current* dissonance to avoid disaster (see below). If the roll *succeeds*, he merely gets another note of dissonance. For either outcome, the check digit determines how many hours he must wait before using *any* supernatural aspect of his resonance again!

For example: *A celestial with no dissonance must roll a 1 or more on at least one of the 3 dice to avoid disaster – an automatic success, but he must roll anyway. He rolls a 2, a 1, and a 6. His dissonance goes up one note, reducing by 1 his future chances of invoking his resonance, and he can't use his resonance for 6 hours (the check digit).*

Another example: *A celestial with 4 points of dissonance must roll a 4 or more on at least one of the three dice. He rolls a 2, a 2, and a 4, narrowly averting disaster but still gaining another note of dissonance.*

Failure and Intervention on Dissonance Rolls

If all three of the dice are lower than the celestial's current dissonance, the roll is failed. Thus, a creature with only one note of dissonance is safe. (And a 111 is always good for angels – see below.)

Failing a dissonance roll leads to disaster.

Falling

When an Outcast angel fails another dissonance roll before getting rid of his dissonance, he Falls. A Fallen angel automatically becomes a demon of the Band opposite his angelic Choir – Seraphim become Balseraphs, Cherubim become Djinn, etc. The only exceptions are Malakim. They don't Fall; they just gain another level of Discord.

When an angel Falls, any dissonance he had is lost, but so are any attunements. He also loses the ability to execute any divine Rites. From that point on, he generates Essence at dusk.

A Fallen angel will be welcomed by the forces of Hell. Chances to hear about the Host's plans first-hand are too rare to pass up. In fact, the Fallen may find himself the subject of a "bidding war" between Princes, offering various inducements to get the new demon into their own ranks – and not just because they want another relatively powerful servant, but because they don't want the other Princes to have him. To further complicate matters, some infernal forces may be gunning for the Fallen angel, just to make *sure* he doesn't fall into other hands. And Dominic's hosts want his head on a stick.

Until he grants allegiance to a Prince, the newly-fallen angel won't be able to go to Hell on his own – he has no demonic Heart to show him the way. However, he can follow another celestial to Hell. Once he swears fealty to a Prince, the dark lord attunes his new tool to whatever Word the Prince serves and ties his soul to a new Heart. This gives the newly-demonic character any Band attunement granted to that Prince's minions, as well as access to his Rites, but it also binds the demon to whatever dissonance strictures the Prince has set for his Servitors.

Angelic Disaster: Falling from Grace

If an angel gets a 666 on a dissonance roll, or fails on all three dice, he becomes an Outcast. He may no longer use his Superior's Rites and rituals, or ascend to Heaven. The doors of Heaven reopen to an Outcast only after he clears himself of dissonance, and patches things up with his Superior. See *Playing an Outcast*, p. 30.

If an already-Outcast angel attempts a dissonance roll and either rolls a 666 or fails on all 3 dice, he will have cast aside the last of his divinity and become a demon. At sunset, if he has no Celestial Discord, he'll automatically regenerate infernal Essence like any other demon. For more information, see *Falling*, above, and *Effects of Discord*, on p. 61.

For example: *An Outcast angel with 5 notes of dissonance must roll a 5 or higher on at least one of the 3 dice. He rolls a 4, a 3 and a 1. He Falls.*



Demonic Disaster: Gaining Discord

If a demon's dissonance roll is 111, or if it fails on all 3 dice, he generates Discord as well as 1 note of dissonance. The level of Discord earned is equal to the check digit of the failed dissonance roll. These levels may be part of a new Discord, or they may augment a previous Discord, at the player's discretion. New Discord may be chosen randomly (see p. 89), or the player may ask the GM to assign it.

For example: *A demon with 3 points of dissonance must roll a 3 or more on at least one of the 3 dice. He rolls a 2, a 1, and another 2. He gains 2 levels of Discord, as well as another note of dissonance. Harsh!*

Favorable Intervention

On an *angelic* dissonance roll of 111, divine forces smile upon the angel's activity, even if it seems to be against his nature! No new dissonance is gained – instead, any previous dissonance he has accumulated is forgiven. The angel may interpret this divine message as he likes . . . and the GM should keep it in mind, too.

Similarly, if a demon's dissonance roll is 666, not only does he generate no dissonance, but Lucifer himself smiles upon the demon's activity. Any existing notes of dissonance are wiped away. The player and the GM should ask themselves *why* Lucifer is pleased . . .

Tethers

The celestial realm of each Archangel or Demon Prince is linked to several places on Earth. These places are called Tethers. A Tether is a place of refuge and communion for its master's servitors and allies and an earthly celebration of its master's Word. At a Tether, that Word enters the mind, heart and soul of everyone who enters.

Tethers vary in size. The smallest known Tether is a tiny room in Tokyo, barely large enough for the obese Baron of Haagenti who is its caretaker. The largest is a parklike African valley in which no man has ever set foot, where Jordi protects creatures which survive nowhere else.

Demons in their celestial forms may not approach a divine Tether. This does not work in reverse; angels in any form are free to approach an infernal Tether.

At a Tether, it is easier to communicate with the celestial realm. Angels in any Tether, or demons in their masters' Tethers, need no Will roll to ascend to the celestial plane – merely attaining celestial form and spending two Essence (see p. 53) is enough. And at a Tether, a celestial may more easily commune with its ruler (+3 to an Invocation). Tethers have other effects, too – some unique to individual Tethers, others shared by all such sites or their caretakers.

Seneschal

Each Tether has a Seneschal, a powerful celestial (always with over a dozen Forces, and almost always with a distinction) who is the place's caretaker. Seneschals are generally Word-bound to their Tethers. Some inhabit a mundane vessel, but many – unlike most celestials assigned to Earth – have the power to remain indefinitely in their celestial forms. Most Seneschals are free to leave their Tethers, though few do so for long. An absent caretaker will know instantly if his Tether is attacked!

It's polite to request the Seneschal's permission before entering a Tether. If your Superior is hostile to his master, your request may be denied, though a caretaker will rarely slam the door in the face of a desperate fugitive.

Many Tethers also have "staffs" who aid in maintaining them or serving their earthly functions; the details vary from Tether to Tether. A Tether of Novalis, for instance, would require gardeners both celestial and mundane. A Tether of Haagenti would have cooks, and a Tether of Andrealphus would get a lot of business.

Serving a Tether is one way for a celestial to lose dissonance. If he has an appropriate ability, the caretaker may permit him to stay and use it to serve the Tether and its master's Word. In general, a week of service will heal one note of dissonance. (The GM may deal with this as he sees fit. It can be an "automatic" way to let the characters work off dissonance, or it can require roleplaying and time taken from other campaign efforts.)

Locations

The locations of Tethers are usually well-known to all angels and demons assigned to the area. They are celestial forts scattered across the corporeal battleground. Secret Tethers are rare, because the activity at a Tether constantly shakes the Symphony.

The most famous Tether in the Western world, Notre Dame in Paris, belongs to no single Superior – rather, it's the common meeting place of all Archangels when they're on Earth, headquarters to the divine.

New Tethers may be created by powerful manifestations of a Word, with or without celestial planning. For example, the rubble which used to be Jeffrey Dahmer's apartment building in Milwaukee is a strong new Tether of Saminga. Since D-Day, the beach at Normandy has been Tethered to the floor of the Groves, the training ground of Michael and his angels of War. The GM may place Tethers to suit the campaign; most major cities have at least one divine Tether and one infernal one.

Tethers may also be destroyed, their link to the celestial realm broken. Newly-established Tethers are comparatively vulnerable, but an attack on any Tether is a major move in the War.

Losing Dissonance

Dissonance, while painful and disruptive, can be removed. Many sources of dissonance have individual cures – that is, if the source of dissonance is undone, that note of dissonance will vanish.

Time spent in a Tether (above), aiding its Seneschal, can cure dissonance. However, if a note of dissonance is worked off in this or some other way, curing the *original cause* of that dissonance can no longer help you – it won't get rid of *another* note.

Also, the GM may allow a character to sacrifice 10 points of Essence, once per adventure, to remove a note of dissonance. This represents either some grave act of divine contrition, or a gleeful renewal of his loyalty to evil, for which the player should concoct a suitable story.

During play, characters may choose to trade 3 notes of dissonance for 1 level of Discord (see below) at any time. This will raise an angel's chances of using his resonance and lower his chances of Falling, at the cost of inflicting an unpleasant limitation on the character.

Redemption

A demon with too much Discord is not much of a demon. He either has a hard time following orders or he's just not that devoted to the selfish cause of Evil. Such a demon, if he truly repents of the harm he caused and genuinely wishes to serve others, may try to join the angels.

There are practical reasons for Heaven to offer asylum to these demons. First, they generally have a wide range of experience to offer an Archangel, and a lot of knowledge about the inner workings of the diabolical hordes. Second, they have an incentive to stay in line – they have nowhere else to go. Last, they're tired of getting knocked around by angels on a regular basis, and would rather join them than be slaughtered by them.

A demon seeking redemption, either through an angel or by other means, must contact an Archangel and – humbly – ask for asylum in the bright celestial realm of Heaven. An Archangel is the only being powerful enough to strip a demon of his Discord and reattune his dark nature to the resonance God originally intended. (This is not always successful; sometimes the demon dies, but for purposes of playability, assume that PC demons who seek redemption have successful realignments.) After that, the demon becomes an angel of the Choir opposite to his former Band (Balseraphs become Seraphim, etc.). His demonic Heart, wherever it's being kept, will shatter, and the angel will have a new, angelic Heart in the safekeeping of his patron Archangel. When the new angel ascends to the celestial plane, he'll appear wherever in Heaven his new Heart is located. Like other angels, he will regenerate Essence at daybreak.

But as far as the Archangel is concerned, the demon has not yet proved his worthiness. While his Celestial Discord is gone, any Corporeal or Ethereal Discord remains. For each successful mission the new angel participates in, the Archangel removes some more Discord.

At first, the only supernatural abilities a redeemed Diabolical has are the Songs he knows (including Numinous Corpus), the Rites of his new Archangel and the resonance granted to him by virtue of his Choir. When redeemed, he loses all the dark attunements granted by any Prince, including the ability to attract the dark lord's attention. He will only acquire an Archangel's Choir attunement through loyal service.

He does, however, still have access to any Rites he may have gotten hold of as a demon. If he can resist the temptation to exploit them to regenerate Essence, then he stands a chance of becoming a full-fledged angel again. Otherwise, every time he performs a demonic Rite, he generates another point of dissonance.

Also, while a newly-redeemed demon is not given the advantages of an Archangel's Choir attunements, he is bound by that Superior's strictures concerning dissonance.

If a redeemed Diabolical fails a dissonance roll before fully becoming an angel again, he's not only Outcast, but that Archangel will never, ever lift a finger to help him again.

Once a redeemed demon rids himself of Discord, earns his Archangel's Choir attunement and at least one of his Servitor attunements, the demon will be considered a full-fledged angel in the eyes of the Lord.

Discord

Dissonance, uncorrected, can lead to Discord. This is a visible reflection of a celestial's disharmonious nature, and may manifest in his vessel (cloven hooves, a prehensile tail), in his mind (extreme paranoia, schizophrenia) or even in his immediate environment (a smell of death, an attendant sound of bees). A Discordant angel will get poor reactions (see p. 44) from other angels. A Discordant demon won't upset other demons particularly, except for the vigilant agents of Asmodeus . . . but he's easier for angels to notice, and may be a vulnerable target for hostile infernals as well.

In game terms, Discord is a Resource (see p. 36), rated by levels from 1 to 6. The higher the level of Discord, the more strongly it will affect the character.

A list of Discords start on p. 85, but GMs and players are encouraged to make up their own.

Effects of Discord

Certain of the Ethereal Discords, different for various Choirs and Bands, count as dissonance for dissonance rolls (see Ethereal Discord descriptions, p. 87).

Sufferers from Celestial Discord don't regenerate Essence naturally. At sunrise for an angel, or sunset for a demon, let the player roll 1 die. If the number he rolls is above his highest level of Celestial Discord, then he's able to coax Essence out of the universe that day. If not, then his Discord got in the way of his Essence regeneration and he'll have to scrounge for some elsewhere.

Demonic Discord

Demons get Discord when they acquire so much dissonance that it fractures their selfish grasp on their personal symphonies. When a demon earns Discord, the GM may inflict something appropriate (with or without

Superiors and Discord

Only a Demon Prince or an Archangel can remove a character's Discord. A celestial must not only explain why he ended up in such a sad state of affairs, but also convince his Superior that he's worth the effort required for celestial realignment. Neither of these are easy – both Archangels and Princes have countless subjects crying to be favored with attention, not all of whom are crippled with Discord.

Luckily for PCs, the Superiors aren't stupid (or at least most of them aren't). They can recognize a good tool when they see it, and they know it's in their best interests to keep good tools finely honed. But a finely-honed tool may be expected to perform even better than before, and demons who have just been relieved of their Discord may be assigned some of their toughest missions ever, to justify the Superior's energies and attention.

GMs, don't let players off easily. Only allow characters to get rid of Discord at the end of an adventure, to reward exceptional game play or exemplary roleplaying *instead* of getting character points or a new attunement. If the PCs think of Discord as only an occasional annoyance, they'll be less likely to worry about generating dissonance. If a player complains about his Discord and wants to summon his boss just to ask him to remove a personally-inflicted stumbling block, let him – few Princes or Archangels would ever acknowledge such a request, much less grant it.

Remind players that timing is crucial when asking favors, and the best time to ask for a favor from a powerful celestial being is after doing him one . . . at the end of an adventure, for example.

player input), or let the player choose it randomly (see p. 89). The check digit of a failed dissonance roll determines the level of a new Discord, or the increase in a previous Discord. If increasing an old Discord would raise its level above 6, then apply the check digit to a new Discord instead. See *Demonic Disaster*, p. 58, for the game mechanics.

Angelic Discord

For an angel, Discord is a very bad thing. If he does not deal with it before someone reports it to his Superior, he could be censured, shunned, punished or – especially for Malakim – destroyed outright.

The first time an angel notices another angel's Discord, he must make a reaction roll (see p. 44), subtracting the level of the Discord. The GM may modify the roll as the situation demands. Particularly nasty Discords may send people screaming from the unfortunate one, calling the cops . . . or an Archangel. Friends may want to help – but then again, they may simply be trying to maneuver the sufferer into a position where they can take credit for blowing the whistle on him.

GMs are not advised to let new angel characters start the game with Discord – but if a player can come up with a *really* good explanation, the GM can give him the character points and let him suffer.

Losing Discord

Discord can't be disposed of as easily as dissonance. Only a Demon Prince or an Archangel can remove Discord with any certainty. See *Superiors and Discord* (in the box to the left), for more information.

Other, riskier methods exist, but since a Discordant celestial is to angels and demons what a leper is to humanity, there's very little knowledge on the subject.

Combat and Healing

While the Archangels and Demon Princes are pulling strings in the background, their Earthly agents have the chance to get their knuckles bloody and raise some hell.

Basic Combat

The simplest way to run ***In Nomine*** combat is as a series of abstract "combat rounds," ignoring issues of time and movement; any fighter can hit any other. Each fighter names a target and rolls one attack per round – usually a d666 roll against his Song or weapon skill plus its governing characteristic. If he hits, add his check digit to the Power of his attack (see pp. 65-66) to find how many hits of damage it does to the chosen target.

If the target is wearing any armor, subtract its Protection (see *Armor Types* box, p. 65) from this damage. The target may also Dodge (p. 66), reducing the damage further. If these modifiers bring damage below zero, consider it zero. "Negative" damage doesn't heal you.

The GM can assign bonuses or penalties to any roll due to *his own conception* of good or bad footing, positioning, line of sight, or whatever.

Combat continues until one side is defeated, manages to escape (which will require roleplaying, since the basic combat system does not account for position!) or gives up. See the combat summary on p. 68.

Characters can do battle in any of the three realms. Occasionally there will be two or even three kinds of combat going on at the same time.

Corporeal Combat

Physical battle can take place only in the corporeal realm. You cannot take corporeal damage unless you are in a physical vessel, though foes in celestial form can use some Songs to affect your physical body.

A bare-handed attack is rolled against (Strength + Corporeal Forces). A weapon attack adds the weapon skill as well. Many weapons affect your roll to hit, or the damage done, or both. Precision-based attacks use Precision instead of Strength. See *Resolving Attacks*, p. 66.

The defender may try a Dodge roll.

Physical damage is measured in *Body hits*. A celestial's total Body number is determined by adding his vessel level to his Corporeal Forces and multiplying the result by his Strength. Humans and undead can add any levels of Toughness (p.48) they have bought to their Corporeal Forces.

Example: *Jeremiah has 3 Corporeal Forces and a Strength of 8. In his cat form (a mere Vessel/1) he has 32 hits . . . (3+1) times 8. Tough kitty! But in his human form, which is a Vessel/4, he has (3+4) times 8 hits – a Body number of 56!*

Another example: *Matthew, the mummy, has 3 Corporeal Forces. Therefore, his body is considered a Vessel/3, since he didn't buy its level up. He chose a Strength of 7. So he has a Body of (3+3) times 7, or 42. Not bad for a human.*

If you take (Body) hits, you fall unconscious. If you take (vessel level × Strength) hits after that, the vessel is dead. So Jeremiah's cat form, once unconscious, can take another 8 hits, while his human form can take 32 hits. An unconscious celestial can do nothing until his vessel awakens or is killed. If it is killed, he reawakens on the celestial plane (see *Trauma*, p. 67).

Any unconscious character will awaken if he is healed above 0 Body hits. Otherwise, he awakens in (7 minus Corporeal Forces) hours. He has not actually healed at all; any further injury will render him unconscious again.

If a celestial's mortal body loses consciousness, the celestial is also unconscious until it recovers. Destruction of the physical body will kill a mortal, and harm a spirit or celestial (see p. 67).

Stunning

Anyone who loses 25% or more of his Body to one attack will be stunned for the rest of that turn and all the next turn. Other things can also cause stunning, even without actual damage. Items and powers that do stunning damage list the duration in their description.

A character can take no action while stunned.

The GM can also arbitrarily rule that a defender has been stunned, should that fit the scenario and the attacker's description of the attack (a head blow, for instance).

Physical Healing

Mortal creatures naturally regenerate a hit of Body damage every (6-Strength) days, with a minimum of 1 day. Celestials, and most spirits, regenerate a hit every day (sunrise for angels, sunset for demons, midnight for spirits, as for Essence) – even if for some reason they are blocked from getting their daily Essence. But the Medicine skill, and the Corporeal Song of Healing, will help you make a much quicker recovery.

Striking and Destroying Artifacts and Weapons

A weapon may be destroyed in combat, if the attacker purposely targets it. Most artifacts are small, hand-held items, earning attackers at least a -2 difficulty to target them. The item's user can make a Dodge roll to get it out of harm's way. If the Dodge is successful, have the attacker roll again immediately to hit, against the object's protector!

Some representative items are listed below. The first column is the difficulty to hit the object in combat. The second is the number of hits it can take from a weapon – blows from a hand will not harm most weapons or artifacts! When it takes this many hits, it becomes useless. A merely damaged artifact can be repaired to full "strength," but one that takes its full number of hits is destroyed. Even if remade, it has lost its artifact powers.

	Penalty	*Hits*		*Penalty*	*Hits*
Ring	-4*	3	Club	-2	2
Dagger	-3	2	Sword	-2	4
Wand	-3	1	Fine sword	-2	8+*
Chalice	-2	1	Handgun	-2	4*
Book	-2	8*	Rifle	-1	6*

A ring cannot be hit by any normal attack, though it could be lost if the hand wearing it is chopped or bitten off (-4 penalty to strike at a hand). An average book can survive 8 hits of physical damage, but only 2 hits from a fiery attack. A fine sword will not break unless it takes 8 hits from a single strike, and some are stronger than that. A damaged gun has a -1 chance to hit for each hit it takes.

Celestial Artifacts

Celestial artifacts are immune to corporeal destructive forces – even the ravages of time. They can only be hurt by celestial damage; otherwise, roll as above. A normal celestial artifact can be destroyed by (2 × Resource level) hits, regardless of its physical appearance. When a reliquary is destroyed, any Essence it still contains is lost to the Symphony.

Gimme Shelter

In the course of a game, things besides the characters will get bashed around. The list below indicates the number of hits some common forms of shelter can take before they are destroyed. Statistics for walls give the strength for a one-yard-wide section, one yard high. In other words, the size of a hole you could squeeze through.

	Hits	*Protection*
Sheet Metal	2	2
Wooden Wall	2/inch thickness	1
Brick Wall	6/inch thickness	2
Concrete	8/inch thickness	4
Reinforced Concrete	12/inch thickness	4
Motorcycle	8/-4	1
Small Car	16/-8	2
Large Car	24/-12	2
Pickup Truck	32/-12	3
Truck	60/-16	3
Helicopter	32/-8	2
Small Tank	60/-20	6
Heavy Tank	100/-24	6

On a hit, add the Power of the attacker's weapon to the check digit rolled, and subtract the object's Protection. The remainder is the number of hits it takes. Keep track of damage. When its hits are gone, it is broken, breached and, if it's a vehicle, inoperable (although it can be repaired). If a vehicle's hits are reduced to the number indicated after the slash, it is irreparably destroyed.

For game purposes, an object provides cover until it is destroyed. Vehicles are an exception; a vehicle provides cover to its occupants only until it is "breached." A cycle doesn't protect its rider at all (though it's better than nothing to hide behind). Autos only count as sheet metal to protect their occupants.

No stats are given for the damage done by major disasters like car crashes, because this *is* a cinematic game. Important characters are expected to emerge from a car crash scratched and angry but basically unharmed, ready to engage in personal combat with their pursuers.

Damage and the Symphony

When a celestial character destroys physical items (let alone living beings) he disturbs the Symphony. Every four hits of damage to an inanimate object give +1 to the chance that other celestials will sense the affair. See p. 54.

Corporeal flesh does not heal while its owner is in another form. If a vessel is about to die, and its owner shifts to another vessel or the celestial realm, then it will still be at death's door whenever he returns to it. Inorganic vessels do not heal damage naturally and must be repaired some other way, or replaced.

Ethereal Combat

This is mental combat . . . or, often, attacks aimed at the mind of a helpless victim. This can take place in either the corporeal or ethereal realm. A being in celestial form may make a mental attack while in the corporeal realm, and may suffer such attacks from any being that has perceived it there. But in the celestial realm, ethereal attacks are as ineffective as physical ones.

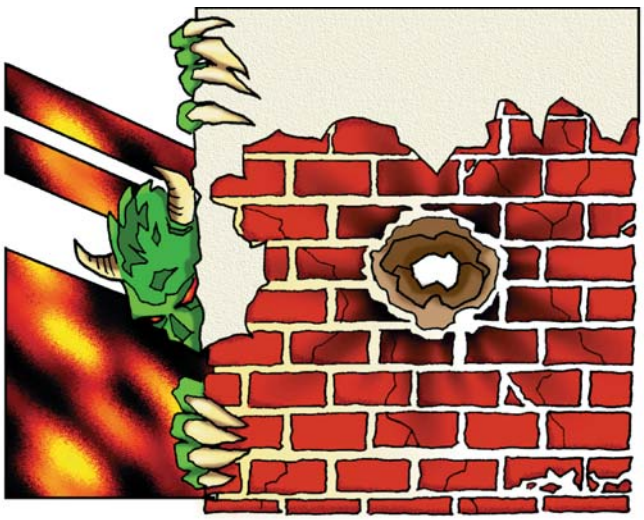
Not everyone can take part in ethereal combat. Generally, a character must have a Song or attunenent which lets him do Mind damage. Roll a normal attack against (Intelligence + Ethereal Forces). An ethereal weapon attack adds the weapon skill as well. See *Resolving Attacks*, p. 66. The defender may try a Dodge roll, using Precision instead of Agility.

Damage is measured in *Mind hits*. Your total Mind number is determined by multiplying your Ethereal Forces times your Intelligence. If your Mind falls to zero, you fall unconscious, are ejected from the Ethereal Realm if you were there, and gain one level of Ethereal Discord (p. 87). Further attacks will not produce more Discord unless you have healed back to at least half your Mind.

This is the rarest form of combat for most angels and demons. Note that creatures with no Ethereal Forces cannot be affected by ethereal combat!

Ethereal Healing

Mind hits heal at the rates given above for body hits. Injury to the mind can also be helped by the Ethereal Song of Healing.





Celestial Combat

A celestial attack tears away at the resonance that makes you what you are . . . and if you are hurt too badly, you *are not*.

This is soul-to-soul combat, a battle of wills. It can take place in any realm, but in the corporeal realm, the wearer of a physical vessel is shielded from blows against the will. However, someone in celestial form is always vulnerable to celestial attacks! This is the only way to do combat in the celestial realm. Creatures without Celestial Forces cannot be harmed by celestial combat.

Celestial forms on Earth are not automatically detected (even by each other) – and of course you cannot attack anyone you have not perceived. See p. 53 for more about perceiving celestial forms.

A normal celestial attack is rolled against (Will + Celestial Forces). A celestial weapon attack adds the weapon skill as well. See *Resolving Attacks*, p. 66.

The defender may try a Dodge roll, if he has that skill, but his target number is (Dodge skill plus Perception).

Damage is measured in *Soul hits*. Your total Soul number is determined by multiplying your Celestial Forces times your Will. Each time the total hits you take in celestial combat equal your Soul number, you permanently lose one Force. Roll to see what kind of Force is lost: **1-2** = Corporeal, **3-4** = Ethereal, **5-6** = Celestial.

The victim immediately loses 4 levels of the appropriate characteristic, divided as he chooses.

***Example**: With 3 Celestial Forces and a Will of 5, a demon's Soul number is 15. Every 15 hits he takes in celestial combat costs him one Force. The first time he loses a Force, he rolls one die and gets a 2. He loses a Corporeal Force, choosing to lose 3 from his Strength and 1 from his Agility. These numbers are changed immediately on his character sheet.*

Note that damage does change the balance of a celestial combat! Loss of Perception will reduce the speed at which a celestial form can flee or pursue. Loss of either Celestial Forces or Will will reduce your Soul number, making further damage easier. And loss of other characteristics will affect skill with Songs.

Battle continues until one side shows mercy, or the other flees (see *Celestial Movement*, p. 65) – or loses so many Forces he's out of the fight (see *Celestial Death*, p. 67).

Attack Modifiers

Event	*Contact*	*Ranged*
Surprise	+1	–
Rear Attack	+1	–
Moving Target	–	-1
Moving Attacker	-1	-1
Telescope	–	+1
Aim (one turn)	+1	+1
Aim (two turns)	+1	+2
Aim (three or more)	+1	+3
Night or low light	-1	-2
Severe darkness	-4	-6

Contact bonuses apply to contact weapon attacks, as well as to ranged attacks within half the weapon's Range score. Surprise and Rear Attacks may not be Dodged – they take their full effects!

Celestial Healing

Only time, or the Celestial Song of Healing, can help a wounded soul. The hits that stripped Forces away have no further effect (you cannot get the Forces back by healing those hits – they're just gone). Only the damage that has not yet contributed to loss of a Force can be healed.

Soul hits are restored at 1 per week for all creatures, in whatever form they take.

Detailed Combat

Players and GMs who prefer more detail in combat may use the system below. Keep in mind that since ***In Nomine*** emphasizes roleplaying over die-rolling and damage calculation, even this "detailed" system has been kept as simple as possible. Players are encouraged to add to the lists of weapons and armor that appear below, and to customize the combat system to their liking with their own "house rules."

Turns

Combat is broken up into rounds, or turns, which cover roughly five seconds of time in the game world.

Movement

A two-legged corporeal creature, without encumbrance, on ordinary ground, can run (Agility × 6) yards per 5-second round. Thus, an average human (Agility 4) runs 24 yards in 5 seconds, or about 5 yards per second. An exceptional human (Agility 8) would run twice as fast – an Olympic speed. The average beginning angel falls midway between. Use of the Running skill (p. 76) represents trained effort or breakneck desperation.

A typical four-legged creature runs (Agility × 10) yards per round, though the GM will wish to modify this for

certain creatures. A typical winged creature flies at least (Agility × 10) yards per round.

The GM may reduce these distances for bad conditions. Fleeing through snowy woods by night, one would do well to manage (Agility × 2) yards per round.

Ethereal Movement

Movement on the ethereal plane is uncertain, since "place" itself is uncertain. The rule is "Things work as they do in the physical world . . . until a Song, or the GM, changes them." One can skulk and hide, or watch for intruders, as in the physical world. But in most cases it is easy to escape combat before taking severe injury, just by making a Will roll to awaken. Of course, you may never find your way back to the same "place," but so it goes.

The GM may create any number of dreamlands in which special rules apply, and visitors to those lands may find out the rules the hard way.

Celestial Movement and Attack Range

Celestial forms normally move at (Perception × 6) yards per round. They ignore barriers and gravity. Various Songs may help, hinder or limit movement.

The normal range of a "hand-to-hand" celestial attack is (Will) yards. Therefore, sometimes you can strike a foe who cannot strike you. But because a celestial form cannot attack and move on the same turn, that foe can move closer on the turn you strike at him.

Contact Weapons

	Power	*Accuracy*	*Skill Required*
Punch*	-3	–	Fighting
Kick*	-2	-1	Fighting
Brass Knuckles	-1	–	Small Weapon
Club	+1	-1	Small Weapon
Dagger	–	+1	Small Weapon
Hatchet	+1	-1	Small Weapon
Short Sword	+2	–	Small Weapon
Long Sword	+4	–	Large Weapon
Battle Axe	+4	-1	Large Weapon

* A skill level with Fighting greater than 4 and some kind of protection (steel-tipped boots, heavy gloves) each add 1 point of Power to the kick or punch. A supernatural level of Strength (9 or higher) also adds 1 point of Power to the attack.

Power is added to or subtracted from the check digit to determine the number of hits inflicted on the target.

Accuracy is the bonus or penalty which this type of attack gives to the initial skill roll to hit.

Ranged Weapons

	Power	*Acc*	*Range*	*Shots*
Derringer	-1	+1	5	1 or 2
Revolver	–	–	10	6
.44 Revolver	+3	–	15	6
Sawed-Off Shotgun	+6	-1	3	2
Uzi	+3 (+7)	–	3	30 (5)
Pump Rifle	+5	–	25	10
Carbine Rifle	+3	+1	100	10
M-16	+4 (+8)	–	80	30 (5)

All ranged weapons simply use the Ranged Weapon skill with the appropriate proficiency.

Numbers in parentheses are the values used when firing in bursts.

Power is added to or subtracted from the check digit to determine the damage inflicted upon the target.

Acc (short for Accuracy) is the number of points modifying the target number.

Range is an increment. At a number of yards up to the number listed, there is no distance penalty. From Range up to 2 × Range, take -1 to skill; from 2 × Range up to 3 × Range take -2; from 3 × Range up to 4 × Range take -3, and so on.

Shots gives the number of shots in a fully-loaded weapon.



Armor Types

Armor	*Modifier*	*Protection*
Heavy Clothing	1	–
Leather	2	1
Chainmail	3	2 (-1 vs. firearms)
Kevlar	2 (4 vs. firearms)	2
Steel Plating	4	3

Modifier is the penalty to the attacker's "to hit" skill roll.

Protection is the number of hits of damage the armor absorbs. For game purposes, armor does not itself take damage except by the GM's cinematic fiat!

You can escape from celestial combat by "outrunning" the foe (if your Perception is higher, you can move faster); by making a Will roll and spending 2 Essence to translate to the celestial realm, unless you are already there; by using a Song to baffle your foes in some way; or by creating an earthly debacle that distracts them.

It is also possible for one celestial form to "grapple" another. The two must be within a yard of each other. The "grappler" can do nothing but hold on. The only effect on the grappled form is that his movement is halved, to Perception × 3, and that if he translates to the celestial realm, the grappler can pay 2 Essence and follow automatically (see p. 53). If the grappled celestial wishes to break away, he may do so by winning a contest of (Will + Celestial Forces) with the other figure, which occupies him fully for a round.

Weapons

There are two types of weapons in ***In Nomine:*** contact weapons and ranged weapons. Most weapons are corporeal, but ethereal and celestial ones exist! A few examples of each type are shown on p. 65 – the GM may create more. Weapon characteristics are:

The *skill* needed to use the weapon.

Accuracy – the bonus or penalty to the target number to hit.

Power – the bonus or penalty to damage, if the weapon hits. Power is added to the check digit of a successful roll.

Range (ranged weapons only) – how far the weapon can reach; see the notes to the Ranged Weapon table.

Shots in a fully loaded weapon (ranged weapons only).

Example: *Paul is firing his revolver at the dog-paddling demon, 20 yards away. He's not aiming or using a scope, so he has a -2 Range modifier. With his Gun skill of 4 and an Accuracy of 2, he needs a 4 or lower to hit.*

Attack Modifiers

Certain situations affect an attacker's chance to hit – taking time to aim, surprise, attacking from the rear, etc. The chart in the sidebar lists the most common circumstances. The GM should use this list as a guideline for other situations.

Armor

A character may want to enhance whatever physical protection – natural or unnatural – he may have, by wearing armor. The box on p. 65 lists a very few, very common types. Some animal vessels give natural armor.

Resolving Attacks

Attacks are resolved by a d666 roll (see p. 38). The attacker rolls against his attack skill, whatever that is for his weapon and the type of combat , with whatever modifiers are required. If he misses, he misses. If he makes the roll, the defender may try a Dodge roll (see below), modified by the appropriate characteristic for the combat – or a Will roll, if applicable. Then . . .

Add:
the check digit of the attacker's roll
and
the Power of the attack.

Subtract:
the defender's check digit (if he successfully Dodges)
and
the Protection of his armor (for physical attacks) or whatever equivalent he might have on another plane.

The result is the number of hits the target takes. If the result is zero or less, no damage is inflicted.

In Defense: Dodging

In Nomine has one term for all types of defense in combat. This is Dodge, which covers getting out of the way of an attack in whatever way possible, whether it's moving out of harm's way or parrying a blow.

The target of a successful hit roll can make a Dodge roll – a roll versus his Dodge skill (or default) plus the control characteristic for the realm of the attack. This is Agility for a physical attack, Precision for a mental one, and Perception for a strike against the celestial form. If the roll fails, the attack hits normally. The attacker gets no special bonus from a failed Dodge.

If the Dodge roll succeeds, its check digit is subtracted from the damage done by the attack.

For example: *The demon Faragoth is attacked by an enraged Soldier of God swinging an aluminum baseball bat (a club, Power +1). The Soldier makes his attack roll, a 144, and Faragoth rolls to Dodge. His Dodge skill is 3, and his Agility is 2. He rolls a 235, a success with a check digit of 5.*

To determine the damage, we add the bat's Power of 1 and the attack's check digit of 4, for a 5. The unarmored Faragoth would have taken that much damage – 5 hits – if his Dodge had failed. But his Dodge succeeded, with a check digit of 5. 5 minus 5 is nothing, so the demon is hit but unhurt.

Full Dodge

A combatant who does *nothing else* during a round may Full Dodge. He takes his Dodge roll against every attack aimed at him at a +2 bonus.

Dodging vs. Resisting

An attack cannot both be Dodged and resisted. In general, attacks which can be Dodged are impossible to resist, and vice versa. In a situation where both would seem possible, the defender must choose only one!

Predestination: Fate and Destiny

Do humans have free will? Does anyone? Are we puppets to the Divine Plan?

The angels argue these questions as bitterly as any mortal philosopher. Some of them have the advantage of being able to see the future. But they have also seen the future change.

Every mortal has both a fate and a destiny. It is given to some celestials to see fate, or destiny, or both . . . to see the potential for good or evil that each human soul has within the Symphony. But not even a celestial, at least within the Heavens that we can reach, can know the measure of a human life before its last note is played.

A person's destiny is the brightest goal he can hope to accomplish, his potential to shine, to affect the Symphony on a scale few angels will ever attain. It's very rare that a human rises to the challenge of a great destiny, but the forces of good rejoice when it happens.

Archangel Yves, and some of his servants, can see human destinies. They know the finest things hidden in every soul. They foretell the best that can happen, and work to bring it about.

Fate is the opposite of destiny. It's the dark moment when, through error or selfishness, a person dooms himself to aid the Diabolical. Just as your destiny is the best you can be, for yourself and for the world, your fate is the worst. Some unlucky souls have a fate much greater than their destiny. Hitler's destiny was to be an honest interior decorator who painted for pleasure and taught in his old age. His fate was greater and drew him to destruction.

Kronos, Demon Prince of Fate, and his Servitors can see these dark futures. They work always to guide mankind into the snares of their own fates, and away from the lamp of destiny.

Many people, of course, die without either falling to fate or touching destiny. And some seem to reach both their fate and their destiny. Hemingway was destined to touch millions as one of the most influential writers of his century – and fated to drunkenness, despair and suicide. Whether or not he reached that fate on his own is unclear.

A person who reaches his destiny without sealing his fate will certainly see Heaven. Someone who finds his dark fate, and not his destiny, can expect to end up in Hell. Those who do both, or who manage neither, will probably be reincarnated to try again. Or their Forces will be disbanded and their souls will be gone forever.

Physical Death, and After

Death of the corporeal vessel will kill a mortal, whether he's a mundane or a Soldier. Human souls may gravitate to the celestial realms of Heaven or Hell; or become spirits in the ethereal realm; or reincarnate into another corporeal vessel; or disband entirely, returning their Forces to the Symphony from which they came. Those souls which are not destroyed may someday return to play, but this is up to the GM!

When a spirit's corporeal vessel is destroyed, it returns to a place in the ethereal realm that it considers "home" or safe. A spirit's period of Trauma (below) is measured in weeks rather than days, and the Will roll to recover from Trauma is made at a -2. Furthermore, every failed Will roll *costs the spirit 1 Force!* Thus, many spirits fade away to nothing when they lose their vessels. This makes corporeal "death" very dangerous for etherueals, which is why so many spirits met the true death during the Purification, and why they are so cautious abut returning to Earth.

When the corporeal vessel of a celestial is killed, his Forces regroup in the celestial realm, but his soul may need time to recover.

Trauma

The destruction of a celestial being's corporeal form is always a shock. He has lost a little part of himself to oblivion, forever. If he has another mortal body to go to *right then* (usually in a Body Bag, p. 71), he cheats death. Otherwise, he suffers Trauma.

The warrior Malakim, accustomed to death, are immune to Trauma. Kyriotates in multiple host bodies suffer no Trauma when one is killed, though they gain a note of dissonance when a host dies under their care. Shedim gain dissonance when their host dies, but avoid Trauma if they can find another host quickly enough. But if another celestial is physically killed on Earth, his Forces will manifest a few hours later, near his Heart (see pp. 137, 185).

A Traumatized being may not speak or respond in any way to others, and should be left alone to contemplate the stark reality of his death.

Recovery is slow. After a number of days equal to the victim's Corporeal Forces, he can make a Will roll to snap out of it. If he fails, he can try again in a number of days equal to his Corporeal Forces plus the check digit of the failed roll.

Some never get over it and spend years just staring at the wall. Most Archangels set up special hostels for their Traumatized servants. Occasionally, when Demon Princes clean house, severely Traumatized demons are rounded up as lost causes and their remaining Essence is used as fodder for the engines of Hell.

Combat Summary

Resolve combat in the following order each round:

1. Anyone wishing to use a supernatural power (a Song, a resonance or an attunement, either as an attack or otherwise) may do so. The person with the highest Perception goes first, and so on in descending order. Making a supernatural attack counts as an action for this round of combat. Supernatural powers which aid other actions (such as the resonance of the Ofanim) may be used now in preparation for the later action. Victims of some mental or celestial onslaughts may make Will rolls to resist; this doesn't count as an action.

2. Anyone wishing to move may do so. The person with the highest Agility goes first, and so on in descending order. Merely moving doesn't count as an action, but moving in conjunction with a skill (i.e., Running, Swimming, etc.) does. However, *celestial* movement is an action. A being in celestial form may not both move and attack (in any way) on the same round.

3. Each person may make one action if they haven't already; an attack is one action. Again, the person with the highest Agility moves first, and so on. Those who attempted a supernatural attack or made a skill-based move may not make a normal attack as well.

4. Anyone who has been attacked this round may attempt to Dodge any attack they did not try to resist.

5. Resolve damage for all attacks which hit, including possible stunning, unconsciousness and death.

The round is over; if there are any combatants left, start a new round at step 1.

Combatants who take no other action may either *Full Dodge* or *Aim* for the whole turn.

Choosing to Full Dodge for the entire round gives a +2 bonus to all Dodge rolls for that turn.

Choosing to Aim for the entire round will add +1 to hit the intended target unless the aimer take damage that round; this destroys his concentration and negates the advantage of aiming. The maximum bonus from aiming is +1 for contact weapons and +3 (three successive rounds of aiming!) for ranged weapons.

Celestial Injury and Death

Celestial combat destroys the Forces that make up the soul. If any kind of Force is *completely* lost, the effect will be severe. Its characteristics will become zero (unless they had been increased by character points, and had not yet generated a new Force).

A celestial who is completely lacking in one type of Force gains a Discord of that type.

Loss of Corporeal Forces

A being who loses all his Corporeal Forces cannot take any physical form until he manages to regenerate at least one such Force.

There is no effect on a continuing celestial combat, except for use of Songs that were based on Corporeal Forces.

Loss of Ethereal Forces

A being who loses all his Ethereal Forces retains the skeleton of memory and personality, and may continue the fight. After the battle, of course, he will find himself at a severe disadvantage, with little or no Intelligence or Precision left.

Loss of Celestial Forces: Becoming a Remnant

A combatant who loses all his Celestial Forces is out of the fight. If he has no vessel, he is permanently, really dead. His "corpse" will shimmer, dissolve and fade back to the Symphony whence it came.

A celestial who had a vessel will take corporeal form right there (which may lead to quick physical death, depending on the location), or – if the battle is in Heaven or Hell – in the last place his vessel occupied on Earth. He is unconscious, and will remain so for 2d hours.

He has become a Remnant (see p. 30). His link to the celestial is gone. His Heart shatters and can no longer be used to track him. A Remnant loses the resonance granted by his Choir or Band, as well as any dissonance he had. Even though he no longer generates dissonance, he retains his Discord. He also loses any Celestial Songs, as well as any attunements which operate off his Celestial Forces. He can't ascend to other planes – he's just a mortal shell. Depending on which of his other Forces were stripped away, he may be brilliant or moronic, strong or sickly.

If he had a Role (p. 43), he assumes that role, remembering nothing of his celestial nature, and can live out his life as a mortal. If he had no Role, he is now a person without history or memory. He may be tormented by visions of the divine or infernal, but he won't understand them.

Without a Heart, and without any Celestial Forces, a Remnant becomes very hard to track. *Resonances involving Perception simply don't affect him.* Thus, his friends (and his Superior) often can't find him to help, and his foes can't locate him to finish him off. This celestial invisibility might make a Remnant a good mortal agent, but it very rarely happens. Celestials feel desperately uncomfortable and guilty around Remnants, and most Remnants are profoundly saddened by any hint of the celestial world.

Glossary

Angel – a divine being, generally composed of at least 9 Forces, working for an Archangel, charged by God with maintaining the Symphony; a member of a Choir.

Archangel – a divine, Word-bound being of immeasurable power; a Superior; see p. 33.

Artifact – an object to which someone has been (or may be) attuned; see p. 41. Also see *Relic*, *Reliquary* and *Talisman*.

Attunement – 1) a deep and abiding connection to a person, a place, an object or an ideal; 2) a type of supernatural ability which a Superior may grant other celestials (particularly his Servitors).

Bands – the various types of demons; see p. 33.

Celestial – 1) an angel, an Archangel, a demon or a Demon Prince; 2) one of the three types of Forces, governing Will and Perception; 3) one of the three realms, containing Heaven and Hell.

Choirs – the various types of angels; see p. 32.

Corporeal – 1) one of the three types of Forces, governing Strength and Agility; 2) one of the three realms, containing the physical plane of Earth.

Demon – an infernal being composed of at least 9 Forces, in service to a Demon Prince, charged with furthering his Superior's Word; also a member of a Band.

Demon Prince – an infernal, Word-bound being of immeasurable power; a Superior; see p. 34.

Diabolical – as a noun, the demonic race as a whole.

Discord – a permanent fracture to a being's soul, generally brought about by dissonance.

Dissonance – the damage a celestial does to himself by working at cross-purposes to either his resonance or his Superior.

Divine – 1) full of God's grace; 2) devoted to selflessness.

Essence – the dynamic energy of the cosmos, used to enact miraculous changes to the Symphony; see p. 50.

Ethereal – 1) one of the three types of Forces, governing Intelligence and Precision; 2) one of the three realms, also called the Marches, ostensibly ruled by Blandine (Archangel of Dreams) and Beleth (Demon Princess of Nightmares), though also containing other lands, the Far Marches, ruled by the remaining pagan gods and creatures of myth; see p. 52.

Falling – the corruption of a good soul; see p. 58.

Familiar – a spirit bound to a corporeal vessel; see p. 192.

Force – any of three types of energy (Corporeal, Ethereal and Celestial) from which souls are formed; see p. 34.

God – 1) the sum of all consciousnesses above the level of reality inhabited by the angels and demons; 2) the consciousness which both created the universe and is the universe; see p. 137.

Heart – an object, generally residing in a Superior's realm, which draws a celestial back to Heaven (see p. 137) or Hell (see p. 185).

Heaven – the divine celestial realm; see p. 136.

Hell – the infernal celestial realm; see p. 184.

Host – 1) the angelic race as a whole; 2) a borrowed vessel.

Human – a sophisticated corporeal creature of at least 5 Forces over whom the angels and demons battle.

Infernal – 1) serving Lucifer; 2) devoted to selfishness.

Invocation – the summoning of a Superior.

Lucifer – first of the Fallen angels, the demons' leader; see p. 185.

Marches, The – see *Ethereal, 2)*.

Mundane – a mortal with no supernatural powers; see p. 32.

Numinous Corpus – special Songs which create unnatural physical appendages of great power, from claws to wings.

Outcast – an angel who has betrayed his Superior, his Word, or himself, and been forced out of Heavenly service; see p. 29.

Person – any intelligent being.

Redemption – the salvation of an evil soul; see p. 60.

Relic – an artifact imbued with a Song; see p. 42.

Reliquary – an artifact capable of regenerating and storing Essence; see p. 43.

Remnant – the fragment that may remain of a celestial after having his Will demolished; see pp. 30, 68.

Renegade – a demon who has abandoned his Prince's service to follow his own agenda; see p. 30.

Resonance – 1) the unique supernatural power granted to members of Bands and Choirs; 2) a celestial's nature.

Rite – a special method of regenerating Essence.

Seneschal – the caretaker of a Tether.

Servant – any being bound to the will of another being.

Servitor – a celestial, not Word-bound, who serves a Superior.

Soldier – a human with 6 or more Forces (and, generally, supernatural abilities) who serves a celestial; see p. 140.

Song – a supernatural ability, fueled by Essence, which has the potential to dramatically alter the Symphony.

Soul – any collection of Forces.

Spirit – 1) a celestial being of less than 9 Forces, who doesn't belong to a Choir or a Band; 2) any other being who lives in the Marches and/or doesn't have a corporeal vessel; see p. 52.

Superior – generally an Archangel or a Demon Prince; also, any person's direct celestial supervisor.

Symphony, The – 1) the universe; 2) God's plan, which the Host is bound to protect and the Diabolicals attempt to subvert; 3) the celestials' paradigm for reality.

Talisman – an artifact which enhances a skill; see p. 42.

Tether – a corporeal place linked to a site in a celestial realm; see p. 59.

Undead – 1) a powerful once-human servant who has given up the integrity of his soul in exchange for some degree of demonic powers; 2) a mummy, a vampire or a zombi; see p. 193.

Vessel – any form which a soul can inhabit to interact with the corporeal world; see p. 48.

Word – a concept integral to and obvious in the Symphony, generally supported by a celestial.

Word-bound – a celestial who is attuned to a Word; see p. 28.

RESOURCES

ARTIFACTS

Artifacts may be corporeal (ordinary objects which the owner has a link to – p. 41); ethereal (talismans, giving a bonus to skill) or celestial (relics, containing Songs, and/or reliquaries, which gather and store Essence).

ARTIFACT LIMITATIONS

The point cost of an artifact may be increased by *limitations*, increasing their value to the owner (or making them harder to use but cheaper to buy). The GM may introduce more; some standard effects are:

May only be used by a servant (direct or indirect) of a specific Superior: +3 points

May only be used by angels, or only by demons: +4 points

Requires a brief, silent invocation before it is used, and cannot be used without the invocation: +1 point

Requires a 5-minute invocation before each use, and cannot be used without the invocation: -2 points

Attuned to the owner and can be used by no one else: +3 points

Can be worn or carried in a completely hidden way (a pocket piece, for instance): +3 points

Can be worn, leaving the user's hands free and giving attackers a modifier (p. 62) to strike at it: +2 points.

SAMPLE TALISMANS

Each ethereal artifact, or *talisman*, enhances a single skill; see p. 42. Any object can become a talisman, containing any skill (skills are listed on p. 73). Normal talismans cost (level × 2) character points, and add their level to the user's skill level.

Most talismans are originally created by servitors of Jean and Vapula, but there are many other sources.

These are just suggestions to get you started.

Stunt Cycle

What is it about celestials and motorcycles? In particular, Calabim, Malakim, and Servitors of Janus, Jean, Valefor and Vapula *love* cycles. With a Driving skill and a stunt cycle, you can ride like a demon (or whatever).

Most cycles have the limitation "Requires brief, silent invocation to start" – much more secure than a key!

Blessed Weapons

Possibly the commonest of all talismans are weapons with the appropriate skill, from brass knuckles including Fighting to guns enhancing Ranged Weapon. The most powerful ones are generally usable only by the forces that created them.

Stealthy Shoes

Footgear enhanced with the Move Silently skill help the wearer move with ghostly silence.

SAMPLE CELESTIAL ARTIFACTS

Most celestial artifacts simply allow the user to perform a Song (see p. 43). The character point cost of an ordinary celestial artifact is 3 times its level, which is chosen when the relic is obtained. An artifact that is both relic and reliquary – that is, produces 1 Essence a day *and* can be used to cast a Song – costs 5 times its level if its Essence can be used only for that Song, or 6 times its level if the Essence can be drawn for other purposes.

The GM may create artifacts which don't use the commonly-known Songs, producing any desired effect. Use these samples for a guideline. One-shot artifacts (like the Holy and Unholy Bullets) will cost less. Artifacts with special effects (like the Body Bag) will cost extra.

When creating a new artifact that does not use an existing Song, the GM should decide whether the new Song is Corporeal, because that's the only kind of Song Soldiers can use, even in a relic.

Compass of Attunement

A relatively simple relic, this usually looks like a brass nautical compass on a chain necklace. Imbued with the Celestial Song of Attraction, its user can attune it to any object or person by touching it to the target and spending 1 Essence. The attunement lasts for a number of days equal to the relic's level.

Thereafter, the compass needle continually points toward the object of its attunement, regardless of distance. It only works two-dimensionally: if the bearer is beneath (or above) the relic's objective, the needle spins madly.

If its target has been broken into pieces, the compass points to the largest piece. Once the user comes within 10 feet of that piece, he can spend 1 Essence to redirect the compass toward the second-largest piece, and so on.

Holy or Unholy Bullets

Ammo for Holy or Unholy Pistols (see below), these bullets can damage a celestially-generated corporeal vessel. They do hits equal to the check digit of the successful hit roll plus the power of the pistol from which they're being fired. The only difference between Holy and Unholy Bullets is that each must be fired from its respective kind of pistol. Neither kind works in an ordinary gun!

Unlike other artifacts, these one-shot relics are not purchased in levels; they're 1 character point each.

Seraphim Scalpel

This blade contains the Corporeal Song of Healing, which requires 1 Essence to fuel. Running the blade along the line of a wound, and making a successful roll against your Corporeal Forces plus the relic's level, heals hits equal to the check digit of the successful performance roll.

Fiery Sword

Another relatively common relic, the Sword appears to be a brass sword hilt, separated from its blade. When someone grips the handle with both hands, concentrates for 1 round and spends 1 point of Essence, a 3-foot-long blade of flame appears, creating a weapon with a Power equal to the sword's level and -2 Accuracy. When its user manifests in celestial form, the sword does celestial damage! The flame remains for a number of minutes equal to the user's Celestial Forces.

Body Bag

This item – appearing in many forms, but typically a black canvas bag – allows a celestial to keep a spare vessel on Earth, saved up for a rainy day. A celestial can climb inside and assume his celestial form. The corporeal vessel in the bag does *not* vanish, and the user may manifest again in any other vessel he owns. The "bagged" body remains in stasis, undamaged by outside forces. If the user's current vessel is killed, he will not return to the celestial realm to suffer the Trauma of death (p. 67) – he'll wake in the bagged body, ready to take on the world anew. Vessels removed from the bag will seem like freshly-dead, room-temperature bodies, and if not replaced in the bag within 5 minutes, they'll *be* dead. Destruction of the Bag destroys the vessels inside.

The Bag acts as a reliquary, drawing Essence from the Symphony to support itself, but this Essence is not available to anyone else.

A Body Bag can contain a vessel or vessels of levels equal to its own. It costs the standard 3 points per level.

Holy or Unholy Pistol

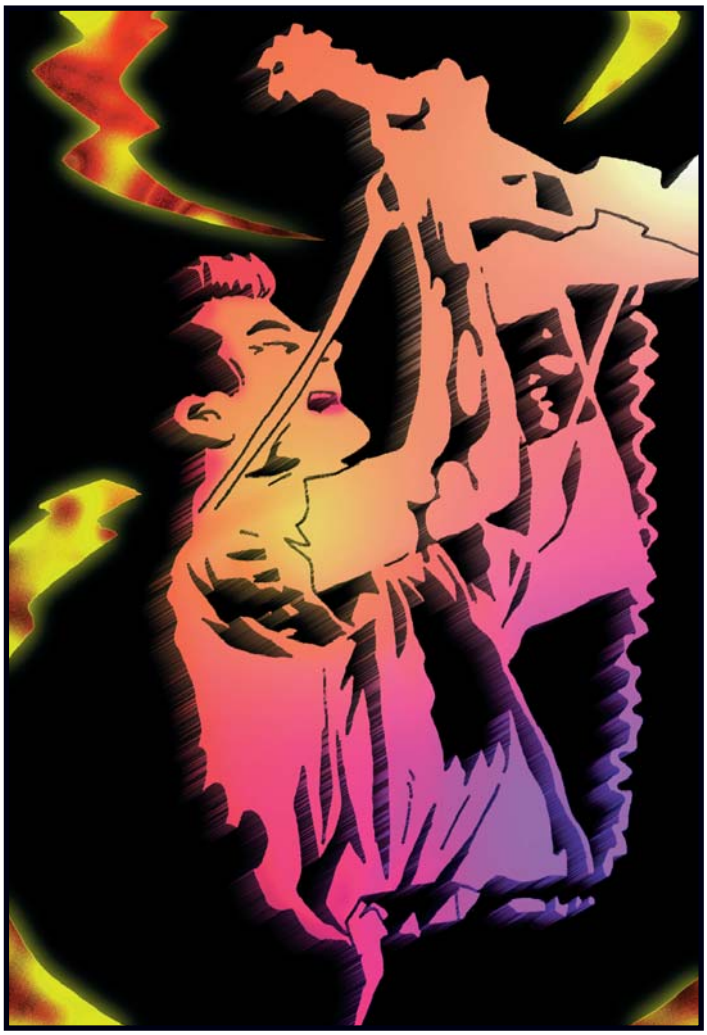
Irreverently referred to by Nicole in "A Bright Dream" as her "itty-bitty pistol," weapons like this are most often used by Soldiers to level the playing field between humans and celestials. This pistol fires Holy or Unholy Bullets (see above). It is a ranged weapon, with a Power equal to its Resource level (multiplied by the check digit!) and an Accuracy of +1. Firing a special bullet spends 1 Essence. The gun can hold Essence equal to its level, but does not generate its own.

It can also fire secular ammo, doing damage as a derringer (see p. 65). Reloading takes 1 round per bullet with any type of bullet. This artifact is worth 6 points per level.

ROLES

Roles allow angels and demons to blend into human society. See p. 43 for complete Role rules.

All roles demand a skill or two, at levels no lower than that of the role, to successfully play that part. For example, a lawyer who can't Fast-Talk isn't really a lawyer; the celestial must really have the Fast-Talk skill, at a level equal to the level of his role.



The cost of a role is determined by multiplying Status (p. 43) by level and dividing the result by 2 (round up). The angel can vary the Status of a Role if he has a good character story!

The Roles given here are just a few samples. The GM may create new Roles as the need arises, or refuse to allow a Role, at his discretion.



Archeologist

Whether he's an assistant on a local dig or a dealer in antiquities with a penchant for whips, an Archeologist has an intuitive edge for immediately spotting and correctly identifying artifacts of the corporeal world.

Generally Status 3 or 4; requires Survival skill.

Bartender

They meet a lot of people, and sometimes bartenders hear about things even before the news people do.

May be Status 2 to 4; requires Fighting skill.

Doctor

From local doctors outspoken about health reform to the Salks, Kevorkians and Mengeles of the world, physicians serve their patients in many ways.

Requires a Precision above 5 and the Medicine skill; generally Status 4 to 6.

Entertainer

Many entertainers are attractive and talented. Some are just smart and lucky. The biggest advantage of this role is that of gossip monger. Unfortunately, your character may get tied up "on the job," networking and rubbing elbows with other big shots. While this gives you an excuse to travel, it can also lead to nasty conflicts between shooting schedules and exorcism deadlines.

Requires some combination of Charisma and performance skills. Status could be anywhere from 3 through 6.

Hacker

This role gives you a basic knowledge of the public computer networks in your area, and a better knowledge of the not-so-public ones.

Computer Operation is the only must, though Move Silently will help you out of those noisy trash bins. Hackers may also wish to branch out with the Chemistry or Electronics skills, but it's not necessary. Status is probably between 2 and 4.

Hunter

What better way to fight the War on Earth than to hunt demons in broad daylight? Just tell people you're a demon-hunter, and they'll never suspect you of being an angel, much less a demon. (Of course! Why didn't anyone think of that earlier?)

You *do* realize that it makes you a target, though – and you'd better have an assortment of combat skills if you want to live long. Any Status is possible; a "demon hunter" could just as easily be a wealthy lunatic or a homeless lunatic.

Journalist

From daily columnists to Walter Cronkite, journalists now more than ever mold the minds of the populace.

Journalists must have Fast-Talk, but Move Silently, Lockpicking, Computer Operation, Dodge and Escape will also come in handy more often than not. Status could be anywhere from 3 to 6.

Lawyer

From struggling human-rights lawyers to Daniel Webster, lawyers define the borders of acceptable behavior in human society – but beyond the law, do some serve even higher powers? You must have the Fast-Talk skill to successfully pass as an attorney. Status can range from a starving and marginal 3 to a filthy-rich 6.

Policeman

The police are the guardians of order, for better or worse. A policeman needs at least two skills from among Detect Lies, Knowledge (his city or town), Ranged Weapon (Pistol), Small Weapon (Baton) or Tracking. Status is almost always 3 or 4. One or two points in Charisma could be described as "looks like a good cop."

Politician

Politicians create humanity's social systems. Until power is taken from them, the fate of the modern world lies very much in their hands.

Lying is the only necessary skill for Politicians. Charisma is a must. Status is usually 4 to 6.

Private Detective

While you may think that anyone with a trench coat and a bad attitude is a gumshoe, this role gives you an official license, a knowledge of how to track people

down, and a worse attitude. No skills are *required*, but you should have a few levels of Fighting, Escape, Lockpicking, Move Silently – and the ever-popular Fast-Talk. Status could be 3 or 4.

Religious Figure

From the local AM radio bible-thumper to Mother Teresa, religious figures shape our world in many ways. Emote is the only required skill. Charisma is reasonable and useful. Status could be from 3 to 6, though 6 probably implies "religious entertainer."

Scientist

Of all the modern roles, the scientist (mad or not) is one of the most divinely and infernally inspired, leaping quickly from one extreme to another. This position can give characters access to all sorts of toys, real or imagined, at the GM's discretion.

From the guy at Texas Instruments who invented the microchip on a weekend break to the savvy programmer who parlayed rights for a third-rate operating system into a corporation that owns small countries, scientists play the tunes to which society dances. A Scientist needs at least one skill appropriate to his chosen field. Status is usually only 3 or 4, unless he's been smart *and* lucky.

Sports Hero

Were you the quarterback the year your high school went to the state championships, or did you just sign a multimillion-dollar contract with Pepsi? You must have one athletic skill (Dodge, Swimming, Running, etc.). Status for a successful pro athlete will be 4 or greater.

SERVANTS

Each Servant is a character – human, undead, animal or spirit – with his own character sheet. The Resource level of a servant indicates how likely he is to obey an unwelcome order. See p. 45 for the costs of different Classes of Servant, and *Supporting Cast*, p. 190, for more descriptions.

SKILLS

To use a skill, make a d666 roll. The target number is given by your skill level *plus* its base characteristic's level. If you must roll against a skill you don't have, *subtract* its default number from your level in its base characteristic!

Skills cost 1 character point per level.

See p. 45 for complete skill rules.

Acrobatics *(Agility)* *Default: -3*

This skill covers any athletic, acrobatic action. It could get you a job in the circus, or pull you out of a tight spot. The check digit simply determines how spectacularly the acrobat succeeded (or failed). The Acrobatics skill may sometimes be combined with Dodge (p. 74).

Artistry *(Perception)* *Default: -2*

This skill allows you to accurately reproduce something you once viewed, or illustrate a scene which never existed – and at the same time convey both emotion and a meaningful message.

Angelic and demonic beings can "read" art, seeing the emotions of the artist laid bare, if they can make a successful Artist roll. If not, then the message received is either partially confusing or wildly inaccurate. Celestials can also do the reverse, embedding a message no longer than 10 words into a picture, which can be read later by other angels and demons.

The check digit of an Artistry roll is open to interpretation. It may represent how well the piece is accepted by the public, how accurately a witness has been able to sketch his assailant, how many minutes an observer will be compelled to stand and look at it – or how many days the artist works on the piece before realizing it isn't going anywhere.

This skill gives you proficiency in one specialty. Buy it more than once if you want more specialties.

Chemistry *(Intelligence)* *Default: -5*

This skill allows you to analyze unknown substances with lab-quality equipment, or to make "chemical gadgets" such as saltpeter or tear gas from readily-available materials – at the GM's discretion. If the chemist attempts to make something explosive (and who wouldn't?), then the check digit of a success indicates how exactly the explosive matched the chemist's intentions. Other successful Chemistry check digits may represent the number of rounds that a foe is incapacitated by your tear gas, or the accuracy of your analysis.

A failed check digit represents both the amount of time you wasted (usually in hours, but it depends on the project) and, in the case of explosives, the number of dice of damage the chemist takes when his work goes awry.

Climbing *(Agility)* *Default: -2*

This is a knack for moving quickly up and down steep surfaces. A successful roll will also let an experienced climber judge how difficult a maneuver may be. The GM may impose modifiers to a Climbing roll depending on the angle of the surface being scaled, its texture, and whether or not any mechanical aids are being used. The check digit of a successful roll represents how quickly the climb can be made (with 1 being slowly and 6 being quickly). The check digit of a failed roll represents how much time the climber wastes, or how badly he injures himself in the attempt.



Computer Operation *(Intelligence)* *Default: -4*

This skill allows for the quick comprehension of a piece of software, its operation and its function. Above level 3, the computer operator may also use this skill in an attempt to repair a malfunctioning piece of hardware.

Detect Lies *(Perception)* *Default: -2*

Detect Lies, obviously, lets you tell when someone is lying. The check digit of the successful Detect Lies roll must be higher than the check digit of the liar's successful Lying roll. When someone fails a Detect Lies roll, the suspected liar may make a Perception roll (with the check digit of the failed roll added as a modifier) to see if he notices that his listener doesn't trust him!

Dodge *(Agility)* *Default: -1*

This skill is based on Agility, Precision, or Perception, depending on the type of combat (see p. 66). In general, you may Dodge any attack that cannot be resisted. A successful Acrobatics roll adds its check digit to the target number for a Dodge roll against nonprojectile weapons – you can acrobatically dodge a sword, but not a rain of bullets.

Driving *(Precision)* *Default: -2*

This is your ability to drive any normal domestic vehicle, such as a car, truck or motorcycle. If someone has driven a specific vehicle often, the GM may give him a +1 modifier for controlling it. Driving rolls are generally made on two occasions – when you're trying to get from one place to another, and when some specific hazard pops up in the process.

Normally, the check digit of a successful roll reflects how much time the driver was able to trim off the trip, while the check digit of a failed roll reflects how delayed the driver is due to traffic, poor navigational decisions, and so on. If he rolls a check digit of 6 on a failed roll, throw a random road hazard at him.

When a specific hazard occurs in play – for example, when the angels chasing the characters try to ram them, or when two Boy Scouts randomly lead a little old lady across the street in front of their vehicle – then the check digit of a Driving roll reflects how spectacularly the driver is able to (or fails to) avoid the situation.

Electronics

(the higher of Intelligence or Precision) *Default: -5*

You have the skill of inventing electronic gadgets and the knowledge of how best to implement them. Like Chemistry, the GM should rule on its use on a case-by-case basis. This skill is also useful for disarming and disassembling electronic traps, locks and other nuisances.

The check digit of a successful roll can represent the amount of time taken to achieve the goal, from a lot to a little, and (like the Chemistry skill) the overall quality of the end product. The check digit of a failed roll can represent the amount of time the character wasted before realizing he's not getting anywhere (after which the player can roll again), the number of specific parts he finds he's missing to complete his work, or the number of hits of damage he takes when he accidentally elbows his beer into the works.

Emote *(Perception)* *Default: -1*

Emote is the skill of expressing feelings (or disguising them) through body language and vocal subtleties. A character making a successful Emote roll will appear sincere and genuine about his feelings. Those who have mastered it are both excellent communicators and excellent actors.

For example, a young woman walks into the room and wants to attract some attention; she successfully Emotes sadness. "You think his daughter is sad," the GM tells the players.

Detect Lies can only be used against the Emote of a person trying to feign an emotion he doesn't feel. If the emoter *failed* his roll, then add the check digit to any Detect Lies roll!

Engineering *(Precision)* *Default: -4*

Engineers know how to design and repair devices in which moving parts are more important than electronics.

Escape

(the higher of Agility or Precision) *Default: -3*

This skill brings freedom from knots, handcuffs, straitjackets and other annoyances. The check digit represents the amount of time it takes to gain freedom, with 1 being a long time and 6 being almost no time at all – or, in the case of a failed roll, the amount of time spent struggling in the attempt.

The GM may inflict a -1 penalty for each bound arm.

A separate Escape roll must be made for each binding. For example, if someone is bound and gagged, he must make one roll to free his mouth and another for his hands. (Since it's more difficult to remove a gag with hands tied, he should work on freeing his hands first!)

Fast-Talk *(Will)* *Default: -1*

There *is* a difference between lying and "fast-talking," albeit a subtle one. Fast-talking involves quickly persuading someone to do something relatively minor that's against his nature – such as talking a security guard into letting you pass, or convincing a postal employee to give you a package that's not yours. Its effect exists only in the moment, a brief lapse of common sense that doesn't change the person's basic nature: you've only convinced him to "bend the rules just this once."

The character engages in a Conterst of his Fast-Talk versus the victim's roll.

If the target wins, he will get a +1 to resist further Fast-Talking by that person for the rest of the day. The check digit of a failed Fast-Talk roll tells the number of hours you must wait before having any kind of chance to Fast-Talk that target again.

Fighting *(see below)* *Default: 0*

Fighting is based on Strength, Intelligence, or Will, plus appropriate Forces, depending on the type of combat (see pp. 62-64). In the corporeal world, this is skill at unarmed combat, anything from brawling to a formal martial art. Celestials can use the same martial discipline when they battle with sheer force of Will, instead of hammering away with Strength. The check digit of a successful roll is generally the number of hits of damage done to the target; see the combat mechanics on p. 61 for more details.

In game terms, there is no difference between the various combat styles, but for roleplaying purposes, a fighter's style should be defined. Does he use the crushing blows of a boxer, or the cunning grips of an Oriental master?

Knowledge *(Intelligence)* *Default: -4*

There are hundreds of different Knowledge skills. Any sort of "book learning" can be a Knowledge skill – any field of scientific or cultural study. The player may define it as he chooses, but a general sort of Knowledge (like History) would be more diffuse than a specific Knowledge (French history).

A character rolls against Knowledge to answer an appropriate question. The more specifically the question relates to his Knowledge, the more of a bonus the GM should give him to answer the question!

A special kind of Knowledge is Area Knowledge. A character could have a high Area Knowledge for his hometown – for example, Knowledge/6 (Arlington, Texas) – he'd know a lot about its people, politics and social mores, plus details about things like store locations and local hangouts. For a larger area, Area Knowledge would cover general subjects like politics and current events, geography, history, and so on. Because Area Knowledge is such an encompassing skill, the GM can let it serve for a variety of things, but often at a penalty!

The check digit of a successful roll determines how specifically the character can recall his knowledge.

Example: *A demon is trying to remember the best place in his town to dump a body. With a check digit of 1, the demon could come up with a general area, but perhaps not the best place. With a check digit of 6, he could remember that tree trunk at the lake's edge with the deep sand pit off to the side.*

The check digit of a failed roll represents the number of hours before the character can attempt another Knowledge roll on the same subject. It may also represent the amount of time he has wasted, or the amount of trouble he and his companions get into because of his poor memory, at the GM's discretion.

Example: *If the demon had failed his roll, a check digit of 1 might mean he wastes an hour driving around, unsuccessfully looking for the right spot. With a check digit of 6, the demon might pull up to a park late in the evening – and, as he's dragging the body by its feet toward the playground, realize he's just yards from the drunken remnants of a police officers' picnic.*

Languages *(Intelligence)* *Default: -4*

Every language is a different skill, written as Language/2 (French), Language/4 (Basque), etc. Mortals automatically understand one language, their native tongue, at level 3; no skill roll is needed to use your native tongue. Any Celestial assigned to Earth will likewise know the language of his assigned area at level 3, at no cost.

Language rolls are generally only used to determine how well nonnative speakers communicate in foreign languages. The check digit of a successful Language roll determines how much of the meaning came through.

Usually, a failed roll represents the amount of time wasted stumbling through the language barrier, but in a high-stress situation the check digit is a penalty toward an immediate reaction roll made against the speaker by the listener.

This skill gives you proficiency in one language. Buy it repeatedly to learn more languages.

Large Weapon *(Strength)* *Default: -3*

This ability lets you use contact weapons of great size and strength, from swords to battleaxes. The check digit of a successful roll generally adds damage to the attack; see the combat mechanics on p. 61 for more information.

Lockpicking *(Precision)* *Default: -3*

This skill will let you open mechanical locking mechanisms and defeat simple security systems. The check digit reflects the amount of time it takes (with 1 being a lot and 6 being a little) or the amount of time spent in vain (with 1 being a little and 6 being a lot).

If a failed roll has a check digit of 6, it not only wasted a lot of time but set off any alarms or traps that were there!

Lying

(the higher of Intelligence or Perception) *Default: -2*

Oh, what a tangled web we weave! Well, not all *that* tangled – if you're good at it. The check digit of a successful Lying roll represents the amount of time it takes the liar to persuade his victim of "the truth," with 1 being a long time and 6 being a little, but the victim is free to make a Detect Lies roll. If the liar fails his roll, the victim should make an immediate reaction roll, minus the failed roll's check digit.

Note that Balseraphs don't need or use this skill. They don't think they're lying. Not really.

Medicine *(Precision)* *Default: -4*

With this skill, you can diagnose sickness and injuries, as well as treat the damage if adequate materials are available. The degree to which you can heal a victim is based on your knowledge of medicine (i.e., your skill level); see the chart below. A patient may only benefit from one successful Medicine roll until he makes a full natural recovery.

The check digit of a successful Medicine roll has no specific meaning – except when it's a 6, in which case the patient is helped as though the doctor was one level higher. A failed Medicine roll has no ill effect unless the check digit is a 6, in which case the patient takes 1d damage from his poor treatment. However, a failed roll cannot be repeated by that healer, that day, on that patient.

Skill Level	*Treatment Time*	*Hits Healed*
1	1 minute	Equal to patient's ST
2	1 day	Twice patient's ST
3-4	1 week	3 times patient's ST
5-6	1 minute	Twice patient's ST

Move Silently *(Agility)* *Default: -1*

This skill covers various tactics a person could use to pass unnoticed – such as walking without making a sound, hiding in shadows or disappearing into a crowd. The check digit of a skill roll acts as a modifier, negative in the case of a successful roll or positive in the case of a failed one, to the Perception skill of anyone trying to spot or follow him.

Move Silently has no effect against the resonance of either the Cherubim or the Djinn.

Ranged Weapon *(Precision)* *Default: -2*

This skill enables you to hit a target using a ranged weapon, such as a bow, a pistol or a rifle. It will also help you maintain and, at level 4 and above, repair such a weapon. See the combat mechanics, p. 61, for more information.

This skill gives you proficiency in one type of ranged weapon; important types include Rifle, Pistol, Longbow.

Running

(the higher of Strength or Agility) *Default: -1*

This skill lets you move as fast as your legs will carry you. In a pursuit, roll against this skill. The check digit of a success is the number of extra yards per round gained beyond your basic movement. A failure brings no benefit – and if its check digit is 6, you fall and make *no* forward progress that round.

Savoir-Faire

(the higher of Intelligence or Precision) *Default: -4*

This is a knowledge of worldwide etiquette. Those with Savoir-Faire can dine gracefully at any table, and handle touchy social situations with perfect style. The check digit of a Savoir-Faire roll may be added (or, in the case of a failed roll, subtracted) from immediate reaction rolls made by anyone observing the character.

Seduction *(Will)* *Default: -1*

This talent tells a character whether NPCs are attracted to him – and flirtatiously encourages such interest. When the object is actual seduction, if the target would not generally be inclined toward the seducer (for any reason ranging from marriage vows to a difference in orientation), then subtract the target's Will from the seducer's target number. The GM may add other modifiers as he sees fit, including Charisma based on looks, fame or sex appeal!

This is a talent to be used on NPCs. The behavior of a PC is up to the player, not the dice.

The check digit of a *failed* roll is a penalty to an immediate reaction roll (p. 44) by the target. Interpret the results in a general fashion. Yes, it's possible to fail a seduction attempt yet leave the "victim" smiling.

If the seducer's roll is successful, then what happens after that is entirely up to him . . .

Singing *(Perception)* *Default: -2*

This is skill at vocal performance. A singer may add his Emote skill to his Singing skill roll. Also, skill at Singing (unmodified by Emoting) enhances the effects of some Songs.

Angels and demons with the Singing skill may use a side effect that is seldom considered – humming. Angels and demons on Earth can hum back and forth to each other, speaking "pig-celestial," without fearing that their communication might be intercepted (except, of course, by other angels or demons). Players who attempt this must actually hum before making the skill roll. The check digit of a successful roll represents the number of words the singer has successfully broadcast to all celestials within listening range. The check digit of a failed roll represents the number of rounds the singer (or hummer) must wait before trying again.

Small Weapon *(Precision)* *Default: -2*

This skill defines a character's ability to use any kind of small hand-held weapon. See the combat mechanics, p. 61, for more information. There is a separate skill for proficiency with each specific kind of small weapon, such as a dagger, a shortsword, or a sap.

Survival

(the higher of Will or Perception) *Default: -4*

This skill lets you forage for food and move easily through one specific hostile environment (desert, swamp, etc.), chosen when the skill is obtained. A successful roll's check digit represents the number of hours you can survive in reasonable comfort before your next roll. A failed roll's check digit is the number of hits you take from the hostile environment; roll again in six hours.

The GM should describe the injuries taken by those who fail their rolls, and may modify the default depending on the environment.

Swimming *(Agility)* *Default: -2*

Add the check digit of a successful Swimming roll to a swimmer's Strength to get the distance he moves that round. A failed roll indicates no progress; a check digit of 6 indicates a hit of damage from breathing water. All this damage is temporary and will be erased by an hour of rest, if the swimmer can just get out of the water.

Example: *Greg decides to dive into the water to get to two Purifiers sitting in a rowboat. Ignoring the fact that he'll have to make an Agility roll to pull off the dive, he'll need a Swimming roll to see how long it takes him to make it to the rowboat, currently 10 yards away. His Agility is 6, and his skill at Swimming is 4, so he'll need to roll a 10 or less to make it. He does, with a check digit of 3. With a Strength of 6, he can close 9 yards in one turn. Unless the people he's chasing have an outboard motor, Greg will grab the boat in the next combat round.*

Tactics *(Intelligence)* *Default: -2*

This is the skill of leading a small number of people (fewer than 30) through a small area of conflict, such as a group of buildings. The "tactical" skirmish can either be rolled out – with a contest between the two leaders' Tactics skills – or played out, with the fighters actually infiltrating a site, and Tactics rolls giving the advantage of surprise to one side or the other.



Throwing

(the higher of Agility or Precision) *Default: -3*

This skill lets you throw a light object (such as a knife or a grenade) accurately. The check digit of a successful roll is generally subtracted from the target number of your foe's Dodge roll to avoid being hit. The check digit of a failed roll represents the number of feet by which the throw misses. Make a separate roll for all other potential targets (characters or objects) within range, starting at the original target and moving outward, until something is hit. If nothing within range is hit, the thrown object continues its trajectory to strike harmlessly (or, in the case of a grenade, not so harmlessly!) behind the original target.

Objects can be thrown a number of yards equal to the character's Strength, plus his Agility and his skill level at Throwing, plus or minus the check digit of a successful or failed Throwing skill roll. Halve the range in for every 5 pounds by which the weight of the object thrown exceeds the thrower's Strength. Double the range for every 5 pounds by which it is less than his Strength.

Example: *Greg has a Strength of 6 and an Agility of 6. His skill at Throwing is 3, so he could throw an object weighing a pound or less – say, a holy football – at least 30 yards without trying too hard (6 + 6 + 3, doubled because its weight is 5 pounds less than his Strength). If he makes his Throwing roll, even with an average check digit of 3 he could peg a dime from as far as 36 yards away.*

Another example: *A professional quarterback has a Strength of 7, an Agility of 9 and a Throwing skill of 6. On a great day, with a successful Throwing roll's check digit of 6, he could go for the Hail Mary and land the ball up to 56 yards (7 + 9 + 6 + 6, doubled because of its weight) away!*

Tracking *(Perception)* *Default: -2*

This allows you to trail someone through familiar terrain. If your prey has the Survival skill, and doesn't want to be followed, a Contest between your Tracking skill and the target's Survival skill determines the outcome. The check digit of a successful Tracking roll usually represents the time the tracker takes to locate his prey, in minutes, hours or days, depending on the situation.

For instance, tracking an imp through the woods behind a high school might only take a few minutes, but following a Renegade demon across a desert may take hours – or even days, if the quarry had a big enough head start. The check digit of a failed Tracking roll represents how many minutes, hours or days the tracker will wander about before realizing he's lost the trail.

Songs

This section describes some of the best-known Songs used by angels and demons. Many Songs are carefully-guarded secrets, but these are almost commonplace.

Most Songs come in three versions – Corporeal, Ethereal and Celestial. Knowing an entire suite of one type of Song is helpful. Someone who knows two versions of a Song has a +1 to the check digit if he successfully performs either. If he knows all three versions of a Song, he has a +2 to the check digit!

Songs may not be resisted or Dodge unless specified. All Songs require Essence. Each description includes the minimum Essence requirements. Any Song disturbs the Symphony (p. 54) by an amount equal to the Essence spent, plus (usually) some additional amount, the *Degree of Disturbance*, given at the end of each entry.

Attraction

In the Symphony, forces of attraction are capricious and unpredictable. These frequently-used Songs give celestials varying degrees of control over these forces.

These Songs last a number of hours equal to the performer's skill level, *multiplied* by the amount of Essence spent in their performance.

• *Corporeal* – The Corporeal Song of Attraction is designed to attune items to each other. Once attuned, each "tugs" gently in the direction of the other. A Perception roll, plus the check digit of the successful performance roll, must be made to correctly determine the direction of the object's tugging.

This Song cannot be performed on living beings – only on objects. Both objects must be in physical contact with the performer's vessel when the Song's effects are activated. If one object is destroyed, the effects of this Song end.

• *Ethereal* – The Ethereal Song of Attraction makes its victim madly, passionately attracted to any person or object of the performer's choosing. The object of attraction must be within eyesight of the performer, and the target must be within a number of feet equal to the performer's Ethereal Forces. The target may resist with a Will roll. If he fails to resist, he'll feel compelled to possess and protect the object of his desire, and to stay in its presence, for the length of the Song's duration.

In a combat situation, the victim will defend himself normally, but must make a Will roll, minus the check digit of the Song's performance roll, when forced to choose between self-preservation and protecting the object of his desire.

• *Celestial* – The Celestial Song of Attraction works like the resonance of the Djinn and the Cherubim. The performer must physically touch the object to which he wishes to attune himself, but may then divine its location anywhere in the Symphony by making a successful Perception roll (aided by the check digit of the Song's successful performance roll). Use the Cherubim resonance chart to determine the meaning of the Perception roll's check digit.

Unlike the resonance of the Cherubim (and, in certain circumstances, the Djinn), this Song never causes its performer to generate dissonance.

Essence Requirement: 1.

Degree of Disturbance: the check digit.

Charm

It's possible to be so damn charming to people that they're stunned. The various versions of this Song can temporarily reduce a victim's characteristic by the check digit of the performer's successful roll. The corporeal



version of this Song affects only Strength and Agility, the ethereal version affects only Intelligence and Precision, and the celestial version affects only Will and Perception. This Song cannot reduce characteristics below 1.

When a Song of Charm reduces a person's Strength, Intelligence or Will, only rolls made against that characteristic – *not* the damage he can take – are affected.

The range of these Songs is a number of yards equal to the singer's skill with the Song plus the amount of Essence put into its performance. Each additional person to be affected penalizes the skill roll by -1 – but like all skill rolls, each extra point of Essence spent (beyond the required 2) also adds a +1 to succeed. There is no limit on the number of people this Song can affect, as long as they're within range and the performer has enough Essence.

The Songs of Charm work on animals as well as human beings – and, of course, celestials in either form.

• *Corporeal* – This Song can affect either a person's Strength, making it more difficult for him to put up a struggle, or his Agility, making him slow (if not unable) to react. The effects last for a number of minutes equal to the performer's Corporeal Forces.

• *Ethereal* – This Song can affect either a person's Intelligence, making him slow-witted, or his Precision, making it difficult for him to concentrate on any sort of complicated task. The effects last for a number of hours equal to the performer's Ethereal Forces.

• *Celestial* – This Song can affect either its victim's Will, making him apathetic and highly suggestible, or his Perception, dulling his senses to near-imbecility. The effects last for a number of rounds equal to the performer's Celestial Forces.

Essence Requirement: 2.

Degree of Disturbance: the check digit.

Dreams

While the servants of Beleth and Blandine are the consummate walkers of dreamworlds, these Songs let others trace their footsteps.

• *Corporeal* – This Song has the same effects as the Dream Walking attunement (see p. 110). It lasts for a number of minutes equal to the check digit of the successful roll plus the performer's Corporeal Forces.

• *Ethereal* – This Song lets the performer affect the dreamer's skill rolls within the dream, for a number of minutes equal to the check digit plus the performer's Ethereal Forces. Any skill rolls made within the dream, or any check digit (but not both on the same roll) may be raised or lowered by the amount of the check digit of the Song roll. The victim may resist the first interference with a Will roll; successful resistance ejects the intruder from the dream. The range of this Song is a number of feet equal to the performer's skill. He may affect one person within that range for each point of Essence spent.

• *Celestial* – This Song lets its performer control occurrences in other people's dreams. (He must first be in his target's dreamscape.) The performer may add the check digit to his Will roll toward affecting the outcome of a dream. If the target is in Blandine's realm, the performer may sculpt a hopeful dream; if the target's sleep runs its natural course, he regains a point of lost Will in the morning. Conversely, if the target is in Beleth's realm, the performer may sculpt a horrifying dream; when it ends, the target awakens with a start and loses 1 point of Will. This Song cannot actually cause a Force to be lost.

With a check digit of 6, the performer may first force his host to travel from Blandine's realm to Beleth's, or vice versa.

Essence Requirement: 1.

Degree of Disturbance: the number of people affected.



Entropy

A little chaos is a dangerous thing. Controlling it is tricky, but masters of this Song are formidable beings. Entropy can be used within touching range, although the performer does not actually need to touch the subject. Melee ranges are okay; sniper ranges are not.

• *Corporeal* – The Corporeal Song of Entropy gives the caster control over the ravages of time. He can cause something to age, or grow young, by a number of years equal to the check digit of a successful roll times the amount of Essence used in its performance.

The subject of this Song may attempt to resist the field of entropy with a Strength roll.

• *Ethereal* – The Ethereal Song of Entropy is a mental attack, bringing terror and nightmare to a single victim. The victim may make an Intelligence roll to resist. If he fails to resist, he takes Mind hits equal to the check digit of the successful roll *times* the Essence spent on the Song.

Celestials may add their Celestial Forces toward an Intelligence roll to defend against this Song.

• *Celestial* – This Song causes a complete and systematic breakdown of a creature's psyche. The target hallucinates, and can take no action at all for a number of rounds equal to the performer's Celestial Forces plus the check digit of the successful roll.

Again, celestials may add their Celestial Forces to a Will roll to resist this Song.

Essence Requirement: 1 for the Corporeal and Ethereal versions; 2 for the Celestial Song of Entropy.

Degree of Disturbance: the check digit plus the performer's total Forces.

Form

These are the Songs that change the shape and appearance of the singer's corporeal vessel. The Songs of Form last a number of minutes equal to the check digit of the successful performance roll times the user's appropriate type of Forces (i.e., the Celestial Song works with Celestial Forces, and so on).

• *Corporeal* – The Corporeal Song of Form lets its performer alter the skin of his vessel. This increases his Protection (see *Armor*, p. 66) by his skill at this Song plus the amount of Essence used in its performance.

• *Ethereal* – The Ethereal Song of Form lets its performer fade from visibility, turning his corporeal vessel into shadow matter. While this doesn't make him insubstantial (he can't walk through walls), it does provide near-invisibility. Others must make a Perception roll, minus his skill level with this Song, to detect him. Even then they'll only "feel" a presence – they won't be able to make out who it is or what he looks like.

Reduce the attack roll of anyone striking at the performer by his skill at this Song.

• *Celestial* – The Celestial Song of Form makes a physical vessel as malleable as clay. Changes are "bought" in increments of 1 Essence. To change a face to match another's costs 1; changing gender adds 1; every 10 years of apparent youth, and every 20% increase or decrease in mass, costs a further 1 Essence.

Essence Requirement: 1.

Degree of Disturbance: the check digit, but only after the Song's effects abate.

Harmony

Also called the Songs of Peace, these tunes soothe angry spirits and calm wild beasts. Their range in yards equals the performer's skill with the Song times the amount of Essence put into it.

• *Corporeal* – All within range of this Song, in every direction – including the performer! – find themselves weak and sluggish, unable (but not necessarily unwilling) to attack. They may be verbally abusive, but the Song's

sphere of influence reduces their Strengths and Agilities (but not their Body number) by the check digit of the roll. This Song won't reduce a characteristic below 1.

This Song lasts for a number of combat rounds equal to the check digit of the successful roll plus the performer's Corporeal Forces.

• *Ethereal* – Targets of this Song become subdued and rational, incapable of physical conflict and able to speak to others only in a calm and friendly manner. Anyone wishing to take violent action must make a Will roll, minus the performer's Ethereal Forces.

This Song lasts a number of minutes equal to the check digit.

• *Celestial* – The Celestial Song of Harmony temporarily negates the effects of Discord. It reduces any one Discord by a number of levels equal to the check digit of the successful roll. The target must be in physical contact with the performer.

This Song lasts for a number of minutes equal to the performer's skill.

Essence Requirement: 1.

Degree of Disturbance: the number of people affected (including the performer, if he chooses to be affected!).

Healing

The Songs of Healing soothe the pain of existence. Each performance costs 1 Essence and affects one person. A failure has no effect other than wasted Essence.

• *Corporeal* – This is the corporeal balm of regeneration. The performer taps into the Symphony to heal hits of damage equal to the Song's level times the check digit, to himself or to anyone else he can physically touch.

• *Ethereal* – The Ethereal Song of Healing wipes away chaos and insanity, healing Mind hits equal to the check digit and instantly bringing the victim out of a stunned state for a number of minutes equal to the check digit. If he could have recovered naturally from his stunned state before the Song's effects end, then he will not revert to his previous state. Otherwise, his illness continues to run its natural course. The performer must make eye contact.

• *Celestial* – This is celestial regeneration. The performer taps into the Symphony and heals damage to the Will. It restores Soul hits, equal to the check digit, to himself or others. The performer must be physically touching the subject.

Essence Requirement: 1.

Degree of Disturbance: the check digit.

Light

Control over light, the most basic component of reality, gives a celestial being an enormous range of abilities.

• *Corporeal* – This Song creates a glowing light around the performer, extending in all directions for a number of yards equal to his skill times the Essence spent on the performance. It lasts a number of minutes equal to the check digit plus the performer's Corporeal Forces. A successful Will roll during this time can turn it on and off.

• *Ethereal* – With this Song, the performer can sculpt the photons within range (a number of feet equal to his skill times the Essence spent on the Song's performance) to create near-perfect illusions. Observers may make a Perception roll, minus the performer's Ethereal Forces, to distinguish between reality and the illusion. These effects last a number of minutes equal to the check digit plus the performer's Ethereal Forces.

The illusion can be literally *anything*, as long as it's no larger in cubic feet than the performer's skill at this Song. Of course, the illusion (being crafted merely of photons) cannot physically affect anything – but it's always great for a scare.

• *Celestial* – The Celestial Song of Light can strike any target within sight of the performer with a tightly-focused beam of light. The victim takes hits of damage equal to the check digit of the successful roll plus the Essence spent, and is also dazzled (-2 to any skill involving Agility or use of eyes) for the same number of rounds.

If the target of this Song is in his celestial form, he takes celestial damage instead, but is not dazzled.

Observers must make a Perception roll, *plus* the performer's skill at this Song, to see the brief flash of light and know which direction it came from!

Essence Requirement: 1, maximum 3.

Degree of Disturbance: none.

Motion

The Songs of Motion were discovered by the Ofanim, but have spread to the farthest reaches of the Symphony. Each rules a different aspect of the motion of the cosmos.

• *Corporeal* – The Corporeal Song of Motion not only grants freedom from gravity; it lets the performer propel himself at great speed in any direction he wishes (but not through solid matter) on the physical plane.

For a number of minutes equal to the check digit of a successful roll, the performer can fly through the air at his normal running speed *plus* a number of yards equal to his skill with the Song, times the amount of Essence he put into it. If the Song ends with the performer in mid-air, he drifts to the ground, unharmed.

The performer can carry with him a number of pounds equal to 10 × his Corporeal Forces.

• *Ethereal* – The Ethereal Song of Motion lets the singer manipulate the world with his thoughts. He can mentally control a number of pounds equal to his Ethereal Forces times the amount of Essence spent in its performance. This lasts for a number of minutes equal to the check digit of the successful roll. Throwing

Numinous Corpus

These are special Corporeal Songs, useful to the sacred and the profane alike, which enhance a vessel's ability to defend itself. For a number of hours equal to the Song roll's check digit, you may make these bodily changes appear or disappear at will. Each Numinous Corpus costs 1 Essence to invoke.

Attacks made with Numinous Corpus are rolled against the user's Fighting skill, modified by the ability's Accuracy. As usual, add the ability's Power to the check digit of a successful roll to determine the amount of damage caused.

When the user is in his celestial form, these powers do celestial damage!

Acid

The performer grows acid glands in his mouth, and can spit acid at any target within a range equal to his Corporeal Forces in yards. The Power and Accuracy of this ability are equal to the level purchased; however, unlike other Numinous Corpus, it can only be used a number of times equal to the check digit before being exhausted. Any unspent acid loses its potency after check digit hours.

Claws

This produces retractable fingernails, 6" long, which attack with a Power of +1 for every level of this ability, with an Accuracy of +1. At level 4 and up, your nails are 1' long, with an Accuracy of 0. While the claws are active, all other Precision or Agility rolls requiring the use of hands are reduced by the level of this ability.

Fangs

These long, pointed teeth attack with a Power of +1 and an Accuracy of +4. However, you must be within point-blank range of a foe to bite him!

Each level of Fangs extends them by 1/2". In addition, their Power goes up 1 point every other level, while their Accuracy goes down 1 point every level.

Feet

This turns your feet to hooves (Power +2 at level 1) or gives you spurs at the back of your heels (Power +4 at level 4 and above). You can attack with both supernaturally-augmented feet and hands at the same time, as long as one attack is based on Strength, and the other on Agility or Precision.

Horns

These beautiful 6" horns attack with a Power of +2 and an Accuracy of +1. Beyond level 4, the horns grow to a foot long, with a Power of +3 and an Accuracy of 0.

Tail

There are three types of tails: at levels 1 and 2, the tail is prehensile, acting as an additional melee attack (but with an Accuracy of -3). At levels 3 and 4 it's a fleshy club, with an Accuracy of -2. At higher levels it's long and barbed, with no Accuracy modifier. The tail's Power equals the level of the ability.

Tongue

This creates a long, barbed tongue coiled in your mouth, with a Power of +1 and an Accuracy of +2. Its range in feet equals the level of the ability.

Above level 4, your spiky tongue also has the advantage of doing Mind hits instead of inflicting corporeal damage, if you choose.

Wings

This creates a pair of wings, reflecting your celestial heritage, which unfold from your shoulderblades. Wings only last a number of minutes equal to the check digit of a successful invocation times the ability's level.

Unlike other Numinous Corpus, wings are not strictly combat-oriented. Instead, they give you the ability to fly a number of yards per round equal to (Agility × 10). If this power runs out while you're in mid-air, they will safely carry you to the ground before vanishing.

something with this Song requires a roll of the performer's Precision, plus the Song's check digit, to hit a target. Items thrown with this Song may be Dodged!

This Song's range in yards equals the performer's skill, and items move a number of feet per combat round equal to his Precision. Any attempt to use this Song to take something out of someone's hands may be resisted by Strength, plus any Essence the item contains; successful resistance negates the whole attempt!

- *Celestial* – The Celestial Song of Motion lets the singer change an object's location within the Symphony – put simply, it's teleportation. The object must be within sight of the performer. (Needless to say, even blind, the performer is always "within sight" of himself.) The destination must be some place on Earth the performer has been before. The base cost of this Song, 2 Essence, allows someone to teleport himself and a number of pounds equal to 10 × his Celestial Forces. Every additional 30 pounds costs another Essence. The performer's skill determines his range: 1, the check digit in feet; 2, the

check digit in yards; 3, (the check digit × 10) in yards; 4, (the check digit × 100) in yards; 5, the check digit in miles; 6, (the check digit × 10) in miles.

As above, this may be resisted by Strength plus Essence if the target is being held by someone.

Essence Requirement: 2.

Degree of Disturbance: the check digit.

Possession

This Song allows its performer to wrest control of a vessel from its rightful owner – whether that owner is mortal or celestial. For a number of minutes equal to the check digit plus 10 minutes for each of the performer's Celestial Forces, he may possess a body belonging to someone else. A "possessed" vessel is also called a *host*.

The victim may attempt a Will roll in his defense. If he succeeds, he is not possessed, and the attacker cannot try again for (victim's Will) in hours. If he loses, the performer can use the vessel as his own, and when the victim's mind returns he won't remember anything that happened – the whole period of time remains a blank. As when asleep, the host's mind may be found wandering the Marches.

The possessor may use any attunements the host has for the duration of this Song. If they require Essence, he must fuel them himself – the possessor does not get access to his host's Essence.

This Song does not let someone inhabit a vessel whose normal, physical inhabitant has more Forces than the possessor (e.g., an Imp with 4 Forces could never possess a normal human body, which has 5 Forces).

Although this complex Song works on all three levels of reality, for game purposes treat it as a Celestial Song.

Essence Requirement: 2.

Degree of Disturbance: the check digit plus the performer's total Forces.

Projection

In both literature and legend, a classic example of celestial power is the ability to project the consciousness from one plane of reality to another. The three versions of the Song of Projection allow its user to do just that.

Projection has a basic performance cost of 2 Essence. When projected, the performer appears as a translucent, shimmering version of his celestial form. The projected form cannot touch anything or take any physical damage, although like normal celestial forms it is open to celestial attack. It creates a disturbance in the Symphony (see p. 54) equal to *twice* the Celestial Forces of the projector(s).

The singer may choose to project others along with himself, if they permit it. Each additional mind increases the Essence cost of the performance by 2 and the roll's difficulty by 1.



While projecting, the performer's mortal vessel is unconscious and can take no actions – except for those notorious multitaskers, the Kyriotates, who can use one host to project, and control any others normally. When someone projects from the ethereal or celestial plane, his form glows a deep violet while his mind is away.

There's no way to tell if an unconscious corporeal form is projecting its soul elsewhere. If any damage is done to the projector's corporeal vessel in his absence, his mind (and any others he projected with him) will return home instantly, ready to deal with the problem at hand. If damage is done to the vessel of someone he projected with him, only the performer is aware of it. With a successful Will roll, he may end the Song . . . or he may choose to ignore the damage. If someone's corporeal vessel is destroyed while he is being projected, he's physically dead . . . unless he is a Shedim or Kyriotate, in which case he snaps back to the site of the dead host, in celestial form, and has the normal opportunity to find a new host.

• *Corporeal* – The corporeal version of this Song allows the performer to project himself to any place on the Earth that he has visited before. When performing this Song from the ethereal realm, the roll is penalized by -1; when performing this Song from the celestial realm, the roll is penalized by -2.

Witnesses of a projection don't automatically notice the singer's presence. Each person within sight of the projected form may make a Perception roll, with a bonus equal to the performer's skill level with the Song.

The corporeal version of this Song lasts a number of rounds equal to the check digit plus the performer's Corporeal Forces.

• *Ethereal* – The ethereal version of this Song allows the performer to project his image to any place in the Marches (p. 51) he has visited before where he might be welcome, or to any dreamscape he's visited before if the owner is dreaming. When performing this Song from either the corporeal or celestial realms, roll at -1.

The Ethereal Song of Projection lasts a number of minutes equal to the check digit plus the user's Ethereal Forces. Servants of Blandine and Beleth who use this Song instead of their natural resonance may *double* the duration of their ethereal projections to the Marches!

• *Celestial* – The celestial version of this Song allows the performer to project himself on a celestial level. If the performer is already on a celestial plane, he may only project himself to places he has been before, in that realm. (When in Heaven, he cannot project himself to Hell, and vice versa.)

When projecting from the ethereal or corporeal planes, penalize the roll by -2. An angel or a demon projecting himself to the celestial realms will manifest wherever his Heart is kept (see pp. 137, 185). Humans, Outcasts and Renegades must be at a Tether to perform this version of the Song of Projection – the performer (and any guests) will manifest in the celestial hall of the Archangel or Prince who supports that Tether.

The celestial version of this Song lasts a number of minutes equal to the check digit times the performer's Celestial Forces.



Essence Requirement: 2 per person projected.
Degree of Disturbance: Celestial Forces × 2

Shields

Classic defensive measures among celestials, the Songs of Shields prevent or deflect many of life's hardships – even the tiny metal ones that move very quickly.

These Songs create temporary defenses extending a number of feet from the performer's body equal to his skill times the Essence used in the performance. The Shield moves with the singer.

• *Corporeal* – Manifests as cushion of whirling air which buffets any Corporeal Force approaching it. The miniature cyclone surrounds its subjects on all sides. It lasts for a number of combat rounds equal to the check digit of the successful roll plus the performer's Corporeal Forces, during which no physical attack can get through.

• *Ethereal* – Creates a green field of energy (observers may make a Perception roll to spot it) through which no attunement, resonance or Essence-based attack can pierce. Physical attacks can get through, as can blasts of pure Will. It lasts for a number of combat rounds equal to the check digit of the successful roll plus the performer's Ethereal Forces.

• *Celestial* – The performer can artificially enhance a previously-existing environmental condition (such as smoke, fog, darkness or thick brush) to create a temporary barrier to observation. No celestial force – whether it's a resonance or an attunement – can peek beneath this shield. Also, any disturbances made to the Symphony within the confines of the Shield are delayed until the Song is over, giving the performer a chance to escape before his mischief comes to light. This celestial shielding lasts for a number of minutes equal to the check digit of the roll plus the performer's Celestial Forces.

Like the Ethereal Song of Shields, this doesn't defend against corporeal intrusion, but it's a sure defense against over-curious celestials in the area. Unlike the other two versions of this Song, the Celestial Song of Shields is cast on a physical area and does not move with the performer.

Essence Requirement: 1.
Degree of Disturbance: the check digit.

Thunder

The Song of Thunder creates a powerful combined attack of Corporeal, Ethereal and Celestial Forces – a sonic explosion across all three levels of reality.

The Song has a range of a number of yards equal to the performer's skill level times the amount of Essence used in its performance. Everyone within range of the Song's effects, except the performer, will be stunned for a number of combat rounds equal to the check digit of the successful roll. Victims may resist with successful Will rolls.

Also, its general chaos masks all other disturbances to the Symphony for a number of minutes equal to the performer's total number of Forces times the Essence used in its performance.

While it acts upon all three Forces, this Song is considered Corporeal for game purposes.

Essence Requirement: 1.

Degree of Disturbance: the check digit plus the performer's total Forces.

Tongues

Among the Songs most commonly granted to human servants, the Songs of Tongues facilitate communication in a world of babble.

When performed properly, Songs of Tongues allow clear communication, disregarding most of the usual barriers. These Songs may be performed on oneself, or on a number of people equal to the performer's skill level.

• *Corporeal* – A successful performance lets the subject communicate in any human language – in fact, in all human languages at the same time. He will understand any text or speech in as close an approximation to his own language as is possible, and others will hear him speak in the language they feel most comfortable with. (For the Song's duration, this extends to reading what he writes under its effects.) The check digit of a successful roll determines the Song's duration, in hours.

• *Ethereal* – The Ethereal Song of Tongues lets the subject communicate mentally with anyone within range (a number of yards equal to the performer's skill level times any extra Essence poured into the Song). This is full two-way telepathy. If a receiver is unwilling to listen to the voices in his head, he may make a Will roll, minus the performer's Ethereal Forces, to push them away. The check digit of the successful roll determines the Song's duration, in minutes.

• *Celestial* – This version of the Song of Tongues may only be used on someone the performer has already met. It allows the performer to bind a brief message (no more than 15 words) into a bit of Essence and then loose it into the cosmos, where it makes its way directly to the mind of the receiver. The receiver, wherever he is, will get the message whether he wants it or not, plus an additional point of Essence in the bargain (if he isn't already full). Cherubim and Djinn have a bonus equal to their Celestial Forces when performing this Song to someone they're attuned to.

There is no way for the sender to use this Song to track down the receiver, or vice versa – nor does this Song open a channel for discussion. It's just a celestial message in a bottle which seldom fails to wash up on the right shore.

Essence Requirement: 1.

Degree of Disturbance: none.

DISCORD

When a celestial ignores his true nature, he gains dissonance (p. 57) which can grow into Discord (p. 60). These are some forms which that Discord can take.



Corporeal Discord

Damaged Sense

A character can suffer damage to his sense of vision, hearing, touch, or taste/smell. Unlike other Corporeal Discord, having a damaged sense won't affect anyone's reaction roll. Instead, increase the difficulty of all the victim's relevant Perception rolls by the level of the Discord, or *three times* this level for touch or taste/smell.

Crippled

Crippled characters are missing some part of their basic anatomy, reducing their natural Strength or Agility (player's choice) by the level of the Discord. The player may focus the damage on one stat, or spread the impact between the two – but cannot reduce either of them any further than 1. If taking additional levels of this Discord would reduce a characterisitic below 1, then no further levels can be taken.

At level 1, the victim may be missing a few fingers or some toes. At level 2, the loss is more pronounced – most of a hand or foot. If it's a foot, the victim walks with a slight limp, and runs only (Agility × 5) rounds. At level 3, an entire hand or foot is missing. If it's a foot, his capacity for running will be halved. At level 4, he lacks an arm or leg from the elbow or knee. At level 5, the entire limb is gone. At level 6, not only is one limb missing, but another is crippled as if it were a level 2 Discord of its own.

Discolored

We're not talking racial bias, we're talking strange. The higher the level of this Discord, the more unnatural the skin of the afflicted character looks. At level 1, his skin might merely be pale green or purple; at level 4, he may have distinctive splotches or markings; and at level 6, his skin may be covered in a fine blue fur or striped with attractive zebra patterns. The player gets to choose his character's particular affliction, with GM approval.

Obese

The victim is undeniably, unnaturally large. For every level of this Discord, an obese character is 100 pounds overweight, reducing his Agility by 1.

Pallid

They're not just pale – they look dead; they're rotting from within, and they smell. Every Sunday at noon, the victim takes hits of physical damage equal to the level of his Discord. Others react at -2 per level of pallor – that's for the stink of death.

Stigmata

Stigmata are wounds which bleed openly and continually, but do no damage. They're traditionally located in the palms, the feet, the side of the chest or across the forehead.

The player may choose the location of his Discord, having one open wound for every level of Stigmata taken. Covering them will only work for 10 minutes. After that, the blood starts to seep through.

These wounds will not heal until the Discord is bought off. Reactions to the victim are at -3 per Stigma observed.

Twitchy

A twitchy character has an odd nervous disorder, reducing his Precision and Agility by the level of this Discord. When he fails a Precision or Agility-based roll, including a skill roll, add the level of this Discord to the failed roll's check digit. (Don't let him hold the nitroglycerine!)

Ugly

This vessel is just plain ugly, in both looks and "feel." Add the level of this Discord to the victim's Corporeal Forces and subtract the result from all reaction rolls.

Vestigium

Like Numinous Corpus (p. 82), vestigium are supernatural growths on corporeal vessels – except that they're not good for anything, they don't vanish when you don't want them, and they don't look scary – they look pathetic. Typical vestigium are hairless, fleshy tails; blunt, spongy horns; broken or dulled fangs; or extra, shriveled limbs. By definition, vestigium aren't good for anything except getting you a job in a freak show – a character can't use his vestigial tail to open a jar or tie a bow; the tail's just a useless bulge in the back of his pants.

Add the vestigium's level to other characters' Perceptions (with modifiers if the victim can mask his deformity) to see if they spot the Discordant mutation. If so, then subtract the check digit of the successful Perception roll from the observers' reaction rolls.

Vulnerable

A character with a vulnerability has a specific physical weakness, something he must avoid at all costs.

A vulnerability can be anything – sunlight, running water, or a glowing mineral from a planet orbiting a red sun. The cost of this Discord, per level, varies depending on how frequently the sufferer may encounter the object of his vulnerability in the course of the game. A rare or obscure vulnerability, like holy water from Damascus or a lock of hair from a 100-year-old corpse, might be worth 1 point per level, while a serious impediment to getting work done, like a vulnerability to silver, may be worth 3 or more points per level, at the GM's discretion.

When a character's vessel makes physical contact with the object of his vulnerability, he starts taking damage – a hit for every level of his Discord, each combat round he remains touching it.

Example: *Vampires have Vulnerability/3 (Sunlight). If Vlad has 2 Corporeal Forces and a Strength of 4, his Body is 16 (2+2, times 4). If he takes 3 hits every round, he's got 25 seconds – five rounds – to get out of the sun!). Otherwise, on the sixth round he'll fall unconscious, and shortly after that he'll burn dust.*

Ofanim and Calabim with vulnerabilities must include the level of their Discord when making dissonance rolls!





Ethereal Discord

Angry

The character is, in general, an angry person. In a conflict situation, he must make a Will roll minus his level of Anger to avoid turning violent. Whether or not he succeeds, the check digit is the number of hours he has until his Angry feelings will again come into play. If he fails, he remains angry for a number of minutes equal to the check digit of the failed roll plus the level of his Anger.

Angry Elohim and Habbalah must include their level of this Discord when making dissonance rolls!

Aura

Some celestials stand out in a crowd. A character's level of Aura is added to others' Perceptions – if they successfully make their Perception rolls, they'll be able to spot the celestial for what he is. They won't know if he's an angel or a demon, but they'll know he's a celestial! If the afflicted character belongs to the Band of Lilim, and the observer is an angel, he'll *know* he's looking at a demon.

Lilim with auras must include the level of their Discord when making dissonance rolls!

Berserk

If a berserker in combat wants to *stop* fighting, he must make a successful Will roll minus his levels of this Discord or continue to hack through whoever's in front of him, friend or foe. If he fails the roll, the check digit of a failed roll gives the number of combat rounds he must fight before he may roll again to suppress his bloodthirstiness.

Berserk Mercurians and Impudites must include their levels of this Discord when making dissonance rolls!

Bound

Being bound to his corporeal vessel is one of the most uncomfortable things that can happen to a celestial – he must subtract his level of this Discord whenever he makes a Will roll to assume his celestial form, and he can't ascend to the celestial plane at all.

A celestial may also be bound to an artifact. The celestial generates dissonance if he allows that artifact to be harmed. His Will is reduced by the amount of this Discord when resisting a command from anyone possessing his artifact. The only advantage to being bound to an artifact is the ability to use it as a spare vessel if something happens to the character's usual corporeal body.

Cowardly

A cowardly character must make a Will roll, minus his level of this Discord, before allowing himself to enter a dangerous situation. The check digit of a failed roll determines the number of combat rounds he must avoid conflict before trying to assert himself again. The check digit of a successful roll determines the number of hours the character can avoid worrying about this Discord.

Cowardly Malakim must include their level of this Discord when making dissonance rolls!

Fear

A fearful person has a phobia, a mental trap door that will drop him into the pit of irrational fear. Low-level phobias might be trivial, while high-level phobias may indicate an extreme psychosis. A character's specific fear should be noted in parentheses after the Discord name, such as "Fear/3 (Clowns)."

The cost of this Discord varies, at the GM's discretion, depending upon how frequently the character may encounter his fear in the course of a game. "Snakes" might only be worth 1 point, at least in an urban setting. Something like "computers" or "raw meat" might be worth 2 or 3 points per level. But use good judgment – fears like "men with dark hair" or "cars" may make a character unplayable.

The afflicted character must survive a Will roll, minus the level of his phobia, or else flee – as quickly as possible – the presence of the object of his fear for a number of rounds equal to the check digit of the failed roll. The check digit of a successful roll is the number of rounds he can suppress his fear before he must make another roll. GMs should keep track of players' phobias and remember to trigger them.

Fearful Cherubim and Djinn must include their level of this Discord when making dissonance rolls!

Geas

A geas is a forced oath, a promise which must be kept. A geas is the only Discord that angels do not see as a sign of weakness, but it does imply that the character cannot be held to a normal promise. Once the promise required by the geas has been fulfilled, this Discord will vanish.

The geas' level as a Discord reflects the expected length of time to complete it. Pick a task that is reasonable for the chosen length of time. An unreasonably hard task increases the level of the geas . . . for instance, if "write an adventure" is a reasonable level-4 geas, which ought to require a month, you may reduce the increment to the next level (a week!) and make it a level-5 geas.

A human takes physical hits equal to the Celestial Forces of the person the geas is owed to (maximum 6) for every increment of time that passes before he fulfills his promise. For example, if a person is under geas to deliver certain photographs to his demonic master within a week, he will take one hit for every week he avoids doing it. Once the geas is lifted, the human's damage will be instantly healed.

A celestial gains 1 note of dissonance for every increment of time that passes before he fulfills his promise, but dissonance acquired from a geas doesn't require a new dissonance roll (see p. 57). Once the geas is fulfilled, the associated dissonance vanishes.

A character may not take a geas as his Discord at character creation, nor may a geas be bought off with character points. If the GM is inflicting a geas, it should be related to whatever misstep he took to earn the Discord. The Lilim resonance (p. 147) can also inflict a geas.

Level	*Time*	*Level*	*Time*
1	An hour	4	A month
2	A day	5	6 months
3	A week	6	A year

Paranoia

For the paranoid, it's a lonely world. He *knows* that others aren't telling him the truth – they're plotting against him and cannot be trusted. He must make a Will roll, penalized by the level of this Discord, before believing what anyone else says. If he fails his roll, the player should come up with an alternate spin on the situation, as fantastical as possible. The character must then act as though he believes the new, paranoid premise to be true, regardless of the consequences. When a paranoid is presented with evidence that disproves his theory, his player must make another Will roll – again, minus his Discord – to change his paranoid mind or else continue with the same fantastical premise as before. (This being a role-playing game about the world's oldest conspiracy, between the ultimate forces of good and evil, the fantastical premise might be the right one . . .)

Paranoid Seraphim and Balseraphs must include their level of this Discord when making dissonance rolls!

Celestial Discord

Celestial Blindness

Victims of Celestial Blindness subtract the level of this Discord from their Perceptions when attempting to detect the presence of celestial beings or effects. The effects of this Discord cannot be suppressed.

Gluttonous

Celestials don't need to eat, but a gluttonous person wants to eat anyway.

If he has not eaten in the last day, at the sight of food a glutton must make a Will roll minus his level of this Discord or begin eating for a number of rounds equal to the check digit of the failed roll. The check digit of a successful roll determines the number of hours before he may again be tempted by his stomach.

In some circumstances, the GM may modify this roll (when a glutton sees food in the middle of a chase, etc.). Use common sense.

Greedy

Greedy people have an amazing hunger for money and its trappings. Make a Will roll minus the character's level of Greed when he is presented with an opportunity to expand his material holdings.

Lustful

Lustful characters are strongly enamored of the pleasures of the flesh. In the presence of someone attractive – anyone appropriate to the lustful person's sexual orientation, with any Charisma described as attractiveness – the "sufferer" must make a Will roll minus the level of his Discord to keep from attempting to seduce the object of desire.

Merciful

Characters with mercy have a hard time killing their enemies . . . and for a Soldier in the War, that's sometimes



a problem. Make a successful Will roll minus a character's degree of mercy before he strikes to destroy a helpless opponent. The check digit of a failed roll is the number of minutes he must struggle with his morals before trying again, if he intellectually believes he *should* strike to kill.

Murderous

In a combat situation, the character goes for the kill, regardless of the consequences. At the start of a fight, he must make a successful Will roll, minus the level of his Discord, to *avoid* trying to kill his foes. The check digit of a failed roll determines how many rounds he will fight to kill before his murderous nature is sated. The check digit of a success tells how many rounds he can suppress his rage, if combat continues, before he must roll again.

Need

This is the worst of the Discords, as its mere presence prevents the victim from regenerating Essence naturally – his connection to the Symphony is so twisted that the energies of the universe don't flow to him in their normal patterns. Instead, the Needful one has some dark prerequisite to fulfill daily before his Essence regenerates.

The GM is welcome to apply his own point value for this Discord, depending on its degree of severity. A relatively simple Need, like inflicting pain on a random stranger, may be worth only 1 point per level, while the Need for blood may be worth 2 or more, depending on its availability in the campaign. Other Needs might be sex, violence, fluffy bunny rabbits, gaming – you name it. The level of the Need represents the number of times per day that the Need must be fulfilled.

Random Discord

When a character has Discord inflicted upon him, he may choose it randomly, rolling two dice:

Corporeal and Ethereal Discord

2.....Discolored
3.....Obese
4.....Pallid
5.....Stigmata
6.....Vestigium
7.....Aura
8.....Berserk
9.....Bound
10.....Fear
11.....Vulnerable (chosen by the GM)
12.....Roll again on the table below.

Celestial Discord

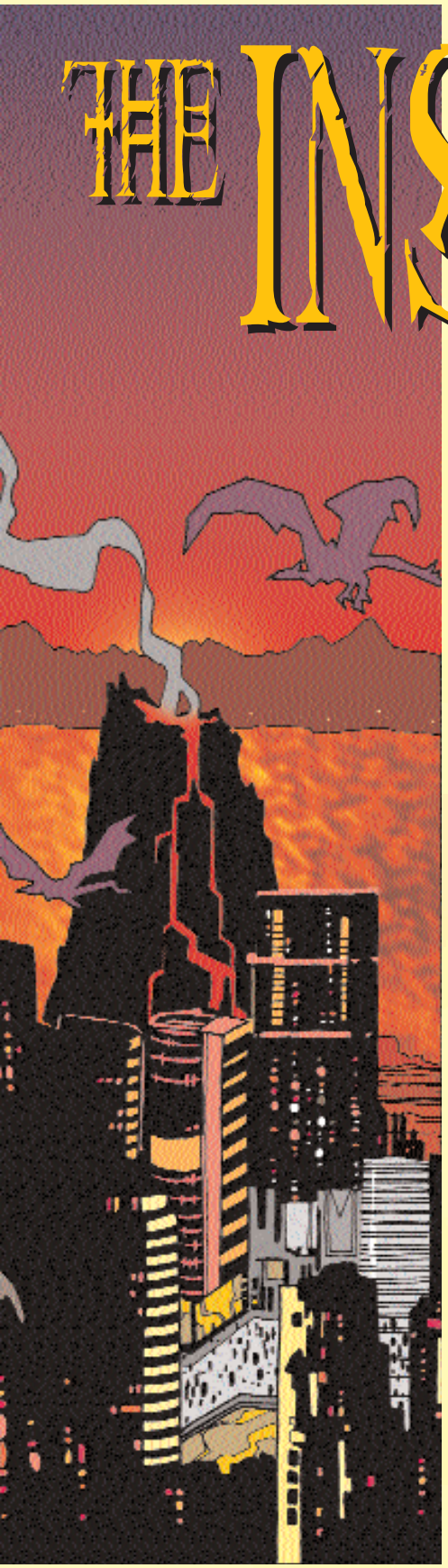
2.....If the character is an angel, he may try again on the table above; if he is a demon, he must roll again on this table, and the Discord he ends up with will be 1 level higher than before!
3, 4...Celestial Blindness
5 .....Gluttonous
6 .....Greedy
7 .....Lustful
8 .....Merciful
9 .....Murderous
10 .....Need (chosen by the player, with GM approval)
11 .....Slothful
12 .....If the character is a demon, he may try again on the table above; if he is an angel, he must roll again on this table, and the Discord he ends up with will be 1 level higher than before!

If a celestial's Need is fulfilled, and it was his greatest Celestial Discord, then he does not roll to see if he naturally regenerates Essence that day. Having fed his Need, he will regenerate Essence normally.

Slothful

At any chance he gets, this character unloads his work onto other people. He must make a Will roll, minus his level of sloth, to begin a new task or to do any hard work in general (anything involving a roll with less than a 50% chance of success) or else he will avoid his duties for a number of hours equal to his Celestial Forces.





THE INSTRUMENTS

Book II



A cap of good acid costs five dollars, and for that you can hear the Universal Symphony with God singing solo and the Holy Ghost on drums.

— Hunter S. Thompson,
as quoted by William F. Buckley, Jr.

CHOIRS OF ANGELS



Bright creations of strength and nobility, the Choirs of angels are God's agents of order in the Symphony. They act within certain boundaries as defined by God, the Archangel they serve – and themselves.

Each Choir has a *resonance*, a specific nature to which its members must be true. Acting against this nature is dissonant to the Symphony and pushes an angel away from his true self. The struggle to maintain a personal balance in an uncaring world is one of the trials of serving God – and part of the price of being an angel.

By Any Other Name . . .

Seraphim	Trisagionists, The Most Holy
Cherubim	Hayyoth, The Guardians
Ofanim	Thrones, The Wheels
Elohim	Dynamis, The Powers
Malakim	Kings, The Virtues
Kyriotates	Hives, The Dominations
Mercurians	Intercessionists, Friends of Man
Grigori	Giants, The Watchers

SERAPHIM
THE MOST HOLY

"I think you're hiding something from us," said the first figure, finally getting through to the couch potato.

"Huh?" said the man. "I don't know nothing!"

"Liar!" the second figure screeched, twitching as though he'd been spit upon. "You disgrace yourself by bringing falsehood to a perfect Symphony."

"What're you talking about, man?" laughed the guy on the couch, turning back to his TV show. "And here I thought you boys were serious."

"I'm only telling you the truth," said the first angel, jerking a thumb at his partner. "Believe me, he knows from truth."

Tall and proud, the Seraphim stand alone as the most divine of all Heavenly Choirs, created from the essence of all that is perfect.

Of all sacred creatures, their relationship with the Symphony is the deepest, resounding from the most fundamental levels of abstract reality.

Resonance

When Seraphim are paying even the slightest attention, no one – human or celestial – can lie to them without it ringing false. A lie is a stain that spreads across creation, undeniable to a perceptive Seraph. These angels don't like pop culture; they cannot stand to watch television.

Their preoccupation with the truth and their pronounced lack of restraint in expressing it make them very, very annoying to some angels, particularly Mercurians (see p. 103). Few Seraphim, most divine of all Choirs and farthest from what it is to be human, have any sense of tact. They regularly blunder into uncomfortable situations in which they feel obliged to point out a truth that others gracefully ignored. They loathe dealing with humans on a one-to-one basis anyway, so the other Choirs have learned when to take control of a situation away from the socially-awkward Seraphim. This especially bemuses those born diplomats, the Mercurians.

Dissonance

It's not that a Seraph can't lie, but since it goes against his basic nature, it causes him a great deal of anguish and generates dissonance. To avoid this, many Seraphim have become adept at the art of "conversational misdirection." Not so much a skill as a rationalization, they resort to this



Seraphim Check Digit Results

1 ....You know whether or not the speaker thinks he is lying.
2 ....You know the above – and, if the speaker lied, which statement in particular he thinks is most false.
3 ....You know all of the above – and why the speaker chose to lie or to tell the truth as he knows it.
4 ....You know all of the above – and what the speaker believes the truth to be.
5 ....You know all of the above – and whether or not the speaker actually knows the Truth.
6 ....You know all that – and what the Truth really is.

when approached with uncomfortable questions. Seraphim are constantly torn between telling the truth in all things and holding to the angelic duty of maintaining the important secrets – such as keeping humans in the dark about the truth of the Symphony.

A Seraph may find it distasteful to stand by while anyone – especially an angel – tells a lie, but he will make no effort to clarify someone's facts if it might draw him into revealing more than he cares to.

Manner and Appearance

With the distance granted by such great divinity, they often have a better perspective on situations than those closer to the minds of humanity. Among similarly-ranked members of other Choirs, a Seraph's opinion is the final word; only angels of higher stature can ignore him.

In his celestial form, a Seraph resembles a winged, many-eyed serpent. On Earth, a Seraph's corporeal vessel is generally tall and thin, long-fingered and bony, clean-cut and well-kept. Their movements are smooth and precise, as befits celestial nobility.

Although the Seraphim are not the perfect creatures they aspire to be, other angels have a great deal of respect for them. Fortunately, it is in a Seraph's nature to act so as to deserve that respect.

They prefer to think of themselves as stringed instruments, from harps to pianos, with a piercing sweetness and clarity that lingers when the note itself seems to be gone. You haven't lived until you've heard a Seraph play a violin.

Game Mechanics

Seraphim have the ability to see into men's hearts to the reality within. The truth, by its nature, can be elusive; game mechanics should not be. These should be clear enough to solve most problems that arise during play. If difficulties arise, as they may when debating "the truth," it is important for the GM to rule consistently so all players feel they're being treated fairly.

For game purposes, there are two sorts of truth to consider: the truth as the speaker understands it, and the absolute Truth as the Symphony knows it, the actual fact of the way things are. "The light bulb is green": yes, it is. It is rare for people to actually say these sorts of Truths; most "truth" is actually opinion from observation, comparing or contrasting perspectives: "He's huge!"

Once a Seraph invokes his resonance, the next thing he hears which relates a fact or expresses an opinion will be scrutinized for accuracy with respect to the speaker's point of view in the Symphony and, if the Seraph is lucky, as it relates to the Truth at large. This will last for ten minutes minus one minute for every point of the successful roll's check digit. So a Seraph who successfully tunes into his resonance, with a check digit of 3, will be attuned to the truth (to the degree described on the chart above) for seven minutes.

Opinions, by their very nature, are subjective. Unlike facts, they can't be judged against some universal measurement of true and false – "This game stinks!" – but people can still lie about their opinions, and a good Seraph can tell when they do.

Note to players: Remember that this is a celestial power, not something to trifle with. If you use it on a whim and accidentally bungle it badly, the feedback will make a mess of your usually delicate relationship to the Symphony for a while, the way your ears ache when you sit too close to the stacks at a concert. (See p. 56.)

Note to GMs: Remember that few Seraphim are stupid; they can "feel" the difference between literal and metaphorical statements. GMs who abuse player trust by purposely misleading them and hiding behind semantics may vanish some night as a warning to others.

Cherubim
The Guardians

"Thou shalt not be afraid of the terror by night, nor the arrows that flieth by day, for He will give His angels charge over thee." – *Psalm 91*

The Cherub flowed through the crowd, approaching the candidate with an open palm. The human grabbed the angel's outstretched hand just like he'd shaken countless others on the



campaign trail. The angel locked eyes with the man and the rest of the world fell away for a moment.

"I'll protect you," the Cherub said.

The candidate stood speechless, puzzled, until the motion of the crowd and the pushing of his men moved him along toward his limo.

The angel put a cigar in his mouth and lit it, watching the long white auto pull away with its police escort. Stretching out his celestial perception, he could feel the candidate as he moved through the Symphony, a steady throb pulsing downtown.

He hopped on his motorcycle and followed down a parallel street. Literally, he'd be damned if he let anything happen to that man.

Stout-hearted and strong-willed, the Cherubim are the most generally reliable and fanatically loyal of the Heavenly Choirs. If the Seraphim are celestial nobility, then the Cherubim are their knights in shining armor, guardians of things held dear.

Resonance

The Cherubim were created from the stoic forces of stability. Their relation to the Symphony is one of ultimate devotion – with a touch, they can attune themselves to something (or someone), and as long as it exists on the corporeal plane, its perceptive protector will have a general feel for its location and condition. If it is destroyed, or in immediate mortal danger, he will know instantly.

This sort of single-mindedness is the most basic expression of their nature: constant and solid, aware and vigilant. This simplicity of thought is entirely alien to the Kyriotates, whose nature for multiplicity the Cherubim find most confusing. Cherubim and Kyriotates, both representing animal archetypes in Heavenly society, are notorious for getting on each other's nerves.

Dissonance

For a Cherub, betrayal of devotion is the most serious sin, and generates dissonance. As long as he is attuned to something, he is its caretaker – its guardian angel – and won't do anything that would bring it harm. Only physical contact and force of will can remove the divine attention of a Cherub. Failed attempts at erasing an attunement are also painful; an unsuccessful betrayal through rejection generates dissonance as well.

Because of these dangers, the Cherubim are selective in applying their resonance, the better to handle sticky situations while maintaining their integrity. There's nothing worse than foolishly granting devotion to something unworthy of such respect.

But even aside from applied resonance, a Cherub must never betray his Superior, his friends, his ideals or himself.

Cherubim Check Digit Results

1 ....You know the direction of the attuned object.
2 ....You also know its general condition, including hazards which aren't immediate or life-threatening.
3 ....You also know its approximate distance from you (within miles).
4 ....You know the attuned object's direction, general condition and approximate distance (within yards).
5 ....You know all of the above, as well as whether or not it's moving.
6 ....You know all of that, as well as whether it is in any danger, even in someone's most remote plans.

Doing so would be to sink below his capacity for nobility, the first step down a short road to selfish malevolence. For this reason they struggle (sometimes in vain) not to divide their loyalties.

Manner and Appearance

Cherubim move slowly but with severe purpose, their bright eyes missing no detail of their surroundings. Their human vessels are usually short and stocky, compact and powerful. In their celestial forms, Cherubim look like enormous, winged animals – lions, bears, etc. – suffused in golden haloes. Why Western artists began depicting them as cute, pudgy, winged babies several centuries ago remains a mystery. The Cherubim were not amused; most suspect the Diabolicals' influence.

As the ultimate celestial protectors, Cherubim are the best angels to have guarding your back – and although a Cherub may say he needs no protection, the best angels of the other Choirs, led by the Cherubic example, make it a point to look after them anyway.

Musically, Cherubim prefer one-handed horns before sundown; at night, they pull out their saxophones.

Game Mechanics

The Cherubim resonance is for location. They can attune themselves to as many different items as they have Forces. A Cherub generates dissonance when he allows an object of his attunement to be destroyed (its Strength reduced below zero), although this does not remove his attunement. If the object of a Cherub's attunement is broken and its parts separated, he can only detect the individual pieces on a check digit of 6. If he can successfully restore the destroyed item to a whole state – unlikely in the case of living things – then the dissonance its destruction generated will disappear.

A successful Will roll can negate an attunement. A failed attempt sounds a note of dissonance.

Ofanim

The Wheels

I applied pressure to the child's wound, hoping that the Ofanite's reckless driving wasn't making things worse. You have to watch it with these bad boys – they're fast, but you can't imagine that they're paying attention to what they're doing just by looking at one.

"Left-left-left!" I shouted, flailing madly.

"This way's quicker," he said, smiling with a curled lip, wrenching the steering wheel right. "I can feel it."

Manic and fleet, tensed for action and wired to the gills, the Ofanim are the Easy Riders of the celestial realm. Forged from the stuff of speed and madness, they are Heaven's swiftest instruments and, once set in motion, implacable and unstoppable forces of action.

Resonance

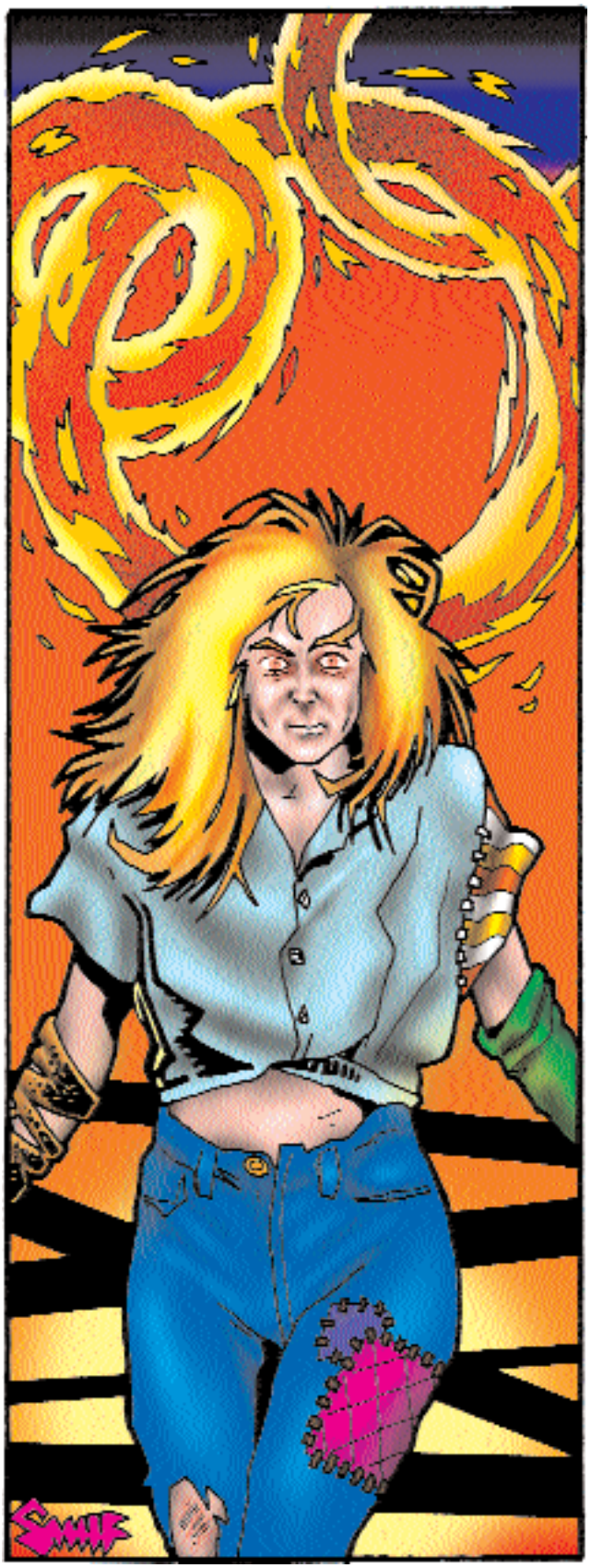
The resonance of the Ofanim is motion. They just don't stop. With an almost abrasive insistence on action, the Ofanim are the Choir that produces the most tangible short-term results. Whenever an Ofanite needs to go someplace, his divine perception of the Symphony instantly reveals the quickest path. He won't ever take the scenic route when another way is faster. Constant travelers, they have an intuitive knowledge of the lay of the land. City-dwelling Ofanim are particularly useful and their navigation skills seem truly miraculous.

They are also very whimsical creatures (some people prefer the more traditional term, "insane"). Even by the loosest celestial standards, they seem crazed. The typical Ofanite likes to watch television as he paces, one hand clenched on the remote control as channels speed past, ranting loudly and gesturing like an amphetamine-dosed spider monkey.

Of all the Heavenly Choirs, Malakim have the hardest time getting along with the Ofanim; the speedsters' mad frivolity is directly at odds with the warrior caste's cold seriousness.

Dissonance

The primary dissonance of the Ofanim is inaction. If they see the opportunity to indulge their mobile natures, they feel compelled to do so. Being imprisoned, bound, or otherwise unable to act is frightening to an Ofanite, but being physically free to act and not doing so is terrifying. Inaction in the face of an overwhelming compulsion is darkly dissonant, and has put as many Ofanim in the grave as it has dropped into Hell.



Manner and Appearance

In their celestial vessels, Ofanim appear as giant wheels of holy fire, whirling across the sky. Their human vessels reflect their manic natures: wide-eyed, thin-lipped and gaunt, unkempt and disheveled, radiating heat from a heart beating too quickly. Their eyes may betray madness, but show no trace of fear.

Racing from one edge of the world to another, they are the border crossers and message bearers, celestial workaholics in the ultimate high-pressure office. Other Choirs respect the Ofanim, though they sometimes also pity them.

Ofanim are creatures of percussion. In modern times this translates as everything from frequent, random cymbal crashes to techno-across-Europe at 140 bpm.

Game Mechanics

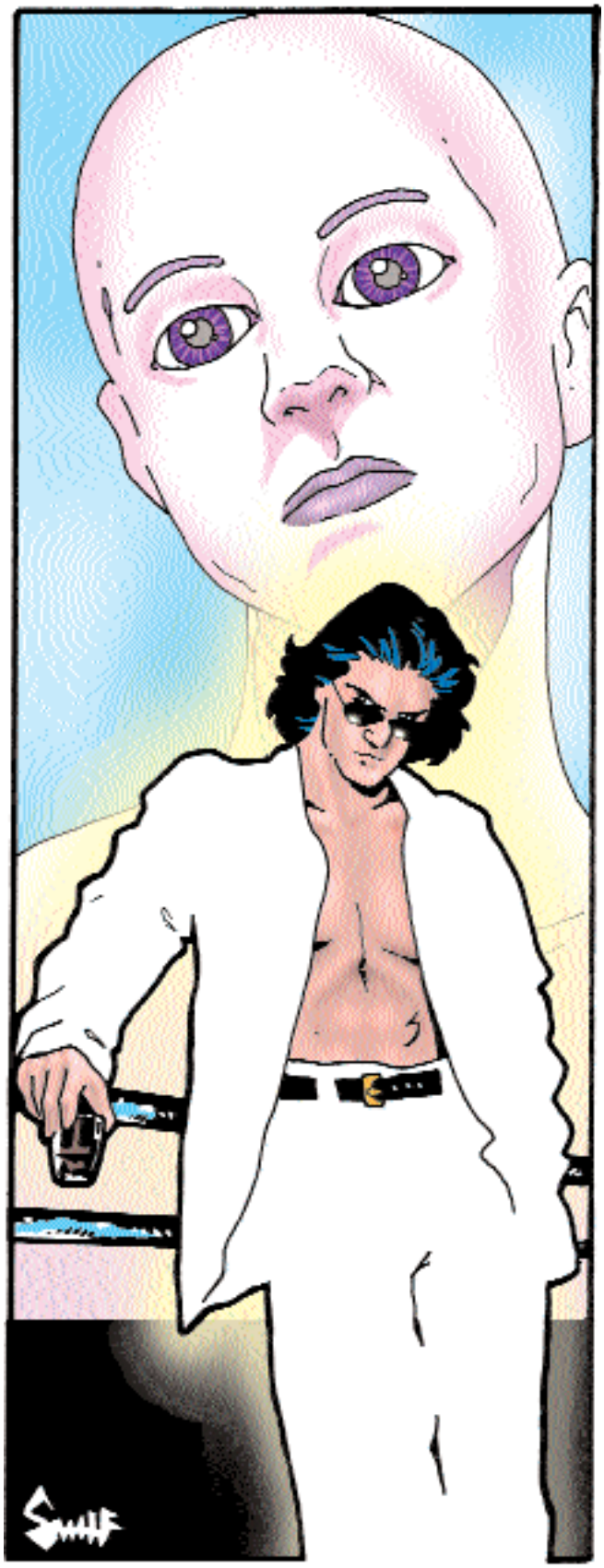
The resonance of an Ofanite is for movement. In game terms, this works for them in three different ways.

First, the check digit of a successful resonance roll can be added to the target number for any roll against Agility itself or an associated skill. State which roll is being enhanced before rolling the resonance; the resonance modifier will only work with that skill.

There is no penalty for failing the resonance roll itself. However, if the resonance roll succeeds, failing at the modified Agility (or skill) roll generates dissonance in the Ofanim when the check digit of the failed roll is 6 or higher. Skill modifiers obtained through resonance are not cumulative; an Ofanite generates dissonance if the skill modifier is not used before he invokes his resonance again.

Second, an Ofanite may add the check digit of a successful resonance roll to the target number of any Area Knowledge skill roll. Since these angels have an inherent grasp of the patterns of location in the Symphony, they're able to "feel" their way toward any general site – "the nearest convenience store" – or a specific place – "the nearest gas station that sells diesel." Their resonance is only for established locations that exist in the public consciousness, not the precise tracking of particular objects that is the trademark of the Cherubim. GMs should apply penalties to skill rolls if the desired results are too specific ("2708 Charlesworth") or subjective ("the best place to buy CDs").

Third, by invoking his resonance an Ofanite may travel a number of miles equal to a successful roll's check digit – in a single minute! – when in his celestial form. He rolls again for each minute he wants to continue. This makes it simple to travel very quickly across the corporeal world, but compromises secrecy and opens the angel up to the possiblity of taking celestial damage.



ELOHIM

The Powers

"And when was the last time you saw your daughter?" the Elohite asked the crying woman.

"Oh God, oh God," she wailed. "Oh God."

"Please, ma'am," he said, putting a gentle hand on her shoulder. He didn't need to invoke his divine resonance to know what she was feeling. "Please. When did you last see your daughter, and what is the credit limit on the stolen card?"

"You don't care what I feel," the woman crooned, big-eyed. "You're heartless, you are."

The angel closed his eyes and pursed his lips.

"Not heartless," he whispered, "no, no, no. I am merely restrained – and by necessity, I assure you."

Calm and self-restrained, the Elohim sit dispassionately at the midpoint of the divinity ladder. They are the Symphony's expression of balance, the compromise between thought and feeling, the middle-Cs of the Heavenly Chorus.

Resonance

Ideally, Elohim perception is objective, stripped clean of the stain of personal prejudice. Just a glance at someone gives an Elohite an immediate feel for that person's psyche, his emotions as they exist at that moment. A perceptive Elohite can use this knowledge to accurately predict how a person will react at that moment to any given action, barring the intervention of celestial forces.

Only the Elohim's reserved nature allows them to profit from their perceptions; a good Elohite never stoops to "taking sides" beyond the direct instruction received from an Archangel. Elohim deny themselves a personal point of view to surrender to the glory of existence as an instrument of the Symphony.

There is no particular Choir with which they have an inherent conflict. As the incarnations of balance, they recognize the purpose of each Choir and hold bias toward none. The other Choirs, while reciprocating respect, think the Elohim focus too much on the forest at the price of losing sight of its trees. Angels who are more outspoken find Elohim boring in their reserve, empty in their lack of passion and frustrating in their inability to seize a single subjective perspective and take a stand.

Dissonance

Subjectivity is dissonant to an Elohite. They form opinions from trusted fact and careful observation (the

Elohim Check Digit Results

1 ....You understand the target's current emotional state – harried, peaceful, sluggish, melancholy, etc. – in a broad and general fashion.

2 ....You understand the target's current emotional state and single strongest emotion – fear, confusion, love, etc.

3 ....You understand the above, and the emotion's current motivation – fear (because you're about to kill him), confusion (because he just lost his job), etc.

4 ....You understand the target's current emotional state, his two strongest emotions and their current motivations.

5 ....You understand the preceding, as well as how the target would react at that moment to any one action.

6 ....You understand the above as well as how the target would react at that moment to any two actions.

For game purposes, an "action" means anything that could be done in no more than one round of combat. Use common sense: burning the flag is an action, but burning the flag and running naked down the street with it while singing the preamble to the Constitution would take two actions (three, if you weren't already naked).

inherent subjectivity of observation being a heated topic of discussion for this Choir), but refuse to allow themselves the vanity of acting as their passions might dictate.

This isn't to say they don't feel emotions: the Elohim just don't allow themselves to act upon them. When an Elohite alters the nature of the Symphony out of selfish desire, he pushes himself farther into a subjective mode of action, away from grace and closer to damnation.

Manner and Appearance

A Seraph's opinion, focused strongly on "the party line," is supposed to be the final word in celestial debate. But before the last word is spoken, the counsel most sought-after comes from an Elohite.

Unlike the Seraphim, they're not above getting their hands dirty. They're found just as often in bars and brothels as libraries and diplomatic embassies. None of these places would make an Elohite feel uncomfortable; they are above judging that one place is any better than another – you are where you are, and if you want to be somewhere else, go there.

On the celestial plane, Elohim have vaguely human shapes with smooth and idealized features. They are androgynous (although sexless would be just as good a description), with slender necks supporting hairless heads holding large, perceptive eyes.

In general, the Elohim lack the conceit to slip into many of the traps that lead an angel to Fall, and cherish an ultimate goal of perfect objectivity. And even though stripping away the subjectivity of passion is an Elohite's dearest desire, other angels fear their success – the principalities of Hell are filled with heartless angels.

As far as music goes, while Elohim seldom let their passions show, they have a certain affection for (and identify strangely with) bells, chimes and xylophones.

Game Mechanics

The Elohim resonance for emotion, like the Seraphim resonance for truth, is a strangely objective vision of the most subjective of human experiences. The check digit of a successful resonance invocation signifies the degree of precision with which the angel has read the target's emotions. See the sidebar on this page for details.

And remember, Symphonic observations don't take into account the activity of Celestial Forces, such as the target's own Will. It's not precognition, but it's good enough for rock and roll.

Malakim
The Virtues

I held the creature down while Carlos lashed it to the pole. We backed up once he was done and watched it flail about and kick up the dust in a big circle. When it looked like it was going to snap the pole with its tuggings, Carlos would give it a big whack with the two-by-four he'd pulled out of the shed.

"Are you sure she's a demon?" I asked him.

"It," he corrected me with a scowl. "It's an it. No human would've put up the kind of fight it did, and it's such a sinkhole of selfishness that I'm guessing it's a Balseraph."

He laughed, balancing the board in his hands like a batter stepping up to the plate.

"See there," he laughed, smacking the creature across one of its beautiful cheekbones and arching a spray of blood down its white satin gown. She – it – screamed, clawing at the collar around its neck. I instinctively flinched, expecting the kind of repercussion you get from the Symphony when you injure a human, but there was nothing.

"See there," he laughed, taking another good whack at the demon. "That's what happens to Seraphim when they go bad."

"What happens to Malakim when they go bad?" I asked. He lowered the board and stared at the bleeding creature. "Malakim don't go bad," he murmured.

Malakim embody the purity of Heaven's honor and the swiftness of its wrath. No one else has the right to be as openly arrogant, painfully tyrannical, frequently cruel and generally destructive as the Malakim are.

Resonance

The Malakim's resonance is honor, a framework of integrity even more sacred to them than their own lives. They can see in a human the purity of his nature and the virtue of his principle – how selfish or selfless that person's nature is, and whether he tries to rise above it or allows himself to sink below it. A perceptive Malakite can always spot the weasel in a crowd. A human who draws the attention of the Malakim can relax. Within the next 30 seconds, he'll either be out of whatever jam he was in or on his way to the security of the next life.

Everything is deadly serious to the Malakim, and they feel charged to make as much of a difference as possible. Malakim insist upon honor from those surrounding them. They don't have time to straighten out every human wretch they meet, but neither do they shrink away when honor is obviously lacking. There is a war going on out there, people are dying, and all the Malakim demand from their servants and their peers is discipline and respect.

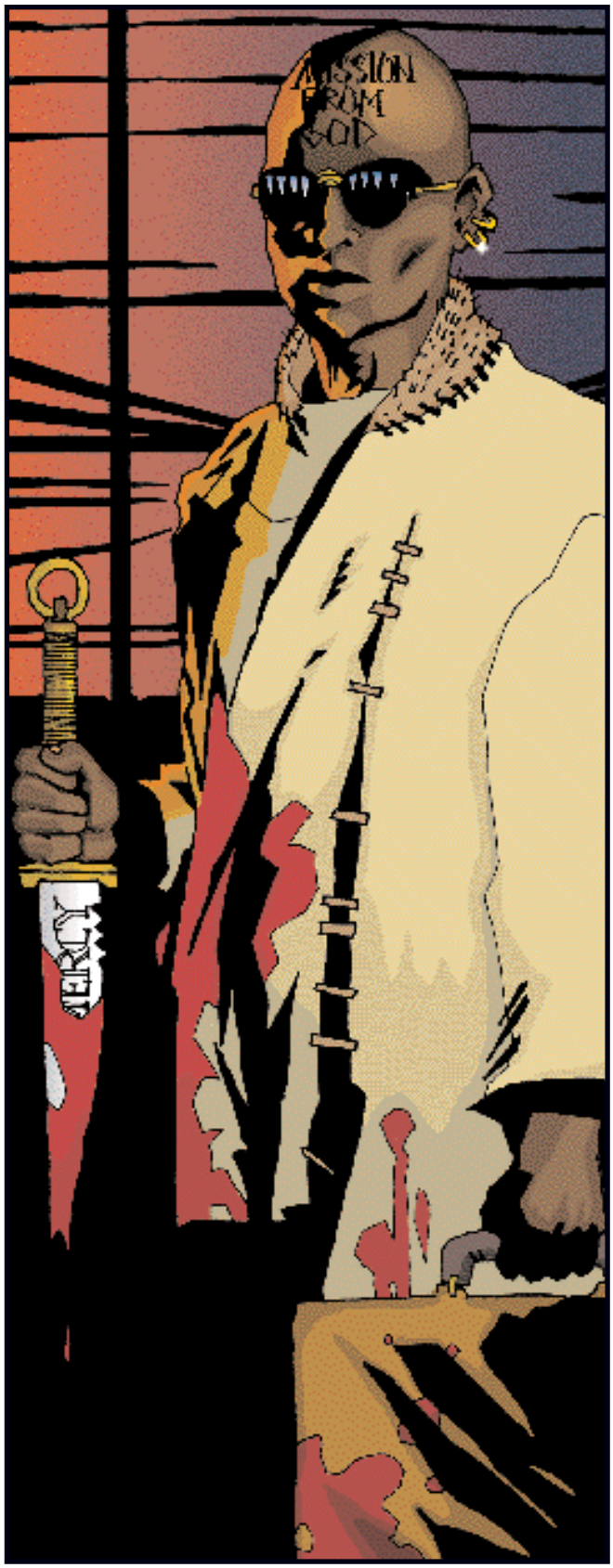
Of the other Choirs, the Ofanim accept the urgent seriousness of the Malakim with the least grace, eager to give a Malakite's honor a metaphorical wedgie just to see how starched his mental underwear really is.

Dissonance

Naturally, the greatest dissonance for a Malakite is dishonor. He would rather have his Forces ripped from his soul one by one than shirk his duties, real or imagined.

There are no Fallen Malakim; they enjoy the hell out of their jobs. They point to this as evidence that they are incapable of Falling, but other angels – without denying the Malakim's strength of character – speculate that it's more a sign of how serious they are about policing themselves. (See *Archangel Dominic*, p. 114, for more information.)

But with the ability to recognize honor comes the desire for it in one's own self. Each Malakite has his own separate code of honor, based on his personal principles of right and wrong, that he expects those around him to follow – which can make meeting new Malakim very interesting. Malakim will take no fewer than four oaths toward their codes of honor; most have more, but two are constants.



Malakim Check Digit Results

1 ....You know the most noble or ignoble thing that the person has done that week, relative to his own moral standards.

2 ....You know the most noble *and* ignoble things that the person has done that week, relative to his own moral standards.

3 ....You know the three most noble or ignoble things that the person has done in the last year, relative to his own moral standards.

4 ....You know the three most noble *and* ignoble things that the person has done in the last year, relative to his own moral standards.

5 ....You know the person's greatest virtue and his worst sin.

6 ....You know the height or depth of spirit the person truly aspires to, as well as his full potential for divinity or malevolence in the Symphony. This will not allow a Malakim to automatically detect demons – there are plenty of humans who are more selfish than most Diabolicals . . . except for Balseraphs. As the most selfish of demons, extremely perceptive Malakim know a Balseraph for what it is.

First, a Malakite will never suffer an evil to live when it's his choice. If you see a Malakite tell a captured demon he can live if he cooperates, you've just seen a Malakite lie to some poor bastard demon who's about to die.

Second, Malakim will never surrender in a fight, nor will they allow themselves to be captured by the armies of Lucifer. Surrendering to Hell would be to dishonor Heaven. Death is preferable. Most Malakim are used to corporeal death. They've lived through it hundreds of times, and are unaffected by its Trauma.

Manner and Appearance

In their celestial forms, Malakim appear as shadowy human figures, large black wings glinting with purple in the light. Like the Cherubim, Malakim don't go for anything elaborate in their human vessels. In clothing, they are purely utilitarian, but prefer real animal skin, preferably animals they hunted and killed themselves.

As the most honorable of the Heavenly Choirs, their actions may seem ruthless but their motives are beyond question. But out of feelings of caution and self-preservation, the other angels watch the Malakim carefully, while staying on their good side.

Those Malakim who stoop to simple personification think of themselves as heavy bass drums, setting the rhythm of the Symphony with the work of their strong hands and cold hearts.

Game Mechanics

The resonance of the Malakim relates to personal honor, or lack thereof. With a successful resonance roll, a Malakite can size someone up and make a snap judgment about his integrity. Compare the roll's check digit to the chart below for a description of the resonance's degree of success. When the chart says "noble or ignoble," the GM may choose which to provide to the player.

Kyriotates

The Dominations

In the body of Karl Anderson, a young sack clerk, I walked quietly through the parking lot. In the body of a small bird, I flew over the blacktop, past my human host, until I picked out the thief. He'd hidden between a mini-van and a Mercedes.

I landed on the hood of the Mercedes and started to caw. The thief looked up, and at the same time I leapt around the corner behind him and knocked him unconscious with a single blow.

God, I love that trick! Man, corporeal vessels rock – and more is always better.

The Kyriotates have given up on 4/4 time altogether. The second-least divine Choir, they are also the most fundamentally alien. They are collections of primal urges, briefly manifesting in borrowed flesh before moving on to other hosts. Taken on their own terms, these rampaging discordians are powerful forces that can be channelled in any direction – but they also illustrate all too well just how ephemeral reality can be.

Resonance

The Kyriotates' resonance is for multiplicity. Blessed with the ability to control multiple vessels, yet seldom in the same body for as long as a week, Kyriotates don't have a single, consistent self-image from which to craft their own unique forms. They must borrow the bodies of other living beings to make their mark on reality.

While possessed, the host consciousness roams the Marches and will have no memory of the events which occurred during the divine takeover. Kyriotates have no

access to their hosts' memories. Possessions range from one to six days, after which control of the vessel reverts to the original owner. While not in a vessel, a Kyriotate has very little time to roam the corporeal realm in his celestial form, searching for another host. If he can't find one, he will ascend to Heaven, where he will have a lot of explaining to do. To avoid this, many Kyriotates have a close-knit group of sympathetic servants, human or otherwise, who take turns being ridden by these strange spirits.



Of all the other Choirs, Cherubim appreciate Kyriotates the least. While they're both guardians after a fashion, valiant spirits of animal nature, Cherubim consider Kyriotates far too cavalier with their host bodies and wildly irrational in their reasoning. On the flip side, Kyriotates are puzzled by the single-minded devotion that is the hallmark of the Cherubim.

Strangely, as polar opposites on the objective/subjective scale, the Kyriotates get along very well with Elohim, and vice versa. Elohim love hearing about all the different perspectives a Kyriotate runs across in his wanderings, and Kyriotates love hearing Elohim struggle to be subjectively objective.

Dissonance

Although sworn to protect their hosts, Kyriotates invariably get into trouble in their borrowed vessels. A Kyriotate generates dissonance when he leaves a body in worse shape than he found it. The closer a Kyriotate comes to the day he must leave his vessel, the more carefully he tends it. Most Kyriotates learn the Corporeal Song of Healing at a high level as a security measure.

Manner and Appearance

The Kyriotates are very smooth characters, at home in almost any vessel after countless years of surfing an ocean of flesh. They are always relaxed, dressed casually and comfortably, but are quick to action.

In their celestial forms, Kyriotates are multi-colored clouds of random limbs, mouths and eyes that pulse to the beat of no particular drummer. People who have seen a Kyriotate unclothed by corporeal skin have been known to be stunned, praying for the refuge of insanity.

Although they switch vessels as though they were channels on TV, Kyriotates manage to hold on to the threads of what make them uniquely themselves. They prize their subjectivity. Without any other constants in life, it's the only thing they've got.

Having abandoned standard musical notation, they prefer improvisational woodwinds, whether it be the starkness of a clarinet or the piercing drive of a flute.

Game Mechanics

With a willing subject, a Kyriotate need only make a successful Will roll to invoke his resonance and allow his Forces to invade the gracious host. If the host is unwilling, he may make a Will roll of his own in an attempt to counter the intrusion. If this roll succeeds, or the angel's own roll fails, the Kyriotate cannot enter that vessel, though he may try again after a number of hours equal to the check digit of the subject's Will roll. If the Kyriotate is successful, his check digit represents the number of days he may stay in that host.

A Kyriotate may simultaneously possess and control any number of vessels whose combined Forces are not greater than the angel's own. For example, a starting Kyriotate with 9 Forces could not take over two normal humans, but could occupy a human and two dogs, or any other combination that added up to nine Forces' worth of flesh. (Note that animals possessed by a Kyriotate may only "talk" to the extent that their natural form allows it. Parrots are OK; dogs are very hard to understand; hummingbirds are right out. But a Kyriotate in an insect swarm can produce an eerie, buzzing speech.)

Any human (including Soldiers, but not the undead) who successfully spots a Kyriotate in his celestial form on Earth must make a Will roll to avoid being stunned for a number of rounds equal to the angel's Celestial Forces.

If a Kyriotate has at least 3 Forces not being used to animate hosts, he can manifest his celestial form (p. 53) at the same time as he runs a host. That form need not be in the same place (or the same plane) as his host body or bodies, but he can never have more than one celestial form at a time.

Kyriotates cannot spend more than (10 minutes times their Celestial Forces) in celestial form without *any* host vessels. After this time, their souls are snapped back to Heaven, to deal with an angry Superior.

Mercurians

Friends of Man

"Hey," I said, strolling up to the dour-looking man on the park bench. "Game of chess?"

"Chess," he said, his face brightening. "Why, I haven't played a game in years! How did you know I loved chess?"

"Just a guess," I smiled, setting up the board.

From divine diplomats to heavenly socialites, Mercurians are the developers of politics and the arbiters of taste, bringing the discipline of abstract structures to the corporeal realm. Since the exile of the Grigori (see p. 104), Mercurians have been the least-divine Choir of angels – and, ultimately, the most human.

Resonance

Mercurians have a resonance with the patterns of politics in the Symphony. Their perceptions are so acute that they can walk into a room full of people and immediately grasp the relationships at work – who has control, who is submissive, etc. On an individual level, a Mercurian can comprehend at a glance the relationships and



responsibilities a person maintains (family, work, friends, etc.) and the importance of each in that person's life.

With the least-divine perspective of all the Choirs, many of these angels allow themselves the arrogance of judging people by their aesthetics. Style counts a lot with Mercurians. But even toward the fashion-impaired, the Mercurians' sympathy for the human condition and generally friendly natures make them affable companions and wonderful conversationalists. No one likes humanity as much as the Mercurians – not even humanity.

Mercurian Check Digit Results

1 ....You can sense a person's estimation of himself, relative to those currently around him.
2 ....You can sense that as well as how those people actually regard him.
3 ....You can sense those things, the name most people he knows call him, geographic and cultural origins, and major items of interest (job, hobbies, etc.).
4 ....You can sense all that and how many relationships he maintains (work, school, family, etc.).
5 ....You can sense the preceding, and how important he perceives the relationships to be.
6 ....With a glance, you can see a person's background as though it were written across his face – up to and including to what degree his relationships actually do control his life.

In addition, a Mercurian may use his resonance on a group of people to see the degree of interrelationships between them, affecting a number of people equal to the successful roll's check digit. The player may choose who within range is affected.

Of the other angels, the Seraphim are the most puzzled by this Choir's unconditional acceptance of individual humanity, but have resigned themselves to the obvious explanation that it's in their nature.

Dissonance

Mercurians cannot be violent toward humans. Violence is the antithesis of politics, the dampener of reason. When they let themselves fall under the spell of violent passion, lashing out madly makes them feel better but pushes them farther away from their resonance – except against demons, who deserve such attention. They particularly enjoy taking out their violent urges against Impudites, their Fallen brethren. This doesn't mean they don't advocate violence; they just don't indulge in it themselves. When negotiations break down, a Mercurian has to know when to step aside and wave in the sharp knives of the Malakim.

Manner and Appearance

In their celestial forms, Mercurians look like the traditional Western image of an angel: a winged human with smooth skin, a bright smile and an open heart.

More than the other Choirs, Mercurians are the most concerned with appearances. No self-respecting Mercurian would be seen in public in an unattractive vessel, unless ugliness were the desired aesthetic. Fashion critics all, Mercurians aim to be the best-dressed in the room; barring that, they'll be the most suave.

Lowest of the high, savior-faire incarnate, Mercurians move smoothly through human society, surfing the sea of human relationships. No other angels have such an abiding understanding of the human condition, and perhaps that's for the best.

Musically, a Mercurian prefers the instrument most frequently at hand – himself, whether singing, clapping, stomping his feet or all of the above.

Game Mechanics

The Mercurians' resonance is for politics. Properly focused, this can determine of the social standing of anyone within a number of yards equal to the angel's Forces. An exceptionally perceptive Mercurian will also know what most people call the subject (not necessarily his real name) and what peripheral relationships he maintains – friends, family, etc.

The check digit of a successful resonance invocation should be compared to the chart on this page. The effects of a Mercurian's resonance will last for ten minutes minus one minute for every point of the successful roll's check digit. A Mercurian who successfully tunes into his resonance with a high check digit will be precisely attuned to invisible social relationships for a brief period of time, while a similar angel whose check digit was very low will be tuned less precisely but for much longer.

The Grigori
The Watchers

The mysterious eighth major Choir of angels, the gentle Grigori, were created by God to be Earthly shepherds for the first humans. The Grigori were both physically and spiritually gigantic, at least by the standards of the people who later wrote about them. They served early humanity as vast reservoirs of information concerning the finer points of civilization, and their selflessness was beyond compare. They were also called the Watchers, as it was their job to observe humanity, lending a helping hand when necessary but not interfering in the course of their development.

But as we have seen, angels – although filled with God's divine grace – are eminently corruptible when in the corporeal world and, perhaps more important, in the



The Eighth Choir and Free Will

The plight of the Grigori adds substantial fuel to the debate about free will, particularly as it applies to supernatural beings.

Consider: could it be possible that God knew the Grigori would be so wonderfully corruptible, end up playing a major role in human affairs and eventually become a powerful supporting force for the other Choirs in their weakest hour?

It's possible – after all, He's God. Understandably, the thought that God would plan the corruption and persecution of one-eighth of his divine army, just to gain an advantage millennia down the line, is very disturbing to some of the angels. It implies that God probably has plans for all of them, and has removed any choice they might have had in the matter.

It may flesh out your character's motivations to decide whether or not he believes that, as an angel, he has free will. Angels who do not believe they have free will see themselves as the literal and not the figurative "Hands of God." Existing merely as an extension of the Will of a greater being will certainly give you a different perspective on life.

presence of humans. The Grigori, designed to be the angels farthest from the Divine, proved to be so much more corruptible that their enormous zest for life tripped them up, spiritually speaking. They chose husbands and wives from among the humans and led greatly debauched lives, neglecting their heavenly duties.

Legends say that the children the Grigori created were hideous, misshapen monsters, now known in demonic circles as the Nephallim, and that angels were quickly dispatched to destroy the half-breeds, after which the Grigori were damned to remain on Earth for the remainder of their long lives.

This is mostly true. The Grigori, both for the sin of lust and for neglecting their mission, were excommunicated from Heavenly society, doomed to spend the remainder of their days roaming the Earth trying to teach humans which sticks to rub together, and when. The Seraphim Council believes even speaking the name of the Grigori disturbs the Symphony – they refer to them as the Watchers, since that was their original duty.

What few angels know, even today, is that beyond their gigantic spawn, the malevolent Nephallim, the Grigori also engendered half-breed children, seemingly human yet part-angel. Angels are strictly forbidden to associate



with the Children of the Grigori or, God forbid, any actual remaining Grigori they might run across in the course of a mission.

The Children of the Grigori

It is impossible to speculate on the number of true Grigori still alive on the Earth. Current estimates range from 50 to none, with most guesses at the low end. The reader is welcome to infer from their inclusion here that belief in their extinction is wishful thinking.

Their direct descendants, most of whom are unaware of their heritage, are uncountable. A few underground groups of crossbreeds have formed to locate and protect one another. Most believe themselves to be remnants of an ancient race – refugees from the mythical sunken continent of Atlantis, for example. There is a grain of truth to this. They are descendants of kind and gentle beings who came from a faraway place to teach and to inspire.

Most of the half-breeds can, consciously or not, exert some small degree of control over the Symphony that rings in their heads. Sometimes they do deliberate harm; more often it's accidental. Children of the Grigori are most dangerous in their teens and early twenties, when for the first time they find their minds pounding with a heavenly cacophony as the Symphony chimes through their celestial genes. For this reason, many have been labeled witches and warlocks to be feared and shunned.

Still, several of these unwitting sorcerors have altered the course of history as radically as any celestial agent – and more often for good than for evil. This is why a growing number of angels consider the Children of the Grigori to be, not a loose cannon, but a sacred "ace in the hole," and dream of organizing these lost cousins for help in the War.

Regardless of what they are called, they are the Children of the Grigori. True to their heritage, they're one of the last major human forces fighting the flow of civilization toward the Pit.

But while they shun demons almost instinctively, they have little love for the angels. Those who understand their heritage, and know about the War, are as wary of those who want to manipulate them as they are bitter toward the proud relatives who pretend they don't exist. Any efforts to reunite them with the Heavenly Host will require a great deal of finesse.

Angels and Their Colas: An Abstract Exercise

These examples illustrate the natures of the various Choirs by showing how they would each deal with getting a drink out of a soda machine, in the abstract.

Confronted with a soda machine, a **Seraph** would disdainfully ask another angel to handle the matter for him.

Confronted with a soda machine, a **Cherub** would wait to watch someone else use it first, then find some way to get money, buy a cola and give it to someone he thinks needs a drink.

Confronted with a soda machine, an **Ofanite** would rip the door off its hinges, grab as many drinks as he could and spiral out over the night before arousing any more attention.

Confronted with a soda machine, an **Elohite** would recognize it as merely an extension of a giant marketing machine, designed to suck money and soul from its customers. He would take it home to disassemble at his leisure, marvelling at its simplicity of design and complexity of purpose.

Malakim find no redeeming qualities in carbonated beverages.

Confronted with a soda machine, a **Kyriotate** would pull out his two quarters and . . . hey, this guy's got some cool stuff in his pockets.

Confronted with a soda machine, a **Mercurian** would put two quarters in the slot and punch the button of the drink he wants. (Mercurians always have a bit of change in their pockets.)

ARCHANGELS

*"Sometimes . . . you just have to **do** what you're **told**."*
*– The angel Simon, on obeying orders, in **The Prophecy***

An Archangel is an entity of immense power, who has passed beyond the boundaries of being and attained a higher perspective on the Symphony. Each Archangel has a near-absolute hold on a piece of Heaven; they use angelic Servitors – such as the player characters – to consolidate their hold on reality even farther.

Unlike other celestials, Archangels aren't defined by mere characteristics and Resources. They embody concepts and powers on a larger scale than can be measured within the scope of a game – or, perhaps, of human understanding. Thus, their motivations will sometimes seem unfathomable, but they are not completely inhuman. Archangels are proud and powerful, but just as susceptible to feelings of fear, doubt and guilt as any other being.

The Archangels are played by the GM, who interprets their personalities at his discretion. Of course, there are many more Archangels than the 13 described here. These are simply the ones who are currently most prominent in the Earthly phase of the War.

The Archangels

Blandine, Archangel of Dreams – page 110
David, Archangel of Stone – page 112
Dominic, Archangel of Judgment – page 114
Eli, Archangel of Creation – page 116
Gabriel, Archangel of Fire – page 118
Janus, Archangel of the Wind – page 120
Jean, Archangel of Lightning – page 122
Jordi, Archangel of Animals – page 124
Laurence, Archangel of the Sword – page 126
Marc, Archangel of Trade – page 128
Michael, Archangel of War – page 130
Novalis, Archangel of Flowers – page 132
Yves, Archangel of Destiny – page 134



Universal Invocation Modifiers

-4 Angel makes futile demands
+2 Angel's corporeal vessel is at risk of death
+3 Angel is at a divine Tether
+3 if the celestial is in the presence of enemy celestials (Diabolicals with the Host, or the Host with the Diabolicals, or **+4** if the celestial is in the presence of an enemy Superior!
-10 if the Superior being summoned is not the celestial's own, unless the celestial is currently on a mission for that other Superior or has an attunement belonging to that Word.

Time since last invocation: **-3** if less than a day, or **-2** if more than a day but less than a week, or **-1** if more than a week but less than a month, or **+1** if over a year!

Most angels were created by their Archangel, molded from the purest patterns of the Symphony.

And most angels remain in Heaven. But many are assigned to Earth. A few, favored servants, communicate directly with their Superiors rather than having their actions directed through a hierarchy of go-betweens.

Beginning angel characters are (in angelic terms) young and of ordinary stature, but they have caught the eye of their Archangel, who favors them with a relatively independent assignment on Earth. They will earn boons – such as special attunements, Rites, and more powerful Songs – in return for loyal and effective service; see p. 202. But poor servants will be punished. Ultimately, the disobedient or incompetent may be cast out of Heaven.

Describing the Archangels

The following pages describe the individual Archangels in detail, covering everything from their personal philosophies to their views on other Archangels.

Every Archangel has a Word and a philosophy. There is no single way to interpret the meaning or purpose of the Symphony, and each Archangel represents a different facet of Truth. Each of these princes of Heaven thinks his own province is the central one, and expects his servants to follow his lead.

Dissonance

Just as angels of all Choirs can do things against their natures and thus gain dissonance (see p. 57), a servant can do things which go against the basic nature of his Archangel. These things, different for each Archangel, cause notes of dissonance in the offender. If the problem can be corrected, the dissonance can usually be removed.

Choir and Servitor Attunements

These sections outline the typical servants of each Archangel, and describe the special abilities, or *attunements*, that Archangel grants to his servants.

There are two sorts of attunements for each Archangel: *Choir* and *Servitor*. Choir attunements, different for each Choir, come free to members of that Choir; other angels of that Archangel must pay 5 character points each to purchase them at character creation. Servitor attunements are available to all servants of that Archangel, but cost 10 character points to obtain at character creation. After character creation, new attunements can only be obtained as a reward from the Archangel.

An attunement generally has no Essence cost and is automatically successful during normal game play unless otherwise mentioned. In combat, an attunement takes one round to invoke; its effects start the following round.

Some Choir Attunements are marked "restricted" or "partly restricted." This means that they depend upon the resonance of the Choir, and other Choirs cannot use them! (A "partly restricted" attunement can be taken by other Choirs, but only the aspect of it that is not resonance-based can be used e.g., the Band Attunement of Haagenti's Lilim.)

Archangels possess all the abilities they grant to their servants, and many more, regardless of what Choir the Archangel actually belongs to.

Distinctions

Each Archangel, except Eli, has a set of rankings with which he can reward his Servitors for exceptional service, distinguishing him from most other angels. Each distinction (ranked "Vassal," "Friend," and "Master") grants a special ability related to that Archangel's Word. Distinctions cannot be bought with character points.

A distinction often brings command of other angels and a higher place among the Host. Other angels will respect, and demons will fear, the holder of a distinction.

One Archangel could grant a distinction to a servant of another, much as one nation may grant a military decoration to a soldier of another nation. Almost always this is done by agreement between the two Superiors.

Relations

As they battle the demons, Archangels struggle with one another over whose Word will dominate the plans for controlling humanity and waging the war on Hell. On Earth as it is in Heaven, angels do not always work well together.

Heavenly politics are complex – a web of alliances and antipathies, both formal and informal. These alliances do change, though not swiftly. Some archangels, such as Blandine and Eli, have dropped out of the political arena and inevitably lost influence by doing so. Jordi, on the other hand, maintains his position despite his disinterest in most issues . . . his support can be had, if one is persuasive enough, and others work hard to persuade him.

Of course, Servitors on Earth are expected to carry out these policies, giving aid to other angels in proportion to the degree of friendship between their masters.

To the Servitors of Archangels listed as "Allied," angels must grant any assistance necessary, or face the wrath of their master. To the Servitors of Archangels listed as "Associated," angels are expected to grant assistance within reason. Servitors of Archangels listed as "Neutral" are to be helped where possible – we're all servants of Heaven, after all – but payment is expected for the favor.

Some Archangels are actually hostile to one another. The interactions of their Servitors will vary, depending on their Choirs and personalities, the exact relationship between the unfriendly Archangels, and the situation. It could mean refusal to help – even in dire need – subtle sabotage, distraction and misdirection. An especially militant angel, or one who sees his Superior's Word opposed, could even attack a rival.

Anything that actually forwards the cause of evil, of course, may cause dissonance in an overcompetitive angel. And anything so clumsy that it creates a political incident in the courts of Heaven may earn public censure, possibly softened by private rewards.

Rites

An angel can do things, beyond an assigned mission, which support his Archangel's Word in the Symphony. These are called *Rites*, and they vary from master to master. When an angel performs one of his master's Rites, he regenerates Essence.

Angels who perform significant labors for Archangels other than their own may be rewarded with one of that Archangel's rites. Unless specified otherwise, each Rite may be used only once per day, and grants one point of Essence.

The Basic Rites listed for each Archangel are available to all his servants (see p. 51). GMs and players are welcome to create other rites that could support an Archangel's Word, and allow them in play if the rest of the group agrees. These would most likely be arcane Rites, granted by the Archangel only as a special reward.

Any Word-bound angel gains at least one special Rite (see p. 28) which he may share with his own Servitors.

Invocation

An angel in trouble can always call his Archangel for help, and a good servant will report to the boss occasionally before the boss finds it necessary to check up on *him*. But the rulers of Heaven have a lot on their minds and are not easily summoned.

An Archangel's Chance of Invocation is the (rather low) number an angel must roll on d666 to call his Archangel. Various artifacts and situations enhance the chance that the Archangel will respond. Some are universal – see *Universal Invocation Modifiers*, p. 108 – and work for any Archangel. Special invocation modifiers, listed for each Archangel, work only for that Archangel. Unless specified otherwise, only *one* of these special modifiers can be used per attempt!

Invoking an Archangel takes 2 turns – roughly 10 seconds. No Essence is required for an invocation, but, as with all rolls, every point spent raises the Chance of Invocation by 1. Failed invocations simply have no effect.

Yes, it's possible to summon an Archangel other than your own Superior. But it is very difficult, unless you are working with that other Archangel.

The check digit of the invocation roll can be used as a guide to the Superior's mood when he appears, with a 6 indicating "friendly and talkative," down to a 1 meaning "distracted, busy, grumpy." Of course, the news the servant brings is the most important thing. Even a grumpy Superior will lighten up if he gets good news, though he may not reward the bearer – and even a happy Archangel will frown when told of disaster.

An Archangel will not appear in his glory in a public place. For instance, if you summon Novalis at a Crash Worship show, she'll be the girl who puts her hands over your eyes and says, "Guess who?"

Even a successful invocation will yield a very brief response. Typically, a Superior might appear for a few moments, minutes at most, to answer a question or receive an urgent report. If the servant is in trouble, the master might instantly translate him to a place of safety, such as a local Tether, before hearing his report. Only a few Archangels, such as David and Michael, are at all likely to jump into battle for their Servitors.



Less-pressing problems may be answered with a bit of cryptic aid, requiring the angels to solve a puzzle or deduce how to best use a tool or helper. Archangels are very busy, and help those who help themselves.

BLANDINE
ARCHANGEL OF DREAMS

The world is a dream, nothing more.

Some dreams are more solid than others, and Blandine's servants are charged with protecting dreamers and helping them battle their fears. The minions of Beleth, Princess of Nightmares, are her dire enemies.

Blandine is a Cherub, and something of a loner. As such, she prefers to avoid Archangelic politics. But just because she's removed herself from the planning of the War doesn't mean she's not fighting. It's generally (if grudgingly) agreed that, of all the Archangels, Blandine has done the most measurable good for mankind. She humbly carries out her orders and follows her Word, helping the human race achieve its goals and dreams with as little celestial interference as possible.

Blandine's servants are rarely combat monsters. Like their mistress, they prefer subtle background manipulations to force, and seldom involve themselves in outright violence.

Every evening is an adventure for the servants of Blandine, who must use caution during the day, saving their Essence for the night in dreamworlds far from Earth. After a long night of walking the ethereal Marches of Dream (p. 51), her angels typically spend a few lonely hours nursing their empty souls before reaching the morning light and its rush of rejuvenating Essence.

On the few occasions when she manifests in the corporeal world, Blandine prefers to appear as a beautiful woman in her early 20s with black hair and green eyes, wearing gray clothing with elaborate embroidery.

Dissonance

An angel of Blandine may not take his celestial form in the mundane world, nor use Celestial Songs on Earth. To do so generates dissonance.

Most of Blandine's angels have been assigned specific dreamers to guard. If one of her servants knows his charge is in danger, he must warn him in his next dream or suffer dissonance until either the dreamer has been adequately warned or the dangerous situation is resolved.

Choir Attunements

Seraphim

Blandine's Seraphim immediately recognize intruders in another person's dream. Add their Ethereal Forces to any Perception roll made in the Marches.

Cherubim *(restricted)*

Cherubim of Blandine may automatically enter the dreamscape of a sleeper to whom they're attuned.

Ofanim

Ofanim feel at home in the Marches, moving comfortably through ethereal reality. When Dream Walking (see below), they can stay in a dreamscape for a number of minutes equal to the check digit of their successful Perception roll times their Ethereal Forces.

Elohim *(restricted)*

In the Marches, the natural resonance of Blandine's Elohim for emotion is constantly active; no resonance roll is needed. Consider the "check digit" as being equal to the angel's Ethereal Forces. They may make resonance rolls in an attempt to improve the check digit.

Malakim

Blandine's Malakim are not noticed in the Marches unless they want to be. Modify any Perception roll to notice one of these Malakim by the angel's Ethereal Forces – even for Blandine's Seraphim.

Kyriotates *(restricted)*

While asleep, a Kyriotate may be in more than one part of the Marches at a time. His consciousness may simultaneously extend to a number of dreamscapes equal to his Ethereal Forces.

Mercurians

Blandine's Mercurians can use dreamers as conduits, moving from one person's dreamscape to another's without needing to roll – but only if the two people are close to each other (GM's discretion) and currently on the same side of the Marches (either Blandine's or Beleth's).

Servitor Attunements

Dream Walking

A servant of Blandine may enter the Marches through the mind of a human dreamer. The angel must be asleep, and must make a successful Perception roll. He must have seen the person before, but the two can be anywhere in the world; +2 if they're physically touching. The subject must also be asleep, and in Blandine's realm. The check digit gives the number of minutes the angel may stay in the subject's dream – or, if the roll failed, the number of minutes before he may try again.

Healing Dream

This extremely powerful attunement allows its user to scan a person's memory for a certain topic, then modify it. The target must be within half a mile, asleep.

Some parts of a person's mind are blocked from tampering: firm convictions, memories from the previous 10 years (minus the angel's Ethereal Forces), as well as phobias, insanities and other major traumas. (Yes, a demon and his actions are considered to be such blemishes.)

Using this power costs 6 Essence and takes an hour. It also requires a successful Will roll at -2 on the part of its user, and may be resisted by the patient. If the attempt fails, the patient wakes up, and remembers a dream about the subject with which the angel tried to tamper.

Distinctions

Vassal of Dreams

The angel can send blissful dreams to any sleeper within 500 yards. Both the user and his target are drawn into Blandine's dream world.

Friend of Sleepers

The angel can detect when someone in his presence is the target of a celestially-inflicted dream or nightmare.

Master of the Realms of Night

A Master has a +2 bonus to succeed on any roll made while walking the Marches.

Relations

The Archangel of Dreams considers the other Archangels too political and not sufficiently dedicated. Like Jordi, she strongly prefers that her servants avoid the complexities of Heavenly politics. She is listed as hostile to four other Archangels, but this is merely because they often work against her Word. "Coldly neutral" might be a better description. Her agents will not sabotage other divine servants except to protect the Word that is Dream. They might heed a genuine call from help from any angel, even a servant of violent Michael, if it did not interfere with their duties.

Blandine herself never leaves the Marches for matters of merely political concern. Traditionally, one of her angels of Hope, the Menunim, carries her sigil to the most important meetings, where her vote is cast at the discretion of Yves.

Allied: *No one*
Associated: *Yves*
Hostile: *David, Jean, Marc, Michael*

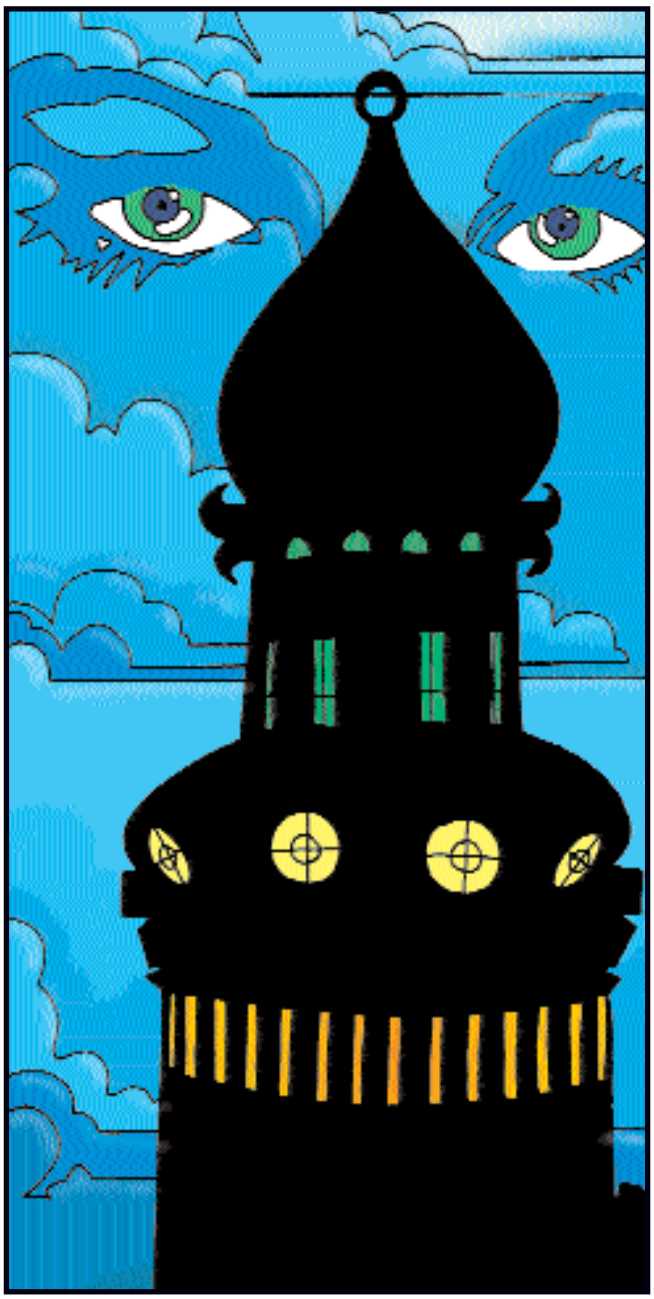
Basic Rites

- Sleep for four hours without visiting Beleth's realm.
- Spend eight hours successfully protecting a sleeper from active forces of danger. (+2 Essence)

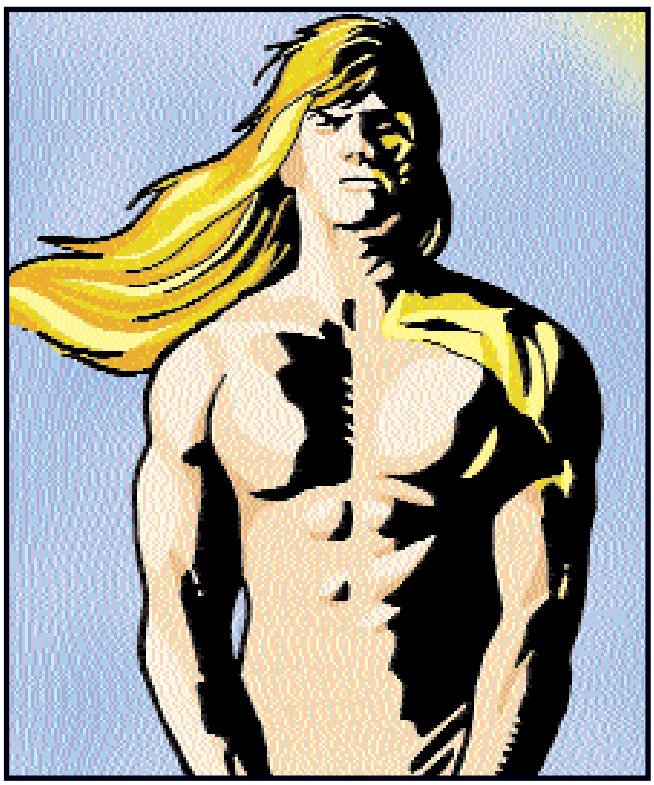
Chance of Invocation: 2

Invocation Modifiers

+1 A book of fairy tales
+2 A sleeping potion
+3 A handwritten collection of lullabies
+4 A bed in which a demon slept while in the Marches
+5 One person, dreaming peacefully while traveling in a car, train or airplane
+6 Ninety people in a room, peacefully dreaming
+8 At the top of Blandine's Tower (see p. 138)



DAVID
Archangel of Stone



The world is strong and hard. Be harder, be stronger.

David is a Malakite. He and his angels created the first human shelters, and his disciples taught the arts of pottery, metal-working and building construction. He also helped to find new and better ways for people to beat one another to bloody smears.

Since David and his followers helped mold early humanity, he feels a responsibility to finish the job. His angels strengthen people by forcing them to endure terrible labors. David believes this is necessary if humanity is to survive the times ahead.

His Servitors encourage people to join together in strength for mutual loyalty and protection, even to the point of forming street gangs and militias. They proudly count skinheads among their followers. Some angels think the servants of David are too brutal, but they themselves wonder if they're brutal enough. David's followers are blindly loyal, and do not tolerate anyone questioning their master's decisions.

David's human vessel has a commanding presence, with steel-gray eyes set in a strong face. He rarely wears clothes, preferring to be naked as stone. He can manifest more subtly as a mound of rock . . . which can, at need, take a roughly humanoid shape, speaking through the grinding and scraping of the stones.

Dissonance

Stone is immovable, incorruptible. Angels of Stone will never start a fight, but they'll always finish it. Being provoked into attacking first generates dissonance. Also, David's angels gain dissonance if they sully their hands with ranged weapons; they prefer close combat.

Choir Attunements

David's angels are attuned to minerals, such as stone, metals, gems, sand – even in altered forms, like glass and asphalt. Grassy dirt, organic material, and artificial substances such as plastic are barriers to their abilities.

Seraphim

David's Seraphim are heavenly miners, charged with teaching people how to live off the land. They can detect the presence and quality of all minerals within 1 yard of their vessels for every Corporeal Force they possess. Combined with a successful Chemistry roll, this allows them to detect complex compounds such as gunpowder.

Cherubim

David's Cherubim enjoy hard labor, like factory work or blacksmithing. They are attuned to forces of attraction. They can create a pseudo-magnetic field which can pull into their hands any object made mostly from minerals that the angel is strong enough to lift, as long as it's within (Corporeal Forces) yards. An object's holder can resist with a Strength roll, at a penalty equal to the Cherub's Celestial Forces.

Ofanim

The Earth parts for David's Ofanim, allowing them to move slowly through any sort of mineral matter. They can take with them worn or carried items up to (Corporeal Forces) × 10 pounds in weight.

Each foot of progress takes one round through soft earth, two through stone or brick, and three through glass or metal. The passage closes seamlessly behind the angel. The angel's connection to the Earth allows him to retain a sense of up and down.

If the angel encounters a layer of non-mineral substance while moving through minerals (most interior walls have paper, wood, or paint somewhere inside them), the angel must tear through it to continue.

Elohim

David's Elohim are attuned to the planet as a whole; they have absolute direction, and always know exactly where they are and what time it is. Organic and artificial substances block this power, but only if a thick layer completely surrounds the angel. This attunement works only in the corporeal world and in Heaven.

These celestial hermits accept students, humans and angels alike, whom they train in the ways of stone.

Malakim

Once a day, a Malakite serving David can plant his feet on solid ground and become immovable and indestructible. His senses still work, but he can do nothing except to answer mental communication if it is received, and to revert to normal with a Will roll. David's Malakim are charged with training humans in the arts of self-defense.

Kyriotates

Kyriotates serving David may possess their own vessels, but only of stone. These vessels cost the usual 3 points per level, but move at half speed, strike with +2 Power with bare hands, ignore weather and any temperature that would not affect a statue, and have a natural Protection of 5.

When the Kyriotate manifests this vessel, it must allocate an appropriate number of Forces to it – five to a humanoid stone vessel, one to a stone seagull, and so forth. Demanifesting the vessel frees up these Forces.

Angels do not suffer dissonance or Trauma when a stone vessel is damaged or destroyed.

Mercurians

David's Mercurians are charged with making places safe for humans to live. They can recognize a building's date of construction and what material was used to build it.

They have a feeling for buildings constructed from minerals, a sense which grows stronger as the angels move through them. It's like a blueprint in their heads, omitting non-mineral elements (like people) but revealing any secret doors and hidden compartments, and showing the quickest way through any maze of corridors.

Servitor Attunements

Deep Gaze

Fueled with 1 Essence, this lets the user see through (Corporeal Forces) yards of stone or earthy material. This ability remains active for (Celestial Forces) × 10 minutes.

Cold Touch

With a mere 6 Essence, and a successful Will roll, the angel may touch a foe and turn him to unbreakable stone, conscious but unable to move or speak. Celestial victims may resist with their Strength plus their Corporeal Forces; others must resist on Strength alone.

After 10 minutes plus the angel's Corporeal Forces, the victim may try a Strength roll (plus Corporeal Forces, for a celestial) to recover. If he fails, he may try again after the same amount of time, until eventually he succeeds.

Distinctions

Vassal of Stone

The physical vessel of the angel cannot be harmed by earth or stone.

Friend of the Subterranean World

The Friend automatically detects the presence of underground cavities (rivers, springs, cellars, caves, etc.) within (Corporeal Forces) × 100 yards.

Master of the Granite Hand

In unarmed combat, multiply the check digit of any successful Fighting roll by the angel's Corporeal Forces. This bonus is not cumulative with the bonus from Rock Hard.

Relations

While it's no secret that David thinks he should be in charge of the War, he and his servants are ultimately loyal to Michael and the rest of the military faction. He has privately instructed his Servitors to aid Gabriel, as well, but to avoid spending their energies to aid others unless it advances David's plans as well.

Allied: *Gabriel, Michael*
Associated: *Jean, Jordi, Laurence*
Hostile: *Marc*

Basic Rites

- Spend four hours resting in a mine or a cave.
- Spend one hour praying undisturbed in a church made of stone.

Chance of Invocation: 3

Invocation Modifiers

+1 A small, smooth stone
+2 A stone statue of a male figure
+3 A marble statue of a male figure
+4 A gathering of 50 gang members without guns
+5 A stone carving more than 1,500 years old
+6 A rock used to kill a demon

DOMINIC

ARCHANGEL OF JUDGMENT

The world is ruled by order. Without law, all is cacophony and madness.

Dominic and his servants have been charged with maintaining order by rooting out corruption in the Symphony, even among angels. Especially among angels.

Dominic is a Seraph. He moves slowly under his heavy black robes, countless eyes peering from his celestial head. In the corporeal realm, he manifests just as frequently as a man (Dominic) as he does as a woman (Dominique).

Known as the most tyrannical of the Archangels, he heads the Divine Inquisition. His servants root out dissent within the Host and deal with troublemakers, such as severely Discordant angels and Outcasts. They've even been known to help the Servitors of Asmodeus track down demonic Renegades. Dominic won't acknowledge this, but his servants' cold silence on the subject tells the whole story.

The Divine Inquisition is organized in triads – groups of three angels. Each triad includes a Cherub, attuned to the subject of inquiry; a Seraph, to resolve his true culpability; and an angel of another Choir to carry out the sentence. Judgment is by a majority vote of the triad. If a guilty party is of higher rank or stature than the angels assigned to the case (or if one of a triad dies and the vote is deadlocked) a more powerful triad must be called in to add their votes and help carry out the sentence.

Only his most-favored Servitors, such as the player characters, operate autonomously, and Dominic reserves them for missions which require the utmost discretion.

Dominic has little interest in the laws of mankind – or, for that matter, its problems. An angel of Dominic will help execute a just human law, especially by aiding human police and courts, but will also ignore a law that fails to serve his master's severe Justice.

Dissonance

While the Servitors of Judgment condemn with heavy hands, with an Old Testament "eye for an eye" philosophy, it's dissonant for them to inflict a punishment greater than the crime, or to stand by while the innocent are punished unfairly.

It's also dissonant for them to overlook what *they* feel to be heresy in an angel.

Choir Attunements

Seraphim *(restricted)*

Dominic's Seraphim are the chief inquisitors of the celestial realm, seeking out corruption both internal and external. Angels who fail to answer their questions may be detained for investigation.

Resonance rolls to determine a subject's honesty are based on their Perception, *plus* the number of Celestial Forces these Seraphim have.

Cherubim *(restricted)*

When attuned to a subject of inquiry, Dominic's Cherubim generate no dissonance if the subject is hurt.

Ofanim

Dominic's Ofanim can hear the entropy of Discord like a wailing scream. Within a number of feet equal to their Celestial Forces, they can tell exactly what Discord he has, and how much.

Elohim

When a person feels guilt – justified or not – Dominic's Elohim can see the guilty feelings dripping across his face like bloody sweat.

Malakim

Malakim working for the Archangel of Judgment can hear dissonant tones in celestials. If they discover Malakim with more than one note of dissonance, they must tell an Archangel immediately.

Kyriotates *(restricted)*

Dominic's Kyriotates generate no dissonance for taking poor care of a host, if that person is evil.

Mercurians

The natural resonance of Dominic's Mercurians will tell them not only the usual information (see p. 103), but also what a human's most deviant behavior is and how long ago he committed it. Also, these Mercurians generate no dissonance for spilling the blood of the guilty, as long as the punishment fits the crime.

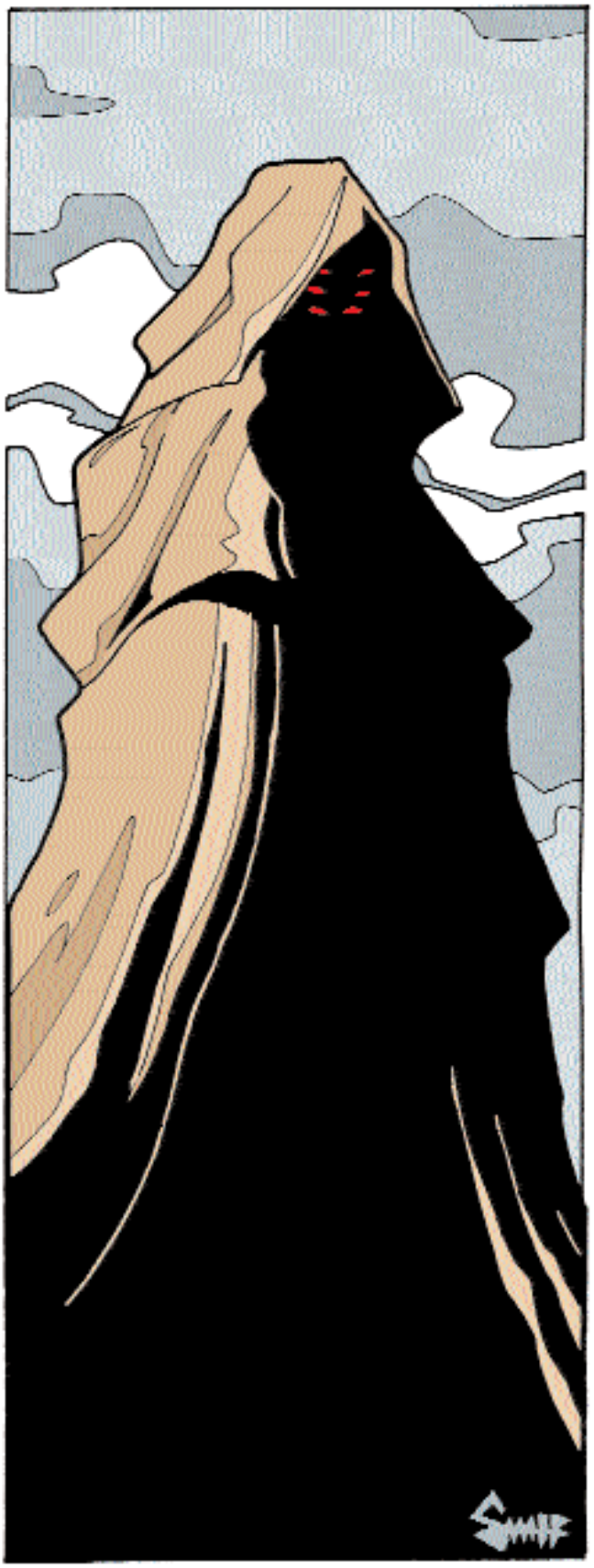
Servitor Attunements

Incarnate Law

The angel innately knows which rules and regulations have been agreed upon by a place's human inhabitants.

Heavenly Judgment

The angel may ask higher powers – whisper not the name – to make an immediate trial, for the modest sum of 7 Essence. The accused must be within the angel's eyesight and suspected of no less a crime than murder.



If the accused is truly guilty, a luminous sword appears in the angel's hand that very second. "Let justice be done," a voice booms from nowhere – and upon hearing these words, the sword flies to the attack, striking the victim once a round for 7 hits of damage. This attack lasts until either the guilty party or the angel of Judgment is dead, or until the invoker wills the judgment to end.

Distinctions

Vassal of Conscience

The angel may imbue his gaze with such severe reproach that those with the weakest wills – a Will of 1 or 2 – confess to their crimes immediately.

Friend of Judgment

As above, but Wills of 3 and 4 also confess!

Master of Law

The Master automatically detects any crime committed within 10 yards times his Celestial Forces.

Relations

Dominic wishes to be uncommitted to any divine faction, though he (along with Laurence) supports Catholicism as the best belief system for humans, and he always listens to Yves. His current distrust of Eli often places him with the more warlike Archangels by default. Other Archangels, especially Michael, think Dominic is too narrow-minded; but, overzealousness aside, he and his servants do get their jobs done.

His current priority is to try (and sentence) Eli, who Dominic feels is mad and dangerous. Few of Eli's scattered angels serve Dominic, nor does he seek their aid. Dominic also looks with a jaundiced eye on Gabriel (also insane, but protected by Yves for some reason), Janus (theft should be wrong, even for an angel), and Novalis (too airy and informal for her rank).

Allied: *Yves*
Associated: *No one*
Hostile: *Eli*

Basic Rites

- Spend two hours defending an innocent in court.
- Help deliver a guilty mortal to corporeal justice.
- Slay the vessel of a demon or Fallen angel. (+3 Essence)

Chance of Invocation: None

Dominic cannot be summoned, but he appears to each of his Servitors approximately once a week to check on their progress.

ELI

ARCHANGEL OF CREATION



The world is creation, the application of will against entropy, bringing life and beauty from the void.

Of all the Archangels, Eli produces the most contradictory images in the hearts of angels. He is both creator and destroyer – full of life and hope, his future wide-open, but out of control and out of his mind. His servants embody the Earth's primal creative forces. Casual and disorganized they may have become, but they remain makers of beauty and servants of Heaven.

Eli is the quintessential Mercurian, a member of the most human of the Choirs. But a few decades ago, Eli abandoned his divine mosque, stripped himself of his memories of the past and disappeared into the corporeal masses. He's seldom heard from, and even his most ardent followers are afraid of what he's become.

The Archangel of Creation no longer seems to care for protecting his Word. It's in no danger, though – Creation is certainly not slowing down. In fact, it's completely overrunning everything else in creation.

Now Eli walks the Earth in various guises, and not even the other Archangels know for sure what he's doing. Insane bacchanalia? Hidden meditation? Consorting with Evil? Gossip is rife, and Eli just smiles vaguely.

At the beginning of this century, Eli granted dominion of most of his Servitors to the other Archangels. So, for instance, one might be "a Malakite of Eli in service to Gabriel." They retain the powers listed below, and get no new abilities unless their new masters grant them rites or attunements – which rarely happens.

A few of Eli's most favored Servitors still do his direct bidding. ("Do what thou wilt," he told them, "but be cool.") They go on esoteric errands at his whim, and often don't understand what they're doing, or why. They keep their own Hearts, hiding them where they can.

Scattered in service to various Archangels, seemingly abandoned by their master, Eli's Servitors have every reason to be frustrated and confused. On top of that, Dominic has been making the supposed heresies of Eli the focus of his dark scrutinies.

DISSONANCE

The servants of Eli have nothing unique which make them dissonant to their Word. Go play, have fun. Those in service to the other Archangels do not acquire the dissonance of the Archangel they serve.

CHOIR ATTUNEMENTS

Seraphim

Eli's Seraphim can recognize gifted individuals. Celestial talent scouts, they know how adept someone is at a skill just by thinking of the skill and turning their Perception on the target. On a check digit of 6, they know the subject's full potential with that skill, as well.

Cherubim *(partially restricted)*

A Cherub working for Eli may hold any item in his hand and know who created it and when. The angel usually learns little beyond the most basic facts about the maker (GM's discretion, guided by the check digit, but the question "human, angel or demon?" will always be answered.) However, he may use his natural resonance to track down the creator. Items made on an assembly line will seem to be made by many people, or by a machine.

Ofanim
Eli's Ofanim can slow down, speed up or even reverse the aging process, both in their own vessels and in others'. Once a day, an Ofanite serving Eli may make physical contact with something and adjust its age by a number of years equal to his Precision. Also, their vessels heal fast – a number of hits per day equal to their Corporeal Forces.

Elohim
Elohim who serve Eli hold the secrets of binding Songs into physical objects to create relics and reliquaries. It takes one month of finding and preparing materials for each level of Song in a relic, and/or every point of Essence the reliquary is to contain. The angel must also know Transubstantiation (below).

Malakim
Even working for the Archangel of Creation, Malakim are still powerful forces of destruction; they fight creatively. Anything they pick up can be used as a weapon with a Power equal to the check digit of a successful Perception roll, for the length of a single combat.

Kyriotates
These angels may perform the Celestial Song of Form on their hosts at no Essence cost! The Song's effects end prematurely if the angel abandons his host.

Mercurians
These Mercurians, counterparts to Eli's Elohim, are the makers of talismans. It takes one month for every level of a skill the artifact is imbued with. The angel must also know the skill.

Servitor Attunements
Abracadabra
The angel can create base matter from nothingness. For every Essence spent, he may create a tenth of an ounce of a rare mineral, such as a precious metal; 1 cubic foot of a common metal or material, such as iron or sulfur; or 1 cubic yard of simple, mundane, and common Earthly substance, such as rock or water. The angel must have some experience with the substance being created – if he's never seen metallic sodium or sulfuric acid, he can't create them. The GM may allow a Chemistry skill roll to substitute for direct experience.

The material appears where the creator wishes, up to 1 hex away. The location must be in sight, and there must be sufficient room for the created matter – it cannot be created inside a person, or within a closed, but empty, cabinet.

Transubstantiation
The angel may imbue inorganic elements with the complex organic energies of life. For each point of Essence spent, he may convert 1 quart of common liquid, such as water or ammonia, into a complex organic solution, such as wine or blood; or a cubic foot of common material, such as sand or sodium, into a common (though relatively more complex) organic pattern, such as bugs or fish. He may also convert small amounts of one organic substance into another, at the GM's discretion.

Distinctions
Eli, alone among the major Archangels, does not offer distinctions to his servants. Further, an angel of Creation in the service of another Archangel, though certainly eligible for that master's distinctions, seems to have to work twice as hard to be noticed. Heaven isn't always fair.

Relations
Since Eli "dropped out," his reputation has grown tarnished among his peers and his influence is waning. If he ever bothered to defend himself, Eli would say that he's doing more than most Archangels by living among the humans and surfing where the Symphony pulls him.

Many in Heaven consider Eli's servants to be latter-day Grigori, corrupted by the delights of the flesh. With Dominic's crackdowns over the last decade, this reputation has diminished markedly. Still, there are no greater debauches than those thrown by the angels of Creation.

Allied: *Jordi, Novalis*
Associated: *Janus, Yves, Blandine*
Hostile: *No one*

Basic Rites
- Succeed at 3 Precision-based skill rolls in a row.
- Spend an hour having (consensual) sex.
- Calm a group of more than three crying children.

Chance of Invocation: Varies
Roll 1 die; the result is his chance of invocation for all attempts made that day by any angel anywhere.

Invocation Modifiers
+1 A paint brush or a musical instrument
+2 Some form of birth control, unused
+3 A human family getting along with one another
+4 A blueprint of the building you're standing in
+5 The work of a blind sculptor
+6 A unique plant, animal or mineral

GABRIEL
ARCHANGEL OF FIRE

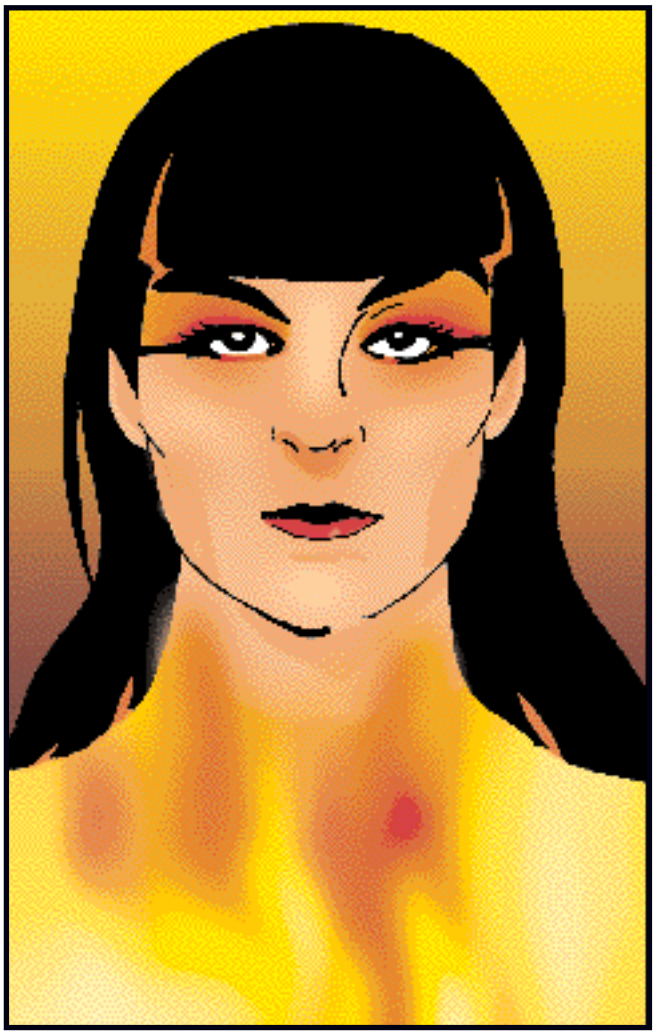
The world is energy, hot and fluid.

This energy can fuel the hearts of men and women, bringing joy and inspiration; it can also burn the unwise and the unfortunate. Gabriel's servants are fire incarnate.

Gabriel is an Ofanite, an ancient and inscrutable creature. She and her servants may conduct themselves in an honest, simple fashion, but their true natures are complex.

Physically, she's perfect. Her male body is just as flawless as her female vessel, which she prefers in modern times. In any form, she's a powerful, obstinate fighter.

Mentally, however, she's unstable. Gabriel was present at the conception of two major religions (literally, in the case of Christianity – for Islam, she recited the Qu'ran to Mohammed at Yves' instruction). Although she was only following orders, Dominic (who, along with Laurence, supports Christianity in particular) declared her heretical and tried to have her exiled from Heaven. Yves and Michael defended her, but she stormed away angrily and has yet to return. That was over a millennium ago.



Besides the Word of Fire, Gabriel has other offices. Her most important duty is to punish the cruel, which she does with a vengeance. She was once Heaven's messenger, but since her tragic mission to Mohammed, she has refused the role of divine courier.

Gabriel is too unstable to manage God's armies, too disturbed to rehabilitate and too powerful to destroy. She's a primal force which can occasionally be channeled, but never controlled, by the rational factions of Heaven. And still Yves balks any attempt to move against her.

She still walks the Earth, avoiding other Archangels and performing her role as she has since ancient times. Sometimes she talks to herself; sometimes she screams; sometimes she laughs for no apparent reason. Her servants love her madly, and burn to follow in her footsteps across the hot coals of life.

DISSONANCE

Gabriel punishes the cruel. They need not die, but they must know God's wrath. Gabriel doesn't insist that her angels clean the Earth of every human louse they encounter – but each time they finish with one, they must deal with the very next one they meet.

The cruel must feel Gabriel's fire within a number of days equal to the angel's Celestial Forces, or the servant generates a note of dissonance. This dissonance vanishes once justice has been served.

CHOIR ATTUNEMENTS

Most of Gabriel's angels are attuned to specific kinds of cruelty, which they can detect at a glance. However, they don't get details – merely that the target practices the kind of cruelty in question.

Seraphim

Gabriel's Seraphim stalk those who profit knowingly from the suffering of others, or who lie to themselves about what monsters they really are. Sweat-shop businessmen, slumlords and politicians are their special prey.

Cherubim

It is the role of Gabriel's Cherubim to burn those who, within the last year, have horribly betrayed someone devoted to them. Look for them, smiling, outside divorce and custody courts.

Ofanim
Charged with pursuing those who flee justice, Ofanim in Gabriel's service are immune to damage from corporeal heat, radiation and electricity. Their vessels' energies balance automatically, with any excess being distributed across the rest of the Symphony, and any deficit made up from it. Every time one of these celestial bounty hunters falls into lava, the sun burns that much more brightly.

Elohim
Gabriel's Elohim can sense those who delight in inflicting psychological or emotional pain upon others. They themselves take no pleasure in the pain they inflict.

Malakim
At will, these Malakim can encircle their hands with green celestial flames, burning everything they touch. As a weapon, this is a hand-to-hand attack with Power equal to the angel's Celestial Forces and Accuracy of -1. Gabriel's Malakim are given specific assignments rather than blanket job descriptions.

Kyriotates
Kyriotates serving Gabriel are attuned to people who enjoy inflicting physical pain upon others. Pimps, prison guards, and school coaches feel their wrath. Unlike her Elohim, these angels enjoy the punishments they visit upon the wicked. After all, they're helping people.

Mercurians
Gabriel's Mercurians can recognize those who delight in being cruel to themselves. Rather than punish these people for their dark natures, these Mercurians must prevent each one they meet from hurting themselves, for a single day. These angels enjoy such roles as bartenders, therapists, prostitutes and other secret confessors.

Servitor Attunements
Dance of the Atoms
The angel may control the ambient temperature within his field of vision, up or down 10°F for each of his Corporeal Forces. The change is almost instantaneous, but cannot be used to reduce (or raise) a person's body temperature to the point of death immediately . . .

Smite
The angel may lash out with a fiery attack at anyone he can see, within (10 yards × Corporeal Forces), doing damage equal to (Celestial Forces × Essence used). This bypasses all normal physical armor. However, while there is no roll to hit, the attack can be dodged, with the check digit reducing the damage done as normal.

Distinctions
Vassal of Fire
A Vassal of Fire may strengthen or reduce any normal fire anywhere in sight by the strength of thought alone. He can contain a fire within the area of effect, letting it burn out without spreading. Or he can cause it to burn faster and leap higher. The fire can be made to spread or shrink at a rate of a yard per round, or leap upward to a height equal to its current radius. More detailed control isn't possible. This power persists as long as the angel concentrates on it, and covers an area up to ten yards wide.

Friend of the Divine Spark
The angel can amplify a human's burning passion (for a thing or a theory), which the victim must then obsess over for an hour each day. This lasts for a number of weeks equal to the angel's Ethereal Forces.

Master of the Flame of Heaven
In combat, the angel can pay 1 Essence to create a sphere of bright flames around his body, with a radius of 5 yards, lasting until the battle ends or the angel wills it away. Any foe entering the sphere (or present when it appears) must make a Strength roll to avoid being dazzled (-2 to skills involving Agility or the use of eyes) for a number of rounds equal to the angel's Celestial Forces. The flames are formed of light only, and do not cause damage, nor do they affect the angel's allies or innocent bystanders.

Relations
Allied: *No one*
Associated: *Janus, Yves*
Hostile: *Dominic*

Basic Rites
- Spend three hours near an intense heat source (a huge campfire, the furnace of a crematorium, etc.).
- Spend an hour in intense conflict, mental or physical.
- Kill a demon with fire. (+3 Essence)

Chance of Invocation: 3

Invocation Modifiers
+1 Praying before a fight
+2 Cleaning a piece of metal in flames
+3 The life's blood from a betrayer
+4 The tomb of one who died to protect others
+5 In, or surrounded by, flames
+6 While actually engaged in mortal battle

JANUS

ARCHANGEL OF THE WIND



The world is a whirlwind. It sweeps across bodies and hearts, bending the soft things and destroying the rest.

The servants of Janus are Heaven's agents of change, charged with shaking up the establishment and making the static into the dynamic. They are also divine thieves, confounding the wicked with their daring exploits.

Janus, a broad and brawny Ofanite, is one of the oldest Archangels. Although his mission is to promote change, he himself has changed very little in the past millennia. In fact, like many Archangels, he seems increasingly set in his ways as time goes by.

He's very gregarious, but just as quick to condemn a friend as to praise him. Then, after his fits of criticism pass, he is very, very apologetic. While some worry about his stability, Janus' usefulness is sometimes the only thing Gabriel and Dominic agree on. After all, his mood swings reflect his role in the Symphony.

Janus' angels aim to disrupt normality and cause as much chaos as possible without upsetting the overall balance of the Symphony. In a typical scenario, an angel of Janus comes to town, scopes the place out, and mayhem ensues. Actually, almost any adventure of these angels ends with "and mayhem ensues."

The servants of Janus are easy to spot: reckless youth, hanging out of the side of a speeding car to regenerate Essence, zooming from one town to another, attending rallies, blowing up cars, agents of change. They're also known for their light fingers and bulging jackets.

Dissonance

It's dissonant for servants of Janus to stay in the same locale for more than three days. Each city is a locale, but some cities (New York, Los Angeles, etc.) sprawl over enough land that different districts could be considered different locales. But it's important for those who serve the Wind to keep moving, at all costs.

Choir Attunements

If the wind stops, it dies. Janus' servants have an attunement for motion much like that of the Ofanim.

Seraphim

The Seraphim of Wind can add the number of their Celestial Forces to their Fast-Talk skill rolls. They still cannot lie without generating dissonance, but they can sway someone's opinion with the overall hope of greasing the wheels of the Symphony.

Cherubim *(restricted)*

Cherubim working for Janus can only attune themselves to one person at a time, but the subject of that attunement becomes enthralled with the Cherub

(the equivalent of a Servant Resource at a level equal to the angel's Celestial Forces), acting as his servant for as long as the attunement lasts.

Ofanim
Ofanim supporting the Word of Wind may add their Ethereal Forces to any roll involving breaking locks, opening doors or otherwise freeing themselves or others from corporeal restraint.

Elohim
Barring the intervention of Celestial Forces, Elohim serving Janus can look at the sky and accurately predict the weather – down to the minute – for a number of days into the future equal to their Ethereal Forces.

Malakim
The dark riders who serve the Wind are extraordinary demolition experts. They may add the number of their Ethereal Forces to any roll involving making, setting and using (including throwing) an explosive device.

Kyriotates
Kyriotates serving Janus may assume a gaseous form, manifesting in the corporeal realm without the need of a host vessel. They can't communicate verbally or interact with the world in any significant way, and move at one-fourth their normal speed. In this form, they can be spotted with a successful Perception roll, made easier by every note of dissonance the angel has.

Mercurians
Janus' Mercurians can move through crowds like eels through coral. Waves of humanity part for them, whether or not the angel is visible. The angel can also tell at a glance if an object was acquired honestly or not.

Servitor Attunements
Passage
With a successful Agility roll, the angel may open any lock. Some are harder than others:

Difficulty	*Type of Mechanism*
0	Simple mechanical (handcuffs, deadbolts, etc.)
-1	Complex mechanical (combination locks, etc.)
-2	Simple electronics (card-based systems, etc.)
-3	Complicated electronics (voice prints, etc.)

Swipe
For 2 Essence, the angel can make a corporeal object (no heavier in pounds than his total number of Forces) vanish for a number of minutes equal to his Celestial Forces. It reappears later with the angel, wherever he is, and it makes no disturbance in the Symphony as long as no one observes the vanishing or reappearance.

Distinctions
Vassal of the Wind
Vassals of the Wind can communicate among themselves, as clearly and quickly as in human speech, in a silent language of gesture.

Friend of the Unseen
Angels with this distinction always know if they're being watched, listened to, or otherwise spied on.

Master of Motion
The angel moves silently and at great speed. Double his flying speed if he has wings. He may add 4 to his Running skill *before* any roll, or to the check digit of any Running roll that succeeds without assistance!

Relations
Allied: *David, Gabriel, Michael*
Associated: *Yves*
Hostile: *Laurence*

Basic Rites
- Spend 1 hour in 80+ mph winds (for example, in a windstorm or in a convertible with the top down).
- Spend 2 hours meditating on a moving roller coaster – it can stop to let others off and on, but the angel has to ride it through.
- See a vehicle flip and roll at more than 60 mph, or watch a multi-story building demolished, in person. (+2 Essence)

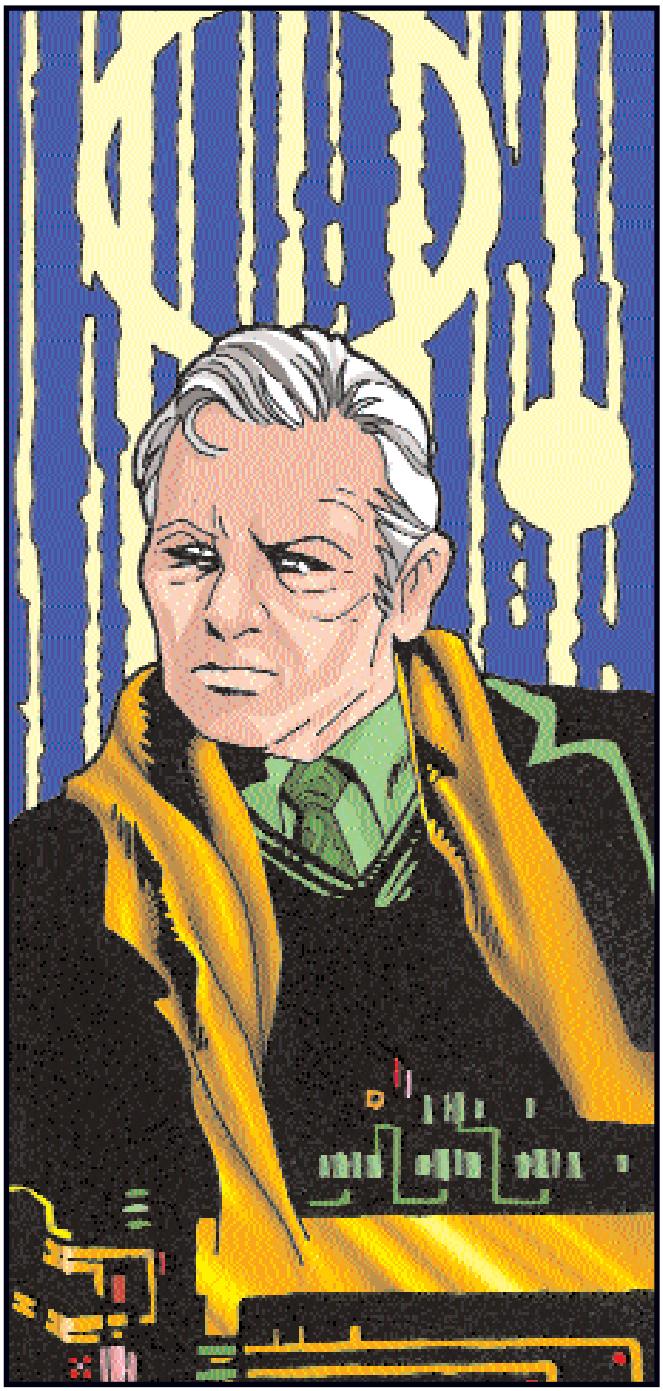
Chance of Invocation: 0

Invocation Modifiers
Just because a storm can't be summoned doesn't mean there aren't ways to attract its attention . . .

+1 Steal a newspaper
+2 Deface a public street sign
+3 Reroute a set of "Detour" signs
+4 Blow up a car
+5 Have a tornado in direct, unaided line of sight
+6 Fall through the air for more than 10 seconds

JEAN

Archangel of Lightning



The world is lightning, the spark of life and the flash of insight.

Servants of Jean control the various energies which course through the corporeal world. Slowly, they dole out their secrets to mankind.

Jean is an Elohite. He manages the technology of humanity, and their knowledge and comprehension of the physical world. He charges his Servitors with developing and experimenting with new high-tech devices designed to reduce the selfish desires of mankind.

He and his Servitors don't think very highly of humanity. "But in spite of their tiny cranial volumes," he admits, "they still manage the occasional flash of insight." Jean usually chalks this sort of thing up to Lucifer and Vapula (Prince of Technology) who slip secrets of the Symphony to human scientists in exchange for dark currency.

Jean is a middle-aged blond man, just over six feet tall, with a face that looks like it was carved by a knife. He avoids the other Archangels, preferring to work on his own schemes – and those of God, of course.

His personality is proud and pedantic. He's a micromanager, who prefers that his angels not take too much upon themselves – especially when it comes to human innovation. As Archangels go, he is easy to summon, and usually grumbles, "You did the right thing to call me." Jean is a hard worker, but likes to do it himself.

Dissonance

It is dissonant to let a technological secret or celestial technological device fall into the hands of a human before Jean decides it is time, though anything the humans truly work out for themselves must be accepted as part of the Symphony. It is dissonant to allow an infernally inspired technological innovation to go unopposed.

Choir Attunements

Because of their natures – they're the only Servitors who spend Essence to enhance the effects of their Choir attunements – the angels of Jean tend to create the most collateral disturbances in the Symphony at large, and are seen by most other angels as lacking in subtlety. They couldn't care less.

Seraphim

Jean's Seraphim have photographic memories. Also, for 1 Essence, they can temporarily conjure up a floating video display and show to an observer anything they themselves have ever seen or heard.

Cherubim *(restricted)*

From any telephone, Cherubim of Lightning can connect to the phone nearest an object to which they're attuned. If there's no phone near the person or object

they're attuned to, they can spend 1 Essence and temporarily (10 minutes) cause a cell phone to materialize within 7 feet of their attunement!

Ofanim

An Ofanite who serves Jean is one of the fastest creatures alive. With a suitable conductor – a phone line, an electrical line, the metal side of a building – he may temporarily convert his corporeal vessel into electricity, traveling a number of hundreds of yards in a combat round equal to his Corporeal Forces, for a number of rounds equal to his Ethereal Forces. He may recorporealize at any point along his metal pathway; however he ends his trip, he does 3d hits of damage (lightning blast) to his entry and exit points.

Elohim

The Elohim of Jean are the only angels with the calm precision to create microchips and circuit boards from thin air. For 1 Essence, they can temporarily create a pocket-sized computer lasting a number of minutes equal to their Ethereal Forces. It has a high-speed wireless link to the Internet (allowing the angel access to anything the GM rules would be available on the Net, such as e-mail, Usenet, etc.). It is immune to electromagnetic pulses, requires no power, and has an unlimited amount of storage. Its cables can connect it to any non-encrypted computer system with a serial port – and it also increases the user's ability at Computer Operation by the amount of his Celestial Forces.

Malakim

The Malakim of Jean are creation's finest mechanics. They may add their Ethereal Forces to any roll involving the skills Chemistry, Electronics, Engineering – or any other roll to repair a technological object.

Kyriotates *(restricted)*

These angels of multiplicity can possess corporeal objects as their vessels for a number of minutes equal to their Ethereal Forces. If your computer seems haunted, perhaps you have one of Jean's bodiless angels.

Mercurians

Jean's Mercurians all know the Ethereal Song of Tongues, always succeeding at its performance. (Consider the angel's Ethereal Forces to be both the level at which the song is known and the check digit.)

Servitor Attunements

Generator

The angel becomes a high-power generator for one second, pouring an incredible amount of electricity through whatever he touches. The Power of the attack equals the Essence spent (at least 1) plus the angel's Corporeal Forces. A living target will be blinded (-2 to all skills involving Agility or vision) for 10 (plus the Essence spent to use Generator, minus the victim's Will) seconds.

Remote Control

Angels with this attunement may mentally control any device crafted by the hand of man from a number of feet away equal to their total Forces. They can make it do only those things that its regular controls would permit, and only one command per round.

Distinctions

Vassal of Lightning

The angel is a lightning calculator – to simulate this, the player may keep a calculator on hand and use it for as long as he needs to arrive at a correct answer. He also has the power to recognize all possible applications for any technological object.

Friend of the Illuminated

The angel can detect the cause of a malfunction in any technological object, or predict a problem a number of rounds equal to his Celestial Forces before it happens.

Master of the Machine

The angel can instantly "heal" damage to any device at the rate of 3 hits for every Essence he spends.

Relations

Allied: *No one*
Associated: *Eli, Yves*
Hostile: *Jordi, Michael, Novalis*

Basic Rites

- Rest for an hour touching the turbine in an electric power station.
- Rest for two hours plugged into a wall socket.
- Spend an hour in a thunderstorm, on a cliff.

Chance of Invocation: 3

Invocation Modifiers

+1 A scientific formula
+2 A demonstration of mathematics
+3 A microscope
+4 A complete laboratory
+5 A new, working scientific theory
+6 The Grand Unification Theory

JORDI

Archangel of Animals



The world is an animal, wild and quick.

Ignore the lie that is "civilization," the shared hallucination which humans call society. Heaven has erred grievously in allowing humanity to keep its artificial trappings – mankind must regain its wild nature, or die.

Jordi is a Kyriotate. With a strong aversion to most of man's works, he spends most of his time wandering across the world's countrysides in animal form. Lucifer did his best to play on Jordi's disdain for mankind, but Jordi was never tempted. He remains completely loyal to the Divine, whatever he may think of the current state of the world. And he accepts as allies those humans who share his love for the animal kingdom.

Angels who don't work for him consider Jordi to be completely insane. Mad or not, he's exceptionally intelligent and wildly perceptive, and always willing to give a bit of leeway to supplicants who show consideration of his eccentricities. His servants may be wild and untameable, but they're not cruel – they act as they must, with passion but without hatred.

Jordi prefers to grant audiences in the country, and will appear in a city (other than places like New Delhi, of course) for only the most dire emergencies.

Dissonance

Jordi's angels cannot allow themselves to be swayed by the concerns of human society, its rules or its expectations of behavior.

They gain dissonance if they value human life above animal life. When they kill, it must be cleanly and without pain, as is the custom of Jordi.

Choir Attunements

Servitors of Jordi are well-versed in the language and culture of animals. Each Choir is attuned to a particular type of animal, noted below, and can communicate basic concepts to those creatures through sound and gesture.

Jordi's servants, except Kyriotates, must purchase at least one animal vessel. Nothing they do in their animal vessels, except the performance of Songs and other expenditures of Essence, will disturb the Symphony!

Seraphim

Jordi's Seraphim are attuned to amphibious and marine life. They prefer to work in the relative peace of the underwater realm, rooting out those Diabolicals who live secretly in watery darkness.

Cherubim

Jordi's Cherubim are attuned to cats. They are usually assigned to urban settings, to watch over the residents' pets and punish those who torment them. But they can also take the *big* cats as vessels . . .

Ofanim

Jordi's Ofanim are attuned to flying animals, such as birds and bats. It is their duty to exact revenge upon those who mistreat the creatures of the air, or destroy them for any reason except food. They still mourn the passing of the pterosaurs.

Elohim *(partially restricted)*

Jordi's Elohim are attuned to reptiles. They're creatures of the desert, dusty angels of open spaces. The range of their resonance extends without difficulty as far as they can see in any direction.

Malakim

Jordi's Malakim are attuned to dogs, wolves and other pack creatures. In the mortal world, they are eco-terrorists supreme, protecting nature from humanity's works.

Kyriotates *(partially restricted)*

These are Jordi's eyes and ears across the globe, able to enter many corporeal hosts at once. A Kyriotate of Jordi can control animal hosts whose total Forces are equal to his total number of Forces *times* his Corporeal Forces! They are particularly attuned to insects; each insect swarm (see p. 191) counts as one Corporeal Force for purposes of control, so a powerful Kyriotate can manifest as dozens of swarms at once.

Mercurians

Jordi's Mercurians are especially attuned to apes. They're charged with studying all animals in their natural habitats, and helping humans to see the similarities between themselves and the cousins they so carelessly dispossess and enslave.

Servitor Attunements

Call of the Wild

For 2 Essence, the angel may summon a small group of local animals. The player may choose what sort of creatures arrive, as long as no one of them has more total Forces than the angel's Celestial Forces.

Roll a number of dice equal to the summoner's Corporeal Forces to determine how many appear – they'll arrive in 2 minutes. They aren't at his control, but neither will they harm him.

Animal Magnetism

For 1 Essence, the angel may charm any single animal within eyesight which isn't already celestially influenced. This is limited to animals whose total Forces are less than or equal to his Corporeal Forces.

Distinctions

Vassal of Animals

Jordi's Vassals always know the intentions (attack, flight, etc.) of any animal they see.

Friend of Beasts

The angel will never be attacked by wild beasts – although trained or charmed animals may still harm him.

Master of the Creature Within

The angel knows, at a glance, how much a given human likes animals and how he tends to treat them.

Relations

Jordi cares little for celestial politics, but doesn't ignore it. This gives him clout as a swing vote, and different sides try to influence him – through his servants, if necessary. If sufficiently motivated, he will appear, cast his vote, and leave. Rarely will he bother speaking.

He cares nothing for the political arena because he feels the other Archangels care nothing about him and his goals. He's basically right; they think he's mad. He gets along with Novalis, who sometimes carries his proxy in a formal vote, but he'll shun other Archangels before giving them a chance to shun him first.

Allied: *Novalis*
Associated: *Eli, Yves*
Hostile: *Jean, Marc, Michael*

Basic Rites

- Spend eight hours with no trace of civilization in sight.
- Live in a city for one full day as an animal, without spending Essence.
- Rescue an animal endangered by man's works or man's carelessness.

Chance of Invocation: 2

Add 2 to the chance of invocation, and 2 to the check digit of the summoning roll, if no human buildings, roads or vehicles are in sight.

Invocation Modifiers

+1 A street mutt or alley cat
+2 A work of man, created out of sincere love for animals
+3 An egg of an endangered species
+4 Twenty cats, living in the same dwelling
+5 A mountain gorilla
+6 A panda

LAURENCE

ARCHANGEL OF THE SWORD

The world is a blade that cuts the unwary. Respect the power that comes with your station. Keep yourself finely honed, and never cease to be vigilant when hunting the Diabolical.

Laurence is a Malakite, honorable to a fault, and the supreme commander of God's army on Earth. He's responsible for training Soldiers and assigning them to angels, coordinating official missions and keeping track of the Foe.

He hasn't always been an Archangel. His previous Superior – Uriel, Archangel of Purity – overstepped his Word by slaying all of the Earth's remaining creatures of myth (the fairies, the dragons, etc.). Laurence, the finest of all of Heaven's demon-hunters, ascended to his current stature when Uriel was recalled to the higher celestial realms, vanishing from the ken of ordinary angels, in the year of our Lord 745.

Since then, Laurence has not only been orchestrating the armies of God, he's also become the patron Archangel of Christianity, actively promoting its growth. In particular, he supports the Pope and would like Catholicism to become the sole religion of humanity. (Dominic is the only major Archangel who vehemently supports him on this.)

Laurence appears most often on Earth as a small skinny man, with long, black hair. The youngest of the major Archangels, he's a real phenomenon in a fight, but as a planner he is still too idealistic. He tends to forget that even his own angels aren't perfect, and that the other side fights very, very dirty. When plans go wrong, he invariably calls in Michael, the old warhorse, to sway the course of the battle back to the side of good.

As the angels' primary strategist against the demons, Laurence is in a sticky position. He must keep the peace among Archangels, not threatening anyone's power or position, while at the same time remaining steadfast, not budging an inch when threatened.

His servants never have a spare minute. While other angels only grudgingly drop whatever they're doing to help Servitors of the Sword, Laurence's angels feel that the others are too quick to beg for help – which his servants feel obliged to give, instead of solving their own problems first. Between their honorable idealism and their prowess as Heaven's greatest questers, they have a great deal of potential, if only they can survive long enough to fulfill it.

DISSONANCE

Laurence is more rigid than any Archangel except Dominic himself. He holds his troops in strict regimentation, demanding precision in all things. Disobeying either the word or the spirit of his orders generates dissonance in an offending angel.

CHOIR ATTUNEMENTS

Laurence's angels are fighters, questers and demon-hunters, and their attunements reflect this.

Seraphim

The Seraphim of the Sword can tell at a glance whether or not the foes they engage in battle are ultimately on the side of good or evil. (This is based on their foes' *motives* for fighting . . . the cause the are currently fighting for is immaterial.)

Cherubim *(restricted)*

Cherubim working for Laurence may utilize their natural resonance of attunement not with a touch, but upon anything they can see (including visual reproductions – see p. 57).



Ofanim

In combat or in pursuit (but not when being pursued!), Laurence's Ofanim may move an extra (2 × Agility) yards when in corporeal form, or (2 × Perception) yards in celestial form. (The benefits of Running skill may be applied normally to this attunement.)

Elohim *(restricted)*

With his natural resonance, an Elohite working for Laurence can feel the emotions not only of the people presently in his general vicinity, but those from the past as well – a number of hours in the past equal to the angel's Celestial Forces.

Malakim *(restricted)*

Laurence's Malakim are the most honorable fighters in existence (as opposed to Michael's, who win more often). When using their resonance, they may add their Ethereal Forces to the check digit of a successful roll.

Kyriotates *(restricted)*

Laurence's Kyriotates are bound into the vessel of a warrior who died an essentially meaningless death before finding his destiny (such as a Marine caught by a land mine while on leave, a policeman shot by fellow officers in a drug raid, etc.).

The vessel will seem to survive its wounds. The angel continues the human life as a Role (see p. 43) of level equal to his Ethereal Forces. The body ia a Vessel/1, but may be improved normally with points. The Role is free, but if its Status would be *greater* than the Role, the GM may require the Role to be incureased with points normally.

Other hosts may be possessed at the same time, using normal Kyriotate rules, but the angel can't abandon this vessel – even when it's made tp "vanish" (like other vessels), 5 of the Kyriotate's Forces are bound into it. However, it generates no dissonance if it's damaged or destroyed. though the angel must buy this attunement again if his vessel is killed.

Mercurians

Laurence's Mercurians, while non-violent, can read an opponent's body language so well that they rarely get hit. They may add their Corporeal Forces to their Dodge skill, or to the roll's check digit (decide before rolling!).

Servitor Attunements

The Blade Blessing of Laurence

The angel may give a divine edge to any blade by touching it and spending 3 Essence. It has +5 Power for the next number of combat rounds equal to the angel's Celestial Forces. The effects of this attunement, of course, are not cumulative. This power is *added* to the normal Power of the weapon, even relics (but they must be actual blades; a Fiery Sword doesn't count).

Hunt

This attunement grants to a Servitor the ability to unerringly track any being he has fought, however great the distance between them. He may keep track of a number of his opponents equal to his Ethereal Forces.

Distinctions

Vassal of the Sword

Lawrence's Vassals can remain serious under any circumstances, even demonic provocation (including diabolical resonances and attunements), and can judge the seriousness of others.

Friend of the Lord's Troops

The angel can judge a person's courage (for example, knowing whether his opponent is going to crack or not).

Master of the Armies of God

The angel can state a refusal in so severe a tone as to discourage the other party from reiterating his proposition – it is, in essence, the power to end a conversation by just saying, "NO."

Relations

Allied: *David, Dominic, Jean, Michael*
Associated: *Everyone else, except . . .*
Hostile: *Eli, Novalis*

Basic Rites

- Slay an evil creature.
- Spend a whole night hunting your prey.
- Spend four hours resting in an armory.

Chance of Invocation: 4

Invocation Modifiers

+1 A practice sword
+2 A book of military precepts
+3 A high-quality sword
+4 Ordering a group into battle
+5 A fine sword engraved with the Lord's Prayer
+6 A sword blessed by the Pope

MARC

ARCHANGEL OF TRADE

The world is trade, the give and take of day-to-day life.

Commerce has complicated the lives of humans, but has lowered the amount of violent conflict in the world. Wars cannot be fought without spilling blood – but in commerce, paper and numbers and the structures inside people's minds are the only casualties.

The Archangel of Trade is a Mercurian, well-suited to the human-level complexities of the fiscal world. He and his servants are divine diplomats, Heaven's negotiators. They lie only by omission and always for good reason. Marc can be counted on, as long as one reads between the lines and pays attention to the fine print.

Marc bears the heavy burden (his words) of promoting the abstract concept of currency and of managing the divine fortune. He does it well, occasionally reimbursing himself for his time. (He invented the concept of a "salary," and doesn't stint himself.)

Snappily dressed, fashionably polite, Marc is one of the celestial in-crowd. He has occasionally stumbled, during times of turmoil when his Word was not given proper respect, but nothing major has ever stood in his way except the hordes of Lucifer.

Dissonance

It is dissonant for angels serving Marc to break their word when they have given it freely. They know the cost of cheating on a deal.

Choir Attunements

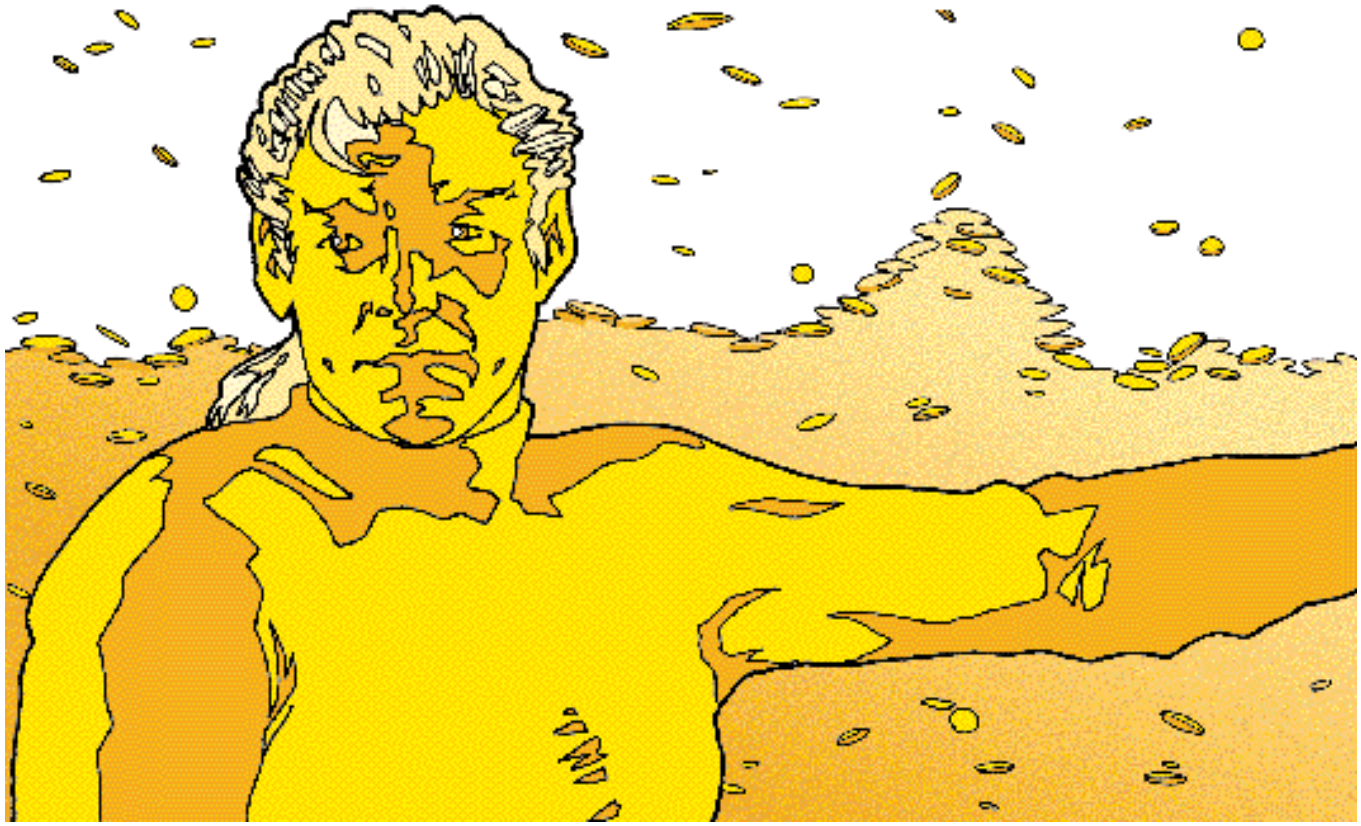
Most of Marc's Servitors are attuned to the abstract structures of commerce and ownership created in the minds of humanity and which extend into the Symphony.

Seraphim (partially restricted)

Seraphim are Marc's traders and managers. They can look a person in the eye and know how much money he'd pay for something, so he might as well go ahead and write the check. Also, when these angels fail a resonance roll they may try again not within minutes but within seconds.

Cherubim

Devoted angels of protection, the Cherubim serving Marc can know, with a touch, any object's true owner.



Ofanim *(restricted)*

"You want it there when?" Marc's Ofanim are the best shippers in the business. They know the fastest way to get anywhere, with anything. (Actually doing so is another matter.)

Elohim

Divine appraisers, these Elohim can tell the fair market value of an item they touch.

Malakim

Malakim, ever the darkest of the angels, are Marc's elite espionage agents. After looking a person in the eye, they can tell what something means to him. ("That folder's the monthly expense account he's trying to hide from his boss." "That's not just any old pen; it's the one the girl he had a crush on in third grade gave him when he didn't have anything to write with.")

The effects of this attunement work on anything within the angel's eyesight, and last for a number of minutes equal to the angel's Ethereal Forces, and can only be performed on one person at a time.

Kyriotates *(restricted)*

Marc's Kyriotates can automatically enter a host; make a resonance roll anyway, just to get the check digit. The subject may resist with a Will roll.

Mercurians *(restricted)*

As an additional aspect of his natural resonance, a Mercurian working for Marc can look back over a number of months equal to his Celestial Forces and tell how much money a person has received, and what he did to earn it.

Servitor Attunements

Divine Contract

The angel may write a contract (on paper) between two or more people. If a party who signed of his own free will voluntarily goes back on his word, the deal breaker takes the amount of Essence bound into the contract, multiplied by 6, in hits of corporeal damage.

Head of a PIN

Once a day, a Servitor of Marc may extract (from an ATM or by wire transfer, but not from a human teller) $100 in the local currency, multiplied by the Essence spent toward the attunement's use.

No one loses by this transaction; the money miraculously comes from cash lost or destroyed elsewhere.

Distinctions

Vassal of Trade

A Vassal of Marc who succeeds at a Perception roll (one attempt per target per day) can discuss a deal with someone and know exactly what they hope and intend to get out of it in the long run.

He also knows, at all times, the exact location of any person who's broken a contract with him (using *Divine Contract*, above).

Friend of the Shareholders

The angel can read any agreement, in any language, and discover any hidden unfairness or "escape clauses" intended by its creator.

Master of Finances

The angel has the skill of Fast-Talk at level 6, or adds 6 to his existing skill, in any financial discussion.

Relations

Trade is Marc's Word – giving of oneself in an agreement rather than taking by craft or violence. Working with the abstract structures of the corporeal realm has set him in a unique position of go-between and diplomat between those who deal with the beauty of celestial abstraction – such as Blandine, Dominic and Gabriel – and those who deal with corporeal reality – such as David, Laurence and Michael. Servants who support these camps are frequently at odds with each other's purposes, and the agents of Trade help smooth things over.

Allied: *No one*
Associated: *Janus*
Hostile: *No one*

Basic Rites

- Make a 100% profit on an honorable transaction.
- For at least an hour, possess an object or document worth more than $10,000,000. (2 Essence if it is worth more than $100,000,000.)

Chance of Invocation: 3

Invocation Modifiers

+1 A dollar someone gave you for nothing
+2 $100 in cash from each of 3 different countries
+3 Illegal goods, smuggled from another country
+4 A contract worth at least $100,000
+5 A contract worth at least $1,000,000
+6 The beads that bought Manhattan

MICHAEL

ARCHANGEL OF WAR

The world is a war, raging across reality.

The first angel created by God, older than any Celestial but the ineffable Yves, Michael is a Seraph and he tells it straight: Things aren't run in Heaven like they used to be. It's not his job to bitch about things, so he generally doesn't – but he's getting tired of pulling Laurence's fat out of the fire every century or two.

As the most powerful angel, in mind and in body, Michael bested Lucifer in hand-to-hand combat and personally kicked his red ass out Heaven's door. (The remaining rebels, damned by God, conceded the battle and found their own way out.) For this, God made Michael the Archangel of War. While Laurence rules the armies of God, Michael is the commander of those who fight alone, relying only on their own weapons.

His servants fight vigorously so that one day the War will end. They are proud, powerful and never back down from a fight. But they're also sympathetic to the human condition, and try not to miss an opportunity to relieve a human of his pain, if only by listening to his war stories.

Michael is a warrior. He lives only for God's struggle. The fact that he doesn't use a noble weapon (he prefers a battle axe to a sword) has earned him the disdain of many Archangels – except for Laurence, who has crossed iron with Michael and has humble memories of the occasion.

Pig-headed and individualistic, Michael doesn't molly-coddle his servants – but he does protect them from Dominic, whom he calls "the hyena of Heaven." Many millennia ago, Michael was the target of an inquest into vainglory, chaired by Dominic. He accused Michael and his servants of encouraging heathenish traditions (collecting trophies, promoting warrior cults, sporting blasphemous heraldry, etc.). God intervened and acquitted Michael, not because he was innocent but because without pride and glory – and Michael – Heaven's greatest battles would be lost.

DISSONANCE

Retreat from any conflict without a direct order generates dissonance in Michael's servants. An agent of Michael must otherwise be beaten into unconsciousness and dragged bodily from the field of battle. The angels of War stand against the forces of Hell as the Archangel does; they must conquer in that battle or fall, but they cannot flee.



CHOIR ATTUNEMENTS

Seraphim

The attacks of Michael's Seraphim tend to strike home, as they see past their opponents' maneuvers to the truth. A target may Dodge, but at a penalty equal to the Seraph's Corporeal Forces.

Cherubim

If, barring the intervention of Celestial Forces, someone to whom a Cherub of War is attuned will die in the next 24 hours, that angel will feel it in the pit of his stomach. This attunement doesn't identify the nature or exact timing of the fatal stroke. Acting on its warning, however, a Cherub of War *can* alter events to keep the attuned person alive.

Ofanim

The speedy and unpredictable Ofanim who work for the Archangel of War invariably get the drop on everyone else, even when mortally wounded! In combat, Michael's Ofanim always go first. They favor hit and run and hit again tactics – maneuvering backward with the intention of circling round to strike again doesn't generate dissonance for them.

Elohim

Calmest of their whole stoic Choir, these Elohim can look into people's eyes and tell just how serious they are – how much they're willing to risk in a situation. If someone is resigned to killing, or to dying, these angels will know it. Elohim of Michael are expert at identifying and removing definite fighters from a combat situation, leaving behind the uncertain and the easily dissuaded.

Malakim

Malakim of War can hear the sound of danger sweeping through the Symphony, beginning as many minutes ahead of time as they have Corporeal Forces, and growing louder until the moment of conflict. However, this gift doesn't identify the nature of the threat – only its existence. It *is* possible for a combat to be defused and never happen – in that case, the theme of danger fades away.

Kyriotates

Michael's Kyriotates, unlike their brethren who serve other Archangels, *can* generate their own vessels – they need not find a host to manifest on the corporeal plane. And like others of their Choir, they may still inhabit as many Corporeal Forces' worth of hosts and/or vessels as the total amount of their Forces – minus 5 Forces if they choose to have a human vessel of their own! (The GM may rule that animal vessels tie up fewer Forces.) But they cannot abandon the vessels they make, and acquire a note of dissonance when such a vessel is destroyed. The vessel is created by Michael, as are vessels for other angels, but he will usually take the Kyriotate's own wishes or needs into consideration. It requires the same number of Forces as a normal host of that type (5 for a human). Any Forces invested in the vessel can't be used to possess other creatures, even when the vessel isn't manifested.

Mercurians

Michael's Mercurians are his only diplomats. They know the price of peace – what, if anything, will resolve a conflict between any two people they have met.

Servitor Attunements

Proficiency

This gives a special expertise with one type of weapon. The angel may make a Precision roll before attacking with that weapon – if it is successful, he adds the check digit of the Precision roll to the Power of the attack! However, this only applies to one attack per Precision roll – if he wants to use his Proficiency for the next attack, he needs to roll again.

Howl

When the servants of Michael howl their frightening war cry, it stuns all foes within a number of feet equal to the angel's Corporeal Forces on the next combat round. As usual, the angel can dodge but not attack for that round.

Distinctions

Vassal of War

Angels of this rank can sing the celestial language while in their corporeal forms. This lets them communicate five times as quickly as any Earthly language. Any angel within hearing can understand, but only other Vassals of War will be able to reply in kind. Demons will recognize the tongue but will not understand. Mortals will hear only whistled snatches of urgent, martial song.

Friend of the Fighters

Angels of this rank are immune to the effects of fear (natural or otherwise) as soon as they commit to a fight.

Master of Valor

Angels of this rank may grant the above ability to their comrades in arms for a single combat.

Relations

Alone among the major Archangels, Michael is hostile to Yves. It was not always thus . . . but over the past few thousand years, as the War went from bad to worse, Michael has grown increasingly distrustful of the motives of the mysterious creature who wears the mantle of "Archangel of Destiny."

Allied: *No one*
Associated: *David*, *Jordi*, *Laurence*
Hostile: *Blandine*, *Dominic*, *Novalis*, *Yves*

Basic Rites

- Spend three hours in armed practice.
- Duel with a Diabolical.

Chance of Invocation: 1

Invocation Modifiers

+1 Howling a war cry
+2 A knife
+3 A battle axe
+4 An ancient battle axe
+5 A castle under siege
+6 A battleground on the day of the battle

NOVALIS

ARCHANGEL OF FLOWERS



The world is a garden – peaceful until disturbed by the strident voices of the savage and the cruel.

The servants of Novalis are charged with calming the souls of humanity. She is a powerful female principle; her Word in the angelic tongue resonates with tones of growth, nurturing and peace.

Novalis is a Cherub. She most often uses a human vessel, looking like a cross between a debutante and a flower child – elegant, earthy, flamboyant and introspective by turns. She may also appear as a young girl with a basket of flowers, or a spry, cheerful old gardener. In any form, she is light and quick, both in body and spirit.

Her servants may be as precise as a new bonsai, or as wild and mad as a valley of kudzu, but none would have felt out of place at a Dead show.

Novalis' kindness is unequalled; she avoids direct conflict as much as possible. Her servants are just so damned friendly that other angels can't help but get along with them. However, she doesn't like to see her servants aiding overtly-violent missions unless there's a good chance that their presence may prevent bloodshed.

Dissonance

Angels of Novalis earn a note of dissonance for performing or allowing any violence that is not absolutely necessary. *Killing* a human will earn the offender *at least* a note of Dissonance, plus whatever other discipline Novalis herself thinks fit. Demons may be destroyed if they make it necessary . . . slow to anger, the Archangel of Flowers will show her thorns if pressed. *But even toward demons, Novalis will try kindness first.*

Choir Attunements

Seraphim

An aura of peace emanates from the Seraphim of Novalis. To take a violent action in the vicinity of such a Seraph, anyone must make a Will roll minus the angel's total Forces, +1 for every yard apart they are.

Cherubim

The Cherubim of Novalis, peaceful angels of great devotion, can take upon themselves the corporeal damage of those they touch.

Ofanim

An Ofanite serving Novalis may collapse the pattern of his being into an energy capable of traversing the web of plant life which graces the Earth. Once a day (or after completing one of Novalis' Rites) he may move, instantly and invisibly, from any plant he touches to any other plant he can see, or within (total Forces) miles.

Elohim *(restricted)*

Novalis' Elohim can sense the strange feelings of plants. By touching one, they can feel what emotions were loosed in its vicinity in the past week. A successful Perception roll gives information about the source of the emotions; the better the check digit, the more is learned.

Malakim

Foliage parts for the passage of a Malakite of Novalis, allowing him to move freely. Plants may also entangle his enemies if the angel is within a number of yards equal to his Corporeal Forces, reducing the foe's movement per turn by a number of yards equal to the angel's Celestial Forces! (Novalis has few Malakim; they are too violent.)

Kyriotates *(restricted)*

The Kyriotates who serve the Word of Flowers can take a plant or plants as hosts, up to *twice* their total Forces.

A Kyriotate in tree form, for instance, keeps the strength and natural Protection of the tree (GM's decision on details) but has his own Agility and can grab or strike with his branches.

Mercurians

In their celestial forms, Novalis' Mercurians fill perceptive humans with great joy. If a human makes his Perception roll to see a celestially-manifest Mercurian, then the target number of the next roll he makes for a nonviolent action will be raised by the check digit of his successful Perception roll!

Servitor Attunements

Nothing But Flowers

If the angel hides behind or within plants, he cannot be spotted without a Perception roll minus the angel's Celestial Forces. If the angel hides among *flowers*, he is completely invisible!

Crown of Joy

The angel can weave a crown of multicolored flowers, spending a half-hour and 1 Essence. It looses a cloud of nearly invisible pollen when shaken, some six feet across. The cloud requires a Perception roll to spot.

It remains in the air for a number of rounds equal to the user's Corporeal Forces. Anyone entering the cloud is filled with limitless kindness, and dances about joyously for 5 minutes (or seconds, if the victim is a demon), plus the amount of Essence used to create the crown (minimum 1). Targets may make Will rolls to resist.

Distinctions

Vassal of Flowers

The angel can detect the degree of love or hate between two people within his line of sight.

Friend of the Gardeners

The angel can, a number of times per day equal to his Corporeal Forces, bring a single large plant or a square yard of small plants to perfect health. For the next week, those who rest on or against the blessed plant(s) will have any applicable die roll modified by 1 in the direction of peace or healing, and against conflict or harm. The GM and the players may interpret this small blessing as liberally as they can imagine.

Master of Peace

The angel can calm an irrational individual or smooth over small misunderstandings, like those caused by Malphas' factioning attunements (p. 174). If a subject resists, make a Contest of Will, adding the angel's Celestial Forces to his target number.

Relations

Some of the martial angels think Novalis blasphemous, both because she would rather reach out to the demons than kill them, and simply because of her corporeal dress (Hawaiian shirts and Birkenstocks, sarongs and sandals). Dominic grumbles but has taken no overt action. Novalis smiles and compliments the appearance of her critics.

Allied: *Eli, Jordi*
Associated: *Yves*
Hostile: *David, Michael*

Basic Rites

- Sleep alone in a garden, from sunset to sunrise.
- Dance for two hours to live music among the throngs of humanity.

Chance of Invocation: 4

Invocation Modifiers

+1 A peace symbol from any culture
+2 A large bouquet of flowers
+3 Ten plants, removed from their pots and replanted in the ground
+4 A nuclear power plant, shut down
+5 A large outdoor concert (Lollapalooza, etc.)
+6 Fifty thousand people, congregating for peace

Yves
Archangel of Destiny

The world has its own destiny. Accept it, embrace it and help things along when possible.

Legend has it, Yves was the first soul created by God. Armed with his knowledge of the universe from its most primal state, he and his Servitors have a miraculous ability to predict the Symphony's future.

Though he serves as an Archangel, he belongs to no Choir. The other inhabitants of the Earthly Heavens speculate that he represents a higher order of being, sent to guide the angels as the angels are sent to guide man.

It was given to Yves to name God, after God named Yves. Some divine theologians argue that Yves, by giving God a name, created not merely the distinction between Good and Evil but that he created God Himself. Others believe that by naming a darkness for light to stand against, he facilitated the original Fall.

Yves is perpetually quiet and rational. He intervenes very rarely on Earth, spending most of his days in serene meditation. On every plane, he manifests as an elderly man, radiating calm good cheer and spiritual strength.

He and his Servitors are the givers of names, the guardians of knowledge. In the modern era he concerns himself most with philosophy, having delegated the sphere of technology to Archangel Jean. His Tethers are almost all in libraries, and his own Library is connected throughout the world (see p. 139).

Yves used to promote religion as a way to brighten the hearts of humanity, but this has not always worked out as well as it might have. His last major attempt was the founding of Islam, which led to the bloody earthly Crusades with warrior Archangels on both sides, and the unjust heavenly persecution of loyal Gabriel.

Yves is not omniscient, but he knows the names of all things, everything that has ever been written down, and – as Archangel of Destiny – all of the best and brightest possibilities for the world. He is the most respected soul in Heaven. Of the Archangels, only Michael is hostile to him, and Yves himself is hostile to no one.

Dissonance

The angels of Yves, holy messengers and divine creatures of knowledge, are charged with helping people achieve the greatest heights of their destiny. They may not take any direct action to move a person toward his fate. See p. 67 for a discussion of fate and destiny.

Choir Attunements

Each angel of Yves has inherent knowledge of a different aspect of the Symphony. This information comes in flashes, but merely reflects the Symphony as it *should* be – which is to say, barring celestial intervention.

Seraphim

A Seraph of Yves is linked to Yves' Book of Names. He knows the true name of everyone he contacts physically, and of every item that he sees clearly or handles, provided it *has* a name in an Earthly language that he knows. Knowing truth, he penetrates illusions with a touch.

Cherubim *(restricted)*

A Cherub of Destiny knows if (and when) a person to whom he's attuned will die within the next year from "natural" causes (disease, stepping in front of a bus, etc.).

Ofanim

Ofanim of Destiny can add their Celestial Forces to any Intelligence- or knowledge-based skill roll.

Elohim *(restricted)*

Yves' Elohim automatically succeed in their resonance rolls when physically touching their targets.

Malakim

Yves' Malakim, agents of honor, can tell a divine disturbance in the Symphony from a diabolical one.

Kyriotates *(restricted)*

Kyriotates of Destiny have complete access to the memories of their hosts, including any of their Skills, as long as they remain inside that host.

Mercurian

Yves' Mercurians, through physical contact, can intuit a person's fortune – loves, career, etc. – for a number of months into the future equal to the angels' total Forces.

Servitor Attunements

Divine Destiny

For 1 Essence, the angel can see both fate and destiny in a mortal's face. He knows the greatest thing that person can achieve, as well as the weaknesses which might seal his fate.

Divine Logic

The angel can make practically anyone concede practically anything, as long as he believes it himself. In two minutes, with a successful Precision roll, he will prove to

his target by simple logic that a + b = c, therefore he is right and any other possibility must be absurd. The victim may resist with an Intelligence roll.

Obviously, don't try proving to a Demon Prince that good is better than evil. Somehow, it never works.

Distinctions

Vassal of Destiny

The angel may immediately comprehend any printed material he sees, even if it's only flashed before him, and his indelible memory will never forget it.

Friend of the Sages

The angel has a general, college-level education . . . in every subject. He has the equivalent of a skill of 11 in any sort of general Knowledge, except Area Knowledge. To simulate this, the player may consult the encyclopedia or general reference book of his choice.

Master of Divine Knowledge

The angel is so much in tune with the Symphony that he gains the natural resonance of another Choir! However, he becomes bound by the dissonance rules of that Choir – for example, if a Mercurian Master of Divine Knowledge acquires the resonance of the Seraphim, he can detect the truth but generates dissonance for lying.

Relations

Allied: *No one*
Associated: *Blandine, Gabriel, Jean*
Hostile: *No one*

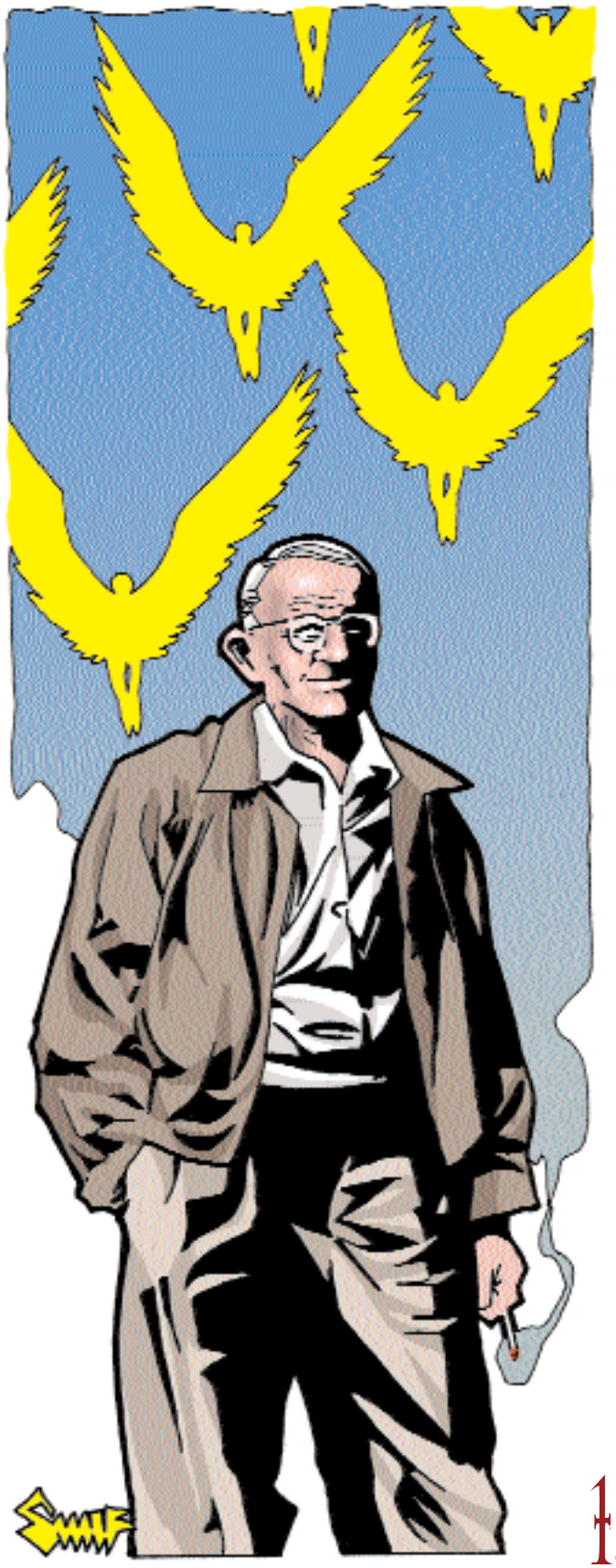
Basic Rites

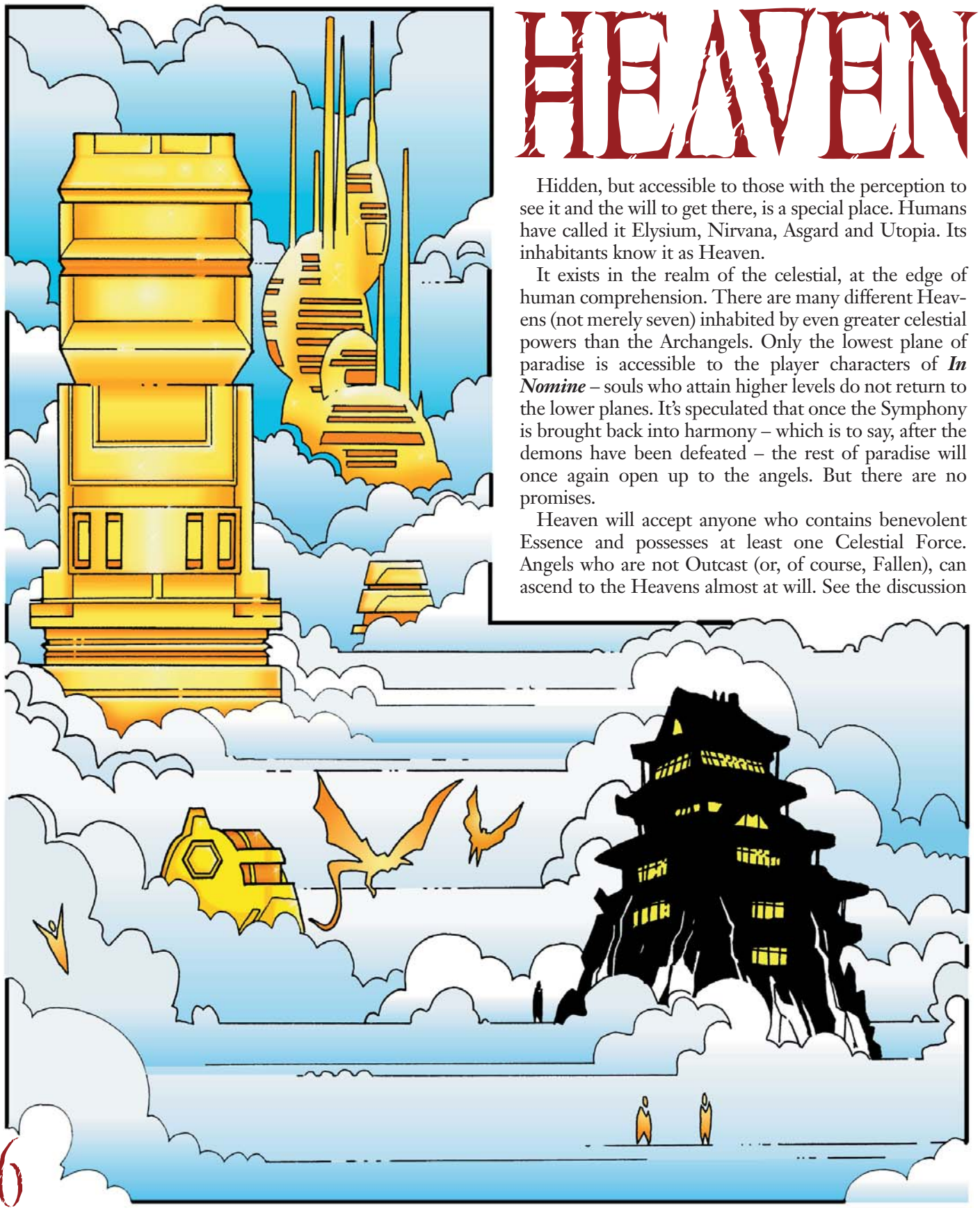
- Spend two hours in deep philosophical discussion.
- Spend four hours teaching willing students.
- Spend six hours studying in a library or meditating.

Chance of Invocation: 1

Invocation Modifiers

+1 A detailed city map
+2 The Encyclopedia Britannica
+3 Solve *The New York Times*' Sunday crossword puzzle
+4 Successfully apply to a major college
+5 Read materials in 10 languages
+6 Recite the Bible from memory for an hour





HEAVEN

Hidden, but accessible to those with the perception to see it and the will to get there, is a special place. Humans have called it Elysium, Nirvana, Asgard and Utopia. Its inhabitants know it as Heaven.

It exists in the realm of the celestial, at the edge of human comprehension. There are many different Heavens (not merely seven) inhabited by even greater celestial powers than the Archangels. Only the lowest plane of paradise is accessible to the player characters of ***In Nomine*** – souls who attain higher levels do not return to the lower planes. It's speculated that once the Symphony is brought back into harmony – which is to say, after the demons have been defeated – the rest of paradise will once again open up to the angels. But there are no promises.

Heaven will accept anyone who contains benevolent Essence and possesses at least one Celestial Force. Angels who are not Outcast (or, of course, Fallen), can ascend to the Heavens almost at will. See the discussion

God

God was a lot more accessible when the universe was just a compressed ball of energy. He didn't have much to distract Him.

In the modern age, He no longer involves Himself much in the lives of humans or angels – especially since the Fall. It's assumed that Archangel Yves has His ear, but God has a lot of other things on His mind. By definition, He has *everything* on His mind.

Players of angels should accept that the Divine Plan won't call for them to deal personally with God. His influence may manifest from time to time, generally in the form of a miracle following a roll of 111, but the GM should resist any urge to involve the Supreme Being directly in gameplay. Let the Archangels do their jobs, as best they understand them, and let the players serve as best they can.

of the Celestial Realm on p. 53. Living humans, even Soldiers, cannot ascend to Heaven while their physical forms are alive, but someone with the Song of Projection (see p. 83) could arrange an out-of-body experience.

Heaven's inhabitants speak the angelic language, a musical tongue which (unlike corporeal speech) cannot express falsehoods. Each word is a pure concept, resonating with the Symphony, from which it is derived. Normally, the angelic language can only be sung while in celestial form, though certain angels can use it on Earth.

Cathedrals

Each Archangel has a cathedral, a holy structure of almost infinite space housing the angels and other spirits who serve that Word. Each celestial cathedral is linked to several Tethers (see p. 59).

Space doesn't exist in Heaven in the same way people are used to imagining it on Earth, so visitors should find a guide before trying to go from one cathedral to another. But again, the PCs aren't expected to spend much time in Heaven anyway – much less the home of an Archangel other than their sworn Superior – without a very good reason.

The Council Spires

Most of the older Seraphim, and all of the Archangels who live in Heaven, are voting members of the Seraphim Council. They assign Words to worthy angels and arbitrate disagreements among celestials – even the Archangels. They also assist Laurence in coordinating the activities of the bodhisattvas, the powerful human souls who choose to remain in this lowest level of the divine realm rather than ascending to their greater reward.

Dominic and his Servitors make their primary headquarters within the Seraphim Council Spires.

Angels' Hearts

There are places in every Archangel's Heaven which are treated with particular reverence – bright grottos, carefully-maintained lawns or stony hallways inset with countless nooks. These places are full of glowing globes, from pinpoints to basketballs, which seem to be made of crystal and which weigh much less than you'd expect.

But don't touch them; they're angels' Hearts. If you picked one up, it would protest slightly and shrill a few moments, noting the time of its theft.

This one's yours. See how it glows for you.

Isn't it lovely? No matter how hard your road or how dark your nights, your Heart will always care for you. If you've gone missing, and a friend can reach your Heart, a few moments of meditation will show him, inside the globe, where you are.

While an angel is on Earth, his Heart acts as a beacon, guiding him back home. When he ascends to Heaven, he always manifests right by his Heart. If an angel is in Heaven, his Heart glows like a small star. If an angel's Forces are disbanded completely, his Heart will shatter as well.

Many angels leave their Hearts sitting in fields (or on lawns, or in nooks . . .) at home with countless others. Some take their Hearts and lock them away in crystal towers, safe from prying eyes – but an angel may not remove his Heart from his Superior's realm without gaining a note of dissonance. Hearts cannot be removed from Heaven.

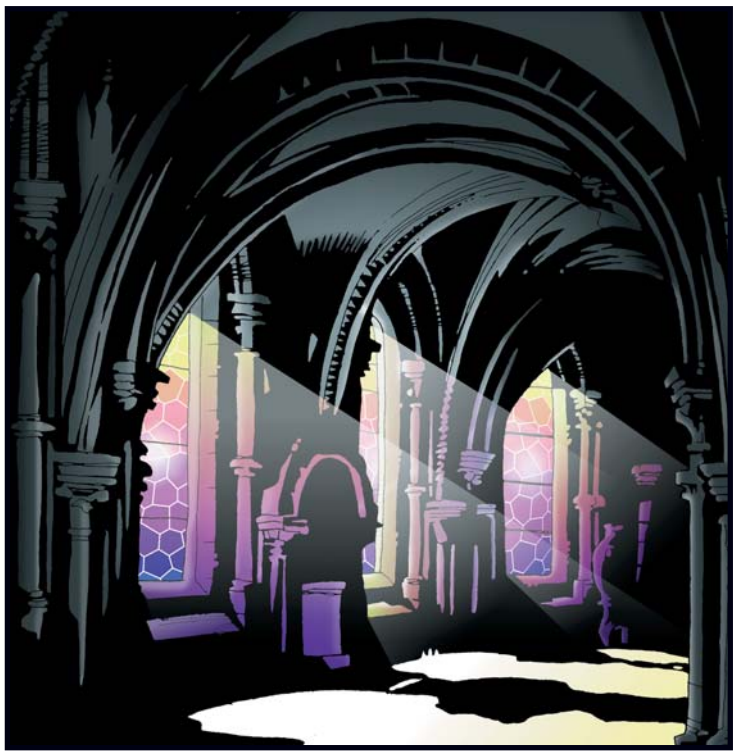
Some angels give their Hearts to their friends, so they can find one another if they've gotten lost – and so they'll have an excuse to see one other when in Heaven.

The Citadel of Fire

Gabriel's fortress sits near the edge of Heaven, in the caldera of a volcano the size of Everest. While she's abandoned the War's politics, she maintains this dark cathedral carved into the mountainside as Heaven's front line of defense should the demons make it past Blandine's Tower.

Commerce Park

This near-infinite stretch of bustling marketplace is home to Archangel Marc and his Servitors. The angels of



Empty Cathedrals

And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?
— St. Matthew Chapter 27, Verse 46

Most of Heaven is bright and active, but the War has left its mark. The cathedrals of lost or wounded Archangels stand empty and deserted. There is no dust in Heaven, but clean desolation is all the sadder.

Eli's Halls of Creation, once the greatest gallery and concert hall of the Heavens, now stand in disarray. Most of his angels' Hearts (see p. 137) are in the cathedrals of other Archangels, as are many of his priceless works of art.

The Castle of Uriel stands empty, its banners somehow dimmed. Mute trophies, the skulls of dragons stare sightlessly from its walls. Laurence took over Uriel's position, but rules from the Eternal City. The castle of Purity stands pure and empty.

Saddest of all are the ancient precincts of the fallen Archangels. Some have been taken over by successors. Others stand empty, seeming to weep for glory lost to selfishness. No one goes there.

Blandine's Marches

Blandine's Tower straddles the borders of the dream world and Heaven. When one of her angels ascend to Heaven, he finds himself in the entryway to his lady's ivory tower, at the foot of a grand staircase. Climbing the stairs, he'll find himself on a balcony atop the tower, the highest point on the angels' side of the Marches.

Against one horizon, he can see Gabriel's volcano outlined against the radiant intensity of the Eternal City. The other horizon glows a deep orange, against which is silhouetted another tower, a dark reflection of Blandine's own. This is the home of Beleth, Princess of Nightmares, one-time lover of Blandine and sworn enemy of her Servitors.

Blandine will almost always appear to her Servitors when they ascend to the balcony of her Tower (+8 to an Invocation). She will not be in a mood to grant favors, but – if asked nicely – she will transport the angel to any point in the Symphony.

Trade each have their own tent – which, while the angel is on Earth, is closed to everyone but Marc – where they may store their Hearts as well as their goods. Many relics and reliquaries appear in this marketplace, offered for exchange or for the right price in Essence.

The Eternal City

The Eternal City is the center of Heaven. It's currently ruled by Laurence, Archangel of the Sword, and is home to his Servitors.

It contains the Halls of Worship, the meeting place for the angels and saints who deal with Earth's religions. Every corporeal creed is represented there, both by its patron angel and by the blessed souls of human followers. The Halls are glorious in their diversity but united in love of God. A quiet discomfort fills the Halls now, though – Archangel Laurence himself is the patron to Christianity, and makes no secret of his desire for that religion to dominate the Earth.

The Glade

Novalis' corner of Heaven stretches along the edge of the Groves (see below). It's a green home to the angels of peace. Novalis holds court in its center, where a never-ending party hosted by Heaven's finest musicians echoes its message of peace and love to a Symphony out of harmony with the rest of creation.

The Halls of Progress

Just outside the Eternal City, and rumored to have secret passageways to Yves' Library (below), are the Halls of Progress. Archangel Jean has made this the celestial base of his experimentations. From here, he can work to refine technology without worrying that his secrets might slip through the Symphony into the mind of a human scientist.

The Groves

The Servitors of David, Janus and Michael make their homes here, among these enormous trees. Janus' servants live among the treetops, where much of Heaven's human population is located – mostly bodhisattvas. Michael's troops camp among the mighty trunks, constantly on maneuver, preparing for the War's final battle. David's Servitors live underground, in his Catacombs carved among the roots of the Grove.

It's very rare that any of the Groves' rulers – David, Janus or Michael – are seen in Heaven. They spend most of their time on Earth, supporting their Words.

Jordi's Savannah

This low, rolling plain stretches along the far side of Heaven, and is home to all the animal spirits who have reached this high level of consciousness. Jordi and his angels live here; although no formal buildings are allowed, there is a constantly-burning campfire around which his Servitors meet to discuss how best to handle their mutual problem, humanity.

Yves' Library

Wondrous even in Heaven, Yves' Library extends throughout reality. It's centered beneath the Eternal City, but it's connected to every repository of knowledge in the Symphony, whether on Earth or in dreams, even to Kronos' dark pool of wisdom in Hell.

These gateways will open only for Yves himself and the innocent at heart – children, mostly. It's not uncommon for a young reader to lose himself in a city library, stumbling through an accidentally-opened gateway to bright rooms full of strange books, and later tell of the kind old man who led him out again. Blessed are these children, for they are pure of heart; may they stay that way.

If someone else finds a way into the Library, he will quickly become lost in its archives. After the invader stumbles around for 1d6 hours, the Library will route him through one of its many gateways – and he could find himself anywhere, from the halls of the Vatican Library to the aisles of a video store.

Yves' Library has a consciousness all its own, which constantly changes the organization of its contents. Among other things, Yves records the collective memories of everyone who has passed on, in the form of written autobiographies. When Yves needs anything from his Library, he only has to hold a hand toward any shelf and the Library will produce it for him. Since all repositories of knowledge are connected to his, he can do this in any place from the halls of the Vatican Library to the aisles of a video store.



Servitors of Yves, when in Heaven, may take advantage of the research opportunities the Library offers. It takes a number of days equal to 10 minus the angel's Celestial Forces, to find the book desired.

As for what one can find here . . . well, Yves collects everything: not just books, but *all* knowledge, whether created or merely dreamed. For many centuries, Blandine has collected for him books which only exist in an author's mind as a dream. So if an angel wants to know what happened in the fourth volume of *Lord of the Rings*, or needs the true secret behind *Twin Peaks*, then he can ask Yves – and perhaps make a deal.

BANDS OF DEMONS



When the angels Fell, they became demons as they pushed Heaven's mercy from their hearts. Each fallen Choir became a Band of demons; the fallen Seraphim became Balseraphs, the Cherubim became Djinn, and so on. Many later demons were created in the image of the first Fallen, so the Bands continue. There are many more Bands, but the seven most important are described here.

A Band is a category, not a social circle. A demon understands his own kind, but that doesn't necessarily mean he likes them, or (God forbid) trusts them.

Like the Choirs, each Band has its own general nature, a resonance, which its members must maintain in order to survive. When a demon goes against this resonance, he generates dissonance (p. 57). Too much dissonance can lead to Discord, a severe fracture between the Diabolical and the source of his power. Discord can manifest in a variety of ways, none of them pleasant. While a demon can, slowly and painfully, rid himself of dissonance, Discord is much more permanent – only a Demon Prince can reverse its awful course.

Demons possess their own evil symphonies, each separate and unique. In a very real sense, every demon dances to the beat of his own personal drummer. A demon's symphony is nothing in comparison to the awesome power of the true Symphony. But they're shockingly effective against individual angels, who must share a single Symphony with the rest of the universe. And though most demons are cut off from the true Symphony, their earthly actions can still upset it (see p. 54) and they still retain the power to detect such upsets created by other celestials. And, like angels, they can still draw Essence.

Also Known As . . .

Balseraphs	Serpents, The Liars
Djinn	Binders, The Stalkers
Calabim	Freaks, The Destroyers
Habbalah	Horrors, The Punishers
Lilim	Daughters, The Tempters
Shedim	Fleshless, The Corruptors
Impudites	Charmers, The Takers



Balseraphs

The Liars

"But won't my parents be upset?" the little boy asked. "I'm not supposed to talk to strangers."

"Don't worry," I laughed, winking at him. "An uncle's not a stranger. They won't even know I was here. Trust me."

Second only to Lucifer as the greatest creatures of deception, the Balseraphs are powerful celestial beings, the most deeply malicious of all the Bands of demons. No other sort of being is so tightly wrapped in his own selfish perspective.

Balseraphs, widely regarded by the rest of Creation as the universe's biggest liars, don't see it that way. A Balseraph cares for nothing save his own point of view, however warped and twisted it may be.

Resonance

To a Balseraph, everything is a struggle, all motivations are suspect and there are no innocents. They have the perverse ability to see only that which supports their paranoia. This unity of perspective characterizes a Balseraph's personal symphony, and keeps his Forces from falling apart without the ultimate truths of the Symphony to support the weight of his soul.

A Balseraph can, through a minor exertion of will, extend his personal symphony into other people's hearts, imposing on them his paranoid point of view. This ability serves a Balseraph well, as long as he avoids tripping over himself . . .

Dissonance

Broken angels or not, a Balseraph is still a Seraph at heart. A Balseraph would no more lie to you – from his perspective – than his Heavenly counterpart would.

In order to lie, a Balseraph first creates an entire reality within himself in which the untruths he tells are true – not *could be* true, but *are* true, *must be* true. Passionately-earnest certainty is the devil's finest instrument.

But the lies of a Balseraph, being lies, are imperfect creations. If a Balseraph's lie is contradictory, then his synthetic truth fractures and he generates dissonance. Should a victim find the strength of will to see through a Balseraph's lie, this can also create a note of dissonance.

Manner and Appearance

A Balseraph is graceful and hypnotic in the corporeal realm. He dresses smartly, giving the same attention to

his appearance that he does to his lies. In his celestial form, a Balseraph, like a Seraph, looks like a many-eyed winged serpent, although the distinction is immediately noticeable. These most maleficent of demons shroud themselves in mystery and reserve, in contrast to the truthful openness of the Seraphim.

Other Bands don't question the Balseraphs – not that they'd ever think Balseraphs tell the truth. Questioning their honesty makes you look gullible (as though you think the Balseraphs might *not* lie to you), as well as stupid (as though you think they'd admit they were lying). Asking a Balseraph if he's really telling the truth is like asking a politician if he really cares about his constituents – and besides, it's rude.

Balseraphs are also the most freakishly paranoid of the Fallen. Since they can seldom be troubled to tell anyone the whole truth, they assume no one else does either. Naturally, they trust other Balseraphs the least.

Like their divine analogs, Balseraphs think of themselves as stringed instruments, from guitars to violins. The delicacy, precision and grace required to play such instruments serve to reinforce their smug vanity.

Game Mechanics

Balseraphs lie like rugs. A Balseraph can invoke his resonance for twisting and distorting a person's reality, persuading a number of people at a time equal to his Celestial Forces. In combat situations, this ability may only be used on a single person at a time, and requres 3 turns of uninterrupted concentration – the demon must avoid both taking damage and having to make a Dodge roll, etc.

The target of the lie may resist with a Will roll of his own. This is not a contest: the victim need only roll his Will, or lower. If successful, the ensuing backlash will prevent the demon from using his resonance on that victim for a number of hours equal to the check digit of the victim's Will roll. If the check digit is a 6, the demon will suffer a note of dissonance! This dissonance disappears if the Balseraph can successfully apply his resonance to that victim in the future. If the target *fails* his Will roll, the words of the Balseraph can influence him for a number of minutes equal to the check digit of the demon's resonance roll.

When resisting the lies of a Balseraph, a Seraph adds the number of his Celestial Forces to his Will roll, whether the angel is aware of the liar's true nature or not!

Once a Balseraph makes his resonance roll, the Detect Lies skill will always show him to be truthful.

A deceived victim will consider almost anything the Balseraph says to be absolute truth. Of course, some lies will never stand – no one will believe the sun is really the moon. But any fact or opinion which can't be proven by hard reality is the playground of the Balseraphs. Once a Balseraph convinces someone of another person's opinion ("He doesn't love you"), even if that other person is right there contradicting him ("But I do! I do love you!"), the will of the Balseraph rules the day.

But when a Balseraph contradicts himself by word or action while the target is still under his sway, this generates a note of dissonance until he can cover it with a new lie. For example, if he convinces a woman that he's not going to shave her head, and then ties her down and does so, he'll still generate a note of dissonance, but only until he can bring the victim under his sway again with a new resonance roll ("I didn't shave your head, you did.")

No matter how many times a Balseraph uses his resonance on someone, he can only have a single note of dissonance from that person at a time. Once that note is cleared up, he can suffer another point of dissonance from that person.

Note that, any desire to stay in character aside, it's bad form for players to lie to the GM.

Djinn
The Stalkers

I knew where he was, right behind the bleachers. From half a mile away, I knew it – I could hear him, I could smell him, I could taste him. I took my time; he wasn't going anyplace.

"Gkkk," he choked, coughing up blood – must have been from the pole through his chest. "Help me."

"No can do," said I. "Against the rules." I sat down next to him and tousled his hair.

Sarcastic and disdainful, the Djinn don't get excited. That would be admitting they cared about something besides themselves. Instead they move slowly, nonchalantly, slouching through life without regard for anyone or anything. They just don't give a damn.

Resonance

Prized for their dogged nature, Djinn are the infernal counterparts of the divine Cherubim, those eternally-vigilant guardians of things held dear. Like a Cherub, a Djinn's resonance is for the set of patterns he's attuned himself to through physical contact. These patterns can be anything – a person, an object, a place. While the attunement lasts (usually less than a week), the perceptive Djinn will know its general location and condition.

The Shedim and the Djinn are notorious for their vicious distrust of one another. The Fleshless move freely and frequently from vessel to vessel, and the resonance of the Djinn can't track them as reliably. The Shedim resent the fact that the Djinn would even *try* to keep track of them – and compound the Djinn's feelings of impotence by making them the butt of nasty tricks.

Dissonance

The frustration which the Djinn feel about the Shedim just shows how much they really *do* care about things, no matter what their poker faces lead others to believe.

Djinn are in a constant struggle between their refusal to care about anything and their need to feel cared about, a sad relic of the Cherubic nature. Unlike a Cherub, who gains dissonance when the object of his attunement is hurt, the Djinn could care less about what happens to a pattern to which he's attuned . . . but he can't bring himself to cause it harm by his own hand. The only exception is when a person to whom the Djinn is attuned *asks* the demon to do something. In this case, the ensuing mayhem doesn't generate dissonance in the demon.

Unfortunately, since the Djinn give their celestial attentions without the caution of the Cherubim, this can cause them to fixate on the strangest things. It can also trap them in a net of divided loyalties. When disposing of an attunement, a Djinn may find he can't get it out of his mind. His resonance begins to act like a Cherub's, causing dissonance if he betrays the object of his irrational attachment. A Djinn's obsession is his darkest secret, to be hidden until his infatuation begins to fade and his black heart returns to a state of tranquil apathy.

Manner and Appearance

Djinn are the sort of demons most likely to be found alone in a dark corner, brooding. Their hearts are desolate from pushing their naturally warm and sentimental souls away from divine glory. In the Pit, there are no greater cynics than the Djinn, brassy instruments of diabolical anger wailing lonely tunes in the night.

Their corporeal vessels tend to the stocky side, dense and strong. Most put no effort into their outward appearances, considering vanity a weakness and the opinions of others unimportant. Some are miserably, compulsively neat and organized.

In their celestial forms, Djinn appear as various dark animals, escapees from a surrealist's dream. Only the hated Shedim look more hideous, a fact that the glowering, pessimistic Djinn never let the Shedim forget.

Djinn get along fairly well with their own kind. They'd never admit it, but they know that no one else can ever understand just how *tough* it is to be a Djinn.



Game Mechanics

With a touch, a Djinn may attune himself to as many patterns as he has Celestial Forces. The check digit of a successful resonance roll is the number of days the Djinn will be attuned to the object of his limited devotion. After that, the Djinn must again make physical contact to renew the attunement, though no roll is needed. But if the check digit of a successful resonance roll is a 6, then the attunement will stay with the Djinn until he makes a successful Will roll to remove it. At any point, a Djinn may *remove* an attunement with a successful Will roll, minus the number of days left on that attunement.

A Djinn may use his resonance on an object to which he's already attuned. See the Cherubim chart on p. 96 to determine the check digit's game effects.

While attuned to something, the Djinn himself cannot cause it physical harm. If following his target's desires brings it harm, and if the attuned person relieved the demon of responsibility, then the Djinn acquires no dissonance from the action.

When a Djinn *fails* a Will roll to remove an attunement, he gains a note of dissonance and loses himself in unholy, selfish devotion. For a number of days equal to the check digit of the failed roll, the Djinn's resonance will act like a Cherub's, causing him even more dissonance if he betrays, denies or destroys the object. (See *Cherubim*, p. 94, for more details.) When the attunement finally fades, the dissonance generated by the devotion will fade as well.



CALABIM

The Destroyers

"The door," said the Balseraph, pointing at it while he sauntered out of my range. "Take it out."

"No problem," I said, concentrating on the door. It wasn't huge, but it was definitely in the way.

I touched it, feeling the grain of the metal. In my mind's eye, the door wasn't just a door; it was a bunch of little pieces of stuff all crammed together into a door-like shape. And if you thought about it, there wasn't really all that much between all the little pieces.

The trick is making the door think about it.

"Thanks, man," said the Balseraph, his feet crunching across tired metal flakes as he walked through the doorway.

"Got anything else for me?" I smiled. "I think I'm on a roll."

The Calabim have no goal except wanton destruction. They are prized by the Princes and feared by angels – but demons fear them as well, because they invariably lose control and start destroying everything around them.

Resonance

A Calabite is surrounded by an invisible field of entropy that can break down any ordered structure within its reach. At will, the Calabim may impose their whirling energies on their surroundings or, when in celestial form, on any other celestial within range.

Dissonance

If a Calabite invokes his resonance only to have it deflected from its target, the energy recoils upon him. He must either absorb its destructive energies into himself, which causes him dissonance, or lash out at some other target within range until he does some damage. They usually choose to lash out, which is why it's not safe to be around a Destroyer at work.

Manner and Appearance

Even by Hell's standards, the Calabim are odd. They all have some Discord, but it's through this crack in their Forces that they pour destruction upon the world.

When they're not smashing and killing, Calabim seem calm, almost distant. They're descended from the Ofanim, the angelic agents of motion. To strike the balance to exist in Hell, Calabim have externalized that sense of motion, converting it into their whirlwind of entropy. They consider themselves insane instruments of painful percussion.

But don't let them fool you. At all times, the mind of a Calabite is turned toward taking things apart. Other demons don't let them near mechanical devices. They know they'll come back to find the Calabite looking sheepish, surrounded by a disassembled contraption.

They're loyal to their Prince, but easy to anger and hard to calm down. Calabim leave behind them a trail of toppled mailboxes, broken windows, punctured tires and fist-shaped holes through doors. If a Calabite doesn't like what you say, he won't think twice about slapping you around, unless he's specifically been told not to.

In their celestial vessels, Calabim are nasty, grubby, leering demons, red-faced and bat-winged. On Earth, they prefer rough-and-tumble vessels, the better to sprawl about. Whatever clothes they put on will quickly get dirty and wrinkled from their ever-present aura of entropy. Calabim let their long hair get messy, smiling hugely from beneath shaggy manes. They're the Calabim, and they'll be damned if they let you get in their way.

Game Mechanics

All Calabim begin play with 1 Discord, of any type, at a level equal to the number of Forces they have of that type. For example, if a Calabite wants to take Stigmata, a Corporeal Discord, and he has 3 Corporeal Forces, then his Stigmata is at level 3. A Calabite's initial Discord can never be bought off or taken away, unless he redeems himself (see p. 60), but it can be amplified.

When successfully invoked, the Calabite's resonance does Body hits to corporeal targets equal to the demon's Corporeal Forces plus the check digit of the roll. In his celestial form, it does Soul hits to celestial targets equal to his Celestial Forces plus the check digit. If the demon fails his resonance roll, he cannot use it again for a number of minutes equal to the check digit of the failed roll.

A Calabite's resonance is effective against anything within a number of feet equal to his Will. Living beings may attempt a Strength roll to resist the infernal forces of entropy (or a Will roll, when resisting celestial damage). When a Calabite's resonance fails, he cannot repeat the attempt against the same target for a number of minutes equal to the check digit of the target's resistance roll. Inanimate objects may not resist.

When a Calabite's target resists his attack, the demon may either take a note of dissonance or lash out at something else within range. If he chooses to lash out, he can do nothing but invoke his resonance against other targets within range (including himself) until he finally does some damage.

Habbalah

The Punishers

"It just doesn't sound good," I said quietly, trying to affect some tone of sympathy. You can't have sympathy for the weak, but it's easier to control them if they think you do.

"No . . . no, he couldn't have," said the banker, shaking his head. "There's no way."

I just shrugged, breathing out slowly as the fires of emotion leaped across the room. His eyes grew wide, his face turned red, his nostrils flared – all good signs.

"I'll kill him," he said, breathing more and more quickly in an effort to keep up with his now-racing heart. "I'll kill them both."

"You do that, cowboy," I said, patting the felt pouch with its cold metal tool of punishment.



The Habbalah are obsessed with punishing those they consider weak. In the face of massive evidence to the contrary, these demons believe with all their black hearts that they work directly for God. They see themselves as the only true Choir of angels, serving God where His hand is needed most – the abattoir.

Resonance

The Habbalah came from the ranks of Fallen Elohim, beings of objectivity. Their perspectives are so fractured by their Fall that they've opened the floodgates of emotion, allowing those feelings to rule their actions. This doesn't mean that a Habbalite is any more emotional on the surface than an Elohite. He still handles his emotion coldly and rationally: he simply doesn't question its origin or its influence on his point of view.

A Habbalite's resonance is for emotion, with a dark twist. Like an Elohite, he can tell what emotion a person is feeling. He can also tell what emotion would cause someone the most harm, accent that feeling in his personal symphony and then let it loose. This does incredible psychic damage to his victim.

Dissonance

Unfortunately, the demon's emotional attack doesn't always work. If a victim resists, the resulting whirlwind of feeling may engulf its maker. A Habbalite may display these feelings, or he may swallow them without manifesting his madly-raging emotions, but the latter course causes him dissonance.

Manner and Appearance

The Habbalah have an ill-concealed disdain for the other Bands of demons – and resent being referred to as such. "I'm an angel," a Habbalite will say, "an *angel*, got that?" The Balseraphs love them dearly, believing them Hell's greatest self-deceivers. As instruments, modern Habbalah see themselves as synthesizers of emotion, with punishing feedback loops.

In the corporeal realm, the Habbalah are very beautiful, very sexual beings, rebelling against the androgynous Elohim and dressing their vessels to maximize their emotional impact. Celestially, their true natures are very clear. Mangled and mutilated, elaborately tattooed and ritually scarred, the Habbalah are broken and resentful, out to prove to the world that they are not the weak ones.

Game Mechanics

The Habbalah are like psychic surgeons, carving and shaping the souls of those around them. With a successful resonance roll, the demon can inflict a powerful emotion upon his victim (or himself, if he's not careful). There is no effect if the demon fails his resonance roll.

In addition to suffering the emotion, the victim's Intelligence or Precision is reduced by the amount of the demon's Ethereal Forces. Both the emotion and the characteristic it cripples must be chosen before the roll is made.

The feelings have variable durations based on their intensities and the check digit of the roll – see the examples below. GMs and players are welcome to craft their own emotional effects.

The victim may make a Will roll to resist the demon's emotional intrusion. If his Will roll succeeds *with a higher check digit than that of the demon*, the resonance will backfire. If the Habbalite doesn't wish to suffer under the cruel hammer of his own resonance, he can re-absorb the feelings at the cost of a note of dissonance.

Elohim, unaccustomed to the ravages of emotion, are at a disadvantage when dealing with the Habbalah. Their Will rolls to resist are reduced by the number of the demon's Celestial Forces.

Emotional Effects

Fury

Whatever the victim is looking at when this emotion strikes him (or, at the Habbalite's discretion, the current subject of conversation) upsets him – *a lot*. The victim will feel an irresistible need to lash out at the object of his anger, in swift and furious action, a number of times equal to the resonance roll's check digit or for a number of minutes equal to the demon's Corporeal Forces.

Sadness

The victim is struck to the core with a deep melancholy. For a number of hours equal to the resonance roll's check digit, he will be unwilling to move much or to speak at any length, wanting only to crawl into a cold bed and be left alone.

Disgust

The current subject of conversation offends the victim greatly. It is an abomination, not to be endured. For a number of days equal to the resonance roll's check digit, the victim must avoid the object of his revulsion, bolting away at full tilt. If he can't avoid it, he'll loudly proclaim his disgust to anyone who will listen. If the object of his disgust touches him, he must make a Will roll to keep from vomiting.

Love

The victim is greatly enamored by the current subject of conversation – or the next thing his eyes focus on, at the Habbalite's discretion. The demon must decide before making the roll.

This irresistible attraction will last a number of days equal to the resonance roll's check digit. During this time the victim can do little but think about the object of his love, whatever it is, and devise ways to be closer to it.

Emptiness

This is the opposite of other feelings – the absence of all emotion. The victim will seem drained for a number of hours equal to the resonance roll's check digit. During this time, his Agility is halved and other characters can take two actions for every one of his.

Emptiness is the most dangerous state of emotion for a Habbalite to enter. It not only causes him dissonance, whether he absorbs it or not; it also leaves him drained of evil to such a degree that there's a chance – albeit a very low one – that his nature will revert to divinity! If the demon makes a 111 on his dissonance roll, he is relieved of his delusion about his status, nature and servitude. He then has the option to try to redeem himself and rejoin the ranks of the Elohim; see *Redemption*, p. 60, for more information.

Lilim

The Tempters

"Aren't you just adorable? Now, if you could just do me this one little favor . . ."

The Lilim are the daughters of Lilith (see p. 149), created in her image. They know what you need, whether or not you realize it yourself, and they're not above giving it to you . . . in return for a little favor.

Each Lilim, more than any other demon, wants to be completely free, answering to no one. But most of them are bound to various Princes or to Lilith herself, trapped in the complicated web of favors that is the sisterhood of the Lilim.

Resonance

The resonance of the Lilim is to extract a favor in exchange for services rendered. This supernatural promise is called a *geas* (see p. 88); once triggered, it wears away at the victim's will until he honors it. For celestials, it is a form of Discord.

A Lilim can look into a person's eyes and see his need or his weakness – what she could give him to win his

word. After meeting her side of the bargain, she can then impose a geas upon her victim. When she calls in a favor, a victim must resolve it quickly, or pay a heavy price.

Dissonance

A victim may resist. If his Will roll to resist succeeds, the Lilim earns a note of dissonance. This dissonance will vanish if she can snare that victim later.

And if necessary, a Lilim can make a promise of her own, imposing a geas upon *herself* to ensure that she makes good on her own promises. This gives her dissonance until she fulfills her word, as she may not resist her own geas. This makes a Lilim a paradoxical thing, a demon whose word can be trusted – which is both an advantage and a curse.

Manner and Appearance

The ultimate party demons, Lilim are warm, sympathetic, sensuous and fun. They're nothing if not fun.

Not all Lilim consider themselves female. Many of them use male vessels, but since the majority prefer to appear as women, demons refer to the Lilim as female when speaking of them as a group.

Lilim get along with most other demons and work well among themselves, though their sisterly rivalries can sometimes turn violent and occasionally fatal. The only major Band they really detest are the Shedim; they find the Fleshless both abhorrent and despicable. The Shedim, say the Lilim, give demons a bad name.

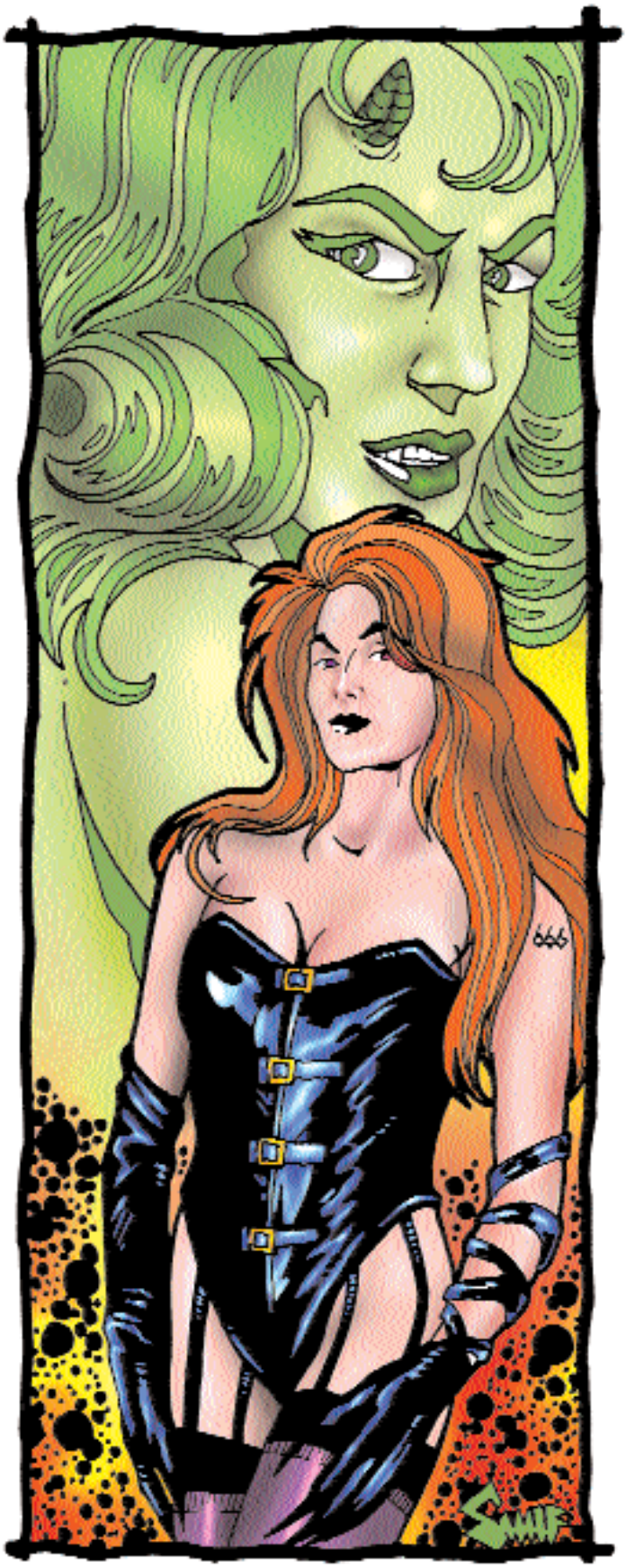
In celestial form, Lilim look like their corporeal vessels but with green skin and tiny horns. It doesn't please the Lilim to think of themselves as instruments, as the other Bands do. Rather, they consider themselves players; other people are their instruments.

Free Lilim

A newly created Lilim need not serve a Prince; she may instead owe Lilith nine favors – one for each Force she has. These favors, which may be called in at any time, are inflicted upon her as Geases, at level 3. Lilith can and will trade those favors to others, such as demons (even Princes), other Lilim, or Lucifer himself. Lilith may just as easily trade favors with a human, or an Archangel or a spirit of the Marches. She knows *lots* of people.

Such a Lilim will of course have no Prince-granted rites or attunements when first created, nor will she have a Heart (p. 185). But as she gains experience, she may have the chance to earn them, or trade for them.

Most Lilim never work their way out of this indenture, making the term "free Lilim" a bitter joke. They find it all too easy to promise more favors in exchange



for coveted Resources, Essence, or just help at a bad moment, sliding deeper into karmic debt.

Thus, a Lilim could appear with almost any campaign group, as a PC or as hired help. But no one can be sure of her whole agenda, especially when the demon herself doesn't know who will call in that next favor, or when.

Game Mechanics

A Lilim's resonance can perceive what a victim needs, and inflict a geas on her target after softening his will.

While making eye contact with a target, the demon may make a Perception-based resonance roll, like that of an angel, to determine the target's needs. The check digit of the successful roll is the degree of need which the demon has uncovered, and reduces the victim's Will roll to resist doing whatever favor the Lilim asks once she grants his desire. (If she fails her roll, she may not try again on the same target before waiting a number of hours equal to the failed roll's check digit.)

Example: *Josephine, a Lilim, sits at a bar. Over the edge of her drink, she makes eye contact with a businessman on the other side of the room. She makes her resonance roll with a check digit of 4, detecting a fairly major need on the part of her victim. The GM tells the player that the target has bad business debts of almost 40 grand, and the bank is threatening to repossess his house if he can't pay up. She strolls over, sits down next to him and says, "How would you like to make $40,000 the easy way?" Not an entirely stupid man, he asks, "What's the catch?" "A little favor," she says coyly, "nothing much, really. I just like helping people who can help me."*

The Lilim may then fulfill her victim's need, a task which should be of a degree of difficulty *to the victim* equal to the check digit (see *Geas*, p. 88). A check digit of 1 indicates a simple need, easily met. A 6 might require an adventure in itself for the average human – but a Lilim has more means at her disposal than the person she's helping! GMs should be creative when inventing needs, basing them on the target's personality and problems. Note that the Lilim does not have to meet her victim's needs; she can always choose to walk away.

If she helps her victim, the Lilim may, at any time in the future, ask for something in return. The check digit of her original roll is the level of Geas she can inflict on her victim; the bigger a favor she did, the bigger a favor she gets. A level 1 favor is minor, almost trifling, and breaks none of the target's moral codes. A level 3 favor awakens twinges of resistance, and a feeling of being used – but after all, a promise is a promise. A level 6 favor may be life-threatening, either to the victim or to someone he cares about.

When the victim hears what the Lilim wants, he gets a Will roll to resist – though his effective Will is reduced by the level of her initial favor. If he resists, the Lilim gains dissonance! She may repeat her request once more (and only once) in a number of *days* equal to the check digit of her target's successful Will roll, and he must roll again against unmodified Will. If this traps that victim into making good on his promise, or if she ever puts another, successful geas on him, the dissonance generated will vanish.

Favors are cumulative. If a person owes a Lilim two Geas/3 favors, she may call them both in at once, resulting in one Geas/6 favor! A smart Lilim can get a lot of good out of a small favor. A Geas/4 favor couldn't be used to make someone murder his boss, but she could just say, "Hey, can I come to your company's Christmas party? I know it's supposed to be private. Please?"

Lilim may only impose geases on those whose needs they've attended to. After fulfilling his end of the bargain, the target's geas vanishes.

Redemption

If a Lilim truly repents and wishes to join the angels (see p. 60) – and yes, it can happen – she does not become part of any angelic Choir. There is none corresponding to her Band. She remains a daughter of Lilith, keeping only the abilities that are basic to the Lilim.

Switching sides in the War does not excuse a "free" Lilim from paying back any favors she still owes. This, as they say, presents a difficulty.

No one knows how many "bright Lilim" there are. They are rare and valued tools of the Archangels who rescue them, as long as they use their powers for good. Their ability to persuade and lay geas is no more inherently evil than a Malakite's ability to smash skulls; perhaps less so. But the essence of Lilith is selfishness, and rare indeed are the Daughters who can burn this from their souls and devote themselves to others.

Lilith

Princess of Freedom

The world is what you make of it.

Long before the Fall, Lilith walked the Earth, beautiful and immortal. Created as the first wife of Adam in God's famous experiment in the Garden of Eden, she exercised her free will and walked away.

Lucifer offered her power, dark Essence, and the Word of Freedom. Lilith accepted, but has insisted that independence means far more to her than power over others. She is the Demon Princess of Freedom, and she means it. She holds no Principality and commands no Servitors. When she wants something, she'll trade favors. If she comes out ahead . . . well, that's how it goes. Thus, her power is far less than that of the major Demon Princes. Technically, she's not even a demon; she's just Lilith, unique and exquisite, whom no one can ever own. But her infernal coronet remains secure, because she provides what no other Prince can: the bewitching Lilim.

Each Lilim is an individual creation of Lilith herself. Other Princes have engendered their own ideas of the perfect infernal seductress, but no one can duplicate the Lilim. Having created her children, she leaves them free to succeed or fail on their own. If someone else gets the better of a Lilim in a fair deal or a fair fight, then Lilith doesn't care. It's when Lilim are victimized or treated as disposable that she's been known to get involved.

Lilith can lie almost as well as a Balseraph – though she thinks of it as "changing her mind" about her own intentions. If she's accepted a service, she'll always keep her end of the bargain, unlike the other Princes. She can Geas herself if she has to, but it's normally beneath her dignity to lie to a being as lowly as a beginning PC, and she'd be very unlikely to Geas herself to anyone except a Superior – and even then, only to make a point.

She gets dragged into Hell's politics only when it's completely unavoidable. She'd like to be completely free, of course, but how likely is that really? Lucifer is a powerful protector, and her experience with the Host involved being a mortal's slave. Many Archangels would still like to destroy her, though not all – Jean in particular.

Lilith has no permanent Servitors, deeming that too much like slavery. She acquires temporary Servitors by trading favors. She will trade favors with anyone who will work with her, and she likes to keep her options open. Temporary Servitors have access to her Rites, but they must also accept her Dissonance.

Dissonance

While in Lilith's service, it is dissonant to accept restraints or orders except as part of a freely negotiated agreement. Actually being imprisoned would not bring dissonance on its own; failure to attempt to escape *would.*

Attunements and Distinctions

Since Lilith has no permanent Servitors, she has no Band or Servitor Attunements, nor does she commonly grant distinctions.

Relations

Allied: *Andrealphus, Valefor*

Associated: *All others (and all others would treat her temporary servitors as Associated, unless they were normally servants of a hostile power)*

Rites

- Spend an hour encouraging people to resist the government, question authority, quit their jobs, or leave one-sided relationships.
- Free a human from physical bondage. (+2 Essence)
- Destroy, physically or socially, a mortal enemy of freedom. (+3 Essence)

Chance of Invocation: 3

Any celestial can try to summon Lilith, though she is unlikely to answer a call from anyone but a Lilim or a great celestial power. (And most angels would be in big trouble if their Superiors found out they had spoken to a Demon Princess!)

Why would you summon Lilith? To ask a favor and offer a trade, of course. You might want to ask for a service from one of her Lilim. Or you might want to trade for a favor that someone else owes her.

If you promise Lilith a favor as you summon her, Geasing yourself to do her will, you can earn an invocation modifier equal to the level of the Geas. You owe her nothing if she does not appear . . . but if she does appear, you are bound, even if she denies whatever it was that you summoned her for. (Remember, she's quite likely to trade this favor to someone else, and it might be someone your Superior doesn't like.)

Note that a Geas to Lilith cannot be escaped; if you make a deal with her, you get no Will roll to let you avoid your end of the bargain. The Lilim can sometimes be cheated . . . but Lilith, never.

Invocation Modifiers

-6 for anyone but a Lilim or a Superior
+ Geas level if you promise her a favor, Geasing yourself, as you summon her.
+1 A pair of broken handcuffs
+2 A piece of the Berlin Wall
+3 A caged creature set free
+4 A battlefield where a tyrant fell
+5 A human prisoner set free
+6 Overthrowing a government – any government

Shedim

The Corruptors

A postal employee drives to work with an automatic weapon and opens fire. A teenager assaults a homeless woman, calmly cutting out her eyes and tongue so she can't identify him. A dentist bandages his bitten finger and then smiles, sedates the screaming child, and fills the cup next to the chair with teeth.

Somewhere, a fleshless demon smiles and moves on to his next host.

The human race holds as much potential for evil as it does for glory, but sometimes it needs some help. And no Band of demon contributes more to the day-to-day corruption of humanity than the perverse, bodiless Shedim.

Resonance

Like their heavenly counterparts, the Kyriotates, the Shedim cannot generate their own vessels on Earth, and manifest by possessing the bodies of living humans. But the fallen Shedim don't have – or cannot bear – the selflessness that comes of controlling multiple hosts at the same time. The Shedim resonance is much more treacherous than that.

While possessed, the host consciousness floats in a serene, dreamlike state. Unlike Kyriotates, Shedim have full knowledge of their hosts' thoughts, feelings and memories. Although fully aware of what its body does, it believes that it's still in complete control of itself – and, in a way, it is. A Shedite desensitizes his hosts to obscenity by bending their minds to his celestial will, convincing them that such perversion was *their idea*.

These body-hoppers cannot pass a day without inciting someone to do something despicable (see *Dissonance*, below). They aim not only to keep people from doing things that generate benevolent Essence, giving power to the side of good, but also to further the cause of evil.

Every Prince instructs his Shedim very carefully, for next to the Calabim these demons are the most dangerous to loose upon the Earth.

Dissonance

A Shedite cannot falter in his constant drive for corruption. The demon generates dissonance every day in which he does not force his host to further corrupt its nature. This needn't be anything big; some of the greatest evils start out with the tiniest of indiscretions. It must, however, be an act of selfishness that indisputably harms someone: stealing or destroying property, infringing



upon the rights of others on purpose or through carelessness – the usual.

Each time a host crosses a moral line, a new standard is set. The next day must bring worse corruption. If not, the Shedite must either leave or gain dissonance. For this reason, Shedim often pick the quiet ones – normal-looking folk full of inhibitions and hang-ups. A Shedite who's on a roll can start a host out by blowing his nose on a restaurant napkin, and raise the ante a day at a time until he's sniping from a tower. At that point the Shedite abandons the wretch to face the aftermath alone. Many hosts who are driven this far kill themselves, advancing the cause of evil even farther by robbing humans of justice.

If a Shedite's victim is reduced to unconsciousness, the demon is expelled 30 minutes later. But if he dies while the demon is still inside, the dark soul gains a note of dissonance from being drawn so close to oblivion. However, it avoids the agony of Trauma (p. 67) if it finds another host before being pulled back to Hell. It has (10 × Celestial Forces) minutes to do so.

Manner and Appearance

If any demons among the throngs of Hell can be called genuine "devil worshippers" – demons who genuinely and devoutly owe their ultimate loyalty to Lucifer – it's the Shedim. They're the ones who spray-paint pentagrams in alleys, the ones with the tattoos of horned heads and blazing pitchforks. They stand at concerts with thumb, index, and pinky fingers outstretched, sticking out their tongues and screaming, "Hellfire, I serve . . . YOU!"

The twisted Shedim rev the engine of evil which idles in every human's mind. They're the Band most generally despised by the angels, and some demons don't care for them either. Shedim don't get along with the Djinn – the Stalkers are disgusted with how hard it is to keep track of the Fleshless – and the Lilim absolutely despise them.

The Djinn and the Shedim share an utter disregard for the state of their bodies, but the Shedim are much worse about it. A Shedite treats his body as though he were an indestructible drunk with an endless supply of rental cars. He'll run a corporeal vessel into the ground, leaving just before its death to avoid dissonance.

You can't compare them to any instrument crafted by human hands. In celestial form, Shedim are shimmering black clouds of limbs, wings, eyes and other (mercifully) unidentifiable organs, pulsing to a mad, infernal beat.

Game Mechanics

To possess a victim, a Shedite must make a successful Will roll to invoke his resonance and enter the victim's body. If for some reason the host doesn't want to be possessed by a demon, he may make a Will roll to resist.

The check digit of the Shedite's successful roll adds to his Will when he tries to control his host for the remainder of that possession. The check digit of an unsuccessful resonance roll (or of the intended victim's successful Will roll, whichever is higher) dictates the number of days he must wait before attempting again to possess that victim.

While a Shedite inhabits a body, the host consciousness goes along with most actions the demon tries to take – talking to people, walking around, etc. In a fog of dream-logic, seeing angels and demons won't disturb the fiend's host any more than it disturbs the possessor. In a situation which is odd but not against the host's nature, the chances are that if the demon is comfortable, then the victim will be too.

At least once a day, the Shedite must win a Contest of Wills with his victim, and make his host do something evil – something that harms someone, whether or not that person is aware of it. Each action must be just a little worse than anything the victim has yet done, worsening the person's corruption. Whether possessing an accountant or butcher, a teacher or a pedophile, Shedim know things that even the most cruel and abusive hosts find repulsive. If a day goes by without this happening, a Shedite gains a note of dissonance. This dissonance goes away if the demon "makes it up later."

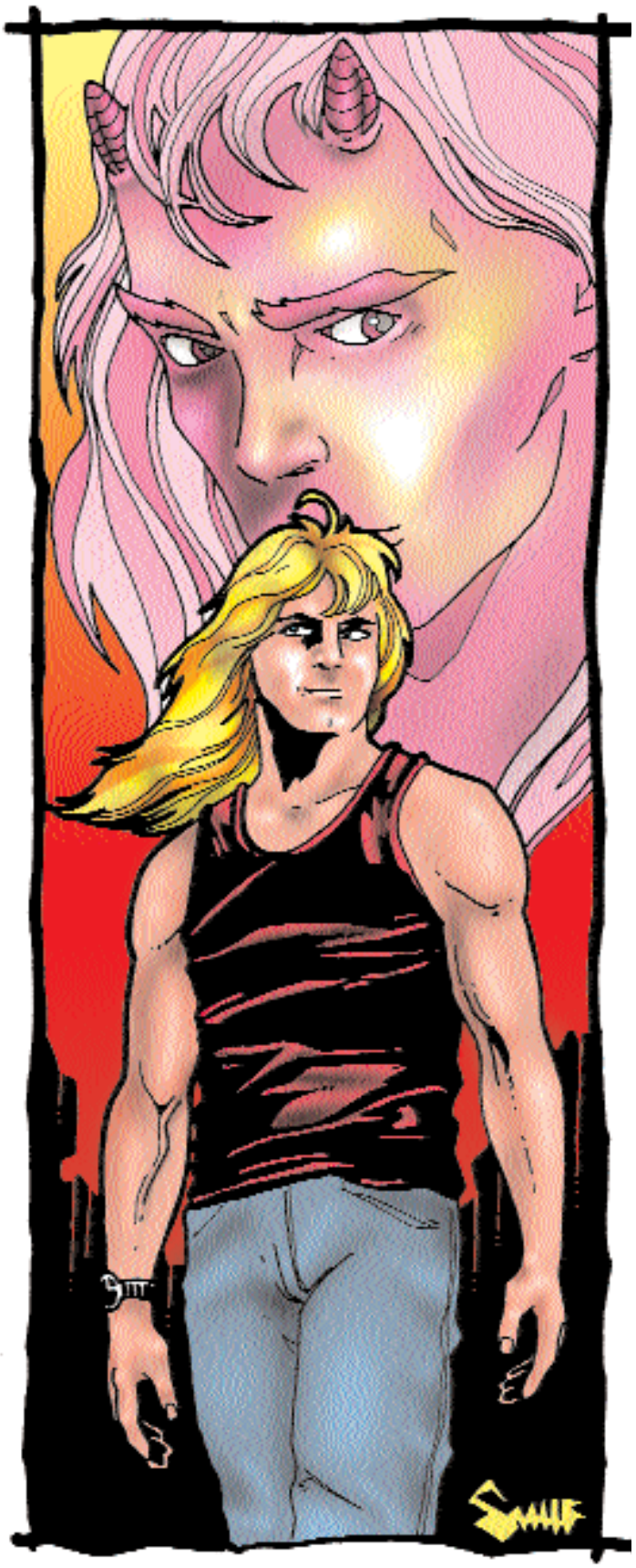
The demon must win a contest of Wills for each evil act that it suggests. Because of this, most Shedim avoid multi-part crimes (such as planning and executing a kidnapping or bank heist), unless they utterly dominate their hosts. They prefer quick and easy evil.

Once a day, at any time that the Shedite attempts to sway his victim, the host consciousness may make a Perception roll to realize he's not really in control. Give the hapless human a +1 bonus to the target number for every full day he's been possessed this time around.

A successful Perception roll while possessed modifies the host's Will by that roll's check digit when he is fighting off the demon's dark urgings. This advantage lasts until he gets a good night's sleep. Once rested, the host is just as vulnerable to the Shedite's powerful will as before.

A Shedite may stay as long as he likes, but his victim grows more and more difficult to handle as the days pass. The demon can leave his host at any time, manifesting in his celestial form, but must make a successful resonance roll to enter another vessel.

The demon automatically returns to celestial form and can look for a new host. Like a Kyriotate, a Shedim stuns mortals who see his celestial form – see p. 103. Of course, he's vulnerable to celestial attacks in this form – and he must find a new host soon. The demon has 10 minutes times his Celestial Forces to find a new host before his diabolical soul will plummet back to the Hell he came from – to face his Superior.



IMPUDITES

THE TAKERS

The demon walked toward the two women, arms outstretched. "Grandma!" he said, hugging one of the ladies tight, sucking out the energies of her soul.

"What a nice young man!" said her friend.

They're the nicest people you'll ever meet. You work with them; you live next door to them; some of you may have married them. You think they're just swell folks. And for their part, they truly, devoutly love the throngs of humanity, and they're so damned charming that they'll not only steal the warmth of your heart, but the energies of your soul as well.

Resonance

The Impudites deal with humans on a one-to-one basis more than the other Bands generally do. They're "people" demons.

They don't want to live in Hell, among the mad and despairing souls. Impudites want to spend their existence among the living, breathing, sleeping, fearful, wonderful humans, whom they love dearly.

Impudites know a great deal about how the collections of Forces called humans stumble through reality, as well as how Ethereal and Celestial Forces connect to Corporeal Forces. This gives them a frightful control over the ways in which souls attach to bodies, and the ways in which human souls generate and spend Essence.

It also gives them the ability to charm almost any creature and suck away its Essence for their own purposes.

Dissonance

More than other demons, Impudites love humans and can't bear to see them destroyed. Personally killing a human – through action or inaction – causes dissonance in Impudites. It's such a waste.

Manner and Appearance

The most human of the demons, Impudites dress pleasantly and comfortably, radiating good will and harmlessness. No one is more gregarious than the Impudites, except perhaps their divine analogs, the Mercurians.

They work their way into human communities and steal Essence from their new friends – if suspicions arise, the demons move on. One reason the Impudites love this

Demons and Their Backrubs

These examples illustrate the natures of the various Bands by showing how they would each deal with getting a backrub from a human being.

A **Balseraph** would go into a massage parlor claiming to be a reviewer for *Backrubs Monthly*.

Djinn couldn't care less about backrubs.

A **Calabite** would turn to someone and say, "You know, when I get these knots in my muscles, it makes me want to break things."

A **Habbalite** would torture someone with guilty feelings until he broke down and rubbed the demon's back.

A **Lilim** would walk up to a stranger, bite her lip and say, "Don't you owe me a backrub?"

A **Shedite** would possess one person, start him giving someone else a backrub, then move into the other person's body to enjoy the experience.

An **Impudite** would rather give a backrub – and take advantage of the opportunity to steal some Essence.

modern age is that Westerners don't *really* believe in demons any more. A Taker in a small group of humans is an effective jinx, sucking away all their Essence – but moving among a large enough group, who notices a bit less "good luck"? And he's so *nice*.

An Impudite's celestial form looks like his most recent vessel, with leathery wings, horns and a dark halo. In their own symphonies, they're singers, front-men in diabolical Bands, surrounded by adoring human fans.

Game Mechanics

Impudites can roll against their resonance to manipulate a soul in two ways: *Charm*, and *Steal Essence*.

Both actions require a normal resonance roll, with a penalty equal to the victim's total number of Ethereal and Celestial Forces. Some Princes grant bonuses to their Impudite servants toward using their resonance on different types of souls.

Charm

An Impudite can use his resonance in its simplest form to charm people. The charmed victim simply feels that the Impudite is his close, trusted personal friend. While a charmed person may be more likely to go along with his charmer's wishes, the demon has no real mental control over his victim.

This effect lasts for a number of minutes equal to the check digit of the demon's successful resonance roll. The victim may resist an Impudite's charm with a Will roll. If the victim makes his roll, he will be immune to the resonance of that Impudite for a number of hours equal to his Will roll's check digit.

Steal Essence

An Impudite can use his resonance again to rob his charmed victims of Essence, if they have any. The average Impudite has no way of knowing whether or not any Essence is available, but it doesn't hurt to try. He can rob as many points of Essence at a time as the check digit of the successful roll. (Note: a normal human, with 5 Forces, can hold 5 Essence . . . but he's rarely full. Humans waste their Essence constantly, any time they really want to succeed at something – see p. 46. The random mortal on the street might contain 1d-4 Essence.)

If the Impudite fails his roll, he can't steal from that victim for a number of hours equal to the check digit of his failed roll.

The victim is allowed a Will roll to defend the energies of his soul. If the check digit of his successful roll is higher than the demon's successful check digit, that amount of Essence moves from the demon to his victim!

Remember, a being cannot hold more Essence in its soul than its total number of Forces. The demon will only be able to siphon off as much Essence as he can hold, and no more.

Angels and Impudites

An Impudite can have his way with any collection of Forces bound to a corporeal vessel, even another demon – or even an angel.

The average celestial starts the game with 9 Forces, 6 of which are probably Ethereal and Celestial. The average celestial's Will is 6, putting the chance of an average Impudite doing much to an average angel at exactly zero. But since an Impudite can improve his chances in various ways, depending on his Prince, it's not impossible. Of course, even if the demon makes his resonance roll, his victim may still make a Will roll to resist.

If an Impudite uses his resonance on a Cherub, an Elohite, a Kyriotate or a Mercurian, then the angel not only gets a Will roll to resist but a Perception roll as well. The Perception roll's target number is *raised* by the number of Forces the demon has, but *reduced* by the check digit of the demon's successful resonance roll. If the angel makes this Perception roll, he realizes that he's being attacked by an Impudite and can shut the demon out before any infernal liberties are taken.

Also, if the angel makes his Perception roll, as his next action he can try to invoke his Choir's resonance upon his violator, no matter where the demon is, as though the two celestials were physically touching.

DEMON PRINCES

You may deny it, but every day you do their bidding. You were forged and trained by the wild forces who bear the title of Prince. They expect your loyalty – cross them at your peril. Just don't count on them for help when someone decides to show you what you look like on the inside.

The Diabolicals – the celestial beings who call themselves demons – originate from the angels who Fell, although few veterans of the War's first battle remain today. Most demons bear little resemblance to their celestial ancestors, and only a handful are as strong as the average angel. Lucifer, angel of Light and first among the Fallen, chose numbers over power – both to increase the ranks of demons as quickly as possible, and to reduce the threat of rebellion from his own servants.

But some demons are potent indeed. These are the Demon Princes, the rulers of Hell. Almost every demon who is not a Prince *serves* a Prince, and partakes of his Prince's nature, both to his own advantage (Rites, Attunements) and to his peril (Dissonances). Even Renegades *theoretically* serve a Prince, and it is he who will be most eager for their destruction.

The player characters, of course, are nowhere near as strong as Princes, but they are among the few demons whose might can match or exceed that of an angel.

More than likely, the PCs were "born" and trained in their master's Principality in Hell, and have only recently been favored with a chance to adventure in the corporeal realm of Earth. And with this honor comes risk, and the opportunity to be sacrificed on a whim.

Theoretically, a Prince will help out his earthly Servitors when he can. In fact, your Prince will write you off if the cost of replacing you – or your mission – is less than the risk of helping you.

And there's always the chance that he set you up to fail. Hell is an intensely political place, where your greatest risks often come, not from your rivals, but from your Superior and your subordinates. Most Demon Princes rose to the top by playing the corporate game, weeding out the too-bright and too-ambitious from their "employees."

If you can please your Prince without exciting his fear or jealousy, he can grant boons in the form of attunements, Rites or distinctions (see p. 156). Displease him, and – if he lets you live – he can inflict dissonance, or even Corporeal or Ethereal Discord.

The Demon Princes

Andrealphus, Prince of Lust – page 158
Asmodeus, Prince of the Game – page 160
Baal, Prince of the War – page 162
Beleth, Princess of Nightmares – page 164
Belial, Prince of Fire – page 166
Haagenti, Prince of Gluttony – page 168
Kobal, Prince of Dark Humor – page 170
Kronos, Prince of Fate – page 172
Malphas, Prince of Factions – page 174
Nybbas, Prince of the Media – page 176
Saminga, Prince of Death – page 178
Valefor, Prince of Theft – page 180
Vapula, Prince of Technology – page 182

Lilith, Princess of Freedom – page 149

Describing the Demon Princes

The following pages describe a few of the most potent Demon Princes: their Words, their powers and philosophies, and their relationships with Lucifer and the other Princes. Of course, the dark lords described in this book are merely some of the most visible of Hell's royalty – the GM is welcome to invent his own Princes to further flesh out his game world.

As part of the politics of Hell (and to curb player abuse) the exact range of any Prince's power and influence is unknown even to their closest confidants. In the game, this means their Resources are left unspecified. No Demon Prince would ever reveal the full extent of his abilities; an uncertain foe is a respectful one. The GM may use his discretion when resolving conflicts involving Demon Princes – and it's a good idea to keep them offstage except, perhaps, as the finale to a campaign.

Every Prince is an individual, a character the GM must portray to the players with his own infernal style and motivations. Also, each Prince deals with his servants in a different fashion. Some give a measure of respect and freedom to the demons they control, while others treat



their servants like mindless tools, to be used and cast aside when they break.

And every Prince sees the world and the War in a different way. Every Prince is ultimately selfish, and his philosophy defines not just how he acts, but why. Since there are so many ways to corrupt the Symphony to evil purposes, the chiefs of the damned see no reason to act other than according to their own whims – and their servants, no matter how favored, must follow suit.

Dissonance

Just as any demon can go against the nature of his Band and cause dissonance, a demon can also violate the basic goals and philosophies of his Prince. This also causes notes of dissonance in the offending servant – but sometimes the dissonance may be removed by correcting the problem. Sometimes, of course, the Prince will remove the offending servant first.

Band and Servitor Attunements

Each Prince grants certain special abilities to all his servants, according to their Band. These "Band attunements" are free to Servitors of that celestial race; other demons must pay 5 points each to purchase them at character creation.

Some Band Attunements are marked "restricted" or "partially restricted." This means that they depend upon the resonance of the Band, and other Bands cannot use them! (A "partly restricted" attunement can be taken by other Bands, but only the aspect of it that is not resonance-based can be used e.g., the Band Attunement of Haagenti's Lilim.)

A Prince may also grant "Servitor attunements" to his favored creatures. These cost 10 character points at creation. After that, they can only be obtained as a reward from that Prince. That is, they must be earned by role-playing. The character point cost must still be paid.

During normal game play, an attunement generally has no Essence cost and is automatically successful unless otherwise mentioned. In combat, an attunement takes one round to invoke, and will manifest its effects the following round.

Regardless of the Band they belong to, Princes have all the abilities they grant to their servants, and many more.

Distinctions

Each Prince may grant further special abilities, called Distinctions, to an especially favored underling. Each Distinction works in a unique way, as described, and carries its own title – e.g., "Captain of Cannibals." Possession of a Distinction is a tangible sign of the Prince's attention and favor, and other Celestials will react appropriately.

The Distinctions are granted in order; a Prince will not grant his second-level distinction (usually Captain) without first granting the first-level one (usually Knight). The three basic Distinctions are listed for each Prince; some Princes have more.

A Knight will probably command several of his master's demons; a Captain may command dozens or hundreds, either directly or through Knights.

A Prince is free to grant his Distinctions to any demon he pleases, including servants of other Princes. But accepting a Distinction from a Prince other than your own is a political act . . .

The Demon Princes possess all the abilities they pass along to their servants (and more), regardless of what Band each Prince actually belongs to.

Relations

Lucifer encourages his Princes to quarrel and even war among themselves. With no restraints on their actions, most parts of the world would quickly become uninhabitable. Besides, if they ever united, they might bring *him* down.

Demon Princes keep careful track of favors owed, requests shunned, insults dealt and compliments given. To the Servitors of Princes listed as "Allied," demons are expected to grant any assistance necessary or face the

wrath of their Superior. To the Servitors of Princes listed as "Associated," demons are expected to grant assistance if possible, but to expect compensation for their trouble. On the other hand, the Servitors of Princes listed as "Hostile" may not be aided. In fact, they may be hindered and harmed in any way that won't blow up into open warfare. Most Princes also have one or two definite *Enemies*, whose Servitors should not only be balked and bashed, but destroyed if possible.

Other Princes are considered neutral; they may be aided or ignored, depending on the advantage of the moment, but are not to be angered without good reason lest their Prince take it personally.

Of course, working on Earth, a demon often won't *know* who commands the demons he meets, nor should he reveal his own master without good reason. Sometimes orders come down to "cooperate with this one, and don't ask questions" – other times, there will be no guidance. When you don't know the affiliation of another demon, it's best to treat him as Neutral and try to swap a few favors. You never know.

While the Princes battle with lies and threats in the drawing-rooms of Hell, the rough stuff will fall to their favored Servitors, the PCs. Don't forget who your friends are and who your enemies are, or there'll be Hell to pay.

Rites

Once attuned to the Word of your dark Prince, there are certain things which bring you fresh Essence. These are called Rites, and they involve creating a specific pattern, either in the physical world or in your mind, which pulls celestial energies from the Symphony.

Unless specified otherwise, each Rite may be used only once per day, and grants one point of Essence.

All demons of a given Prince share in his basic Rites. Each Prince has other, arcane Rites which he can grant to favored underlings, his own or others; the GM may be creative in inventing these.

Any Word-bound demon gains at least one special rite (see p. 28) which he may share with his own Servitors.

Invocation

Some days, a demon really needs to talk to the boss, either to ask for help or pass along something really urgent. But the Princes are busy: like the Archangels, they're constantly juggling plots on every level of reality. A Prince's "Chance of Invocation" is the number a demon must roll to successfully summon his dark master. It's generally a poor chance, but it can be improved in a number of ways.

Some artifacts and situations create patterns which are pleasing or compelling to a particular Prince, increasing the chance of a successful invocation. For instance, weapons – the bigger, the better – will help attract Baal's attention. The special modifiers listed are guidelines, rather than strict rules, and the GM should reward creativity. Invoking Baal while perched atop a Doomsday Bomb would be quite likely to succeed . . .

Oathtaking

Oathtaking is a way to bestow an extra Force on a mortal, making him a Soldier of Hell. The attunement summons a specially-prepared Force from the demon's Prince (who is aware of this use of designated Forces) and attaches it to the designated human. The human must be aware that he is selling himself to Hell, and doing so willingly. If he already has his maximum number of Forces, he will die – see the ***Corporeal Player's Guide***. Oathtaking is a diabolical attunement that any Prince can bestow – it is actually a special kind of Distinction, and therefore costs no points. Most high-ranking Word-bound Servitors are authorized to induct Hellsworn Soldiers. Unless there's some reason not to, Princes grant it to any demon who is a Captain or higher.

Special modifiers for one Prince do not affect other Princes. A few modifiers affect all Superiors – see *Universal Invocation Modifiers*, p. 108.

Invoking a Prince takes 2 turns – roughly 10 seconds. Failed invocations have no effect, except to reduce the chance of another invocation working any time soon.

When a Prince is successfully invoked, reactions vary. The check digit of the reaction roll will give a guideline, from 1 (short-tempered) to 6 (hellishly happy). The typical Prince (whose dutiful servant, by whom he is disturbed infrequently, invokes him at a moment of extreme duress) will probably follow the quickest route to save the troubled demon – usually "pulling the plug" and moving him to a place of safety, sometimes taking him directly to a local Tether for questioning. A Prince who feels he was invoked unnecessarily will make his displeasure very evident.

Princes will not appear in their celestial form if mundanes are around. The dread Asmodeus may be the bug on your shoulder; Nybbas may speak to you from a TV.

Only a few Princes will actually fight for their Servitors (Baal and Belial come to mind). Others will provide less (or subtler) assistance, seeing every situation as a test which will weed out the losers.

ANDREALPHUS

PRINCE OF LUST

The world is lusting, writhing with desire.

Andrealphus and his demonic Servitors are the most hot-handed and cold-hearted creatures ever to crawl out of Hell.

The Prince of Lust, Andre to his friends, is a perfect Impudite. He enjoys worldly missions of glamour and politics. When subtlety is required, Andrealphus has many eager servants.

He and his Servitors are well-liked by all the Princes with a taste for pleasure. Andre frowns upon any demon whose general appearance is even the least bit monstrous, preferring to deal with "pretty people." His servants, and even other Princes, often have trouble contacting him – he's always got a rendezvous to attend to.

In recent decades, Andrealphus has been working with Nybbas, the Prince of the Media, to create a new paradigm for religion, based around the kind of selfish freedom which demons best appreciate. Between Nybbas' deliciously deceitful media and Andre's diabolical charm, they expect to found a new religion of entertainment in the cracks of the corporate state before the end of the next century. In the meantime, Andrealphus has committed his Servitors to teaching humans that sometimes it's good just to lose yourself in the pleasures of the flesh.

Dissonance

These demons stay physically close to their victims, but distant from any emotions. It's dissonant for Andrealphus' Servitors to feel sympathy for a human, and they are strictly prohibited from feeling or showing concern for the fleshly beings surrounding them. Mortals exist only to be ruthlessly manipulated. (However, *faking* affection to manipulate a human is permissable, as is recognizing the useful quality of a human tool and keeping it in good "working condition.")

Band Attunements

Balseraphs

A Balseraph who works for Andrealphus can force a victim to enjoy any single physical sensation he chooses to inflict upon them, for a number of minutes equal to his Celestial Forces. A victim may resist with a Will roll, but if that roll fails, a check digit of 6 indicates that he is now permanently wired to feel that experience as extremely pleasurable, however harmful it may actually be.

Djinn *(partially restricted)*

Andrealphus' Djinn, who couldn't care less anyway, are the best at faking affection. They have the uncanny ability to keep a person in mental "cuddlespace," that post-coital afterglow during which a person is most susceptible to a demon's powerful will. As long as the demon continues touching an awakening human, or maintains physical contact with a partner after satisfying sex, the human will remain calm no matter what is going on – and the demon may add his Ethereal Forces to any Will roll or Will-based skill roll made to influence his victim, and to any resonance roll thereafter if he is attuned to the target. Other



Servitors who take this attunement can use any part of it except where it involves being attuned to the victim.

Calabim *(restricted)*

The Calabim of Lust, using their resonance, may do celestial damage to any target they can touch — even one protected by a corporeal vessel. Sadly, this attack will *not* do the final hit of soul damage that would cost the victim one of his Forces.

Habbalah *(restricted)*

The Habbalah who serve Andrealphus never suffer a reversal of their resonance if their target resists; the emotional storms they generate merely spin randomly into the world and afflict someone else. Also, these demons may add their Ethereal Forces to any resonance roll against a victim with whom they have physical contact.

Lilim *(restricted)*

The Lilim of Lust are Andre's favorite minions. (He asked for a full page in which to express their virtues, but it boils down to, "If you ever get a chance with one, you should take it.") They automatically detect what a victim needs if they can make physical contact, although they must roll to establish the check digit for the level of those needs.

Shedim *(restricted)*

Andrealphus' Shedim, by making physical contact, can move at will into any vessel experiencing an orgasm. Also, they may add their Corporeal Forces to any resonance roll against a person they touch.

Impudites *(restricted)*

Impudites who serve the Word of Lust may add their Corporeal Forces toward using their resonance on anyone they've had sex with.

Servitor Attunements

Dark Desire

This power costs 1 Essence, and allows a demon to imprint any desire upon a person's psyche. The victim may make a Will roll to resist his urges, but if he fails, he'll have no goal except to satisfy his desire, for a number of hours equal to the demon's total Forces.

Kiss of Death

This power permits a demon, by succeeding in a Will roll, to attempt to kill someone with whom he is having sex. This is considered a physical attack, doing hits equal to the check digit times *twice* the Essence spent. (As an Impudite, Andre rarely likes finding that this "grande morte" has been used on a *human*, but he doesn't often ask, either.)

Distinctions

Knight of Infernal Pleasures

The demon can detect an individual's degree of sexual fulfillment, both at that moment and in his life as a whole. Andre always grants this rank to any of his demons who seduces an angel . . .

Captain of Diabolical Delight

Andre's Captains can bring a person instant pleasure with a touch, increasing their reaction roll to the demon by +4.

Baron of Eternal Ecstasy

A Baron of Lust can make someone he's seduced do *anything* sexual with the demon, even something the victim wouldn't normally consider.

Relations

Andrealphus is quite happy to ally himself to those who do not interfere with his Word, or who can contribute to it. Naturally, he is hostile toward those who would detract from his Word's power, or steal his devotees. This explains his hostility toward Haagenti, who – although one of the Princes of Shal-Mari – wishes to broaden Gluttony at the expense of Lust, stealing Andrealphus' power base and narrowing his Word.

Allied: *Lilith*, *Nybbas*
Associated: *Valefor*
Hostile: *Baal*, *Haagenti*
Enemy: *Saminga*

Basic Rites

- Spend half an hour participating in sexual acts.
- Spend an hour reading an illustrated magazine in a public place and smiling very pleasantly at passers-by.

Chance of Invocation: 1

Invocation Modifiers

+1 A dirty picture, scrawled on a wall
+2 An issue of *Playboy*, well-thumbed
+3 A good-looking person having sex
+4 An extraordinarily beautiful person having sex
+5 A person having sex for an audience
+6 Ten people having sex for an audience

ASMODEUS

PRINCE OF THE GAME



The world is a game, whose rules must be followed.

Asmodeus and his Servitors are Lucifer's secret police, responsible for hunting down renegades and other traitors to the infernal armies.

The Prince of the Game, a Djinn, is probably the second-most powerful of Hell's royalty, after Kronos. He is widely feared and roundly hated by his peers. His agents always have at least one cover identity, and only unmask themselves upon making an "arrest."

They are charged with slaying the corporeal vessels of any renegades they encounter. To Asmodeus and his servants, a demon is renegade (and within their jurisdiction) if he acts against the expressed or implied wishes of his Prince, if he possesses any Celestial Discord, or if his actions call his loyalty to evil into question.

Above all, Lucifer uses Asmodeus to weed out demons who might defect to the angels or threaten Lucifer's own plans. He is the counterweight to the unrest that Malphas stirs up. While any Prince may call upon the Servitors of Asmodeus, most prefer to deal with problems in their own way rather than risk scrutiny.

Asmodeus usually appears as a tall man with burning eyes – the Inquisition made spirit.

DISSONANCE

Servitors of Asmodeus generate dissonance by disobeying any of his direct orders or by helping a renegade to escape judgment.

BAND ATTUNEMENTS

The Servitors of Asmodeus are attuned to the members of their respective Bands, and can identify them, and their dissonance, with a Perception roll. For example, his Balseraphs can make a Perception roll to correctly identify someone as a Balseraph, and they also know how much dissonance that demon has at that moment.

All his demons also get 12 extra character points which must be spent on a Role, or skills for that Role. See p. 43. Asmodeus' Band attunements are for his Servitors only.

Balseraphs

Asmodeus' Balseraphs typically take cover identities as casino clerks, stockbrokers, meteorologists and other positions which require creative lying.

Djinn

Djinn working for Asmodeus prefer roles such as security guards, accountants, police officers, members of the military and other positions which require them to keep careful track of people's comings and goings.

Calabim *(restricted)*

Asmodeus' Calabim enjoy physical labor, taking jobs as

construction workers, loggers, oil tanker captains and other posts which let them destroy with impunity.

Habbalah

The Habbalah who work for Asmodeus enjoy cover jobs such as therapists, school counselors, private detectives, fast-food clerks and other occupations which allow them to be overly inquisitive without raising suspicions.

Lilim

Asmodeus' Lilim show up most frequently as hookers, strippers, substitute English teachers and other roles that let them get kinky in plaid private-school uniforms.

Shedim (partially restricted)

Asmodeus' Shedim need not wear out their welcome by perverting their hosts – they have other duties. They may stay in a borrowed vessel for a number of days equal to the check digit of the successful resonance roll and don't generate dissonance if they fail to corrupt their host.

Impudites

These Impudites become doctors, lawyers, or other roles which provide endless streams of people to "help."

Servitor Attunements

Dissonance Binding

This attunement, for 3 Essence, permits its owner to bind a demon in his own dissonance, creating ghostly chains which restrict the demon's movement. The victim's Agility is reduced by his dissonance plus the Celestial Forces of the binder for the binder's total Forces in hours. The bound demon may not spend or regenerate Essence. This power may also be applied to dissonant angels.

Humanity

This attunement lets a demon pass as a human under any circumstance, to anyone – except Lucifer.

It costs 1 Essence to activate and remains in effect for 24 hours. During this time, nothing the demon does creates ripples in the Symphony. He becomes human in almost every regard: his vessel requires food and maintenance, he can't perform Songs, regenerate Essence naturally or assume his celestial form on Earth. He may use attunements, both passive ones and those which require Essence to fuel them, as well as his basic resonance. He may spend Essence to enhance die rolls, but while the demon is "human," he may not freely exchange Essence with someone else.

Distinctions

Knight of Judgment

The Knight has the power to inspire confidence in the humans he meets. They will respect his opinions and will not dispute his judgments.

Captain of Integrity

Asmodeus' Captains can compare a person's spoken words to his secret feelings – basically, this is the ability to detect a liar or hypocrite.

Baron of Justice

The demon may identify those whose opinions are just, fair and accurate. His Celestial Forces indicate how much detail the demon gets about their judgment.

Relations

Note that a demon of Asmodeus will never ignore treason out of "friendship." Asmodeus is allied with Kronos, but Kronos' demons are cut no slack. In fact, some Inquisitors might let treason in a *hostile* force fester a bit longer "just to see who we can smoke out" . . . any extra damage in the enemy ranks is just the fortunes of war.

Allied: *Kronos*
Associated: *Baal*
Neutral: *Beleth, Malphas*
Hostile: *All the others*
Enemy: *Valefor*

Basic Rites

- At sunset, Asmodeus' minions regenerate 2 points of Essence, not just 1.
- Eliminate a renegade demon. (3 points)

Chance of Invocation: 1

Invocation Modifiers

Regardless of invocations, Asmodeus *personally* checks in on each of his Servitors, roughly once a month, to assess their progress. Any dissonance they've gained will be immediately noticed and require an explanation.

+1 Remonstrate with a child
+2 Attend an important legal suit
+3 Use exhaustive evidence to bog down a trial
+4 Bring an innocent to trial and see him convicted
+5 Defend a criminal, and "prove" him innocent
+6 Clear the name of a Nazi war criminal



BAAL

PRINCE OF THE WAR

The world is a war – and the demons are out to win it.

With Baal leading the troops, their chances are better every century. A Balseraph and a warrior, Baal is an inveterate liar with a strange sort of honor. He is not a brute, but a cultured killer, with more class than Belial and more brains than Saminga.

Baal has made combat a way of life. Unlike Michael, Archangel of War, Baal is firmly at the helm of Hell's military, more general than fighter. But while he prefers to appear as a respectable statesman, he keeps other vessels in reserve: powerful alien forms of enormous physical prowess. At other times, he may appear as a normal human, wearing plain clothes and radiating a powerful charismatic aura.

His demons are sent to Earth to encourage the self-destruction of humanity and to help other demons defend against the angelic menace.

Baal holds his disciples in an iron grip, checking in on them frequently to be assured of perfect service. He is a prime example of the great contradiction of the Diabolicals: Baal fought like a champion at the start of the War for the right of the demons to rebel, yet he has slain many of his finest servants for threatening to rebel against him.

Like Valefor, he seldom stays long in the same place. Not just because he despises most of those he encounters – and their unworthiness as opponents – but because he is pressed for time: somewhere, it seems, there's always an army waiting to be led to victory for Lucifer.

DISSONANCE

As with the angels of War, retreat from any conflict without a direct order generates dissonance in Baal's demons. A demon of War must be beaten into unconsciousness and dragged bodily from the field of battle.

BAND ATTUNEMENTS

Balseraphs

In Baal's ranks, Hell's greatest liars are also the best feinters – their opponents must subtract the demons' Corporeal Forces from any attempt to Dodge their unpredictable attacks.

Djinn
Baal's Djinn automatically detect the presence of any flesh – alive or dead (or undead) – within a number of yards equal to their Corporeal Forces.

Calabim *(restricted)*
The Calabim of War are attuned to how flesh is formed, and may add their Corporeal Forces to any resonance roll to tear it apart.

Habbalah
A Habbalite of War can feel any physical conflict around him, ranging 10 yards for each Corporeal Force the demon owns.

Lilim
Few of Baal's Lilim are geared toward combat; they prefer to work behind the lines, spying and indulging in the occasional sabotage or assassination. They add their Corporeal Forces to any attempt to charm someone.

Shedim *(restricted)*
War's Shedim add their Corporeal Forces to any Will rolls designed to urge their hosts into physical combat.

Impudites *(restricted)*
Impudites who serve Baal acquire no dissonance by killing a human in honorable combat.

Servitor Attunements
Art of Combat
This attunement gives a Servitor of Baal additional attacks in a single combat round, up to the demon's Corporeal Forces: one for every point of Essence spent in its invocation. These attacks can be physical as well as mental, coming from powers or weapons, but the demon may not use the same attack more than once.

For example, a demon with 3 Corporeal Forces who knows the Art of Combat may spend up to 3 Essence in a single round and make 3 extra attacks that round. He could perform a Song as well as use both a gun and a sword in that round – but could not fire the gun twice (or swing the sword twice).

State of Ophis
Ophis is widely thought to be the celestial who came to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, spoiling God's early experiment with humanity by suggesting that they use their free will to disobey His wishes.

This attunement allows a demon, with a Will roll and 2 points of Essence, to assume his celestial form without creating any untoward ripples in the Symphony.

Distinctions
Knight of the Black Order
Demons of this rank can, at a glance, judge if a person has the will to fight, if not the skill.

Captain of the Infernal Armies
The demon knows, at all times, the exact location and state of health of every creature under his command.

Baron of Victory
Baal's Barons can predict, 1 round (5 seconds) in advance, the actions of an adversary in physical combat. The demon's foe must decide at the beginning of a round what he plans to do, and tell the player of the Baron. If an opponent catches on (by making an Intelligence roll, or by knowing who he's dealing with), he may make a Will roll at the beginning of each turn to change his action at the last moment, thwarting predictions.

Relations
Allied: *No one*
Associated: *Asmodeus*, *Belial*, *Saminga*, *Vapula*
Hostile: *Andrealphus*, *Beleth*, *Kronos*, *Nybbas*, *Valefor*
Enemy: *Malphas*

Basic Rites
- Kill an adversary – that is, an opponent who puts up a fight. The massacre of innocents does not count, nor does a stab in the back. (2 Essence)
- Enter into a duel with a Servitor of Michael.

Chance of Invocation: 1

Invocation Modifiers
+1 Brass knuckles
+2 A pistol
+3 A machine gun
+4 A 20mm cannon
+5 A heavy tank
+6 A destroyer



BELETH

PRINCESS OF NIGHTMARES

"It is hard to fight an enemy who has outposts in your head."
– Sally Kempton

The world is terror, a never-ending nightmare.

The creatures of Beleth defend themselves from life by becoming the most terrifying things in it. Even the Malakim, those steely-bright angels of war, exchange nervous glances when discussing the Servitors of Nightmares.

Beleth, one of the first celestials created, the angel of Fear, is now a Djinn. Full of hate for humanity, she sided with Lucifer against the wishes of her lover, Archangel Blandine.

The Princess of Nightmares thinks the other Princes – especially those who merely kill their prey – are too soft on mortals. The other Princes know that she spies for Lucifer, and seldom visit her dreamland when they sleep, if they sleep at all. No important Prince is her ally. None will even work with her except the austere Kronos and Asmodeus, who have no reason to fear her, and the callous Malphas, whose Word she enhances as she spreads paranoia.

Beleth and her servants have worked harder than any other Diabolicals to promote fear and general mistrust. That they do it to mask their own insecurity is a weakness they would never confess.

Dissonance

The agents of Beleth are classic demons from Hell. They gain dissonance by taking their celestial form on Earth. But unlike Blandine's servants, they may use Celestial Songs.

Band Attunements

Balseraphs ***(restricted)***

The Balseraphs of Nightmares can create irrational Fear (see p. 87) in anyone who they subject to their resonance. The level of the Discord is the check digit of the resonance roll. This Discord is a lie: it is temporary, lasting days equal to the demon's Ethereal Forces.

Djinn ***(restricted)***

Beleth's Djinn are charged with physically terrorizing people, stalking them and making their lives miserable.

They possess the ability to enter the nightmares of their attuned, no matter what the distance.

Calabim

These Calabim are the greatest sadists in Hell's armies; they automatically know what would most stun or terrify anyone they see, sending them into a state of shock for a number of rounds equal to the demon's Ethereal Forces. The victim may resist with a Will roll.

Habbalah *(restricted)*

Beleth's Habbalah see themselves as the healers of fear, but in truth they simply move it around. If they successfully invoke their resonance while touching a stunned target, he will come out of his stunned state.

However, the next person they afflict with painful emotions is stunned for twice the time that the previous target was saved from being stunned. For example, if a Habbalite brings a victim out of his shock 2 rounds early, then his next target will be stunned, frozen in place, for 4 rounds.

Lilim *(restricted)*

When a victim of these Lilim fails to perform a geas, in addition to the normal penalties, he suffers a level 1 Fear (p. 87) of the demon's choice, which worsens by a level each increment of time until the geas is performed.

Shedim *(restricted)*

Since the Shedim drive mad all those who see their true shapes, these are the only demons of Beleth who may take their celestial forms in the corporeal realm.

Impudites *(restricted)*

These demons may add the number of minutes most recently spent in a target's nightmare to any resonance roll against that victim.

Servitor Attunements

Dream Walking

The servants of Beleth, like those of Blandine, can enter the Marches through the mind of a human dreamer. The demon must be asleep, and must make a successful Perception roll. He must have seen the person before, but the two can be anywhere in the world; +2 if they're physically touching. The subject must also be asleep, and in Beleth's realm.

The check digit of the successful roll is the number of minutes the demon may stay in the subject's dream. The check digit of a failed roll is the number of minutes before he may try again.

Terror

The demon can haunt the nightmare of a person he's seen before; the target must be within 500 yards of the demon, and in Beleth's realm. It costs 3 Essence. The demon's attunement summons up an incarnation of the target's fear and confronts him with it while he sleeps.

The victim may make a Will roll to resist. If he fails, he awakens immediately and takes Soul hits equal to the check digit times the demon's Celestial Forces. This won't reduce a person's Soul below 1.

However, if the victim makes his Will roll, he has successfully confronted his fear and is no longer under its influence. (If he had the Fear Discord, remove one level.)

Distinctions

Knight of Restlessness

Beleth's Knight can afflict any sleeper within 500 yards with a delirious state of fearful dreaming. The dream has no fixed effect, but draws both the user and his target into Beleth's dream world.

Captain of Headhaunters

The demon always knows if any person in his presence has had a celestial visitor in his dreams, or experienced a celestially-inflicted dream or nightmare, in the past day.

Baron of Screams

This distinction gives a +2 towards the success of any roll made while walking the Marches.

Relations

Allied: *No one*
Associated: *Asmodeus, Kronos, Malphas*
Hostile: *All the others*
Enemy: *No one*

Basic Rites

- Spend six hours in Beleth's realm.

Chance of Invocation: 1

Invocation Modifiers

+1 A Stephen King novel
+2 In a theater showing a horror movie
+3 More than one hit of LSD
+4 Frightening more than 20 people
+5 A person confronting his phobia in a nightmare
+6 In an asylum for the violently insane

BELIAL

PRINCE OF FIRE

The world is burning – like the ovens at Belsen, like the eyes of a madman, like the heart of the Prince of Fire.

He and his minions know that if you're not fire, you're fuel. Belial would let the whole world burn before admitting defeat. The Calabim Prince of Fire is a fighter, rarely making a personal appearance unless force – or at least a threat – is required. The Adversary himself likes Belial well enough, but limits his power, some say, for fear of treachery.

Belial takes himself very seriously, even by demonic standards. He wears vessels that are strong and well-built, hating any implication of weakness. He likes to dress well, and affects sophistication, but is never without a weapon. It wouldn't be out of character for him to show up in a three-piece suit, toting a flamethrower on his back. His Servitors may be grubby or elegant, as suits their Bands and their whims – but they all smoke, if only because it's an excuse to carry a lighter.

He was a servant of Gabriel's before the Fall. Lucifer swore that he could have the word of Fire after they overthrew God, and he kept his promise as best he could.

Belial represents only the literal power of fire – its destructive nature – and not its conceptual power, as Gabriel frequently does. The rivalry between the two Words of Fire is legendary, and the enmity between their respective disciples rivals the heat at the heart of a star.

Dissonance

It's dissonant for Belial's demons to be burned by a fire they created. Take this metaphorically: a Belial demon gains a note of dissonance any time he is hurt, physically or otherwise, by his own schemes.

Band Attunements

Balseraphs

The Balseraphs of Fire can instantly heat up any metal object no heavier than their total Forces times 10, in pounds. It doesn't get hot enough to melt, or even to start fires, but it will be too hot to hold. This power has a range equal to the demon's Corporeal Forces, in yards.

Djinn *(restricted)*

A Djinn of Belial can brand a victim with the dark symbol of his name. The demon is then permanently attuned to the victim, who doesn't count against the total possible targets he may attune himself to! The only way to escape is to have the branded flesh flayed away, one inch on either side of the brand and a half-inch deep. A victim who does so is permanently immune to all powers of that Djinn, and often gains unpredictable abilities of his own.



A further drawback to this powerful attunement: Anyone in the presence of the branded victim (or simply the branded flesh) can use the Celestial Song of Attraction to hunt down the Djinn! Other Djinn – or Cherubim, for that matter – don't even require the Song; their natural resonance can trace the link back.

Calabim *(restricted)*

These demons may double their Corporeal Forces when adding them to the check digit of a successful resonance roll . . . and the Calabim of Fire do not disturb the Symphony when they use their powerful resonance!

Habbalah *(restricted)*

Instead of inflicting vicious emotions on their victims, Habbalah of Fire can use their evil resonance to make someone they touch believe he's on fire for a number of rounds equal to the demon's Corporeal Forces.

Lilim *(restricted)*

Belial's Lilim add their Ethereal Forces to any attempt to use their resonance to geas someone into an act of mayhem or destruction.

Shedim *(restricted)*

Instead of entering a human heart, Shedim serving Belial may possess flames – one square yard of flame for each Force they possess. They control the form of their energy, and may urge the flames to consume in one direction or another, or to refrain from burning something in their midst.

Impudites *(restricted)*

Belial's Impudites add their Corporeal Forces when using their resonance on a victim – to Charm or to steal Essence – in the presence of fire. The fire must be within a number of feet equal to the demon's total Forces.

Servitor Attunements

Incendiary

The demon may ignite anything or everything consumable by fire within a radius of (6+Corporeal Forces) feet. This power costs 2 Essence and does not cause any damage the first round, doing 1d of damage to every chosen item every round after that.

Firewalker

Demons with this attunement don't take damage from fire – they love the licking, tickling flames. In fact, once a day they can heal lost Body hits when touched by flames, recovering a number of hits in damage no greater than the demon's Corporeal Forces. This doesn't make the demon immune to heat, nor to heated objects (red-hot pokers, etc.), only to energy manifesting as flame.

Distinctions

Knight of the Infernal Furnaces

The demon knows (to the nearest degree) the ambient temperature, as well as the temperature of anything else within eyesight. Demon with this ability can "see" in the dark, detecting people and some things by their heat.

Captain of the Eternal Fire

The demon may snap his fingers and ignite a fingertip. The flame is the equivalent of a cigarette lighter – not a weapon. Also, flames never block his vision. For example, no vision penalties apply to the Captain if he is fighting through flames.

Baron of the Demonic Brazier

Demons of this rank are completely immune to the destructive power of all kinds of heat, not just flames. With a touch, they may pass this immunity along to anyone else for a number of minutes equal to the demons' Celestial Forces.

Relations

Allied: *No one*
Associated: *Baal, Vapula*
Hostile: *Andrealphus, Haagenti, Kobal, Valefor*
Enemy: *No one*

Basic Rites

- Immolate six humans – not necessarily all at once.
- Spend an hour resting in 120°F heat.
- Spend half an hour in 250°F heat.*

**The being must be immune to fire to benefit from this!*

Chance of Invocation: 1

Invocation Modifiers

+1 A match
+2 A charcoal briquette
+3 Fifteen gallons of gasoline
+4 A can of napalm
+5 A forest fire
+6 A skyscraper on fire

HAAGENTI

Prince of Gluttony

The world is starving – it must be fed.

Just don't stand too close, or you might lose an arm. (Mmmm. Arm.)

Haagenti usually appears as a hairy, screaming demon about three feet tall, with a huge maw ringed by razor-sharp teeth. He moves by hopping and skipping, and eats everything he can get into his greedy little hands.

Haagenti despises almost all the other Princes, mostly because he spent 600 years toiling under them. He started as a gremlin in the domain of the Prince of Sloth, and pushed himself upward with ruthless, angry, hungry energy. He promised himself that someday he'd destroy his enemies, and *devour* them.

Over time, he became a full demon, a Calabite, and a servant of Belial. While in Belial's service, he caught the eye of Kobal, Demon Prince of Dark Humor. Kobal bartered with Belial for the services of the fat Calabite, sponsored him for the Word of Gluttony, and finally adopted Haagenti as his "brother." Protected and encouraged by Kobal, Haagenti grew ever more powerful.

Eventually, supported by servitors of his own, he attacked and consumed Meserach, Prince of Sloth. After that feat of gluttony, Lucifer made him a Prince in his own right.



As a Prince, Haagenti is as energetic and informal as ever, and as greedy. He demands obedience and food. He retains the sense of humor that first drew Kobal's attention, but he's not subtle; he likes torture and sight gags (which, some might argue, are a kind of torture.) His disciples swarm across the Earth to encourage consumption, especially overeating. They also help the Servitors of Kobal harass mankind.

Dissonance

Haagenti's Servitors ooze through the mortal crowds, destroying the will of humanity as they go. It's dissonant for these demons to go more than a number of days equal to their Corporeal Forces without forcing a human to Consume (as described below). They can't hold back the urgency of Gluttony without taking dissonance for it.

Band Attunements

Balseraphs ***(restricted)***

With the power of their personal Symphonies, these infernal liars can impose the Celestial Discord of Gluttony upon their victims, at a level equal to the demon's Coporeal Forces, lasting for a number of days equal to the check digit of the demon's resonance roll. While humans do not gain actual Discord, they behave as though they had Gluttony while the resonance lasts.

Djinn ***(partially restricted)***

Haagenti's Djinn can spot gluttons from miles away. Not only do they know the direction to the closest glutton, but their resonance automatically succeeds, with a check digit of 6, toward anybody to whom they are attuned who has the Celestial Discord (or disadvantage) of Gluttony!

(Non-Djinn may know the direction to the closes glutton, but receive no resonance enhancements.)

Calabim

Haagenti's Calabim have a special Rite. They regain 1 Essence if they can provoke, or participate in, an orgy of consumption by destruction . . . such as a demolition derby, or the sort of party where all the furniture goes out the window.

Habbalah ***(restricted)***

Habbalah of Haagenti can use their resonance, adding their Corporeal Forces, to make their victims feel physically hungry. With a check digit of 6, the victim will gorge himself to bursting while still feeling starved . . . but there are more subtle uses for this nasty power, too.

Lilim *(partially restricted)*

Haagenti's Lilim are wicked cooks. They may spend a number of hours in a kitchen equal to (4 minus their Corporeal Forces) – minimum 1 – to produce a gorgeous meal which can hardly be refused; in fact, the person to whom the demon offers the food must make a Will roll minus the demon's Celestial Forces to avoid devouring it on sight. If the meal isn't poisoned, the diner will also owe the Lilim a small favor (Geas/2). The Lilim can only prepare a meal for one person at any given time, although they do not have to selelct the target until the food is offered. If other Bands take this attunement, then the meal is irresistible to the target, but they don't get a Geas out of it.

Shedim *(restricted)*

If the host of one of these Shedim is a glutton (GM's decision), then his resistance rolls against the Shedite's Will are reduced by the demon's Corporeal Forces!

Impudites *(restricted)*

Haagenti's Impudites, true gluttons themselves, need only make physical contact to steal Essence - they need not charm the victim. However, this produces a disturbance in the Symphony by an amount equal to the Essence stolen plus the demon's Corporeal Forces, and leaves the victim complaining of ravenous, biting hunger.

Servitor Attunements

Consume

This attunement lets a demon see what secret hunger lies in a human's heart . . . and amplify it to fiendish proportions. The victim must make a Will roll, minus the demon's Corporeal Forces, to resist wastefully consuming the object of his desire, whether it's wolfing down a jelly donut or putting yet another VCR on an overloaded credit card.

All Servitors of Haagenti must purchase this attunement at character creation.

Devour

The demon can consume (10 × Corporeal Forces) pounds of *any* matter in a minute. It requires a Strength roll to invoke. He must have the Numinous Corpus Song of Fangs to break up anything the GM rules is harder than normal food. For 1 Essence, this can also be used as a Power +5 attack. A demon who uses this power more than once in an hour, and fails the second or any later success roll, will vomit up what he consumed earlier. This does a number of dice of damage equal to the number of times the power was successfully used earlier that hour – the damage is inflicted on the demon himself *and* on anyone directly in front of him!

Distinctions

Knight of Banquets

The demon can detect every form of nourishment (anything edible by a normal human) within a 40-foot radius. Note: humans, living or recently dead, qualify.

Captain of Cannibals

Haagenti's Captains gain the ability to give any flavor to anything they touch, for 1d6 minutes.

Baron of Satanic Dishes

The demon can make anything he touches look and feel like an equal mass of food for 1d6 minutes. This is just an illusion, which is not apparent until its effects pass.

Relations

Haagenti cooperates with the other Princes of Shal-Mari – especially Kobal, his brother. He's often a random factor in everyone's plans, though, as his Calabite instincts drive him toward aggression, while the Shal-Mari bloc would rather preserve human lives for their own use. Of special interest is Mammon, a now-minor Prince whose Word is Greed; though Mammon tries to stay on Haagenti's good side, claiming to be Associated with Gluttony, Haagenti is at best neutral to him.

Allied: *Kobal*
Associated: *Saminga*, *Nybbas*
Hostile: *Belial*, *Malphas*, *Valefor*
Enemy: *Asmodeus*

Basic Rites

- Cause someone to eat 15 pounds of food (the equivalent of at least a dozen large meals) at a sitting.
- Absorb 200 pounds through *Devouring*, above.

Chance of Invocation: 3

Invocation Modifiers

+1 A piece of candy
+2 A Big Mac
+3 A normal meal
+4 A luxurious meal (pâté de foie gras, champagne, etc.)
+5 Fifty pounds of fast food
+6 Ten thousand whole fried chickens

KOBAL

PRINCE OF DARK HUMOR

"Tragedy is when I cut my finger. Comedy is when you fall through an open sewer and die."

– Mel Brooks



The world is a joke, and humanity is the punchline.

Kobal is Hell's court jester, and he seems to have a special place in Lucifer's heart; the Lord of Lies permits Kobal to say, with wicked wit, what no other Prince would dare even think. On Earth, humor is one of God's greatest gifts, making friendships easier and lightening misfortune. It is Kobal's talent to skillfully pervert the art of humor into mockery, hatred and despair. His demons serve Evil by turning thought to laughter, concern to callousness, reverence to blasphemy – and all in the name of good clean fun.

Kobal manifests in a different guise every time he appears, all the better to fool people – but his servants always recognize him. Sometimes he appears animated; these days he is often depressed and caustic. He specializes in word games and intelligent humor, leaving the crudity of visual gags to his "brother," Haagenti.

The Prince of Dark Humor used to spend much more time on Earth – after all, he's an Impudite. But with the dawning of the 20th century, he began to spend less and less time walking the corporeal plane. He's heard all the jokes – he's jaded, and he's beginning to get bored and angry. Now he rarely comes to Earth, except to help one of his Servitors out of a jam or to enjoy some especially brutal practical joke.

In the depths of Kobal's mind, the ultimate joke is slowly taking shape, whether or not he's consciously aware of it. When he plays it, and upon whom, might make all the difference in the world to the War.

Dissonance

It is dissonant for a Servitor of Kobal to go a single day without worsening someone's misfortune by laughing at him or making others laugh.

Band Attunements

Each Band under Kobal has a special way of regenerating Essence by demeaning humanity in specific ways. These attunements are considered Rites, and as such may only be used once per day. Each invocation regenerates 1 Essence – or twice that if the demon can laugh in his victim's face afterwards!

Balseraphs

Kobal's Balseraphs gain Essence when they lie to someone and make others think he's stupid and gullible.

Djinn

Djinn serving Kobal regenerate Essence by embarrassing a person to whom they're attuned, by making a scene or implying some dark secret on the part of the victim ("I didn't hear you leave this morning . . .").

Calabim

Calabim of Dark Humor regain Essence when a human discovers at a particularly ironic moment that something important to him has been destroyed (by the demon, of course).

Habbalah

Kobal's Habbalah get Essence by making humans embarrass themselves with inappropriate emotional outbursts, such as laughing uncontrollably during a funeral.

Lilim

Lilim serving Dark Humor regenerate Essence for successfully daring (or Geasing!) a human to do something patently foolish and dangerous.

Shedim (restricted)

Humans possessed by Kobal's Shedim find no end to life's little ironies – these demons add their Ethereal Forces toward making their hosts do anything darkly silly or degrading (singing "Frère Jacques" sarcastically during a business meeting with French trading partners; greeting a date wearing nothing but a condom, and so on). If successful, they also regenerate a point of Essence.

Impudites (partially restricted)

Kobal's Impudites regain Essence by playing the kind of practical joke that makes the victim's life miserable. These Impudites don't generate dissonance if one of their jokes kills a human.

Servitor Attunements

Prank

This attunement allows the user to create an illusion worthy of the greatest cartoon madness. It requires a Will roll and 2 Essence to invoke. Anyone within the invoker's sight can be affected; the number of people affected is equal to the check digit.

Pranking creates a convincing but "cartoony" illusion which breaks the basic laws of reality. The best pranks scare some people and amuse others – such as a giant chicken growing out of a car, or dead bodies of secretaries arranged on a boardroom table with apples in their mouths. Above all, the illusion must serve a humorous or ironic purpose. Victims are permitted a Perception roll, minus the demon's Celestial Forces, to resist.

If the power works correctly, the victims will genuinely believe the illusion for a number of seconds equal to the check digit of the demon's Will roll *plus* the check digit of the observer's failed Perception roll.

Distinctions

Knight of Derision

Kobal's Knights can make anyone see the humor in a cruel situation, laughing at the unfortunate. This must be roleplayed. If the victim cannot resist with a Will roll, he demeans both himself and the object of his scorn. Note that, by proxy, this also fulfills the Kobalite requirement to avoid Dissonance!

Captain of Repartee

A demon of this rank can make any human within the sound of his voice shrug off the importance of any event he's just witnessed or any news he's just received, merely by making a pithy remark about it. The subject may resist with a Will roll.

Baron of Hysteria

These demons, at a glance, know which kind of humor would affect a target. They can then use their sharp wits to distract that person for 1 round (5 seconds), during which his success rolls will be reduced by the demon's Celestial Forces. The subject may resist with a Will roll.

Relations

Allied: *Haagenti*
Associated: *Malphas*, *Saminga*
Hostile: *Baal*, *Kronos*, *Valefor*
Enemy: *Asmodeus*

Basic Rites

- Make someone laugh just before he dies.
- Make a psychotic joke at the expense of any other celestial – and make the GM laugh at it.
- Disrupt a serious occasion, involving at least 30 people, with inappropriate laughter.

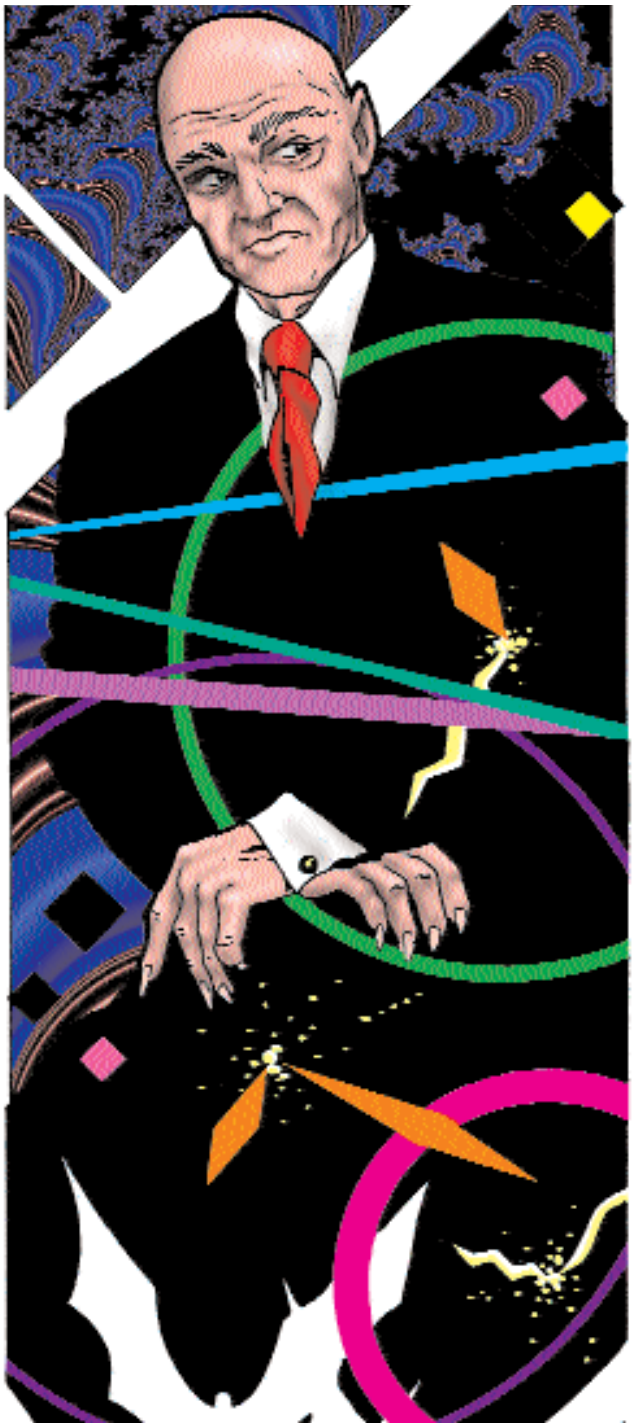
Chance of Invocation: 3

Invocation Modifiers

+1 An original, cruel joke
+2 A five-minute comedy sketch that makes the audience enjoy something basically evil
+3 A busy stretch of road turned slick (with oil, banana peels, small animal corpses, etc.)
+4 A malicious stand-up routine lasting an hour
+5 Something that would make Kobal smirk (GM's discretion)
+6 Something that would make Kobal laugh (again, GM's discretion)

KRONOS

PRINCE OF FATE



The world is sliding toward the Pit – but not quickly enough.

Kronos is the most powerful of Hell's Princes. He doesn't care about most of the people in the world, only those who aspire to greatness, who hear the call of their bright destiny. Those are the ones whose great potential must be crushed by the dark hand of Fate.

He and his Servitors are the only demons with a true connection to the Symphony at large, charged with perverting its workings from the inside out. Dire enemy of the angels of Destiny, Kronos operates by forcing patterns in the Symphony down paths of weakness. Without the demons of Fate to stalemate Yves, the angels might have already won the War.

Kronos, a Balseraph, presents himself as an older man of small stature. He rarely speaks, but when he does it's always with calm authority. Sometimes this is more than a little annoying, but other Princes, while jealous of his position, respect the vastness of his knowledge.

Dissonance

It's dissonant for an agent of Kronos to help a human achieve his destiny (see *Predestination*, p. 67). It's also dissonant for an agent of Kronos to prevent a human from meeting his fate. This only applies to those whose destiny or fate the demon has discovered through the Fated Future attunement, or whose potential futures have been revealed to the demon by Kronos himself. If a demon *unwittingly* helps a human achieve his destiny, or prevents him from meeting his dark fate, he won't generate dissonance – but Kronos will be severely displeased. Because of this, the demons of Fate meddle in the affairs of humanity only when they feel confident in the outcome.

Band Attunements

Balseraphs *(restricted)*

Kronos' Balseraphs, at character creation, may choose to emulate the resonance of any one Choir of *angel*. However, the resonance's prohibitions, as far as dissonance is concerned, also apply. For example, a Balseraph can have a Mercurian's resonance in addition to his own – but if he kills a human, he'll generate dissonance just as a Mercurian does.

Djinn *(restricted)*

The Djinn of Fate know when an object of their attunement is slated to be destroyed in the next 24 hours, barring the intervention of Celestial Forces. Also, their attunements to objects negate the attunement of any Cherub attuned to the same object.

Calabim *(restricted)*

Kronos' Calabim start the game without Discord. Also, when they use their resonance for destruction, they

may choose to make it look as though the target was wracked and wrecked by the passage of time. For example, a human victim will become a rotted corpse or a dusty pile of bones.

Habbalah *(restricted)*

Habbalah using the attunement Fated Future (below) automatically know what emotion to inflict on a target to best serve the cause of evil.

Lilim *(partially restricted)*

Kronos' Lilim can see Discord in the eyes of others. Also, they can add their Celestial Forces to any attempt to inflict a charmed person with their infernal geas.

Shedim *(restricted)*

Once a day, a Shedim may alter his host's perception of time and mortality. He may convince his host that there is time enough for everything, and the human can afford to give in to the demon's agenda – or that there is no time to do the "right thing" and haste is required. Either way, the victim's Will is reduced by the demon's Celestial Forces when resisting his guest's dark urgings.

Impudites

The Impudites of Fate can touch a person and, with a successful Perception roll, know the story of his past from his own perspective.

Servitor Attunements

Fated Future

Some people have the destiny to rise to greatness; others are fated to fall. Some will meet both fate and destiny (see p. 67). For 1 Essence, a demon can tell at a glance if a person has great potential either way. For 2 more Essence, he'll know his target's great destiny *and* dark fate.

Temporal Projection

This attunement works on any being within 2 yards of the demon, launching the victim through time and space. Temporal Projection only works on a creature bound to a corporeal vessel; he can resist with a Will roll.

If the target is unable to resist, he will vanish from the corporeal plane for a number of hours equal to the demon's Celestial Forces times the amount of Essence spent to fuel the attunement.

He will reappear a random distance from his starting point times the Essence spent to fuel the attunement. Roll 1 die: on a 1, he finds himself feet away from where he was; on a 2, yards; on a 3, tens of yards; on a 4, hundreds of yards; on a 5, miles; on a 6, tens of miles. The GM may rule exactly where this is. The victim won't appear in solid matter, in mid-air or any other immediately destructive setting – although not being able to swim may present certain difficulties . . .

Distinctions

Knight of the Winged Chariot

The demon always knows the time, down to the second. He also knows the age of any inanimate object he touches. By spending 1 Essence and making a Perception roll, he can find the darkest deed in any object's past.

Captain of the Infernal Hourglass

The demon can spend one Essence to perform an hour's worth of non-combat tasks (but not movement or travel) in half the normal time, or he can spend two Essence to let any other being do the same thing.

Baron of the Book of Days

This rank grants detailed, true knowledge of worldwide human affairs (equivalent to what would have been reported in the newspaper headlines, had there been newspapers) for any one century in the last two millennia. To simulate this, the player may refer to any applicable history book, or the GM may feed him information as necessary. Or just assume that all relevant Knowledge rolls are passed with a check digit of 6.

On occasion, Kronos has granted this distinction more than once to the same demon, covering different periods.

Relations

Allied: *No one*
Associated: *Asmodeus*, *Baal*, *Beleth*, *Nybbas*
Hostile: *Andrealphus*, *Haagenti*
Enemy: *Kobal*, *Valefor*

Basic Rites

- Spend six hours observing the passage of time (listening to a clock tick, watching a second hand spin, etc.).
- Prevent someone from achieving his destiny.
- Help someone meet his fate.

Chance of Invocation: 1

Invocation Modifiers

+1 A quartz watch
+2 A wind-up clock
+3 A hand-written autobiography
+4 A century-old grandfather clock in working order
+5 An incredibly large clock (Big Ben, etc.)
+6 An atomic clock of unprecedented accuracy

MALPHAS

PRINCE OF FACTIONS

The world is a chaotic pattern of factions within factions – but in the end, we have no allies at all. Each of us is a faction of one.

Malphas, a Shedite, presents himself as an older man of mean disposition. He could easily be mistaken for a war criminal or a deposed tyrant. The Adversary uses Malphas and his servants for diplomatic missions of the greatest importance.

He is in favor with Lucifer, and liked by almost all the other Princes. He does not return this affection. Malphas practices his art among his peers as much as he does on Earth. Lucifer approves; in fact, that's one reason Malphas keeps his high state. As long as Malphas is playing his games, the Demon Princes will never unite against Lucifer . . . they'll be squabbling among themselves.

Malphas is cordial with his servants, willing to listen to the complaints of even the least of them. This is not kindness, of course; it's the faction game. Each of his demons is convinced that Malphas is a tough but fair boss; each one thinks he has a special "in" with Malphas. His organization is not especially efficient . . . none of his demons trust one another enough to cooperate really well . . . but it's completely reliable. His demons are always alert for excuses to denounce each other to their immediate boss or to Malphas himself.

Malphas is never violent except in the last extremity of self-defense, and insists that his minions follow his example. Inciting violence is fine; using it directly is the mark of a failure. (And Malphas secretly believes that most of his fellow Princes are clumsy dolts.)

Dissonance

It's dissonant for the Servitors of Malphas to go more than a day without creating division between two people. A missed day can be made up for by starting two fights on the next day . . . but after a day, the note becomes permanent and must be worked off another way.

Band Attunements

Balseraphs

Malphas' Balseraphs shine in the modern age as the ultimate talk-show hosts. These divisive liars can make one person at a time take the demon's opinions as their own for a number of hours equal to his Ethereal Forces.

Djinn *(restricted)*

Djinn working for Malphas can make a person to whom they're attuned hate any person or object which the demon points out, for a number of hours equal to the demon's Ethereal Forces.

Calabim *(restricted)*

Malphas' Calabim can destroy *relationships* by making their resonance roll. Their victims won't care about a relationship of the demon's choosing for a number of hours equal to the demon's Ethereal Forces plus the check digit of the resonance roll. They may resist with their Will minus the demon's Celestial Forces.

Habbalah

These Habbalah can make a person take an unwavering stand on any of his opinions for a number of minutes equal to the demon's Ethereal Forces. Anyone who disagrees during this time will suffer a violent response – physically violent if the target can't make a Will roll.

Lilim *(restricted)*

A Lilim who serves Malphas can use her resonance to distract a target's attention for a number of minutes equal to her Ethereal Forces. The victim will have no time for anything but the demon . . . ignoring spouse and friends, which may cause all kinds of trouble.

Shedim *(restricted)*

Malphas' Shedim drive away their host's minds entirely and need no Will rolls to assert control, but they retain access to the host's memory while possessing him. (They must still perform diabolical acts, but need not struggle with their hosts over it.)

Impudites *(partially restricted)*

An Impudite of Factions can make a Perception roll to discover how to destroy a person's trust in anyone or anything. The check digit of the successful Perception roll reflects the importance of the trust, and the amount of work it will take to break. This may require some work on the demon's part, but after doing so he may steal from his victim an amount of Essence equal to the check digit of the original Perception roll!

Servitor Attunements

Imbroglio

While this power is active, everyone in range will take everything said to them in the worst possible way – every compliment is misunderstood as sarcasm, every comment as disagreement. Victims must make Perception rolls to avoid miscommunication.



This power has a range in yards equal to the demon's Ethereal Forces, and lasts a number of minutes equal to the Essence spent to activate it.

Polarize

The demon may ignite conflict between any two people – they find, guess, or imagine something to fight about. (For example, a father suddenly "realizes" that his daughter is pregnant, or a child decides that one of his friends stole his crayons.) Only one of the victims need be within the demon's sight.

Essence spent on this roll adds to the check digit as well as the demon's Will. The check digit determines the seriousness and duration of the argument, but the demon may choose a lesser effect than indicated.

The victim with the higher Will may try to resist.

Check Digit	*Type of Polarization*	*Duration*
1-2	Cold separation	1 day
3-4	Argument	3 hours
5-6	Screaming argument	1 hour
7-8	Punch, slap, scratch	6 minutes
9	Any weapon that's handy	6 seconds

Distinctions

Knight of Deception

This rank grants the ability to detect the degree of hatred between any two people within the demon's field of vision, and to accurately intuit its probable origin.

Captain of the Broken Promise

The demon knows, with a touch, who his target has most recently betrayed, and how the betrayal was accomplished.

Baron of Inner Torment

With a touch, the demon knows any painful secrets his victim keeps – such as a son hiding his homosexuality from his family, or a wife who cheats on her husband – including Ethereal Discord.

Relations

Allied: *Beleth, Nybbas*
Associated: *Andrealphus, Kobal*
Hostile: *Baal, Haagenti*
Enemy: *Saminga*

Basic Rites

- Initiate conflict between two people; this rite may be used twice in one day.

Chance of Invocation: 2

Invocation Modifiers

+1 Giving bad directions to a stranger on the street
+2 Leading a blind man astray
+3 Convincing someone to betray his spouse
+4 An employee cheating his boss for over $20,000
+5 Selling illegal arms worth at least $2 million
+6 Involving at least 100,000 people in a conflict

NYBBAS

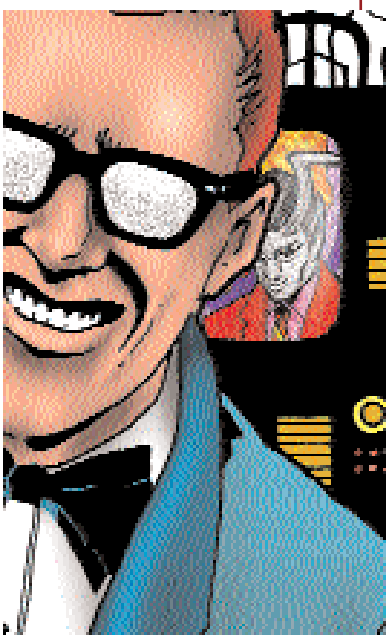
Prince of the Media

The world is what you think I say it is, half off this one-time sale. Call today!

Nybbas is the newest major Prince in Hell. In 1884, with several human allies, he invented the television. His immediate crowning by Lucifer was unexpected – Nybbas was a low-ranked servant of Vapula at the time, without even a Word of his own – and caused great controversy on both sides of the Celestial front. Television has forever changed the way mankind thinks and dreams. Nybbas' plot to mold the psyches of humanity is working all too well.

The Hollywood style of storytelling best embodies Nybbas' unrealistic attitudes: to the Impudite Prince of the Media, beautiful people are stars, most members of humanity are disposable extras or consumers to exploit, and reality is a script that can be rewritten when it is too boring. His manner and appearance is worse than that of the most horrifying game-show hosts, his grinning countenance terrifying to even the most cheerful Girl Scout troop. He can look good if he wants to, buy why bother? He's the studio head. People are supposed to look good for *him*.

He's full of disdain for everyone he manipulates – and he feels, not without reason, that anyone who helps him is his puppet. Although he works very closely with Andrealphus and Vapula, the other Princes of Hell see that he only tolerates them. They fear that he is gearing up for revenge against those who slighted him when he was an underling. The parallels to Haagenti are too great to ignore.



Nybbas doesn't seem to notice the uneasiness he causes among his peers, but who can tell what he's feeling behind those glasses and that perpetual smirk?

Dissonance

The machinery of the media needs endless fodder. Servitors of Nybbas acquire dissonance if they do not spend at least an hour every day contributing to the growth of the world's media. This encompasses everything from writing a newspaper article to creating a Web page. Once caught up, this dissonance vanishes.

Band Attunements

Nybbas gives each Servitor a human servant, a media junkie or other pawn of the media. The servant is worth character points equal to twice the demon's Celestial Forces. The demon can spend points to improve his servant's Status or resource level, at the usual rate.

Balseraphs *(restricted)*

By using his resonance to impose his dark Will upon any medium – typically a television or a magazine, though computers and many other media are also vulnerable – a Liar working for Nybbas can make it read anything he desires while his victim is reading or watching.

Balseraphs of the Media typically command entertainment lawyers, script writers, producers, and other highly paid liars.

Djinn *(restricted)*

Bouncers and bodyguards, Nybbas' Djinn are found on studio sets, location shoots, and homes of the famous – perfect positions for action, any time. They tend to make friends with humans working at similar jobs, and have at least one vicious servant who'll come when called. As a lucky side effect, these demons are always attuned to their servants, who don't count against their total possible attunements.

Calabim

Nybbas' Calabim create group events which bring people together for insane public displays of violence and mayhem. Put simply, they have sports heroes serving them..

Habbalah

Habbalites of the Media are associated with New-Age metaphysical freaks, who hungrily take credit for the demon's celestial actions. These demons create no disturbances in the Symphony when their doings appear to have been performed by their "psychic friends."

Lilim

Lilim aren't assigned to stars; they *are* stars. For free, each Lilim starts with a Role at a level and Status equal to her *Corporeal* Forces. Her servant is a faithful fan.

Shedim *(restricted)*

These demons may inhabit the servants whom Nybbas assigns to them for as long as they like, without making Will rolls as they come and go from their servant hosts. They must still corrupt their hosts, and purchase this attunement more than once for multiple servants, but when a mortal becomes too corrupt to use, their Band Attunement allows them to be assigned a new one.

Impudites

Impudites are the ultimate groupies. They cling relentlessly to their idols, who are actually their servants, sucking the Essence from them as their stars shine more brightly. These demons are generally assigned to humans who excel as entertainers.

Servitor Attunements

Soundtrack

It's a loose tie to the Symphony, but better than nothing. For 1 Essence the demon hears a soundtrack inside his head which reflects the mood of the moment, lasting (10 × Celestial Forces) minutes. For example, if the demon is in trouble, he hears a foreboding theme; if he's in the clear, he hears triumphant crescendos. It's hard to surprise such a demon; if his luck suddenly changes, he knows it a round in advance.

Subliminal

The demon can bind a Song or an attunement into a medium (such as film, art, videotape, or audio recording). This takes twice the power's normal Essence cost, or 1 point for a power that normally requires no Essence.

The embedded power affects the first person to understand the message (with a Perception roll). The GM decides which abilities can be embedded in this fashion.

The person embedding the message must specify any variable effects. For example, when embedding the Celestial Song of Form in a newspaper, the demon must decide what effect it will have on the user's form.

The user can, if he desires, affect multiple people by spending more Essence. (For example, a piece of music carrying the Ethereal Song of Projection can affect 1 person for 4 Essence, 2 for 8, or 3 for 12.)

Distinctions

Knight of Influence

Demons of this rank have an hour of radio or TV air time per week at their disposal (as newscasters, invited guests, musicians, etc.) in which to inundate the public with strange new media concepts. Each time they successfully put on their show, they regain 3 Essence.

Captain of Swank

Demons of this rank raise their reaction rolls by 3 for people who follow any sort of media (TV, sports, etc.).

Baron of the Fourth Estate

Demons of this rank can use the Subliminal attunement on ten people for the same cost as on one. For example, the Corporeal Song of Charm can affect ten people for 2 Essence, 20 for 4, 30 for 6, etc.

Relations

Nybbas is the youngest major Prince in Hell, and he inspires strong feelings – either for him or against him. He's held his title for only slightly over a century, so his relations with Hell's royalty are not stable yet, and may deteriorate or improve much more rapidly than those between well-established Princes.

Nybbas is drawn to Princes who are either young (relatively speaking), or who have a very modern style – Andrealphus, Vapula, Haagenti, and Kobal all fit this pattern. Nybbas is only peripherally interested in Factions for the great news footage Malphans create, and because people who are alone often rely on the media to give their lives meaning, but Malphas allies imself with the Media because it easily functions as an extension of his Word. Fate is an ancient concept, but Nybbas works with Kronos because their goals are often parallel. As to the more militant Princes, Nubbas finds their ideology tedious, if not their methods. He didn't Fall, he doesn't have any scores to settle against Heaven.

Allied: *Andrealphus*
Associated: *Kobal, Kronos, Vapula*
Hostile: *Baal, Saminga*
Enemy: *No one*

Basic Rites

- Spend three hours watching television.
- Spend six hours listening to the radio.

Chance of Invocation: 4

Invocation Modifiers

+1 A color television
+2 A department store display window
+3 At the editor's desk of a major newspaper
+4 On the set of a live television broadcast
+5 The physical location of a web site in the top 1/2 percent of hits per month.
+6 On the set of a live television broadcast being viewed by more than 10,000,000 people

SAMINGA

PRINCE OF DEATH

The world is dead; it just doesn't know it yet.

Saminga is a Shedite. The lord of Death wears a rotting corpse when he appears on Earth; his celestial image is that of a mass of decaying bodies.

Only three millennia ago, Saminga was an ordinary demon. He learned the secret of mummification (p. 193) from the ancient Egyptians and used it to create an army of undead sorcerors. Soon his occult power exceeded that of many Princes.

Lucifer considered slapping him down, but Saminga's not trying to take over Hell. He has everything he wants, and lets the other Princes manage those things that bore him. Arrogant and patronizing, he thinks death is the ultimate evil, and since he is Death, *he* must be the ultimate evil. That's fine with Lucifer, who finds the Prince of Death pathetically easy to manipulate.

The destruction of property or animals doesn't amuse Saminga; only the death of an intelligent being, preferably in fear and agony, fuels his dark symphonic theme. That's amusing.

The Demon Prince of Death always prefers dead puppets to living mortal servants. As this might indicate, Saminga isn't particularly bright. He makes up for it with paranoid savagery, especially when he thinks a Servitor is being even the least bit insolent.

Dissonance

It's dissonant for Saminga's demons to encourage life. (For example, never give wholesome food or drink to a mortal – it just encourages them to go on living.)

Band Attunements

Balseraphs

Balseraphs serving Saminga may kill a human with their own bare hands without disturbing the Symphony.

Djinn *(restricted)*

These Djinn don't generate dissonance for killing an object of their attunement. In addition, they can detect the presence of the undead within a number of yards equal to their Corporeal Forces, times 10.

Calabim

Death's Calabim always know how much damage a creature can take before dying – that is, they know just what it would take to kill anything they can lay eyes on.

Habbalah

The Habbalah who serve Saminga can remote-control a corpse with a Will roll, up to 50 yards away. This is like a temporary zombi, which lasts as long as they concentrate on it. They must do nothing else while manipulating their puppet, or any actions of the corpse will be at -4 to skill.

Lilim

A Lilim starts with an undead servant (p. 192) or servants worth 3 times her Celestial Forces in character points. Few Lilim serve Saminga; Death is no fun.

Shedim *(restricted)*

Saminga's Shedim may possess a corpse for a number of days equal to their Corporeal Forces. No corpse may be possessed more than once by the same Shedite. Only cadavers can be possessed; fleshless skeletons cannot be animated this easily.

A demon gets the Corporeal Discord of Pallid while living in a corpse, made worse depending on how long the body's been dead (GM's discretion).

Impudites *(partially restricted)*

Death's Impudites are the ultimate vampires. They can pull Essence from *corpses*, as long as they have been dead for no more hours than the fiend has Corporeal Forces. They earn no dissonance for killing humans.

Servitor Attunements

Zombi

The demon can turn any fresh corpse into a zombi (see p. 193). He must make a Will roll, adding his Celestial Forces but subtracting the original Forces of the corpse he's trying to raise. For example, a human corpse, which housed 5 Forces while alive, would subtract 5 from the target. If this roll fails, he cannot zombify that corpse.

If the roll is successful, then an amount of Essence equal to the corpse's original Forces must be spent. In a number of hours equal to 6 minus the roll's check digit, the subject will reanimate as his zombi servant. It has the same Forces that it did in life, but all its Celestial Forces are replaced by Corporeal ones. It has a level-3 Need (p. 89) and a Numinous Corpus (p. 82) at a level equal to its new Corporeal Forces.

It will have the memory and instincts that it did when alive (at least until it starts to rot) – but the original soul is completely gone. It's just an animated corpse.

Vampiric Kiss

With physical contact and a successful Will roll, the demon may "suck" the life force out of a willing (or charmed) victim. This power cannot be used on an unwilling victim.

The check digit gives the number of hits of Body damage lost by the victim. The demon gets that much Essence, or all the victim has, whichever is less. The Essence thus gained must be spent before the next use of the power.

Distinctions

Knight of the Dead

The demon knows the cause of death for any corpse he touches, and can see the last thing the corpse saw.

Captain of the Infernal Legion

The demon can seem dead in every way – temperature, skin color, respiration, etc. – for as long as he pleases.

Baron of the Undead Kingdom

The demon knows, at all times, the exact position and location of all corpses within a number of yards equal to his Celestial Forces. He also knows the location of any undead who serve him, much like Baal's Captains.

Relations

Allied: *Baal, Kobal*
Associated: *Belial, Haagenti*
Hostile: *Everyone else, except . . .*
Enemy: *Andrealphus*

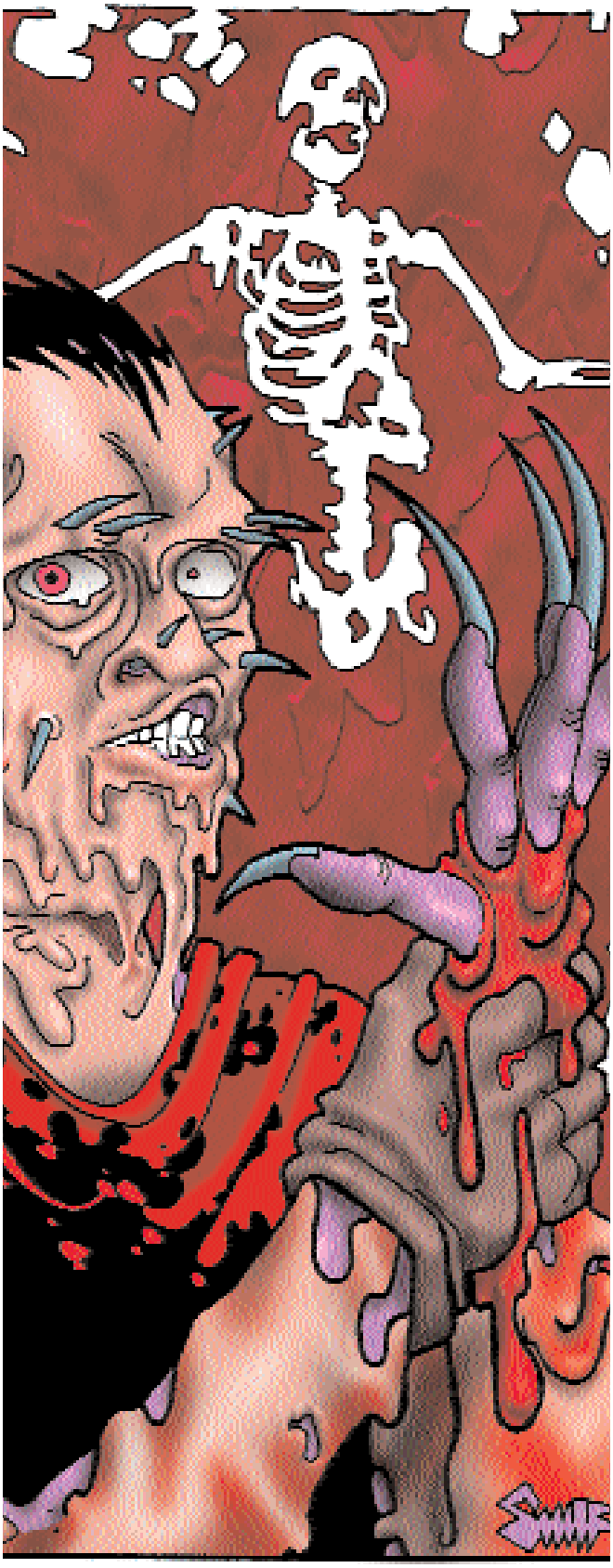
Basic Rites

- Kill ten humans – not necessarily all at once.
- Kill the vessel of a being with more than five Forces.
- Sleep in a cemetery for six hours.

Chance of Invocation: 2

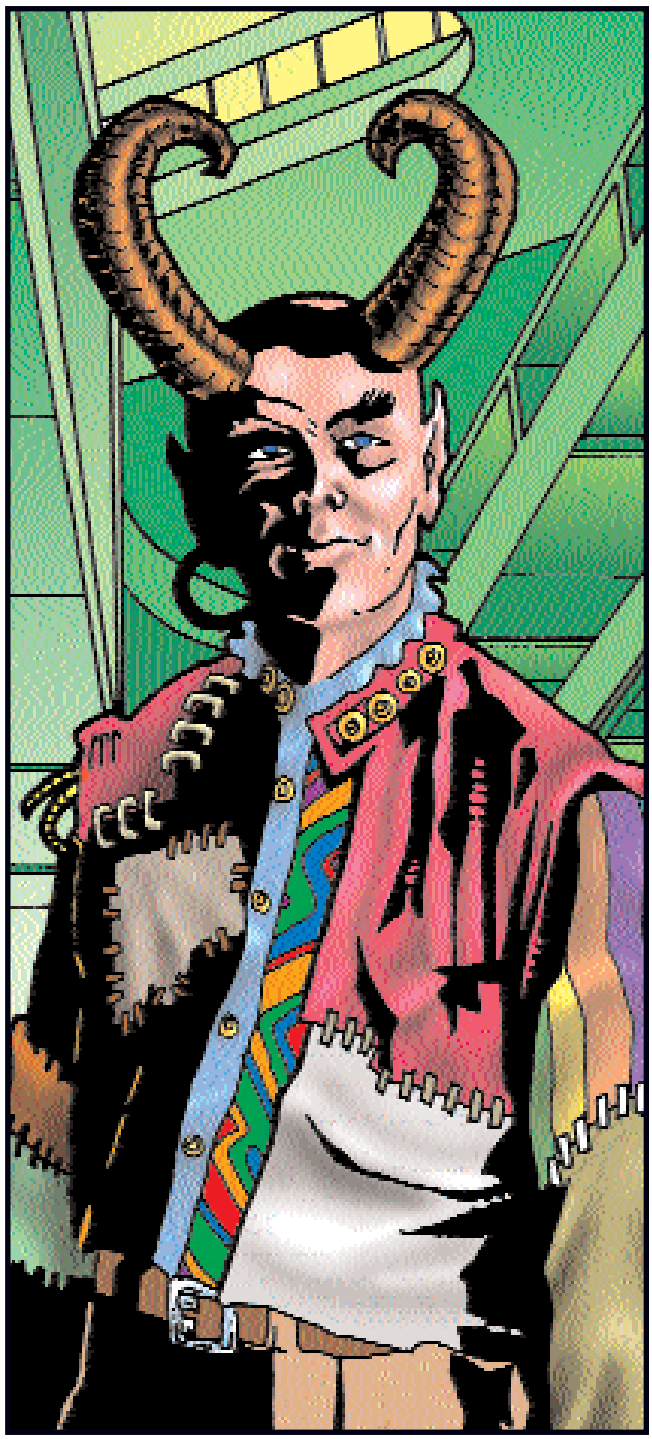
Invocation Modifiers

+1 A human bone
+2 A human skull
+3 A human cadaver
+4 Ten human cadavers
+5 One hundred human cadavers
+6 Five hundred human cadavers



VALEFOR

Prince of Theft



The world is there for the taking, so take whatever you can.

Ever since humanity learned to tell one cave from another, it has struggled with the concept of ownership. Valefor delights in the conflicts between those who have and those who want.

Valefor is a Calabite, thin and suave, with an unusual sense of style for his Band. He appeared on the scene several centuries back, having liberated the true prophecies of Michel de Nostradame, better known as Nostradamus, from Yves' library. He rapidly made a name for himself; since then he has personally stolen everything from the sealant for the Spanish Armada's gunpowder barrels to Nikola Tesla's electrotherapy cure for cancer.

More important than Valefor's flashy personal thefts – though they do raise a lot of Hell in the mortal world without disrupting the Symphony – is the constant strain that the demons of Theft put on mortal society. A little theft is often the door to far greater sins, especially since Nybbas started cooperating by promoting stylish thieves as cool media heroes, from Robin Hood to Dillinger. In addition, theft tends to promote greed and anger in its victims – better and better!

Lucifer made the daring thief a Prince. But most of Hell's more austere royalty – Asmodeus, Baal, even Kronos – think there's something terribly wrong and dangerous about Valefor. For example, the rivalry between his Servitors and those of Janus seems "too pat." Surely, they argue, there must be some reason they and their Servitors bear such an uncanny resemblance, if not physically, then conceptually.

But Lucifer finds Valefor a useful tool. And in fact, when any Prince of Hell needs something stolen, on Earth or anywhere else, he's likely to call directly or indirectly on Valefor.

Dissonance

It's dissonant for servants of Valefor to stay in the same locale for more than three days. Their Prince claims this keeps them from being recognized. A locale, in the modern world, can be interpreted as a city, but the largest urban sprawls (and most Principalties, including Stygia) contain different locales. It's also dissonant for these demons to recognize society's "rules" of ownership and personal space.

Band Attunements

Hesitation can be fatal for a thief; Valefor's demons are attuned for motion. Almost all of them favor speed, dexterity and cleverness over raw power of any kind.

Balseraphs ***(restricted)***

Balseraphs of Theft add the number of their Celestial Forces to the target number of their resonance rolls.

Djinn *(restricted)*

Djinn working for Valefor can only attune themselves to one person at a time, but the subject of that attunement becomes enthralled with the demon (the equivalent of a Servant Resource at a level equal to the being's Celestial Forces), acting as his servant for as long as the attunement lasts. A Djinn may attune to another celestial, but the celestial does *not* become enthralled with the Djinn.

Calabim

Calabim thieves, aided by their auras of entropy, may add the number of their Ethereal Forces to any roll involving breaking locks, opening doors or otherwise freeing themselves or others from corporeal restraint.

Habbalah

Barring the intervention of Celestial Forces, Habbalah serving Valefor can look at the sky and accurately predict the weather for a number of days into the future equal to their Ethereal Forces – down to the minute. They're excellent at devising precisely-orchestrated burglaries.

Lilim *(restricted)*

Valefor's seducers may add their Ethereal Forces to the penalty for resisting when they attempt to geas someone into any form of theft.

Shedim

Shedim serving Valefor may assume a gaseous form, manifesting in the corporeal realm without the need of a host vessel. They can't communicate verbally or interact with the world in any significant way, and they move at one-fourth their normal speed. In this form, they can be spotted with a successful Perception roll, made easier by every note of dissonance the demon has.

Impudites

Valefor's Impudites can move through crowds like eels through coral. Waves of humanity seem to part for them, whether or not the demon is visible. The demon can also tell at a glance if an object was acquired honestly or not.

Servitor Attunements

Passage

With a successful Agility roll, the demon may open any lock. Some are harder than others:

Difficulty	*Type of Mechanism*
0	Simple mechanical (handcuffs, deadbolts, etc.)
-1	Complex mechanical (combination locks, etc.)
-2	Simple electronics (card-based systems, etc.)
-3	Complicated electronics (voice prints, etc.)

Swipe

For 2 Essence, the demon may touch a corporeal object (no heavier in pounds than his total number of Forces) and make it vanish for a number of minutes equal to his Celestial Forces. It reappears later with the demon, wherever he is, and it makes no disturbance in the Symphony as long as no one observes the vanishing or reappearance.

Distinctions

Knight of Kleptos

Valefors' Knights can communicate among themselves, as clearly and quickly as in human speech, in a silent language of gesture.

Captain of Corsairs

Demons with this distinction always know if they're being watched, listened to, or otherwise spied on – which is great for finding out if any witnesses are going to pop up later to ruin their day.

Baron of Buccaneers

The demon moves silently and at great speed. Double his flying speed if he has wings. He may add 4 to his Running skill before any roll, or to the check digit of a Running roll that succeeds without assistance!

Relations

Allied: *Andrealphus*
Associated: *Kobal*, *Malphas*, *Nybbas*, *Vapula*
Hostile: *Baal*, *Haagenti*
Enemies: *Asmodeus*, *Kronos*

Basic Rites

- Spend 1 hour in 80+ mph winds.
- Steal more than $200 worth of material goods.

Chance of Invocation: 3

Invocation Modifiers

+1 Steal a newspaper
+2 Ten $20 bills, fanned out
+3 A valuable painting
+4 A Ming vase
+5 An ancient relic
+6 My God! *The lost Monet!*

VAPULA

Prince of Technology

The world is an experiment gone awry – it stinks, and when it breaks, there'll be bodies everywhere. I love it.

Vapula is a Habbalah who usually manifests as a bright-eyed elderly man with unkempt hair and clothes. He often wears a lab coat. Think "mad scientist." He's usually quiet, and seems to be working on something in the back of his mind – until he bursts forth with a torrent of excited ideas. Even when angry, he's soft-spoken. A clumsy Servitor may be invited to donate his vessel for medical experimentation . . . but Vapula will smile encouragingly as the victim is strapped to the rack.

Archangel Jean was handed the secrets of the corporeal world by Yves. Without access to the Symphony, Vapula is reduced to experimentation – but he's gotten pretty damned good at it. The Prince of Technology loves gadgets, and has absolutely no conscience about their side effects. He was never an angel, and Hell suits him far better than Heaven would; he's free to come up with whatever he wants. He's especially fascinated by technological relics.



Lucifer and the other Princes want to see devices which humanity will use for destruction and selfishness, such as chemical weapons, automobiles, cement, fast food, and explosives. Actually, humans invented all those things, but Vapula takes credit for helping them along – it earns points with the rest of the Descending Hierarchy.

Vapula's forges in Hell are the source of most infernal artifacts. Few of the demons who know these secrets are permitted to reach Earth, though! None of the Princes want diabolical artifacts to be too easy to get.

Most recently, he has been recruited by Nybbas to help create a combination computer/television that will draw Essence from those nearby, or accept Essence "broadcast" from some central location, to power the dark invocations of the cathode ray tube. With such an device – tentatively dubbed the NC, or "Nybbas Computer" – the Diabolicals' control of humanity might be complete.

Dissonance

Most Servitors of Vapula have been granted at least one artifact of infernal origin. It's dissonant for a demon to allow such a boon to fall into human or angelic hands, although this dissonance vanishes if he recovers it.

Band Attunements

Balseraphs *(partially restricted)*

Vapula's Balseraphs can look at a device devised by the minds of humans and precisely comprehend all its possible applications. They can do the same thing if presented only with a spec sheet – they can identify the lies of specifications and intuit a device's real-world performance.

They are granted no high-tech boons; instead, these Liars are Hell's snake-oil salesmen. They may add their Celestial Forces to any attempt to convince someone that a mundane item has fantastic properties.

(The resonance enhancement cannot be taken by other Bands.

Djinn

Djinn working for Vapula are granted feather-light palmtop computers which they can attune to a number of objects equal to their users' Celestial Forces. The palmtop has a thin cable, 6" long, which must touch the object of attunement before being able to track it. All the uaual benefits and restrictions of attunements apply equally to these objects.

Calabim

Vapula does not allow Calabim within his ranks! Their unpredictably destructive fields of entropy wreak havoc with his experiments.

Habbalah *(partially restricted)*

Vapula grants his Habbalah mood rings which change color to reflect the emotional state of the nearest person. These demons can apply their resonance to people experiencing strong feelings, closing the circuit on their target's emotions and creating a feedback loop, stunning the victim for a number of rounds equal to the resonance's check digit. Failed attempts have no backlash.

(The resonance enhancement may not be taken by other Bands.)

Lilim *(partially restricted)*

Vapula's Lilim are the ultimate hackers and social engineers. They add their Celestial Forces to any Computer Operation roll . . . and to any use of their resonance against someone of a scientific or technical bent.

(The resonance bonus cannot be taken by other Bands.)

Shedim

Vapula gives each of his Shedim a laptop computer (which requires no power and has a high-speed cellular Net connection) to use as a vessel, entering freely when a host is not readily available. The Shedite may add his Celestial Forces to any attempt to possess someone who uses the laptop while the demon is inside. Any celestial with possession ability (with resonance or Song) may use the artifact as a host and gain the bonus.

Impudites *(partially restricted)*

Vapula's Impudites are giant Essence batteries. They can store twice as much Essence as a typical creature of their Forces! An Impudite serving Technology has a pair of glasses which let him see the Essence around him. He can measure the Essence in anyone within a number of feet equal to his Celestial Forces.

(The ability to store extra Essence may not be taken by other Bands.

Servitor Attunements

Invention

This ability temporarily creates a relic imbued with one or two abilities. These must be fueled by the user's Essence; if he does not have enough, the cursed relic can instead inflict 5 hits of celestial damage on the user for each point of Essence needed. If this would take the user's last Soul hit, costing him a Force, it will not function.

The object with which the demon is experimenting must already exist in the real world. With a successful Precision roll, the demon can add one or two Songs (or attunements which require Essence) he already knows. The check digit of the Precision roll indicates how many hours the device keeps its powers.

The powers embedded in the object should reflect its mundane uses. For example, a potato-masher could give its user the Numinous Corpus of Claws and Acid; a pillow could produce the Corporeal and Ethereal Songs of Dreams; a jar of cold cream could be given the youthful aspect of the Corporeal Song of Entropy; and so on.

Distinctions

Knight of Combustion

A demon of this rank can immediately determine the best way to operate any device he encounters, giving him a +2 to whatever skill he uses.

Inspector

Demons of this rank (and it's not Inspector of anything, just "Inspector") can detect any fault in any technological equipment.

Baron of Gremlins

Vapula's Barons can create a tiny defect in any technological object they touch. It will fail disastrously after another 10 (minus the demon's Celestial Forces) uses. Only the most thorough examination (GM's decision) has a chance of spotting it before then.

Relations

Allied: *No one*
Associated: *Baal, Nybbas, Kronos*
Hostile: *Saminga*
Enemies: *No one*

Basic Rites

- Work for three hours, or spend six hours asleep, in a lab or factory.
- Convince someone to try a new creation that will increase their reliance on technology.

Chance of Invocation: 3

Invocation Modifiers

+1 A used battery
+2 A cheap toy imported from another country
+3 A stick of dynamite
+4 A machine responsible for maiming a factory worker on an assembly line
+5 A well-used crematorium furnace
+6 A nuclear bomb

HELL

It all comes down to this: humans are born, then they walk around bumping into things until they die. They don't have much time, much sense or much hope. Chances are, today more than ever, they'll live selfish lives, diabolical lives, and then Hell will have them. And if they're going to walk the dark road, I hope for their sakes they do it well. Evil has no patience with mediocrity.

In Hell, everyone can do whatever they want, and unfortunately, some of them may be bigger than you. Those are the chances you take, standing on the edge of the Abyss.

There is a place of darkness, a constant screaming discord reverberating throughout the Symphony. It's an abscess in the celestial realm, and so has rightfully been called the Vacuum. It is a series of countless caves and caverns, endlessly descending, and so has rightfully been called the Pit. It's a place of great suffering, and so has rightfully been called the Inferno. Its inhabitants, who have better things to worry about, just call it Hell.

Principalities

"Daddy," piped the little demon, snug in his bed, "can angels visit Hell?"

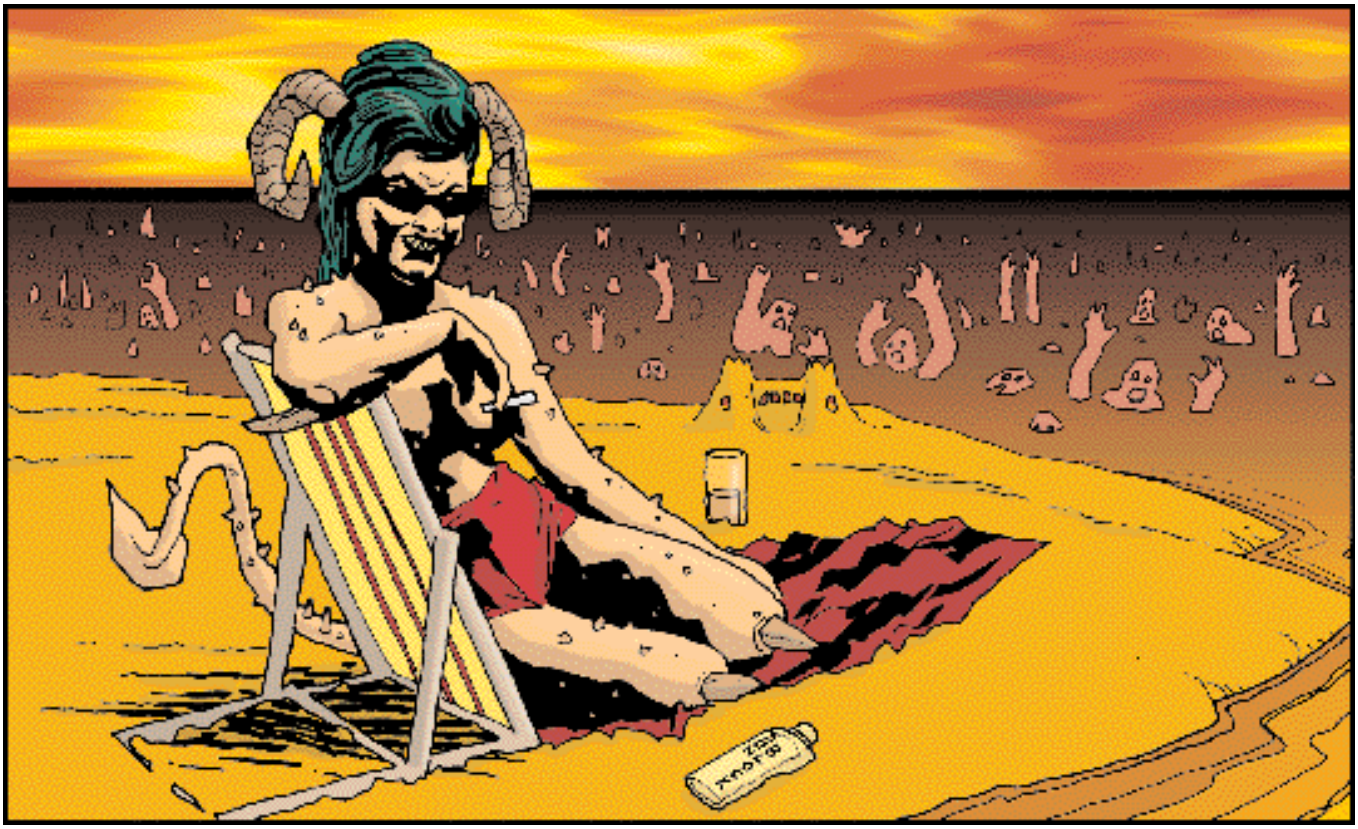
"Only angels can go to Heaven," the older demon chuckled, "but ***anyone*** *can come to Hell!"*

Hell is where the demons live. It's divided into a large number of Principalities, canyons of varying sizes connected by tunnels, walkways and teleporter gates. Each Principality has several Tethers (see p. 59), hellish places on Earth to which it is closely linked.

Each Principality is ruled by a Demon Prince, whose subjects include not only demons but also untold millions of human spirits – those whose diabolical actions drew them downward after death. These souls become the property of the Prince whose Word they (knowingly or unknowingly) supported during their lives. Travel between Principalities is difficult and monitored closely, even for demons, though more so for human souls.

The currency of Hell is, of course, Essence. Each demon or damned soul in Hell generates 1 Essence every 24 hours – not at sunset, since Hell is always dark. (Angels visiting Hell don't regain Essence at all.)

Depending on the Principality, humans can use Essence to buy anything from a brief respite from their tortures to complete freedom. But depending on the



Principality, humans are used as everything from guinea pigs to the ultimate consumers to fuel for the furnaces – not that much different from Earth, come to think of it.

Abaddon

Saminga's domain is a gray wasteland of cowering human souls, scattered tribes of those whose actions in life best served death. The Prince of Death cares little for his human subjects, but allows them to move freely in his Principality until he has need of them.

In the center of Abaddon is Saminga's bone citadel, to which his servants drag human souls for harvesting of Essence – and their very Forces, as well. Other Princes see Saminga's stripmining of human souls as wasteful, but the souls in Abaddon are his to do with as he pleases.

Demons' Hearts

There are places in every Prince's land which are particularly well-guarded – metal shelves within concrete bunkers, pits covered by locked grates, stony hallways inset with countless nooks. They contain glowing globes, from pinpoints to basketballs, which look like flickering crystal and weigh much less than you'd expect.

But for God's sake, don't touch them; they're demons' Hearts. If you picked one up, it would glow red-hot until you dropped it.

This one's yours. Oh, but you knew that when you saw it.

Isn't it nice? Doesn't it call out to you like nothing else in your selfish world? No matter who you've betrayed, your own Heart will always care for you. But be careful – wherever you go, your Prince can grab your Heart and squeeze . . . and find you.

Only demons granted Earthly access have Hearts generated for them, to serve as their connections to the celestial realm. When a demon ascends to Hell he always manifests right by his Heart. While a demon is in Hell, his Heart glows like a furnace. If a demon's Forces are disbanded, his Heart shatters as well.

A Heart may not be moved, save by its owner or his infernal master. Demons are strictly prohibited from moving their own Hearts – most Princes keep their Servitors' Hearts locked in steel cages to which only they have the keys.

With a Will roll, a demon in possession of his Heart may break it, but after returning to Earth he'll be unable to find his way back to Hell without following another demon (see p. 53).

Lucifer

The Bringer of Light, greatest of the Balseraphs, Lucifer, remains an enigma. Each Prince fights his own personal battles against the Heavenly Host, but in the end it's the Shining One who manages the War. And he seems to be doing damned well.

Lucifer cannot be summoned; he comes and goes as he chooses. But when he appears, it is always significant. He has no time for small talk, no patience for buffoonery, and no appreciation of the ridiculous. Lucifer does have a sense of humor, but his laughter is a thing to fear.

The GM should use Lucifer sparingly in the campaign, but never forget him. The greatest of the Fallen is always quick to help the maneuverings of a Prince when it would please him – or spoil a plan that would not!

The Prince of the Dead never destroys a soul all at once – rather, they're captured and stripped of one Force, then released to roam the wasteland until they're unlucky enough to get caught again. Each time a soul loses a Force, it's pushed back a step on the evolutionary scale, taking a new form – a monkey, or a dog, or a bat, or a nameless crawling thing. Saminga's Principality is the only source of animals in Hell. The dirt grubs infesting this wasteland are the remains of human souls, stripped of all but one Force, mindlessly attempting to avoid their last harvest and the final death.

The harvested Forces are sent back to Earth, to be bound into newly-created undead servants. See p. 192 for more information on the undead.

The Archive

Hell's record-keepers, Kronos' demons slave to record the details of the Symphony, the history of the War and the stories of humanity. They keep track of the dispersal of souls to Principalities (described under *Hades*, below) and record which demons have been granted Earthly service by the Princes – or, at least, the ones the Princes publicly admit to. They also record which Words Lucifer has seen fit to hand out. Of course, Kronos (and, presumably, Lucifer) is the only one who can regularly find anything in the Archive. But if a demon can get his attention, the Prince of Fate will be more than happy to answer his question . . . for a price.

The Archive is one of the only places in Hell from which you can access every other major Principality. Like the Library of Yves, it has many secret portals leading to or from other Principalities, but rarely both ways.



Beleth's Marches

Beleth's Tower straddles the border between the dream world and Hell. When one of her demons enters Hell, he finds himself within his lady's dark tower, at the bottom of a grand staircase. Don't go up the staircase unless you want Beleth to see you. If your path crosses hers and you don't have incredible progress to report, she'll knock you back to Earth so hard they'll be looking around the impact crater for your horns.

Beleth's half of the Marches also serves as a sanctuary for the remaining pagan deities and other creatures of myth. Archangel Uriel "purified" Earth, and Blandine's half of the Marches, before being recalled to Paradise. The gods of myth – survivors of various pantheons, from the Aztecs to the Greeks – don't necessarily like Beleth. But she did protect them from Uriel, so many of them continue to add their power to her realm.

Gehenna

Land of eternal struggle, Gehenna, the domain of Baal, is a constantly changing battlefield strewn with weapons and bodies. Those who refuse to fight are slaughtered.

Gehenna is the proving ground for the demons of War. The fighting only pauses when Baal returns to Hell to inspect his troops and select new Earth forces from his Principality's most vicious and talented fighters. Then the conflict begins again, demons and damned souls equally desperate to prove themselves to their master.

Hades

Hades sits on Hell's right hand like a ring waiting to be kissed. It's a great sprawl of a city, spanning the entire outer perimeter of the Inferno itself. All souls which enter Hell must pass through the front gates of Hades, except for demons returning to their Hearts (see the box on p. 185).

Standing on either side of the gates to Hell are two large angels, towering over the throngs pressing for entry. Servants of Dominic, they can spot souls who do not truly belong in Hell, plucking them from undeserved damnation – although it doesn't happen very often. (A long time ago, some impulsive young Diabolicals tried to make the angels move, and the universe taught the demons a lesson which didn't make them any happier.)

Servitors of Asmodeus, Prince of the Game, control the assignment of human souls to the other Principalities. Many years ago, Lucifer sat down with all the Princes and worked out an unfair method for soul distribution – but since everyone felt equally shafted they all assumed it must actually be fair.

Perdition

Once the land of Sloth, before Haagenti devoured the Prince who held that Word, in the last century it's been taken over by Nybbas and his Servitors. He and his demons keep their human subjects in a state of tranquil dormancy – and they like it.

Perdition's human inhabitants are completely opposed to change, fixating on one kind of sensory input (a ball, constantly bouncing; a television screen full of white noise; a top, forever spinning) which they obsess on to the exclusion of the rest of the world. The threat of removing the object of a human's attention is enough to coax Essence out of him.

The demons of Perdition spend most of their time in the glass and steel structures which fill this land, dreaming up content for their Prince's various media endeavors. This Principality borders Vapula's realm of Tartarus. Luckily, he and Nybbas get along.

Shal-Mari

The glitzy Principality of Shal-Mari is run by Andrealphus and Haagenti, largely underwritten by Kobal. It's organized much like an Earthly consumer-driven society, with a vast expanse of casinos, bordellos, restaurants and theaters, inhabited by all kinds of wretched souls.

Demons of Andrealphus, of course, run the bordellos, charming the Essence out of human souls with their diabolical wiles. Servitors of Haagenti, chefs beyond compare, orchestrate the restaurants and bars. Kobal's minions take care of the theaters – a vast sprawl of cineplexes showing the Servitors of Dark Humor making humanity miserable. These comedies are some of the most popular entertainments in all the dark afterlife.

The casinos help support all their demonic sponsors. Proceeds are (supposedly) divided evenly between them.

Humans in Shal-Mari may do anything their hearts desire, as long as they pay for the privilege. The human souls of other Principalities can sometimes use hoarded Essence to buy brief "vacations" in Shal-Mari, but their infernal owners make sure to get them back quickly.

Death After Death: How You'll Suffer in Hell

All damage in the celestial realm is taken to the soul itself – when a human soul is tortured, it reduces the integrity of the bindings of his Forces, and enough Soul damage (p. 64) will reduce the victim's Forces, one at a time, until he is gone. But the pain is far greater than the actual damage.

A victim could be suspended by his ears in a pool of lava up to his chest and not die – he'd want to, but it wouldn't happen. He could be crushed between two small mountains and merely feel pain. A sufferer in Hell feels as though he has a corporeal body, and his torments really do him harm. But what a victim feels as a day's worth of suffering really does only a single hit's worth of Soul damage.

If the demons want to strip your Forces, they can. But they know just how much pain each soul can take before losing a Force. It might take a long time to recover after swimming the lake of fire, but you *will* recover. Of course, a Prince can kill a soul within his Principality if he cares to, just by lifting a talon, but otherwise Hell earns its reputation for eternal suffering.

The Dark Celestial Tongue

One of the first dilemmas the original Fallen angels faced was what to do about their language. The only tongue they knew, the divine speech of angels, was incapable of expressing falsehoods – for demons, this would not do.

Over the millennia, the Diabolicals have bent and broken a perfect language in so many ways that angels hardly recognize it – much as Americans have done with English. Unlike the divine language, the dark tongue of demons can be spoken in any form, either corporeal or celestial. And while demons can speak the divine language, angels can make neither heads nor tails of the warped speech of a Diabolical's tongue, though they can identify it for what it is.

Sheol

Sheol is built around the base of Hell's only volcano, from which a torrential lava flow sustains its infamous Lakes of Fire. In the Principality of Sheol, demons serving Belial are immune to heat and fire.

Belial traps human spirits in flames, torturing the Essence out of them. Once a human gives up his daily Essence, he's allowed out of the flames.

Stygia

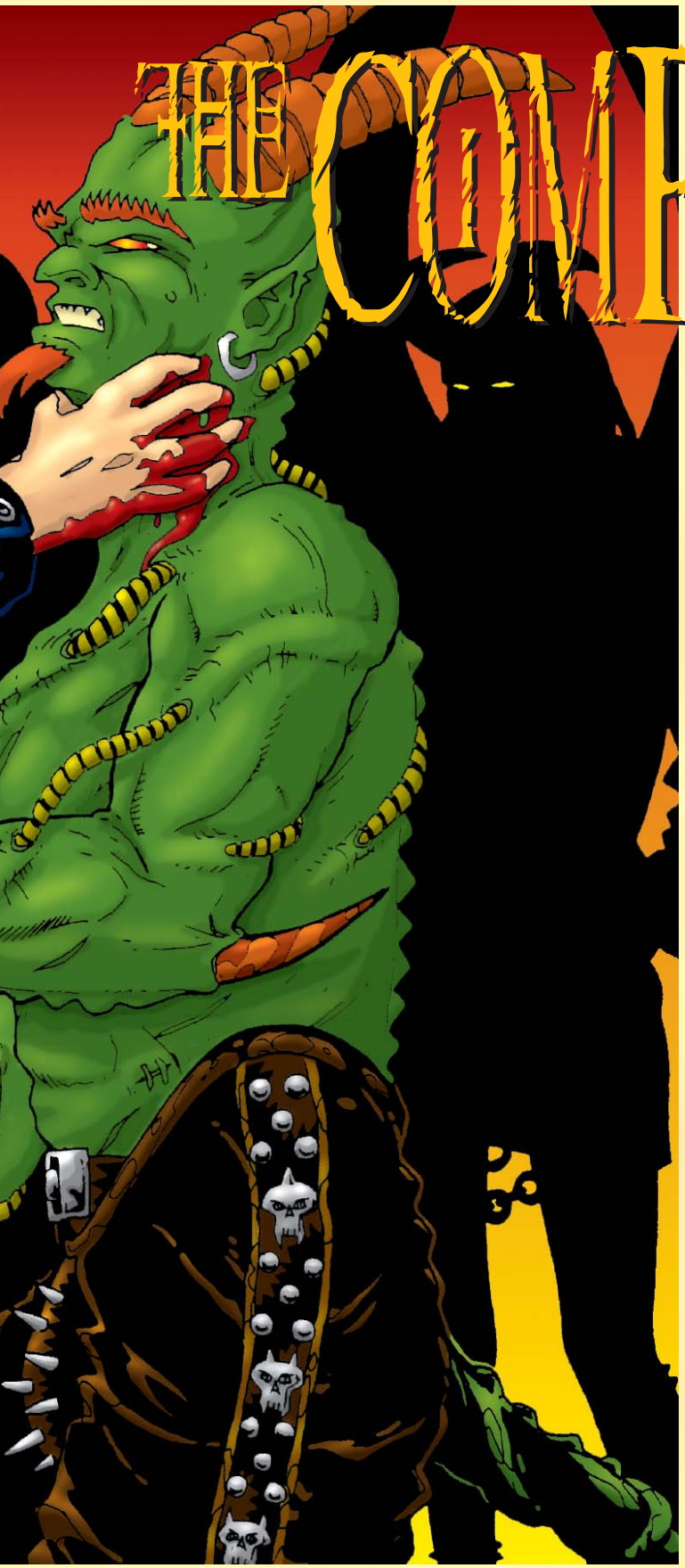
This dank maze of catacombs, centered around the twin courts of Malphas and Valefor, is home to the self-tortured, the trustless and the thieves, all of whom coax Essence from one another in hope of buying freedom from this Principality's endless passageways. Sadly, there is no way out – except through faithful service to one of Stygia's two Princes.

Tartarus

For the people who can get absolutely nothing done in Hell until they've been tortured a while, there exists Tartarus. It's ruled by Vapula, Demon Prince of Technology, who experiments on his human charges (the ultimate beta-testers) before introducing his accursed inventions to the corporeal realm.

It's a tangled mess of animated rebar growing like kudzu, dotted with toxic spills and half-finished construction projects. Vapula likes it that way, as any random combination of parts might inspire a new project. This Principality has a passage to Perdition which is so wide as to be almost unpatrollable. Luckily, Vapula's infernal machines police the area, dealing harshly with escapees.


HEAVEN'S
HELLIONS



THE COMPOSITION

Book III



The ultimate, angels' law,
Indulging every instinct of the soul
There where law, life, joy, impulse are one thing!

— *Robert Browning*

SUPPORTING CAST

Angels and demons are not the only fighters in the War. This section focuses on other types of characters, some sacred and some profane. All these creatures, from spirits to Soldiers, would make excellent servants for a celestial character. See *Character Creation*, p. 27, to calculate their point costs.

At the end of this section are eight sample celestial characters – four angels and four demons – who could enter an ***In Nomine*** game. Some of them are good "starting characters," examples of solid character construction, while Orc and Lynore are Word-bound beings, on a much higher level than the average beginning player character. Those who have already read "A Bright Dream" and "A Dark Dream," the short stories which open this book, may recognize a few faces.

SOLDIERS

Soldiers were once ordinary people, but they have learned about the War, or have been recruited, and joined the battle. A Soldier knowingly serves an angel or demon. They don't know everything – just enough to get themselves in trouble. *Soldiers of God* serve angels . . . *Soldiers of Hell* are their infernal equivalent.

Soldiers start with 6 Forces, and know how to control their Essence use (p. 46). They may learn and use Corporeal Songs. In a game, they may be either servants or player characters.

Despite the name, not all Soldiers fight on the front lines. Many are aides, spies and support troops for the celestial warriors they serve. But some really do take up their swords, or their .45 pistols, or their straight razors . . . and seek out the hated foe.

SOLDIERS OF GOD

Soldiers of God have sworn to fight the Diabolicals and their servants on any front, regardless of the consequences to themselves. Some – like the Purifiers, who work out of the Vatican – belong to organizations, while others operate alone, under an angel's guidance.

Soldiers have the advantage of being living, breathing humans. Their actions make no disturbance in the Symphony, except when they spend Essence.

SOLDIERS OF HELL

Soldiers of Hell have, often literally, sold their souls for dark currency. Some serve Evil for earthly rewards, some



hope to become demons in the hereafter. Some are just as selfish and evil as any demon, and think the job is its own reward. Typical Soldiers of Hell work in small gangs, supervised by a demon. But there are many mad loners, and a few surprisingly large organizations are infernally-controlled.

Demons rarely stint their servants on Earthly support, but they can be stingier about supernatural help. They don't like to see mortals grow too powerful. In particular, a Soldier of Hell who learns any Songs except Corporeal ones (yes, there are ways, though not open to beginning Soldiers), or who gains his 8th Force, is likely to become a target of his former mentors.

ETHEREAL SPIRITS

There are many sorts of ethereal spirits, from surviving Norse gods to human souls. Most live in the Far Marches, rarely leaving their dreamland strongholds. The lesser ones serve the greater; some of the greater ones pay lip service to Beleth, but few would do battle for her.

Rarely does a free spirit become an actual servant of an angel or demon. A less formal alliance with an ethereal spirit is quite possible – but, for now, is left to the GM to introduce at his pleasure.

Celestial Spirits

Celestial spirits are created by divine or infernal forces, and may eventually grow in power to become angels or demons.

Most spirits aren't bound by corporeal vessels – they walk through the matter of the corporeal world. Without vessels, they require a Perception roll to be seen. Familiars are the exception; though they can take celestial form, they normally spend their time in an animal vessel.

Celestial spirits are never sent to Earth without a specific purpose – either to serve an angel or demon, or to help or hinder a specific person (or object or place). They must perform their duty to maintain their connection to the corporeal realm. If a spirit is prevented from playing his role, his soul will be pulled back to the celestial realm whence it came. They may not return to the celestial realm on their own.

Spirits are constructed on 3 to 8 Forces. Celestial spirits can learn any Songs their Superior approves. They may purchase any attunements which reflect the being they serve, although they may not earn distinctions. For example, a reliever (see below) serving an angel of David may purchase the Elohim of Stone attunement, giving him absolute direction.

Spirits who persevere can gather about themselves additional powers – and additional Forces. A celestial requires only 7 Forces to become a demon, but 9 Forces to become an angel (Lucifer chose quantity over quality). The Choir or Band to which the new celestial belongs should reflect either the sort of attunements he chose or the way in which he best performed his duties.

Animals

Animals can enter the game as servants, hosts or opponents. Here are a few of the commonest ones.

A listing starts with the type of Forces that compose a typical individual, and which characteristic each type of Force is weighted toward. For example, the one Corporeal Force of a small dog is weighted toward Strength (giving it a Strength of 2 or 3 and an Agility of 2 or 1). Remember that a characteristic can only be 0 if there is no corresponding Force. A zero listing for a type of Force does not mean that that kind of animal never has such a Force – just that it's not usual.

Skills are treated exactly as for humans, except that an animal can have a skill at a level higher than 6. After the Fighting skill is given the creature's Power modifier (for when it hits) and Protection number (for when it is hit). Note that small creatures have a negative Protection number!

When creating an animal servant, players can vary these stats within reasonable levels (lowering Fighting and increasing Tracking, for instance, to turn the generic large dog into a bloodhound).

Cat

1 Corporeal (Ag), 0 Ethereal, 1 Celestial (Per). Climbing/6, Dodge/5, Fighting/6 (Power -3, Protection -1), Move Silently/8. Runs at 10 × Agility.

Cats are common as familiars and companions, and any city has lots of stray cats for a Kyriotate to borrow. Quick and silent, cats can scratch the bejesus out of a foe but rarely do real harm.

Dog

Small dog: 1 Corporeal (Str), 1 Ethereal (Int), 0 Celestial. Dodge/4, Fighting/5 (Power -1), Move Silently/4, Swimming/5, Tracking/4. Runs at 10 × Agility.

Big dog: 3 Corporeal (Str), 1 Ethereal (Int), 0 Celestial. Dodge/4, Fighting/6 (Power +2), Move Silently/4, Swimming/5, Tracking/4. Runs at 10 × Agility.

Dogs come in all sizes and temperaments; most of them fall between the extremes listed above. Small ones are inconspicuous and not threatening. Big ones can be very threatening.

Insect Swarm

1 Corporeal per swarm; 0 Ethereal; 0 Celestial. Fighting/6 (Power 1). Crawling insects move at only a few yards per round, and are always considered silent. Flying swarms go at least 10 yards per round; they can go 30 yards per round if intelligently directed. They cannot move silently; there is always a buzzing sound.

Each Corporeal Force of tiny insect life (such as bees or ants) is considered a "swarm" of 30 insects. They can penetrate the tiniest cracks, and often go unnoticed. Ordinary insects can't bother a human much, but some have painful poisons. A hand-to-hand attack will take out only 1 insect for each hit of damage done. Area-effect attacks (such as flames) damage the entire swarm. Only Jordi's Kyriotates may manifest as insects.

Wolf

2 Corporeal (Str), 1 Ethereal (Int), 0 Celestial. Dodge/6, Fighting/8 (Power +2), Move Silently/4, Swimming/3, Tracking/7. Runs at 12 × Agility.

Wolves are very unhappy if deprived of wilderness and the company of their own kind.



Familiars

A familiars is a spirit with a corporeal vessel – generally that of a small animal, such as a cat or a dog. Other common forms for familiars are bats, rats, wolves and owls. A familiar is always someone's servant (p. 45). Disobedience to his master generates dissonance for the familiar. This dissonance reduces his Will to resist his master's instructions.

(If a familiar's vessel is killed, he will be in Limbo, (***Heaven and Hell***, p. 79), in Trauma. His master may, of course, send him Essence to help rebuild his vessel in Limbo.

A familiar's master may use his minion as a living reliquary, an external Essence reservoir, moving the energies of the universe back and forth at need. This can serve to fuel an angel or demon in unlucky times.

Also, demonic masters may temporarily force their Discord upon their familiars, briefly relieving themselves of their problems by imposing them on their servants. If a demon has stigmata, for instance, his familiar may be seen leaving tiny, bloody pawprints. This can be done once a day, with one type of Discord only, for a number of hours equal to the demon's Will minus the level of the Discord. It's no wonder that creatures such as Prince Haagenti, who worked his way up from familiar status, are so full of spite.

A familiar must purchase an animal vessel (see p. 48). This will look like a normal creature of its type, but it will be able to talk. Most familiars, of course, are under strict instructions to keep their mouths shut around mundanes.

Gremlins

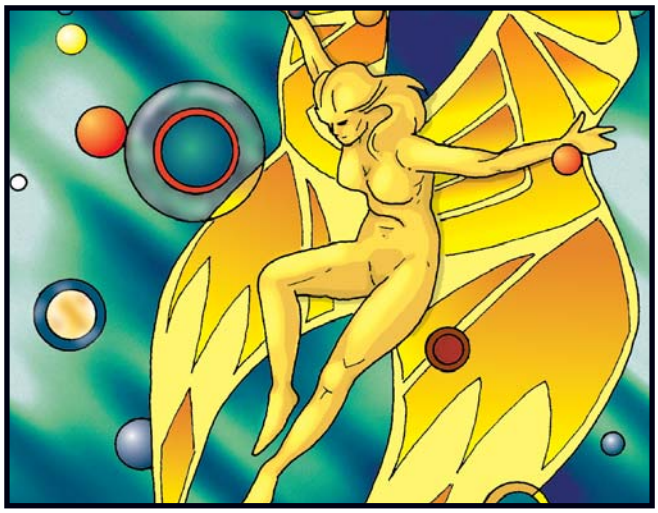
Gremlins are sent to Earth to spoil the works of mankind. They delight in breaking or disfiguring every work of human hands – from putting sugar in a gas tank to spraying graffiti on a wall. Gremlins, when they can be spotted in their celestial forms, appear as small, misshapen winged demons – pitiful creatures.

These spirits may know the following Songs: Entropy, Motion, Thunder and any of the Numinous Corpus. If gremlins graduate to full demonhood, they become Balseraphs, Calabim or Habbalah.

Imps

Imps make humans' lives miserable in petty, annoying ways. They drain the batteries in remote controls; they shove car keys between couch cushions; they push glasses off shelves and poke holes in diaphragms. Imps appear as miniature humans, with vestigial horns and tails.

These spirits may know any of the following Songs: Dreams, Form, Light, Motion and Possession. If imps graduate to full demonhood, they become Djinn, Shedim or Impudites.



Relievers

Relievers are minor angelic spirits, helpers and healers of humanity. They leave food for the poor, perform minor miracles of healing and pull car keys out from between couch cushions, replacing them with spare change. Their celestial forms look like tiny, hand-sized fairies. The more Forces a reliever has, the larger he'll appear.

These spirits may know any Songs of Dreams, Harmony, Healing, Light or Motion. If they ascend to full divine stature, they may become angels of any Choir, depending on how they best served the Symphony in their previous assignment.

Undead

When humans offer to sell their souls to evil, the illusion of immortality ranks high on the list of things they

want in return. Many Soldiers of Hell, sooner or later, ask to become unaging, powerful undead. They gaing the ability to learn and use Celestial Songs. The demons are happy to comply. There's a catch, of course.

Ironically enough, the Servitors of Saminga, Prince of Death, are the finest practitioners of the dangerous art of extending human life. Even after thousands of years of practice, their methods are crude. But when they succeed, the newly undead being becomes a powerful new servant for the armies of darkness . . . at a dreadful cost to the servant himself.

Once undead, the only thing binding the dark soul's Forces together is his corporeal flesh. Undead do not require the basic maintenance of human vessels, such as eating, drinking or sleeping – although they can do all these things if they wish. Nor do they age in any normal manner. But should the undead vessel be destroyed, the soul is gone as well. It's a condition of their servitude that they be told this beforehand, but they seldom listen. They're more focused on the promise of power than on its price.

Angels loathe the walking dead – and they find it particularly disgusting that the undead make no disturbance in the Symphony with their work.

Mummies

If all goes well in the black mass, then the soul of the human supplicant is bound permanently to his corporeal form. This creates a mummy, a potent and disturbing undead creature who can pass for human – with an extra Force, summoned forth from Saminga's Principality.

The additional Force may be Corporeal, Ethereal or Celestial. It gives the character another 4 points to distribute among the corresponding characteristics. He also gets 10 points worth of any ability available to demons of Saminga and/or the Prince he works for. A typical mummy has a Numinous Corpus at level 3 or 4 and a couple of Songs, although he may also choose some attunements. At their creation, some mummies choose to accept some Discord to gain additional powers.

Mummies generate 1 point of Essence every sundown. Some truly ancient mummies have developed their own specialized Rites to regain Essence. At character creation, the GM may give a mummy one additional Rite, which regenerates 1 Essence, for 3 points.

Vampires

About half the time, things go wrong and the Hell-summoned Force won't attach properly. This is a problem, since more energy is needed to keep the new undead's Forces from bleeding away entirely. This can be managed by quickly imposing Discord upon the hapless soul. This creates a vampire.

Create a vampire as for a mummy, but with only 5 Forces. He gets the same 10 points worth of demonic abilities. Add the Discord of Vulnerability/3 (Sunlight) and at least 3 levels of a Need (such as blood). If the vampire can meet his Need every day before sunset, he'll regenerate 1 Essence at nightfall.

Zombis

And then sometimes things *really* go wrong, and the undead servant's soul unravels down to 4 or sometimes even 3 Forces before it can be stopped. Zombis have no Celestial Forces. They rarely have many Ethereal Forces, and so aren't very bright. They keep their Corporeal Forces, and find no trouble bringing harm to anything within their grasp. A zombi won't harm his master or his master's allies. With no Will, it will follow all orders (so there is no reason to buy a Zombi as more than a level-1 servant).

Zombis have 3 levels of a Need (blood, brains, etc.) and 1 Numinous Corpus equal to their Corporeal Forces. They can use any skill they possess, and can even use Corporeal Songs.

Not all zombis are failed mummies. The servitors of Saminga can turn any fresh corpse into a zombi (p. 178). This type of zombi contains nothing of the body's former soul, though it will keep the memories!

Zombis don't last very long. The curses designed to keep the creature's soul from fleeing were also supposed to support the vessel in its undead state. Every dawn, a zombi takes 1 hit of damage unless he has satisfied his Need since the last dawn . . . and zombis cannot heal. The Corporeal Song of Healing can help them, but few zombis are worth the waste of Essence.

Angels

Ishmael

Elohite Servitor of Dreams

Corporeal Forces – 2 Strength 5 Agility 3
Ethereal Forces – 4 Intelligence 7 Precision 9
Celestial Forces – 3 Will 5 Perception 7

Vessels: Human/1, Dog/1
Skills: Dodge/2, Savoir-Faire/2, Throwing/1
Songs: Dreams (Ethereal/6, Celestial/6); Charm (Celestial/3)
Attunements: Elohite of Dreams, Dream Walking

Ishmael is one of Blandine's newly favored Servitors. He typically wears his human vessel – a tall, somewhat serious-looking male, dressed in rumpled clothing from



the '20s. He keeps a sleepy look on his face, balanced by a twinkle in his nearly-closed eyes.

Blandine has had him guarding the dreams of a variety of children, mostly grade-school kids, and he's been pretty lucky so far. In the year he's been on Earth, he has yet to run into a demon. Spirits, yes – demons, no. He has been on the trail of a real demon for some time, though, and he thinks he's closing in. But the closer he gets to the evil, the larger it seems. Ishmael has contained his fear so far, but he's growing afraid of being afraid.

He's got a friend, a servant of Gabriel, who moves from town to town helping wipe out servants of the Diabolicals, and he's hoping to hook up with her before he actually runs across his prey.

Ishmael is a balanced starting character, as he stands.

Nicole

Mercurian Servitor of Fire

Corporeal Forces – 3	Strength 6	Agility 6
Ethereal Forces – 3	Intelligence 7	Precision 5
Celestial Forces – 3	Will 5	Perception 7

Vessel: Human/3 (Charisma +2)
Servant: Human/2, Status 2
Skills: Dodge/2, Fast-Talk/2, Ranged Weapon/1
Songs: Charm (Celestial/4), Healing (Corporeal/3, Celestial/1) , Motion (Ethereal/4), Form (Celestial/4)
Artifacts: Holy Pistol/1, 3 Holy Bullets
Attunements: Mercurian of Fire, Special Rite – Dancing (from Novalis)

Nicole is, in a word, pissed. If an adventure grows out of the action from "A Bright Dream," she's not going to let anything stand between her and Marcus' corpse. Her one goal in life has become taking him out. If the PCs are angels, she'll try to persuade them to join in the hunt, and even if she knows that other celestials are after him for their own reasons, she may not say anything.

It'll be a while before she's back in Gabriel's good graces. Accepting that rite from Novalis didn't help any, but finding the Sanguine Painting (see p. 197) and finishing the job she started might begin to set things right.

Nicole is basically a balanced starting character; her Artifacts and her special rite from Novalis are additions.

Orc

The Angel of Networks
Kyriotate Master of the Machine

Corporeal Forces – 5	Strength 8	Agility 12
Ethereal Forces – 6	Intelligence 12	Precision 12
Celestial Forces – 5	Will 10	Perception 10

Songs: Attraction (Corporeal/1, Celestial/4), Form (Celestial/4), Healing (Corporeal/6, Celestial/3), Motion (Corporeal/3, Celestial/6), Shields (Celestial/4), Tongues (Corporeal/4), Thunder (Celestial/4)
Skills: Computer Operation/6, Dodge/6, Electronics/6, Languages (English/4, Finnish/5, German/3), Tracking/5 (his familiar ground is the net)
Artifacts: An old Unix manual (with a picture of a demon on the cover!) granting Computer Operation/6; a 4-colored ballpoint pen which is a Reliquary/6.
Attunements: *All* Choir attunements of Jean, Generator, Master of the Machine, the Angel of Networks.
Special Rites: As Angel of Networks, Orc gains 1 Essence by sleeping in a well-connected computer room (which his hosts often do, when they sleep) or by connecting a site to the Internet.

Orc is an Earthly servant of Jean, of moderate but growing power. He is helping humanity develop their nascent computer networking technology. After several decades of hard, successful work, he was granted a Word for his efforts. He's based in Finland, at the cutting edge of net development, but he can appear instantly anywhere in the developed world . . . as long as the network stays up.

Lurking around university computer labs, Orc has found a small clique of student programmers who don't mind being possessed by an angel for days at a time. With 16 Forces, he can possess three people at once, multitasking his hacking efforts. When he has time, he does their homework for them. (All they remember is going into the computer lab and sitting down at a terminal;

then suddenly it's days later and all their programming is finished. They blame it on too much coffee.)

Like any Kyriotate of Jean, he may possess a computer; once inside, his Word grants him two special abilities. He can travel instantaneously from that machine to any other computer it can connect with, anywhere in the world. This costs 3 Essence. While inside a computer, he also has access to the data it contains, circumventing any password protection. If the information is encrypted, he must make an Essence-aided Computer Operation skill roll to decipher it.

Friendly, but poorly socialized, Orc is happy to help out other angels in times of true need, but he's so busy with his personal projects that it's difficult to get his attention.

Orc is a very developed character. Some angels might be assigned to work for him (if so, they should get his Rites). Orc is not nearly as potent a protector as an Archangel, of course, but he's easier to reach – you could probably send him e-mail.

Tariel

Cherub Friend of War

Corporeal Forces – 4	Strength 9	Agility 7
Ethereal Forces – 2	Intelligence 3	Precision 5
Celestial Forces – 4	Will 7	Perception 9

Vessel: None (lost in combat)
Skills: Dodge/5, Driving/3, Fighting/2, Small Weapon (Knife)/4
Songs: Entropy (Celestial/4), Shields (Corporeal/4)
Dissonance: 1
Attunements: Cherub of War, Proficiency (Knife), Friend of the Fighters

Archangel Michael loves a fighter. Tariel, a noted ass-kicker, let himself be trapped by Charlie and Marcus, and lost the Sanguine Painting – but he's valued by Michael. He's already over his Trauma, and won't spend too long in Heaven before being granted a new vessel and sent back.

He has no immediate orders beyond protecting his charge, Patricia. Michael assigned him to her a few months ago, but never told him why she was so important. Not a questioning angel, Tariel wants to focus on his job instead of getting sidetracked on some wild chase after the demons who knocked him around – but if they show up he'll gladly give them a rematch. If angelic PCs come to town, he'll be more than happy to help them out as long as he can bring Patricia along.

Tariel is a somewhat developed character who had some bad luck. He could be used as-is for an NPC, or you could give him a Vessel/3 and take away his dissonance, his Proficiency and his Friend distinction, and he'd be a solid starting character.



Demons

Adam

Balseraph Knight of Gluttony

Corporeal Forces – 2	Strength 4	Agility 4
Ethereal Forces – 3	Intelligence 7	Precision 5
Celestial Forces – 4	Will 9	Perception 7

Vessel: Human/2 (Charisma +1)
Songs: Charm (Corporeal/6), Fangs/6
Skills: Electronics/1, Emote/1, Fast-Talk/4
Attunements: Balseraph of Gluttony, Consume, Devour, Knight of Banquets
Discord: Slothful/3

As the only person who really got what he deserved in "A Dark Dream," we can assume Adam is madly scrabbling his way back to Earth, eager to patch things up with Sabrina and to get even with Marcus and Nicole. His only serious problem is his Discord. He's got a nasty habit of taking the credit for other peoples' work. This might stand in the way of avenging himself, but Adam has a reasonably strong Will. He'll manage.

Haagenti has not been pleased with Adam's performance – he could easily be assigned to work with a PC who also serves Gluttony, in a supporting role. But if he hears that either Nicole or Marcus is around, he'll do his Balseraph best to set up a showdown with them (for

which, of course, he'll take credit). Players who have read the short story should be wary of taking his advice.

But Adam has a few tricks left. Besides Nicole, who's certainly not going to take advantage of it, he's the only person who knows how Rudolph Sorenson's artwork was going to create a new infernal Tether. That's certainly a way to get noticed by a Prince; perhaps the PCs could persuade him to help finish the job.

If you remove the Knight distinction, Adam would be a legal starting character, though taking two Attunements rather than Songs or skills makes him a real specialist. He accepted 3 levels of Discord, for 9 extra character points.

Lynoure

Demon of Shadow Shapes
Djinn Baroness of Nightmares

Corporeal Forces – 4	Strength 6	Agility 10
Ethereal Forces – 4	Intelligence 7	Precision 9
Celestial Forces – 5	Will 11	Perception 9

Vessels: Human/5 (Charisma +2); Cat/5

Songs: Dreams (Corporeal/4, Ethereal/3, Celestial/6), Form (Ethereal/5), Light (Ethereal/6), Possession/4, Wings/5

Skills: Detect Lies/5, Dodge/4, Emote/4, Savoir-Faire/2, Tracking/6 (through the Marches)

Attunements: Djinn of Nightmares, Dream Walking, Baroness of Screams, the Demon of Shadow Shapes



Special Rite: Lynoure can steal Essence from a victim by terrifying him, as described below.

A beautiful, red-haired young woman, the Demon of Shadow Shapes is one of Beleth's favored Servitors. Her Word grants her the power to enthrall a victim, someone to whom she's attuned. As his mind drifts off to sleep at night, she can make a Will roll to freeze him in place, unable to make a sound. She may be up to three blocks away. The victim may resist with a Will roll.

After pinning her victim, Lynoure can manifest in the room in the form of shadows, cast on the walls from an outside window or formed in an open closet door. She cannot manifest in a room with opaqued windows and closed closet doors.

If undisturbed for an hour, Lynoure will rob the victim of any Essence he has; he will stay awake the rest of the night in fear, having taken 2 hits to his Will. If he had no Essence, she gains 1 from the Symphony anyway, as terrifying lonely people in the dark is her own Rite.

She loves to menace children, and in doing so has recently attracted the attention of Ishmael, a Servitor of Blandine (above). Lynoure knows this, and has been leading him closer and closer to her, one child at a time, leaving messages for him with each victim. If he confronts her alone, she'll probably finish him off – if she doesn't take a liking to him first.

Lynoure is a developed character, suitable as a patroness, rival or adversary. As a Word-bound servant of Beleth, she probably has a little domain of her own in the Marches; there may be more to Lynoure than meets the eye.

Marcus

Impudite Servitor of Death

Corporeal Forces – 2	Strength 6	Agility 2
Ethereal Forces – 3	Intelligence 9	Precision 3
Celestial Forces – 4	Will 12	Perception 4

Vessel: Human/1

Servant: Zombi Cat (as per *Cat*, p. 191, and Zombi attunement: daily Need for a chip of human bone, 2 Corporeal Forces, and Numinous Corpus Claws/2)

Songs: Form (Celestial/4); Possession (Celestial/5), Shields (Celestial/4), Wings/2

Skills: Dodge/1, Fast-Talk/1, Seduction/1

Artifact: The Sanguine Painting

Attunements: Impudite of Death, Habbalah of Death, Zombi, Revivification

Marcus, the narrator of "A Dark Dream," is a real piece of work. He's been around for a long, long time, but only recently made it back to Earth in Saminga's service. He single-handedly betrayed everyone, including his friend Charlie, just to save his miserable hide and score a few points with his Prince.

What he needs to do now is get out of town. To be specific, he should show up in the PCs' town, looking for a place to hide. He'd be willing to do just about anything to avoid having to deal with Adam and Sabrina – except betray his master, the being in the world he's most afraid of. (Charlie has no way of knowing that Marcus set him up as a target for that imaginary Malakim raid, and knows better than to believe anything Adam and Sabrina say, so Marcus gets away with that one; Charlie is still his friend.)

If the PCs are angels, Marcus might make good bait for the other demons, who will undoubtedly be after him. Trying to take him down after he's served his purpose will be another matter entirely.

As demons, whether or not the PCs help him is another matter, depending on who they're working for. They might be in the mood to help him lay a trap for Nicole and any other angels who may be helping her with the search, or they may just as readily slit his throat for the painting. This assumes they can get past his viciously-protective guardian zombi cat.

But most important, he's going to be looking for an artist to whom he can attune his painting. He has yet to report to Saminga since acquiring it, and until he has to hand it over he'll use it for his own protection.There is a lot about that artifact that Marcus doesn't know; the box describes what he *believes* to be true.

Marcus was designed as a starting character; very heavy on Will and with lousy Perception. As this book was written, he picked up a servant and a painting, and he'd had such a bad week that we let him keep them for now.

Sabrina

Lilim Captain of Lust

Corporeal Forces – 2	Strength 3	Agility 5
Ethereal Forces – 2	Intelligence 6	Precision 2
Celestial Forces – 5	Will 12	Perception 8

Vessel: Human/2 with +2 Charisma (sex appeal)
Skills: Acrobatics/2, Dodge/2, Emote/3, Fast-Talk/1, Lying/3, Seduction/4
Songs: Light (Celestial/3), Harmony (Corporeal/1)
Attunements: Lilim of Gluttony, Lilim of Lust, Dark Desire
Discord: A level/2 Geas owed to Lilith herself.

Sabrina, the Lilim from "A Dark Dream," is nobody's fool, and she's not about to let a fiend like Marcus make her look like one. Not a combat creature, her greatest resource is her diabolical charm. She's oriented toward the celestial side, with an incredible Will and Perception – "the better to eat you with, my dear." Without Adam to protect her, she'll be looking for a new celestial guardian soon. She might try to hook up with Charlie, the Calabite, although he might see through her manipulations.

The Sanguine Painting

This is a large framed canvas, about 2 by 4 feet, showing a rather disturbing scene which is not always exactly the same. Marcus thinks it was originally created by Eli himself, but fairly recently, after his mind started to go.

If an appropriately-anguished artist (GM's ruling) can dabble on the canvas long enough to score 6 consecutive successes at his Artist skill, then the next celestial whom the artist sees while at work on the painting will be discorporated and bound to the painting. The victim is trapped in his celestial form and unable to move more than a number of feet from the painting equal to his Celestial Forces. He will be freed when another celestial is trapped.

If no artist can be found, Marcus has certainly put himself through enough to qualify as tortured; now if he can only learn how to wield a brush . . .

No point value is given for the Sanguine Painting. This is far too powerful an artifact for a character to buy with points, or to be allowed to keep for himself once an adventure is over. Marcus will have to give it up to his Superior before long.



She'll probably never give Adam the time of day again; perhaps one of the PCs would work out.

If she were to persuade one of the PCs to take care of her, she might be able to protect herself from Marcus. And if she persuades the PCs to go after Marcus, look out – she probably won't mention that there's more than one celestial after him, and they're not all demons. So stand back; when the two of them next meet, it won't be pretty.

Sabrina is not a balanced starting character due to her Discord and Captain Distinction.

THE CAMPAIGN

At its most basic level, game play consists of the GM setting up a scenario, describing it, and letting the players tell him what their characters do. But as adventure leads into adventure, short plots may develop into longer, larger themes which join together into something greater still.

The campaign is the binding, the thread connecting your players' adventures that keeps them coming back session after session. Like the best epics, campaigns start out small. Assassinate one little archduke and the next thing anyone knows it's world war. A GM usually takes players through several smaller adventures before opening up the entire scope of the campaign to them – and even the GM may not know at first where the campaign is going.

Campaigns can work perfectly well without any predetermined focus or end. The way most players make mincemeat of a GM's plans, characters could spend forever looking for that one single goal. In the end, campaigns aren't about "getting to the end of the story" – they're about continuing the story and having fun.

With a GM who keeps good notes, and players who demand a little consistency, a campaign can begin from nothing and grow into something far greater than its architects imagined: a living, breathing world existing only in the minds of people who visit it during their gaming sessions.

Styles of Play

In general terms, there are four basic play styles for ***In Nomine***: realistic, dark, humorous and mythic. Some players and GMs tend to lean toward one style over the others. The GM and the players should agree on the kind of campaign they want to run.

Of coures, few campaigns are pure examples. Most actual games use elements from several styles, and the perfect ***In Nomine*** campaign is a balance of all four. Finding the right mix of realism, darkness, humor and mythic qualities is a large part of running a successful ***In Nomine*** campaign.

Realistic

This campaign focuses more on day-to-day interactions among humans, and the victories and defeats they encounter as they go about their mortal lives. The realistic playing style doesn't mean players have to rely more on the rules for conflict resolution. Typically, the best realistic game is fueled more by roleplaying than rolling dice. This is a small-scale campaign, but one which easily allows the addition of other playing styles – after all, you can get only so "realistic" in a world where angels and demons roam freely across the Earth.



Dark

It's easy to find a dark, gothic flavor in the world of ***In Nomine***. Dark campaigns play up the game's horrific aspects, like the humans' general complicity in the plottings of Lucifer and his minions. Angels will have a harder time in a "dark" campaign, and demons can get away with more.

For angels, dark campaigns focus more on their questioning of their own natures, and the Host's general feelings of helplessness as the world slides closer to Hell. For demons, a dark campaign might emphasize a character's sense of Pyrrhic victory, winning the War at the cost of his soul.

Humorous

Humorous campaigns play up social satire, focusing on

Short Adventures

The world of ***In Nomine*** is rich with subplots and subterfuge – but it doesn't always lend itself to large groups of adventurers. It may be difficult for a GM to get six players to agree on what sort of game they'd like to run and what sort of plot they're most interested in.

Short adventures are a great solution to this problem. With two or three players – or even just one – a GM can scream through a roller coaster of a short adventure, accomplishing in an afternoon what might take two or three sessions with a regular group. Or, as a break from a scheduled gaming session, a short adventure with a limited number of players can resolve significant subplots or flesh out important character backgrounds without boring the other regular players.

the ironic aspects of current events as seen through the eyes of the celestials. In this campaign, the servants of Kobal will shine, though no Band or Choir has the market cornered on irony.

Mythic

The opposite of realistic campaigns, mythic campaigns emphasize the celestials as the grandest part of an ancient story. These campaigns focus on the conflicts with the widest scope, such as that between the courts of Heaven and Hell. They will tackle philosophically-oriented adventures as often as real blood-and-sweat ones. For example, to see why everyone is sleeping restlessly, celestials in realistic campaigns might check the city's water supply or look for some evil technological influence. Those in mythic campaigns are more likely to visit the Ethereal plane to find what's happened to the source of dreams.

Planning a Game

An ***In Nomine*** game can be a hell of a lot of fun, but if the GM hasn't planned a few things in advance, it can just be hell. Things to consider include: which Archangels and Princes are going to be represented, among both PCs and NPCs; what obvious alliances and antagonisms are there, and which ones this plot will exploit; and how much the PCs should know in advance about other characters. A variety of intricate plots are already written into the game world. Many deal with the somewhat delicate politics of the Archangels and Demon Princes; others deal with humans and their manipulation at the hands of celestials.

Encountering the Word-Bound

Of all the forces a player character may come across, low- to mid-range Word-bound celestials are the most dangerous. First, they're not generally at a level of power where they're caught up in (or, more accurately, bound by) the complex web of politics that entangles the Superiors. Second, they tend to be more autonomous than normal Servitors, rarely forced to get along with other celestials except when they want something. Third, they're single-mindedly obsessed with furthering their Word, and they deal harshly with people who get in their way.

So as a peripheral consideration, whenever the PCs get involved with a theme of the Symphony that the GM considers important enough that a celestial (either angel or demon) might be assigned to protect it, that Word-bound being might just show up – especially when the characters do some major damage. This not only makes them more careful about running around and trashing things, but it gives them other celestial NPCs to deal with besides their Superiors.

For example, when some player characters trash an aviary, Arael, the angel of Birds, shows up to kick their asses. After all, he's been nurturing that aviary for decades, keeping it stocked with countless rare birds from across the globe, just waiting for two more weeks to pass before young Julian Sweet was destined to pass through the zoo and be gripped with a life-long love and respect for birds – but now all his plans have been ruined. Even worse, he serves Jordi, the Archangel of Animals, who couldn't care less about retribution from other Superiors.

Instead of getting knocked around by a Word-bound angel, the PCs might choose to go on a quick mission to correct the situation, if they have the time and they feel like it. Of course, being on the good side of Word-bound celestials is rarely a bad thing – as long as your interests coincide and your Superior doesn't object. If nothing else, you may be rewarded with arcane Rites or even unique attunements. And you never know who the new hot-shot Superiors are going to be later on, so you should at least not go out of your way to make enemies.

Most angels tend to be straightforward with one another, because that's their nature, but sometimes they do have ulterior motives. These motives may be orders from Archangel, or they may be personal. Angels with hidden motives don't always let on what they're ultimately after, but occasionally they tell their friends, if

Campaign Groups

A good way to start a campaign is to define the sort of group to which the PCs belong. This will immediately suggest adventure ideas.

Each of these groups allows a general "ensemble" to repeat from session to session, but also allows individuals to come and go on a temporary or permanent basis.

Local Protectors

The PCs make up the local community of angels or demons. The local representatives of the Other Side, if any, will be recurring NPCs. They may not be completely hostile, and they may be very cordial even if they *are* completely hostile.

Each PC has his own specific job and mission, but (for the most part) they cooperate. Adventures happen when something upsets the equilibrium. Celestial threats from outside can appear, celestial politics may set two PCs at odds or some event in the mortal world may require attention and correction.

Exterminators

The PCs are a "hit squad" of celestials and their servants, traveling from place to place, finding the opposition and wiping them out. The locals will usually be grateful allies, but sometimes their cooperation will be less than total and the visitors will want to find out what they're hiding.

Hit and Run

The PCs are a vagabond group of demons (or possibly angels of Eli or Janus), dedicated to visiting a place, raising Hell, and leaving again. For this to be a meaningful campaign, there has to be some greater pattern or purpose in their depredations. If some of the PCs serve different Superiors and have different reasons for what they're doing, this campaign can be an interesting combination of action and "personality" play.

Troubleshooters

The characters are elite troubleshooters, for either side, called in to deal with special problems. They could be a combat team, or a high-Perception sneak-and-peek squad, or a combination. Friendly NPCs, different for each adventure, can supply special talents as needed. If the locals can be trusted, they will have help from forces already on the scene – other times the briefing will have to come from a Superior, because none of the local friendlies have survived to tell the story.

Runaways

The PCs are demonic Renegades and/or angelic Outcasts. Some of them want to get back into their Superiors' good graces; some just want to be free. They're all hunted by the forces of Asmodeus, Dominic, or both.

they think their friends can give a helping hand or, if nothing else, a little good advice.

As we see in the short stories which open this book, demons seldom know where their allies' loyalties lie. This can easily engender an atmosphere of paranoia and insecurity, which goes a long way toward explaining why the demons haven't overwhelmed their enemies yet. When a group of demons has been assigned to work together, a certain amount of trust must be maintained to accomplish a mission. But when that trust is broken, it tends to break spectacularly.

Once a GM has a handle on which alliances and antagonisms will be the focus of the game, he can work on the setting and the player characters' places in it.

The Setup

Celestial player characters are assumed to be living on Earth, spending most of their time in the corporeal realm. PCs very rarely all work for the same Superior, so the GM, with the players' help, must provide reasons for them to work together. Generally, celestials are motivated by instructions from their Superiors – who may assign them to places which need monitoring, to people who need protection, or to other celestials who are in need of regular aid.

In a more abstract way, a celestial's assignment on Earth consists of short-term goals, long-term goals and reactive missions. While a player may have some say in his character's initial job, the GM is expected to play the part of his Superior when assigning goals – these are the hooks upon which the plot of the story hangs.

Short-term goals are brief assignments. These are usually "opening scenes" to an adventure, leading directly to work and conflict with other celestials. When assigning a job to a servant, the Archangel or Prince will lay out how it's supposed to aid their cause in general, as well as what spin the Superior would like to see put on it to serve his cause in particular. Conflict can arise between the celestial agents when their Superiors have slightly different agendas. For example, a scientist analyzing a relic is held

hostage in his lab by mundane terrorists. Angels have been assigned to keep the terrorists from unwittingly using the relic and, if possible, to retrieve the scholar and his artifact. One of the PC's Archangels admits that if the terrorists somehow destroy the relic before it is retrieved, then that's life. Another Archangel may ask his Servitor to try to keep the relic for himself, while another angel is supposed to make sure the scientist (a morally questionable sort) doesn't survive to talk about his discoveries. Players must decide if they're willing to admit to each other their hidden motives – and if so, whether or not they're willing to compromise enough to pull the mission off successfully.

Long-term goals are the Superior's broad plans for geographic areas and political arenas, measured in years or decades. These goals will further the Superior's overall power – such as increasing the level of trade between the U.S. and Mexico, for a Servitor of Marc – and bring the greatest rewards.

Reactive missions are duties the celestial is expected to carry out because of his training or his nature. Frequently, characters will be troubled with these duties while on other missions. For example, Servitors of Gabriel cleanse the world of specific kinds of people; if an angel of Gabriel comes across a potential target while stalking a demon through a parking lot, he's expected to write down that license plate number for future reference. And when celestials stumble across the plans of their enemies, they're expected to do something about them as soon as possible. For example, when a demon shows up in an angel's town, she's supposed to mount a reactive mission to kick his ass – back to Hell, if possible.

How well a character is able to pull off his short-term and long-term goals, as well as how quickly and successfully he jumps into reactive missions, will largely determine the rewards or punishments he receives. See the box on p. 202 for more information.

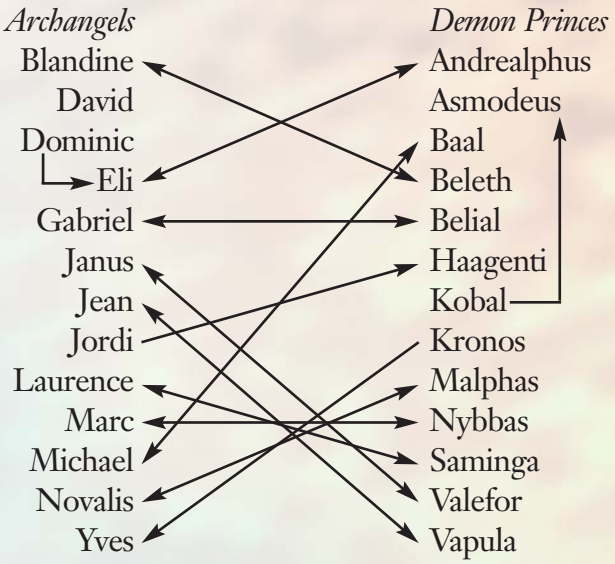
Places and "Stuff"

Angels and demons are assigned to geographic locales, which can be as general as North America or as specific as the south side of Chicago. Some celestials, such as the Ofanim and the Servitors of Janus and Valefor, are allowed to roam freely across a defined area, but the Archangels and Demon Princes like to see a Servitor become familiar with one place and stick to it. The more accustomed a Servitor is to his assigned area, the more likely he is to spot any new threats.

For example, if late-night traffic suddenly increases to and from a poorly-run mortuary, then there's a chance that the agents of Saminga are hanging around making undead creatures. The GM should occasionally make a Perception roll for a character to notice such things,

Dire Enemies

The structure of politics in the world of ***In Nomine*** holds many obvious oppositions between the Servitors of various Archangels and Demon Princes. Some are mutual; others are not. Below is a chart illustrating *some* of these, as they are today.



These are by no means the only lines of opposition between Superiors. Some Princes feel more animosity toward their own kind than toward the angels. For example, while Jordi hates Haagenti for his wastefulness, the Demon Prince of Gluttony is too scornful of other Princes to bother noticing the Archangel.

And some Superiors don't have direct opposites. While Dominic and Asmodeus are each other's analogs, they're more concerned with internal affairs than with the actions of the other side. No Superior, on either side, is spared the barb of Kobal's jokes, and David hates all demons equally.

But remember these are generalities, not hard and fast exclusionary rules. For example, while Marc, honesty incarnate, opposes Nybbas, controller of the media, that doesn't mean he hates Vapula any less, nor would he wait for Jean's approval to mop up one of Vapula's messes.



Rewards and Punishments

At the end of each play session, the GM should distribute character points to the players – generally 1 or 2 points each, if they made satisfactory progress toward completing their mission, plus 1 or 2 extra points for exceptional roleplaying. Also, a celestial's Superior will grant rewards or inflict punishments at the end of an adventure for the way a mission is accomplished.

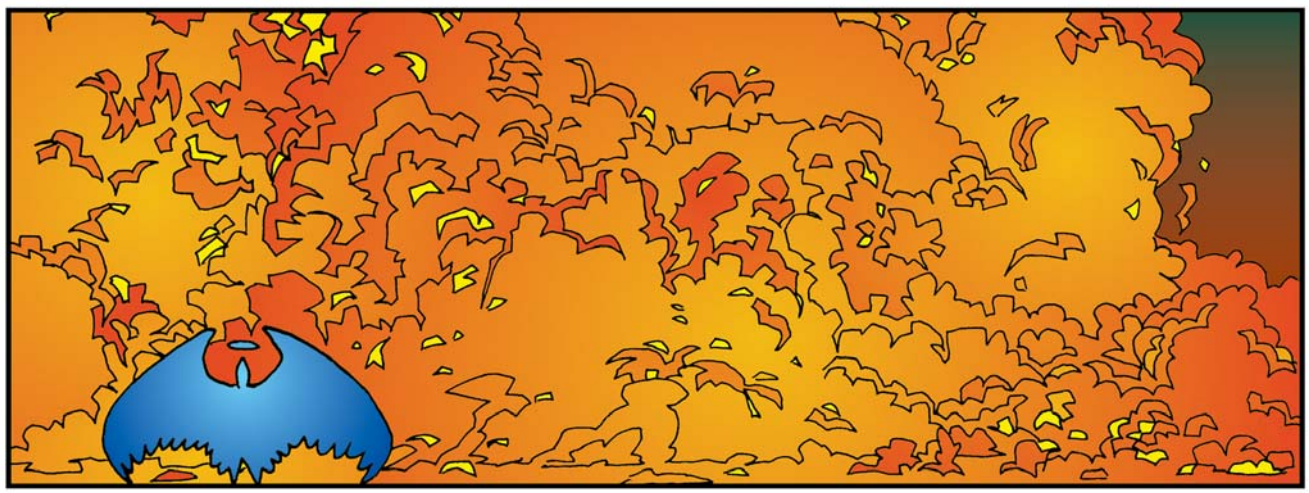
If a character's group succeeds in its task, his Superior will contribute a few extra points beyond what the GM normally gives. If the character also succeeds in putting his Superior's spin on a mission, he may earn an additional Rite or Song. Also, the Superior may relieve the character of one level of Discord, or any dissonance he obtained for a good cause. If the character succeeds spectacularly in meeting his goals, he may be rewarded with a Choir attunement, an additional Force, or a first-level distinction. If the person has not only acted above and beyond the call of duty but weathered severe conflict and come out on top, or otherwise has success to report on such a scale that his Superior's Word has been dramatically served, then he may be rewarded with a Servitor attunement, a second- or third-level distinction and – if it's warranted – may be recommended by his master for his own Word!

When a character's group fails its mission, a Superior will not contribute any character points beyond what the GM assigns – unless the mission was secretly *supposed* to fail, or otherwise appears to serve a greater purpose in its doom than it would have through its success. If a character fails miserably in his mission, any number of things may happen depending on the Superior. He may find himself with some Discord, he may be stripped of an artifact or a distinction, or he may be forced to fight for his life against another celestial to prove his worthiness!

Also, an important consideration when gauging the success of an angel or a demon is the measure of disturbance which the Symphony undergoes in the course of an adventure. Chaos reverberates in the Symphony for some time after the initial damage. Even if a celestial meets his goals, he can very easily get in trouble for creating an unnecessary degree of chaos in the process.

All other considerations aside, if a player manages to get through an adventure without having his character utterly destroyed, however disastrous the mission went, he should get a few character points from the GM. These new points may be spent on basic Resources, or to improve levels of characteristics. With the GM's permission, a player may buy Resources at any time during the game that he has enough character points. The cost of new Resources is the same as that of Resources bought at character creation, except where specified otherwise. Note that some types of Resource can only be bought at character creation. Many Resources (GM's decision; Roles in particular) will also require successful planning and roleplaying.

Characteristics may not be improved during a game session unless the GM feels that the circumstances are unusual (e.g., an Intervention). Under normal circumstances, characteristics cost 3 points per level. Once 4 levels have been added to one of a character's pairs of characteristics (Strength and Agility, Intelligence and Precision, Will and Perception), he gains an additional Force of that type. If a player wishes, he can purchase a Force directly (and its 4 additional characteristic levels) for 10 points.



modified by the number of months he's been posted to the area.

In addition to an assigned locale, most celestials receive a place to operate out of, appropriate to both their Choir or Band and their Superior. The GM should allow each player to invent a place for his character to crash, within reason. For example, Servitors of David are more likely to live in catacombs than Servitors of Eli, who delight in passing as human. And only those working for someone like Marc can rationalize a luxury home. Most PCs will-have places ranging from apartments to small houses, ostensibly paid for by their Superior and supported by minions who work for various utility companies.

Also, PCs are given a small allowance of "stuff" – which is to say, anything within reason that doesn't grant a distinct advantage over other characters, and that the average human could, in theory, have just sitting around. For example, the average human can probably lay his hands on a screwdriver – but not a specific kind of torque wrench, unless he has a Role as a mechanic. Anything beyond "stuff" – such as vehicles, weapons and high-tech toys – has to be obtained through roleplaying. Some things can be purchased at the corner store, others will require some informal dickering with your fellow celestials, while getting the very best toys may require adventures in and of themselves.



Mixing It Up

Eventually, players will want to run a mixed party, with angels and demons working (more or less) together. While this is entirely possible within the framework of the game, it does take a little thought to set up right.

The most obvious mixed party would combine Servitors of Dominic and Asmodeus joining forces to hunt Renegades, to find an Outcast who's been causing too much trouble or perhaps even to track down rumors of some Grigori resurfacing. Naturally, there probably wouldn't be any Malakim in such a party unless the fact that some of the PCs were demons could be hidden from them. Also, Servitors from other Archangels and Princes interested in the outcome of the hunt will more than likely be tagging along. For example, when chasing down a Renegade who worked for Belial, another of Belial's servants might come along to ensure that everything is handled in such a way that his master is spared undue political backlash – and that the Renegade doesn't have the chance spill any vital secrets before getting the axe.

And just as in real life, not everything a celestial does is work. Many angels and demons knew each other before the Fall, and some may stay in touch with friends who picked the other side. It's conceivable that some celestials were, literally, sleeping with the enemy – and still are.

As in normal ***In Nomine*** adventures, most of the PCs would have their own agendas beyond the party's shared goals. And the split may not be along angel-vs.-demon lines either. For example, it's entirely possible that celestials working for Eli and Kobal might ally against the Servitors of Dominic and Asmodeus, if only for kicks.

As the end of the adventure approaches, celestials who might normally be dire enemies may ally to keep the Servitors of other powers out of their territory. For example, if agents of any Superior of either Heaven or Hell threaten to complicate a plot involving human dreamers, the Servitors of Blandine and Beleth might grudgingly (and briefly) put aside their differences to keep the outsiders from meddling in their affairs.

PRIMARY SOURCES

This book could easily be filled just with a listing of the books, films, TV shows and songs which mention angels and demons – and in working on this project, we looked at a lot of them, from Thomas Aquinas to Larry Niven. Below are discussed just a few of the works which provided the most inspiration. It's by no means comprehensive, but it'll put you on the right track.

BOOKS

Angels and Visitations, *by Neil Gaiman*

The most interesting piece in this collection of short stories is "Murder Mysteries," where the angel of Vengeance is commanded by Lucifer, pre-Fall, to piece together the mystery of the universe's first murder. It also contains excellent insights into the mind of a Word-bound celestial.

Another Roadside Attraction, *by Tom Robbins*

An ex-martial arts instructor in the early '70s sends postcards back to his hippy friends describing his life after accidentally becoming part of the Catholic secret police. When he finally decides he's had enough of the charade, he makes a discovery in the Vatican's basement that could change the face of organized religion. It's not what it is that you won't believe, it's what he does with it.

The Boomer Bible, *by R. F. Laird*

Worthwhile if only for its "Book of Angels," ***The Boomer Bible*** tells the epic saga of the history of the world as though written by a group of punks in the late '70s, in perfect biblical prose. This book has something to offend everyone.

A Dictionary of Angels, *by Gustav Davidson*

For the traditionalist, this recently-published book holds more information on historical "angelology" than any other single source we found. It contains not only listings for every angelic or demonic name mentioned in most religious (and many secular) texts, but also a useful collection of angels and their Words. Curious as to who the angel of Abortion is? Check out the ***Dictionary***.

Good Omens*, by Neil Gaiman and Terry Pratchett*

An angel and a demon who have known each other since time immemorial conspire against both Heaven and Hell to stop an early Apocalypse. This is the perfect example of how to run a darkly-humorous ***In Nomine*** game, and an important influence on our perspective of relations between the divine and infernal.

Letters From the Earth*, by Mark Twain*

So bitingly sarcastic that it couldn't be printed in its original form until more than 50 years after the author's death, these are letters written by the angel Lucifer, during his stay on Earth, describing in detail to the other angels how God has set about ruthlessly torturing humanity.

Paradise Lost, *by Milton*

Another classic. Criticized by his contemporaries for making the damned more interesting than the divine, this is a romantic telling of the Fall of the rebel angels. Don't get the *Cliff's Notes* – put aside a weekend and work through the original. It's worth it.

The Screwtape Letters, *by C. S. Lewis*

Arguably the best presentation of the diabolical perspective, this is a series of letters in which an older demon advises his young nephew, newly assigned to Earth.

Season of the Mists, *by Neil Gaiman*

While most of DC Comic's *Sandman* comic-book series has a style that meshes nicely with ***In Nomine***, this particular compilation has a storyline of mythic proportion. Lucifer has quit his job as ruler of Hell, evicted its occupants and given the key to Morpheus, master of the dreamlands and our protagonist. In deciding what to do with that damned key, Morpheus is visited by agents from Heaven, Hell and everywhere in between. Very few things on this list are more entertaining or romantic.



This Present Darkness, *by Frank Peretti*
Angels and demons converge upon a town; mayhem ensues. While a bit preachy (and heavy-handedly anti-New Age), readers are treated to some great bits about how spirits interact with corporeal humanity.

A Wrinkle In Time, *by Madeline L'Engle*
Another modern classic with a cool perspective on angels. Don't miss its sequels, especially ***Many Waters.***

Movies and Television

Angel Heart
If we told you how this was related to ***In Nomine*** – beyond the title, of course – it'd give away the film. Trust us.

The City of Lost Children
The ***In Nomine*** view: "A dissonant servant of Beleth captures one of Jean's Tethers, to which he brings children to be mined for their dreams." (Well, maybe not.) This French film has gotten very little press in the States, but its inventive imagery makes it an ***In Nomine*** must-see.

Desperado
Divine mariachis and infernal drug dealers duke it out in a border town in this dark, funny, dark action movie. Also check out *From Dusk Till Dawn*, a horror movie from the same director.

Hellraiser
The first two in this series of films from Clive Barker are worth their decidedly different perspective on Hell and its minions.

The Prophecy (aka *God's Army*)
Christopher Walken never looked as cool as he did in this film, playing Gabriel. It's a great film – if only we could've seen more of the celestials and less of the humans.

Twin Peaks
The presence of a renegade demon – a familiar, grown up into something resembling a Shedite – sets off a struggle of cosmic proportions in the small town of Twin Peaks. This series has a great perspective on the war between good and evil, with excellent characters illustrating a wide range of nobility and pettiness.

Wings of Desire
An angel, inspired by his love for a human, struggles over taking corporeal form to be with the object of his desire. If any book or film best romanticizes the Heavenly Host, it's this one.

Music

Being young in the latter half of the last decade of the twentieth century means being absorbed by a particular style of music to the exclusion of most others. In our case, we're absorbed by what is commonly known as rock-and-roll. While there is plenty of music from a variety of cultures which would lend itself nicely to ***In Nomine*** play (from Gregorian chants to tribal drumming to Glenn Danzig's *Black Aria*), this is not the music we're most qualified to suggest.

Here are some modern artists – infernal or divine, depending on your perspective – who have contributed to the feel of this game, followed in parenthesis not by what arguably might be their best work (much less our personal favorites), but by which of their works in particular most inspired us to write about angels and demons over the last three and a half years.

In Nomine Satanis Magna Veritas

The French roleplaying game upon which this book is based is called ***In Nomine Satanis/Magna Veritas***. It was originally sold as two books in a black box, one book (***INS***) being the demonic side of things and the other (***MV***) being the angelic side.

While our version is, to say the least, divergent from theirs, since 1990 they've released a great number of supplements which are still available – in French, of course. Most of the text is written in a very straightforward manner and is relatively simple reading if you've got a smattering of French, except for the vignettes and short stories, which are heavy on conversational French and street slang. They're great, and Francophile GMs or players will find them to be lots of fun.

INS/MV was recently compiled into a single hardback book, and is available from the alternately divine and diabolical people of Asmodée. Please write to the address below, or send e-mail to asmodee@club-internet.fr, for mail-order information and a current list of supplements in print.

Asmodée Éditions
7 rue Jean-Mermoz
78000 Versailles, FRANCE

Halloween Concept, another French company, released a collectible card game in 1995, ***Intervention Divine***, based on ***INS/MV***, and a set of boosters, ***Cult Movie***.

On top of all that, both ***In Nomine Satanis*** and ***Magna Veritas*** are available separately in German, from Truant. Please write for information.

Mario Truant Verlag
Kaiser-Wilhelm-Ring 85
D-55118 Mainz/Rhein, GERMANY

Black Flag (and **Henry Rollins**, spokesman for the Balseraphs), **David Bowie** (especially *Hunky Dory* and *Ziggy Stardust*), **The Breeders**, **Counting Crows** (*August and Everything After*), **Danzig** (that's the *other* Danzig), **Dukes of the Stratosphere** (divine retro-pop), **Lords of Acid** (definitely evil, oh definitely), **Liz Phair** (undeniably connected to the Lilim), **Stan Ridgeway** (*Mosquitos*), **Smashing Pumpkins** (if only for "Cherub Rock"), **T Rex** (especially "Metal Guru"), **Tom Waits** (especially *Small Change*), **Ween** (dark servants of Kobal, for *Chocolate and Cheese*).

And last but not least, **Soul Coughing**, for "Bus to Beelzebub." Get-on-to-the-bus.

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He's never looked his age.



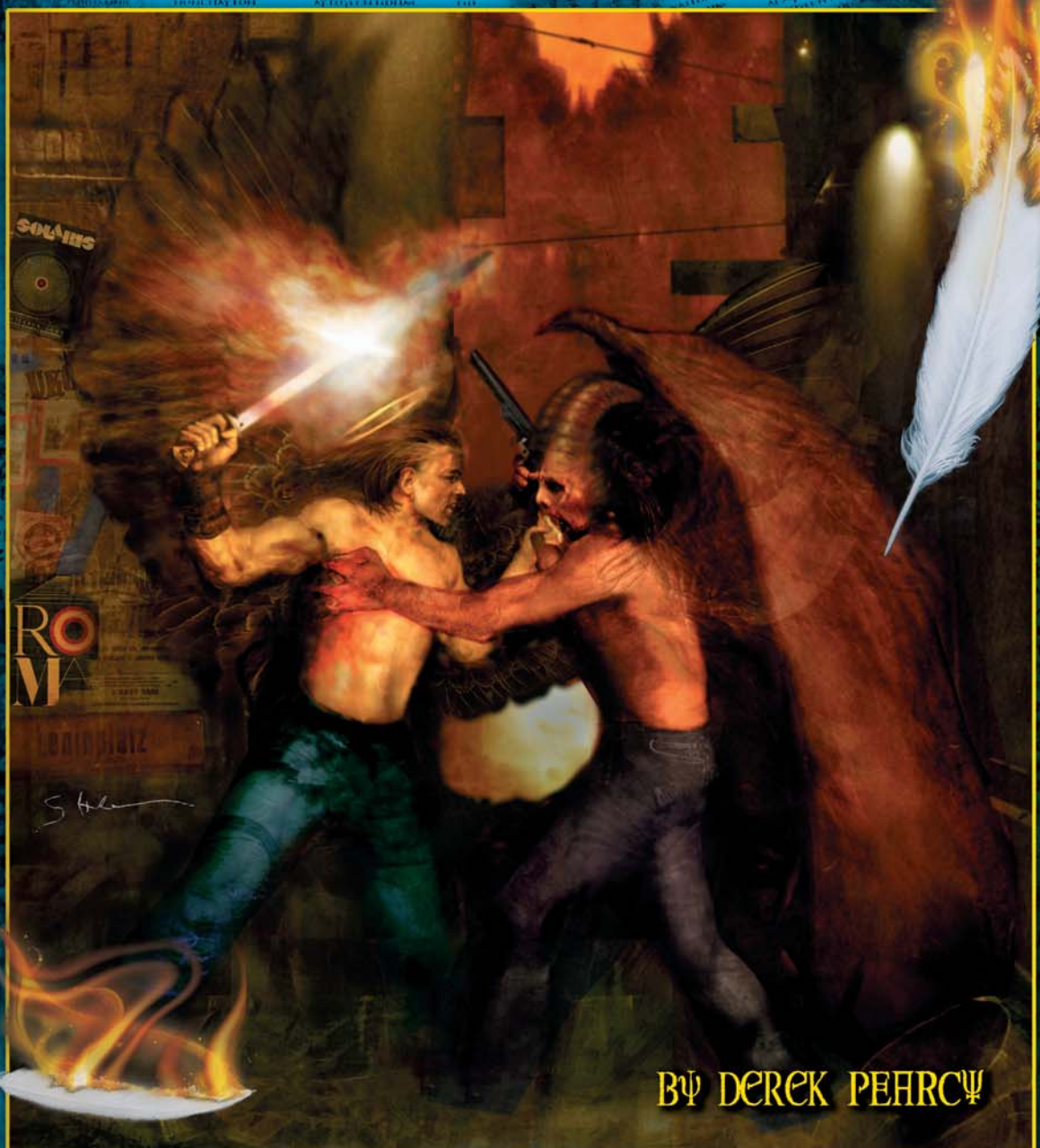
My name is Dan Smith, although some may know me by my pen name, . I am a freelance illustrator residing in the city of Lost Angels. After graduating college, I did everything from paste-up artist at Frederick's of Hollywood to a gig at Marvel, doing work on the *Transformers*® animated series. Artists who inspire and influence my work at the moment are Jack Kirby; Mike Mignola; and my spiritual guru, Fritz Willis. You may have seen my work for different companies in the past five years – but my first job in the gaming industry was for Steve Jackson Games, so it is especially nice to be a part of ***In Nomine***.

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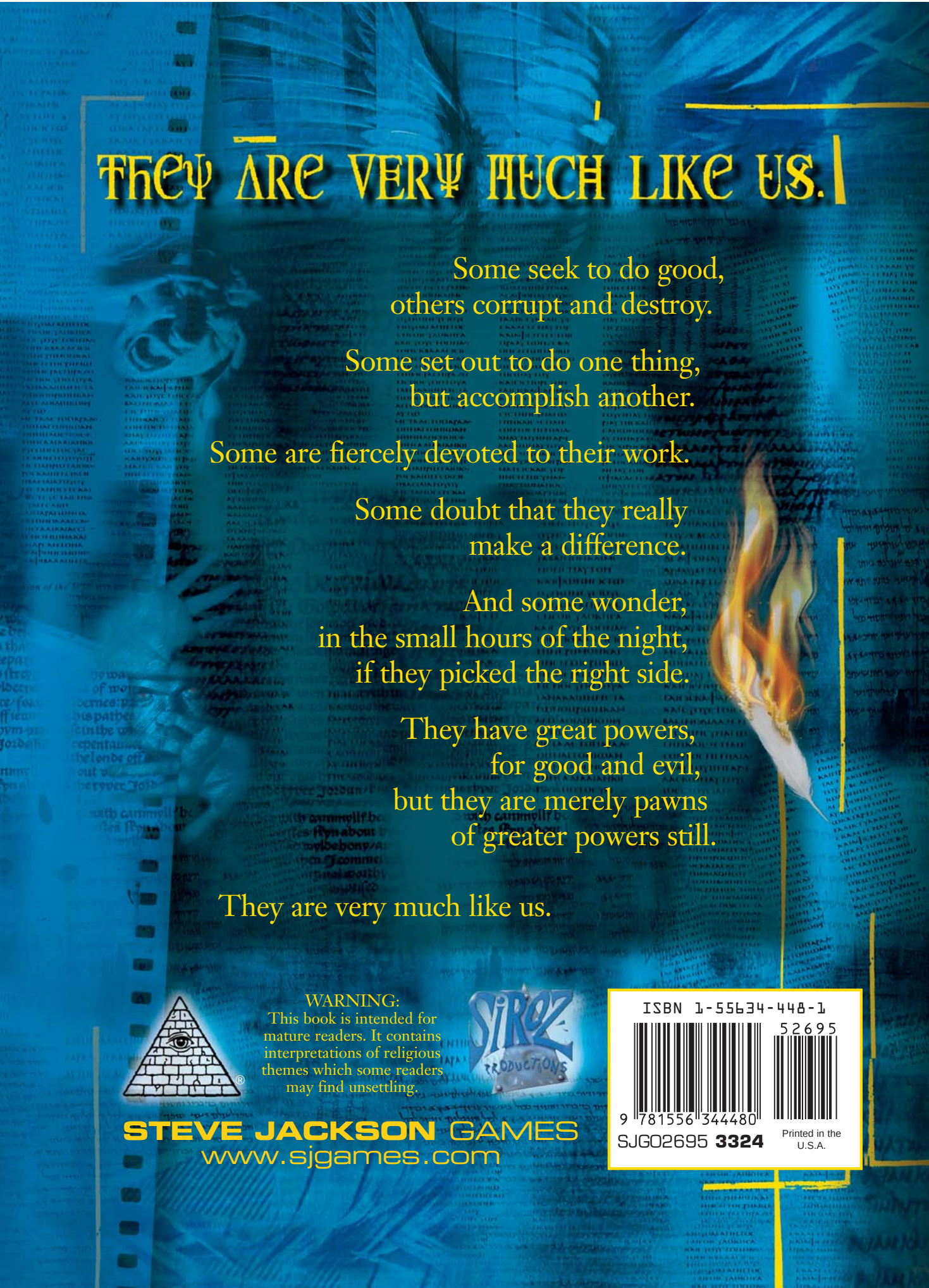
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