

The Cleansers of the Sacred Fire

The “Cleansers,” as they are known, have grown up around a maggot filled nuked Atlanta.

General Campaign Background:

In my MP campaign of 2095 the apocalypse is caused by a virus which occurs in 2005, which results in a 95% death rate. Atlanta is one of six American cities that also experienced a nuclear strike from a 1 Mt Warhead carried by a JL-2 (CSS-NX-4) Chinese SLBM. Two more JL-2 Missiles misfired and were destroyed by the onboard guidance. Another Missile struck the Canadian city of Montreal in Quebec closing off the Saint Lawrence Seaway. The last three missiles were headed for the US and Canadian West Coast and shot down by SM3 Theater Ballistic Defense Missiles aboard the Ticonderoga-class Cruiser CG-70 USS Lake Erie.

JL-2's Missiles

Launched	12	
Targets Hit	7	Cities hit by 1Mt Warheads: Atlanta, Chicago, Denver, Los Angeles,
Failures	2	<i>Montreal</i> , San Francisco, and Seattle.
Destroyed	3	Targets of Destroyed SLBM: Oakland, San Diego, and <i>Vancouver</i> .

Atlanta Area Campaign Background:

The Atlanta area was key in my apocalypse due to the fact that this was a Virus that caused the end of the world. The CDC (Center for Disease Control) is based in Atlanta and many of the worlds best medical and biological scientists brought samples of the virus that first appeared in Iran in January 2005. Military and National Guard units were called out to increase the level of security around the CDC facility as these samples first arrived in March of 2005. Standard NBC procedures were successful in preventing spread of the virus and there was hope that a vaccine or treatment would be developed. The likes of this virus structure though, had never been seen before.

Several experimental protocols were attempted on the virus but none showed any hope until that of an experimental antiviral drug known as “Fundament-4.” This drug showed hope and several batches were made of it, a few other likely drug therapies, and several promising vaccines. The hope was that these would be field tested in June and July at different locations. While some of these drugs were being shipped out to their diverse locations, the informational security was lost. The public was informed by News Agencies of the existence of these drugs and the fact that they were being moved away from Atlanta. The people of Atlanta believing that they were being abandoned began to show up in mass at the CDC Defense Perimeter. This stopped any meaningful work from being accomplished there.

When a National News Helicopter tried to force a landing at the heliport to “interview some of the scientists,” (actually the helicopter crew was trying to get some vaccine for their own use), the News Chopper was shot down by a Shoulder Launched SAM fired by the troops guarding the CDC. The explosion seemed to confirm the crowds’ worst fears and they began to tear at the perimeter fence and move in mass on the CDC Buildings. The Military fired CR Gas and then the crowd began shooting, with the crowd’s weapons including some fully automatics. The Military then opened fire and killed or wounded thousands of fellow citizens to preserve the lives of millions of their fellow Americans. Behind those first thousands citizens were thousands more intent on saving their own and their family lives, even if they died to do so. This distrust was the level of trust between the government and its citizens, which had been undermined by the race baiters, class haters, and news organizations who reported that ideology as truth.

Some of the labs were breached at the CDC, but most of the laboratories were saved from the riots and the few fires also started. A number of key scientists were killed and the city of Atlanta was placed under martial law. The city was cordoned off and I-285 was fortified as a barrier to those trying to get in or leave the city. Some of the citizens, who breached the CDC and survived were now carrying the virus. Surviving scientists who were not infected were dispersed to several locations, which included Albany, GA and Jacksonville, FL. This dispersal was along with some of the remaining dosages of the drugs and vaccines. Those locations and others had various success in fighting off the virus and had larger portions of the population survive. No longer did the people believe that their fellow citizens would act responsibly and some national news organizations were closed down as the whole country was placed under martial law. If there was any hope left for an intact country surviving this chaos, it all vanished in late July with the launch of the JL-2 SLBM from a type 98 Chinese Submarine.

Atlanta's Metropolitan Area was heavily damaged by a 1mt Nuclear Warhead's Ground Level Burst. The heroic men and women of I-285 Cordon continued to stay at their posts limiting their exposure as much they could as the fallout grew intense. Many of those on the cordon voluntarily served until their death occurred from radiation, so that others there would survive. Around the underground bunkers and the heating stoves of that first winter after the blast, the talk turned to religion, blame for the problems, and what to do. It was in one of these meetings that the first recorded use of Pyro-kinetics was observed. A young man, who had been up until earlier in the year, a Seminarian at the Candler School of Theology at Emory University (right next to CDC) and was able to manifest a fire burning without fuel. The young man saw this as a sign for those who worked upon the cordon that they had been noticed and not forgotten. Not wanting to get caught up in the debates of the old religions before the apocalypse, he gathered a few other religious survivors who also saw this as a chance at a clean slate.

This began the formation of the institution of the Cleansers of the Sacred Fire, as this fire ability was able to manifest at will by first one and then others of the Cordon. The church formed and fellowship was made between them and no one was required to change their previous beliefs. The Liturgy and Sacred Texts of the church began slowly, many things were tried but nothing was tolerated that suggested ending the cordon. People joined the church but any who left it were considered to have abandoned their now sacred post. Slowly recruiters and foraging parties evolved into establishing a support network for those still on the Cordon. There was a period of quiet in the combat along the cordon as population of Atlanta stopped trying to leave the city. This period of quiet was known as the "First Testing" to the Cleansers. However the Cleansers still continued to prevent those few who attempted, from going in and going out of the city.

By 2025 the Cleanser's were back up to the level where they could guard the city and support their bases without the need for much outside help. Cleanser's recruited from their Revival trips to the areas surrounding Atlanta with much trading going on with the locals in the areas they visited. These Revival groups were respected even amongst the Razer populations of Alabama. Then some of the Razer's younger members even joined the Cleansers, out of belief and partially as a desire to get away from Razer indoctrination. Even the KFS (Kentucky Free State) based traders have even made exceptions to the KFS trade rules and traded refined gasoline to the Cleansers for their fire weapons.

In 2026 the first encounters occurred with the mutant maggots as they became to be called, as the maggots sought to get beyond the Cordon. These first attacks were easily turned back which was seen as a confirmation that remaining on the Cordon was what the "Sacred Fire" had desired of them. These attacks took place all along the Cordon mostly at night, as the population pressure on the Maggot's forced more attempts. These attacks cumulated in a major effort on the night of a new moon in 2034. On that night an estimated 45,000 maggots attempted to force the Cordon in five places. This was the "Night of the Righteous" when almost 70 percent of the people manning the Cordon were killed or wounded. A fact is that being wounded by a maggot in a society without antibiotics is usually considered an excruciating death sentence. The Righteous are the ones

who died that night and joined the “Eternal Flame” so that they might be reborn. This was a night that severed many links to the past for the Cleansers as they were refined by the fires of life. The founder of the church was last seen going up in a fireball that consumed him and around 700 of the maggots. The Church had fallen to a new leadership that was mostly made up of those who had been youngsters when the apocalypse had come. Those who died or would die soon of the maggot’s diseases were allowed to go on to renewal with the “Founder” in the multitude of bonfires that lit up the next night’s sky.

Then began the period of the “Second Testing” as the new leaders took the Cleansers to a new depth of understanding of their mission for the “Sacred Fire.” This period had more maggot activity but they were only small groups were attempting to get out of the area. The Cleanser’s numbers regrew and a few of the communities beyond I-285 became part of the church. The Cleansers also took on some survivors from Razer communities of the “Year of the Crows” activities which occurred in northern and central Alabama. {The “Year of the Crows”- 2051 was a major assault into Alabama by the KFS to prevent the continuation of Razer activities. Only the most isolated and remote of Razer communities survived and some escaped to other areas. Some of both types of communities retained their Razer ideology, but most did not. Called the “Year of the Crows” because the KFS left the bodies where they lay when they left the area for the crows and vultures to pick over.} The Cleansers channeled all desires for vengeance, hatred, and other emotions of the new recruits into the efforts for the mission.

This “Second Testing” ended in another renewed attempt by ten thousand maggots to force the Cordon in 2058. This began the “Second Sacred War” against the maggots by the Cleanser’s manning the Cordon. This war lasted on and off for the next nine years, till in 2067 another massive exodus was attempted. This attempt was made by a group about 30,000 maggots strong but the increases in the amount of Clerics of the faith turned back this attempt without the great losses of the “Night of the Righteous.” Even so, many Cleansers did pay the ultimate price for defending the Cordon.

This cycle of “Testing” and “Sacred War” has played out again starting after 2067, the “Third Testing” lasted to about 2091 when the “Third Sacred War” was started. The “Third Sacred War” has lasted so far, for four years and is probably in the middle period of its cycle. There are reports that a few maggots have been demonstrating more tactical ability than in the prior wars. However, the support from the communities outside Atlanta has never been stronger for the Cleansers whose Clerics are seen as part War Leaders, part Religious Leaders, and part Consecrated Protectors.

The Cleanser’s Organizations and Doctrine:

Congregations are found at either Church or Firebases. A Church exists off the Cordon and the Firebases are on the Cordon. The Liturgy and Sacred Texts are kept internally to the membership and at the Congregation. The other smaller group than a congregation is the Revival Group. All groups are lead by a Clergy Leader (Pastor), who is one who studies the texts and manifests the power. The second in each group is the Laity Leader (Deacon), who may under special occasions may overrule the Clergy in a single instance. The Laity Leader who does this realizes that this action will cause a reassignment of both and has the occasion accessed by a Clergy Council.

The Revival Groups travel the surrounding areas conducting trade and recruiting those who wish to join in the “Sacred War.” The Revival Groups only go where they are allowed by the locals, but many locals respect the Cleansers. On these occasion former recruits from earlier meetings return to tell the locals of what they have seen, this is called witnessing by the Cleansers. People may leave the Cleansers but they are called apostates and are shunned unless they choose to rejoin the fight again, there are very few of them in the first place.

The Cleansers have four levels to which they categorize people. The first is the Clergy, which are those who have manifested the power of Pyro-kinetics and have learned the liturgy. The next is the Laity, who are the backbone of the church who learns the scriptures, care for the weapons, provide the food, and all the basic needs of the Cleansers. The next are the Novices, which are those who support the work of the Cleansers but are not yet those who feel compelled or capable to join the Sacred War. The last level is the Unbelievers who are those, who have not heard, cannot hear, or have rejected the Cleansers. The Unbelievers are not looked down upon unless they interfere with the work of the Cleansers and their Congregations. Some subsets of the Unbelievers are the Apostates and the Hunted. The Apostates are those who have rejected the Cleansers after joining them, the worse to all of the Unbelievers are the Hunted which are ones who may be killed on sight as they are in league with the maggots or have taken actions against the Cleansers.

Cleanser's Relations with Others:

Some outsiders think that the Cleanser Clergy are cruel overlords of their people but this is not a fact. They very much value mercy and tenderness, but they however do not accept outside interference with their Mission. The Cleanser Hierarchy is on very good terms with the Albany Presidency but only visits the AP border towns with their revivals. Those within the Presidency who want to hear the message of the Cleansers are encouraged to do so at the nearest border town. The Presidency is the closest thing the Cleansers recognize to a governmental authority beyond themselves. The Cleansers also go to the northern reaches of the Savannah River Alliance and the Piedmont. The Piedmont is an area along the northern part of the Savannah River in South Carolina who also receives visits from the Revivals.

The Cleansers are neutral with the KFS, even though the KFS has traded things with them beyond the normal level of trade. The Cleansers are against slavery, but their interest lies elsewhere than enforcing that view. The KFS oligarchy is based upon wealth, and this also is not a view shared by the Cleansers. However, the KFS's oligarchy seems deathly afraid of mutations like the maggots and as long as the KFS provides for the mission and doesn't interfere with the Cleansers, they will be left alone.

The Cleansers keep up a series of major roads around the City of Atlanta to encourage traffic that usually leads to trade. From that road work the Cleansers have good relations with Gypsy Truckers, Traders, Mailmen, and Emdees. A few slavers have tried to use the road system and those slavers have found that their contraband cargo was removed. Some of the contraband returned home with the next revival, while others were to join the Cleansers voluntarily. Both actions have endeared them to the locals from where the contrabands were taken.

Cleansers Beliefs:

The Cleansers do not worship fire, they worship the working of fire that burns away all things. They worship the proper use of the "Sacred Flame" to destroy that which harms humanity. There are four hierarchical levels of fire that the Cleansers considered part of the "Sacred Flame." The lowest level of fire in the hierarchy is called "Natural" which is the fire which burns objects. This is fire as the natural process of combustion, it may take life without being directed to, is all that is considered natural in the process of fire. The next level of the fire hierarchy is "Destructive" which is fire used as a weapon. This is using fire to take life through channeling fire to be used as a weapon or item. It can be as simple as the combustion of a gun firing a projectile or as complex as internal combustion within a vehicle's engine. The third in the hierarchy is "Essence" of fire which exists as potential in all things. This is the level that shows that fire can cause all things to change, it is from this philosophy that the increased prospective for Pyro-Kinetics are manifest in these people. The highest level of in this hierarchy of fire is the "Celestial," this is the transforming aspect of fire which changes one thing into another. The "Celestial" is the fire which consumes the body of the Cleanser at their end and enables them to be renewed into the world.

Though they don't view technology with the same hatred that the Razers do, Cleansers see some technology as suspect, without redeeming qualities within itself. The Cleansers are not dependent users of technology, they avoid technology which makes the body, spirit, or mind weak. Technology is not the be all and end all to these people and they are quite distrustful of technology that makes one dependent upon it. Technology is to be subject to the understanding of the average man. Nothing whose principles are not understood by the average person will be used, unless it is necessary to the maintenance of the Cordon. This attitude came slowly over the years as relying on technology which may be lost and that lost could put the Cordon at risk.

The Scriptures are the writings of the first and second generation clergy and was accepted in its present form in 2055. The reasons for this were to maintain the initial mission of the Cleansers stays on track. Within is a discussion of the principles of technology that are generally understood by all the Laity. It is a part instruction book as well as the articulated beliefs of the Cleansers. Within the Scriptures is one section on the Repair and Maintenance of the M9A1-7 Flame Thrower. This Manual/Scripture is not shared with outsiders, only after being a probationary member of the Laity for one year does the individual receive their copy. The Scripture discusses the proper role of each member of the church. It is not prophetic except in that it predicts three things, first a continuation of the unending war between those within the Cordon and those who man it. Also it predicts periods of testing which makes some think that the Cordon is not necessary anymore. The final predication is that there will be a final battle that eliminates those within the Cordon and on that day the Cleansers will find new challenges who are in some ways deadlier than the maggots.

Cleanser Disposition:

Churches	= 18	Churches average about 500 members	= 9000
Firebases	= 70	Firebases average about 100 members	= 7000
Congregations (total)	= 88	Total Cleansers (including Revivals)	= 17000

Cleanser Ranks:

(Clergy/Laity)

Assistant Pastor	Member
Associate Pastor	Senior Member
Pastor	Elder
Senior Pastor	Deacon

Cleanser Weapons:

Black-powder Hellfire Musketoons: which project a damaging flame up to 2m wide at 10m range.
Black-powder Revolvers: which are manufactured locally in 44-40 Caliber.
Black-powder Lever Action: which are manufactured locally in 44-40 Caliber.
M9A1-7 Flamethrower: most have their ranges reduced 20% due to less pressure.
Ruger GP-100: is adopted as a standard revolver due to a preponderance of .357M found locally.
M202 Flame Rocket Launchers: due to an extreme oversupply brought in for the CDC Defense.
Grenades of the Thermite and White Phosphorous have been manufactured and preserved.
Various other Military and Civilian Weapons which came from the initial supplies.