In Nomine™

Liber Castellorum

"So the people shouted and the trumpets were blown. As soon as the people heard the sound of the trumpet, the people raised a great shout, and the wall fell down flat . . ."

(Joshua 6:20)

. . . But you don't want that to happen to *your* strongholds in the War between Heaven and Hell. In the *Liber Castellorum* (Book of Tethers) discover how Tethers – the celestial outposts on Earth – form, grow and die. Learn how to protect your Tethers from attack, and how to undermine the fortresses of your enemies. From the halls of Notre Dame to the House of the Morning Star, Tethers are everywhere.

The *Liber Castellorum* contains Tethers for all the major Superiors, worldwide, including examples that can fit into any campaign. It also includes guidelines for creating Tethers, staffing them, protecting them, handling them in play . . . and destroying them. If your celestials dream of becoming Seneschals, or just need to work off some dissonance, the *Liber Castellorum* will provide inspiration, plots and settings.

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You will need the *In Nomine* basic rulebook to play.

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In Nomine

LIBER CASTELLORUM

THE BOOK OF TETHERS

In Nomine was written by Derek Pearcy based on an original game by CROC, under license from Asmodée

By Mark Allen, R. Sean Borgstrom, James Cambias, Genevieve R. Cogman, Alain H. Dawson, Emily Dresner, David Edelstein, Scott Haring, Jo Hart, John Karakash, Elizabeth McCoy and Walter Milliken

Edited by Elizabeth McCoy

Cover design by Jack Elmy

Illustrated by Chuck Bordell, Kurt Brugel, Kent Burles, Michael Harmon, Mike Mikolajczyk, Sean Murray, Shea Ryan, Ellym Sirac, Dan Smith and Clifford VanMeter

Floor Plans by Ann Dupuis and S. John Ross

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STEVE JACKSON GAMES

LIBER CASTELLORUM

THE BOOK OF TETHERS

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FORTRESSES OF THE WORLD

BY MARK ALLEN, R. SEAN BORGSTROM,
   JAMES CMABIAS, GENEVIEVE R.
   COGMAN, ALAIN H. DAWSON,
   EMILY DRESNER, DAVID EDELSTEIN,
   SCOTT HARING, JOHN KARAKASH,
   ELIZABETH MCCOY

ADVENTURE SEEDS 117

BY R. SEAN BORGSTROM, GENEVIEVE R.
   COGMAN, ALAIN H. DAWSON AND
   EMILY DRESNER

Theory and Practice of Tethers

There are places in the Symphony where particular notes are strong, where a Word's influence is manifest. There are places where Essence flows and fountains, breaking down the barriers between the realms. These are Tethers, where one realm melds into another.

The Duties of Seneschals

The room in Heaven was full of light and air, and the high arched windows let a gentle breeze through to ruffle the wings of the celestials who sat there. None paid it any attention, their focus on the Malakite who stood at the podium, his pose at once alert and impatient.

"The purpose of a Tether," said Laurence, "is multiple."

There was a whisper of movement as many of the listeners made a note on the tablets they carried.

"Multiple," the Archangel of the Sword continued, his black wings flaring behind him. "Firstly, it nourishes the Word that it is linked to. Secondly, it protects the mortal community around it. Thirdly, it acts as a base for angels in the area, and a staging-point for attacks. Fourthly, it is an open link from Heaven to Earth. Do not forget this."

Laurence turned to sweep his gaze across the angels in the rear benches. One Seraph shifted, nervously coiling his tail under him. "You are all experienced Servitors who have fought on Earth, and a number of you are being considered as Seneschals. It is easy, on Earth, to be taken up with day-to-day concerns, to pursue demons and protect humans and consider that to be the limit of your duty."

The Archangel's voice cut like steel. "It is not. Whatever Word you serve, that Word is a part of the Symphony. Do not let yourself forget that the strength of the Tether is the strength of the Word. Strengthen the Word in the humans and the world around you, and you serve Heaven best."

There was a pause.

"But, on the other hand, we must not neglect the practical matters."

Laurence turned his gaze to the angels seated at the front, this time. "Remain always vigilant. The forces of Hell are unlikely to directly assault your Tether – in most cases – but will endeavor to spy it out, to corrupt it and to encourage the humans around it to weaken its Word. Do not underestimate what humans can do! As they can form Tethers, so they can also change or destroy them. Guard them and protect them, for they are the essence of your Tether."

There was another pause; several angels tried to decide whether or not that was meant to be a joke, and decided that intelligent silence was the best course.

"And the best defense is a good offense." The Archangel's wings shifted in a ripple of obsidian. "Identify local Enemy Tethers. Know their agents. Know their likely methods. Spread the influence of your own Tether – cooperating with other local angelic Tethers – and do **not** succumb to complacency. Idleness is folly. Satisfaction is folly. We do not sleep, we do not rest, and we **guard**. The Earth is our charge."

His hand brushed the sword at his belt. "You will simply have a more defined group of people to protect than most. They are in your keeping. Do not betray them."

The Tactics of Tethers

The room was hot and dry, and the chairs in which the demons sat were all imperceptibly too small. The walls were dark steel, and in the distance the dim thud of gunfire pulsed like a bloodstream. All gazes focused on the starkly uniformed creature who stood at the front of the room, and all the demons sat stiffly upright, scribbling quick notes in their pads as they listened.

"Tethers have many purposes," said Baal. "And all of them serve the War."

The Demon Prince of the War focused his attention on a Calabite sitting in the middle of the room. There was a pause. "Tethers are military outposts. Even those that serve Words like Gluttony or Dark Humor are of use to us. Each Tether is a dagger plunged into the face of the Earth, a new wound that marks **our** territory. It is an area forbidden to Heaven and consecrated to Hell."

The Calabite desperately stared at his paper as he scribbled the words down verbatim.

"And," Baal said, his voice a clipped sharpness that had all the demons tensing their shoulders, "it is **ours.**"

He took a pace, and the shadow of leathery wings flickered briefly on the wall behind him. "You are all officer candidates. You are all intelligent. Always be alert for new territory. Strengthen your Word – it will support the Tether and support you. Make inroads on the territory of enemies if you can, and by that I mean anybody not directly allied to you. Those who are not for you cannot be entirely trusted. If it is a choice between leaving territory under the lax authority of a weak Word, or using it for your own purposes, then the choice should be obvious."

There was a pause. Somewhere in the distance, an explosion rippled softly through the air like thunder.

"Do not," said the Demon Prince, very softly, very directly, "ever consider disobeying your commanding officers. They have risen to their rank through merit. You have yet to prove yourself. If they order you to defend, then defend. If they order you to attack, then attack. But at the same time, do not be blind. Learn from them. Some day you too may be Seneschals, and then the responsibility will be yours."

He took another pace, watching the seated demons. "In the same way, Tethers obey their Princes. They are outposts in the War; forward positions, areas from which we can defend our operations and launch attacks at the Enemy. Any Tether is a vital resource. They are not to be betrayed. They are not to be made vulnerable. You must know your Tether's strengths and weaknesses." His voice fell in the air, cadenced and regular. "Be prepared for the most stealthy of attacks, and be prepared for insane Malakim with dynamite. Heaven will stop at nothing in their attempts to reduce us to slavery."

Baal turned on his heel, and his gaze was like a knife. "Each Tether is a victory in the War, and a gateway to future victories."

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THE LIFEBLOOD OF GODS

The woman leaned on her spear at the mouth of the cave, and called, "Brother?"

Light flared in a sunburst for a moment, then was gone. The voice from within was very weary. "Go away."

Athena waited, patient as ever. Her white robes shifted in the dawn wind, and she watched the mouth of the cave with cool gray eyes.

Eventually, the voice said, "Very well." Light flared again, and a man who burned with the living incandescence of the sun stood beside her. "What is it that you want, sister?"

"I came to bring you news," Athena said.

Apollo's laughter was brief and scorching. "That we are diminished further? They are encroaching on **Delphi**, sister. That is one of my last remaining Tethers. What am I to do? Appear to worshippers?" He spread his hands. "Sister, we don't **have** worshippers any more."

"No," Athena said calmly.

"Ah." He began to pace. "Then you want a prophecy. Why else would you have come here? Let me give you one. We're dying. We're fading away. We're dreams and dust on the wind. Our power is broken and our Tethers are vanishing or gone. We have less Essence with every season. We are exiles and we have no hope left."

"No," Athena said again.

He touched her shoulder, briefly, and fires rippled on the cloth of her robe before vanishing. "We have no temples to appear to the mortals in. We have no strength to build ourselves bodies. There are no centers to spread our faith from any more. The angels drove us out – **damn** them!" For a moment, tears ran from his eyes like liquid gold. "And we are too virtuous for Hell. They would use us and throw us away."

"They would," Athena agreed calmly.

"We were strong once. I had temples across the Isthmus." Apollo turned away from her. "I could have appeared in any of them, taken my pleasure with the priestesses and showed myself in glory. Our servants defended them. Armies raised shrines to us at each new conquest."

"Oh, my brother, I had temples too." Athena's voice was soft.

Apollo rounded on her again. "And who controls the Agora now? What do we do when there are no Tethers left? Sister, what becomes of us when there is no more belief, no more Essence, when nobody remembers we **existed**?"

"Brother." Athena regarded him. "They have not forgotten us yet. We still have time."

Apollo stooped to the ground, and sifted a handful of rock dust between his fingers. "Look at us, Athena. This is what our Tethers are becoming, and this is what we will be in the end. Dust. Dust on the wind."

Her eyes sought the middle distance, and she whispered, "But not yet."

THEORY AND PRACTICE OF TETHERS

TETHER TERMINOLOGY

Affinity – the degree to which a Tether-forming event is concerned with a particular Word (or ethereal god). The GM should have a good idea of which Words a newly formed Tether would have affinity for, based on its origin, and should also be able to decide what subsequent actions might affect affinity, if a Tether is being fought over.

Compatible – a Tether is said to be compatible with a Word (or ethereal god) if it has a substantial affinity for it.

Domain – shorthand for a Cathedral, Principality or Ethereal Domain; a place belonging to a particular Superior, ethereal god or ethereal pantheon.

"Down" – slang for the direction to the corporeal from the celestial. Angels also use it to refer to Hell, relative to Heaven, and will, confusingly, use "down" as the direction from Earth to Hell.

Flow – short for "Essence flow," the amount of Essence that a Tether normally delivers to the linked Word.

Link – A stable Tether is said to be linked to the Word of the Superior who stabilized it. For ethereal gods, the link is to the god himself.

Locus – the physical extent of the Tether at its endpoints; inside the locus, all of a Tether's capabilities are accessible or active, while outside the locus everything is normal. The **upper locus** is in the ethereal or celestial realms. The **lower locus** is usually in the corporeal realm, and is defined by the trigger event. Sometimes a locus is also called a *terminus*.

Stable – a Tether is stable if a specific Superior has invested Forces in it; the converse is *unstable* or *"wild."*

Tame – slang for "stable."

Trigger – the event that caused the formation of a Tether.

Unstable – an unstable Tether is one whose upper locus has not been permanently anchored in a Superior's Domain.

"Up" – slang for the direction from the corporeal to the celestial realms (both Heaven and Hell); angels also refer to Heaven as being "up" from Hell.

Wild – common slang for "unstable."

WHAT IS A TETHER?

According to angelic history, the first Tethers appeared shortly after the Symphony formed the basic elements of the corporeal realm. The ever-restless Gabriel found she could dive into the newly ignited Sun. David discovered a route through the greatest of mountains on the early planets. Janus explored connections between the currents of Heaven and the chaotic storms of Earth.

Soon, the celestials learned to stabilize these natural connections to their Words, binding some of their own Forces into them. This also let the angels tap the great flows of Essence through the links.

Still later, as life flourished and evolved on Earth, the empty expanses of the Marches began to fill with the Essence from the dreams and fears of living things. Tethers formed from the corporeal to the ethereal, and from the ethereal to the Words of Dream and Fear in the celestial. Thus was born the Tower of Blandine and Beleth.

When humans appeared, many new themes entered the Symphony. Tethers multiplied, forming as much from the collective passions of Man as from the power of the natural world. Repeated actions by unknowing humans often fed Essence into parts of the Symphony, creating places where Words grew strong and drew down their celestial aspects. Then religion was invented, and some of this energy was knowingly funneled to those powers mankind imagined, creating (again, according to celestials) both the ethereal gods and Tethers to their Domains in the Marches.

ANATOMY OF A TETHER

A Tether is a link between two realms, usually called "upper" and "lower." Usually the corporeal realm is the lowest, with the Marches in the middle and the celestial realm as the highest. This is because the natural events that form Tethers normally occur in the corporeal realm, or sometimes in the ethereal. However, it is theoretically possible for a Tether to form backward, or between two Domains within a realm.

The physical extent of a Tether's endpoints is called its *locus*, and anything within (or touching) the locus at either end is considered to be inside the Tether itself. The locus is always well-defined, with a sharp boundary, though it is possible for the shape or position to change with time.

The lower locus is usually the area in which the creating event happened, but it may shrink or expand if the event is an ongoing one. (E.g., if a restaurant is a Tether to Haagenti, and it adds another dining room, the new room will become part of the locus.) There is no visible sign of the lower locus of a Tether in the corporeal realm, but if the lower end is ethereal, it will have some symbolic appearance.

The upper locus will be in the Domain of the Word which the event best couples to, and its size is typically an indication of the power of the Tether. The appearance of the upper locus is chosen by the Superior who stabilized it. It is often an obvious form, such as a gate or doorway, but may also be a pattern on the floor, a room or an object. The upper locus of a "wild" Tether (see p. 12) normally appears as a rippling vortex in the air, and it may move around. The top of an ethereal Tether manifests in a location belonging to the associated god or pantheon.

TETHERS IN OPERATION

Tethers funnel Essence upward, and pull down some of the nature of the upper realm in return. The Essence that flows through a Tether is generated by actions or natural processes which enhance the linked theme in the Symphony. Celestial Rites also contribute to this indirectly. People in the Tether locus can also generate (or donate) Essence through rituals – this is common in the worship of ethereal gods.

Non-corporeal beings can transit a Tether in either direction, though going up requires a Will roll if the destination is not the being's "home." Any place in Heaven is home for angels. Demons are only going home if they are returning to their Superior's Principality. However, ethereals cannot travel to the celestial realm.

The lower locus of a Tether is strongly coupled to the Word it is linked to, making it easier to communicate with the Superior who is that Word (+3 to invocation). Further, Superiors and Seneschals can draw upon the Essence flow of their Tethers, though some Seneschals may only do this while within the locus (see p. 33). The flow from a wild Tether sprays from its upper locus and dissipates into the upper realm – it cannot be tapped or captured.

Everyone within the locus is affected by the Word the Tether is linked to. This is usually an appropriate emotional effect; intensity varies with the power of the Tether. (No one will be surprised at being hungry in a restaurant – whether or not it's a Tether to Gluttony.) Non-mundanes may make a Perception roll to realize they are being influenced.

LIFE CYCLE OF A TETHER

Tethers are born, grow, age and eventually die. The following sections describe how Tethers form, change and fade away or are destroyed. The life cycle covered here is for a standard Tether from the corporeal realm to the celestial. Corporeal-to-ethereal and more exotic Tethers vary somewhat, and the differences are noted in the relevant sections.

Birth

A Tether can only be created by conditions *within* the Symphony that emphasize a particular theme or themes. The trigger may be a powerful natural process, some significant occurrence among humans or a strong, repetitive set of human actions. Direct supernatural intervention will never create a Tether, even for Superiors. Celestials and ethereals cannot create Tethers alone. However, celestials *can* nudge humans in directions that may favor Tether formation. No doubt God, and perhaps Lucifer, could create a Tether directly, but there are no known examples.

There are no fixed rules on what will cause a Tether to form. They are often associated with places where substantial amounts of Essence have been spent unconsciously by humans, where humans have performed the same activity for a long time or where human deaths have occurred. (One guideline for GMs is to look at events that cause disturbance if done by a celestial, or at the Rites of Superiors. If these happen as a result of *unknowing* human actions or natural processes, they can lead to Tether formation. Actions that *do* cause disturbance, or

are performed by non-mundanes, rarely spark Tethers!) Areas where humans have experienced powerful emotions – especially over a long period or in large groups – are also possible Tether sites. Whatever the trigger is, it will be something extraordinary and rare. In any given year, only a few such events occur, and some years pass with none at all.

For a Tether to form at all, there must be at least one compatible Domain for the upper locus to manifest in. If no such Domain exists, no Tether can form. Abandoned Cathedrals in Heaven, such as Oannes' Grotto (**Heaven and Hell**, p. 77), *do* qualify, but with no Superior there, such a Tether cannot be stabilized.

When the conditions are exactly right, an *unstable* ("wild") Tether forms. This usually creates no disturbance. A Superior must stabilize the Tether by investing some of his personal Forces in it. This links the Tether to his Word and Domain, allowing him to tap its Essence flow and permanently anchor the upper locus. Discovery of a wild Tether in a Superior's Domain is worth a major reward, *if* he manages to stabilize it before it jumps elsewhere. Tethers are rare and valuable.

Tether loci interfere with each other. Tethers to the same Word do not form close together in the corporeal realm, and attempting to stabilize an upper locus too close to the upper locus of another may force the unstable Tether to manifest elsewhere, or in rare cases, destroy it. The more powerful the Tether, the greater the degree of interference. Few Superiors will take chances with anchoring a Tether, so the tops are often spread out within a Domain, allowing room for growth. Lower loci can also interfere with formations of Tethers to other Words, so it is rare (though possible) for new links to form close to existing ones.

Once the Tether is stabilized, the Superior normally appoints a Seneschal, who is attuned to the new Tether, and may also be Word-bound to it (see p. 30). A Seneschal is not required for a stable Tether, but will greatly improve its security and often lengthen the Tether's lifetime.

Youth

After a Tether is stabilized, it may enter a period of growth, where the Tether's power and connection to the linked Word are increased. Most often, this is encouraged by the Seneschal, but it can happen for other reasons, especially when the Tether was formed by a specific human activity. This phase varies from days to a decade or two, but is usually about a year.

During the Tether's youth, defenses (see Chapter 3) may be weak. It may be stolen by other compatible Words, if it can be destabilized. It can also be more easily destroyed (see below on Tether death). The Superior

and Seneschal often work to link the Tether more tightly to the Word, hoping to lock out attempts at theft. This is most feasible with Tethers based on human perceptions of an event. For example, if the trigger was a battle, emphasizing the individual bravery of the combatants would increase the affinity for Michael, while focusing on organization and *esprit de corp* would favor Laurence. Promoting warfare in general would help either Michael or Baal, and highlighting the slaughter could strengthen a connection with Saminga.

Increasing a Tether's affinity or power often involves manipulating human perceptions through song, story or news reports. All of these things augment the symbolic value of the Tether in the minds of humans, and sharpen its focus. Of course, other potential owners and enemies of the current possessor will fight such efforts, and may

ORPHANED TETHERS

When a Superior (or ethereal god) is killed, his Tethers do *not* die, though they may weaken – there is no longer a Superior promoting the linked Word. These orphaned Tethers remain linked to the dead Superior's Domain, and the Seneschal will still be able to tap the Essence flow. However, any Essence reaching the top will dissipate, as with an unstabilized Tether.

Another Superior possessing a compatible Word may re-link the Tether, using the process for stabilizing new Tethers. This is common in Hell (and with ethereal pantheons) and the Seneschal will usually cooperate with the new Prince, rather than be destroyed and replaced. Occasionally, a Word-bound Seneschal will resist re-linking of his Tether. In this case, the Seneschal must be destroyed before the Tether can be connected to the new Word.

If there is no compatibility between the Tether and the Word that now rules the linked Domain, the Tether will persist if it has a Word-bound Seneschal, but otherwise quickly fades away. Most Princes will not leave a known orphan Tether in their Domain – they will either attempt to take it over, or failing that, destroy it by destroying the Seneschal. Princes do not like potential enemies with access to Tether-Essence nearby.

Tethers to dead (or Fallen) Superiors in Heaven are usually left alone – often the Seneschals are the only angels left serving the Word, as the other Servitors seek new homes. Sometimes an orphaned Seneschal will request another Superior link to his Tether, to save it from fading. It may also happen if the Seneschal is thought to be in danger of Falling, without an Archangel to guide him.

wage counter-campaigns. In battles for Tether ownership, the winner may be the one who writes the *most popular* history . . .

Tether growth augments the properties of the Tether – it may add Forces, increase Essence flow or develop new Features. The growth pattern is unique to every Tether, and different aspects may change at different times.

Maturity

Mature Tethers are the most common. They change very little for long periods of time (typically decades, sometimes centuries). They are safe havens, with well-established defenses and a well-trained staff. There is usually a Word-bound Seneschal in a mature Tether. Mature Tethers are sometimes attacked, directly or by

assaults on the Word-link, but these are rarely more than probes to check that the Tether is still solid.

Old Age

A point often comes where the Word linkage of the Tether wanes. The trigger fades from human memory, a continuing human activity supporting the Tether falters, its environment changes in a bad way or necessary physical parts of the Tether decay or are destroyed by design or accident.

When this happens, the Tether weakens, and may be on the path to extinction. Once-reliable Features fail, Essence flow slows or other symptoms announce the Tether's decline. If the problems can be reversed, full health can be restored – otherwise the Tether will slowly die.

Tethers are often as vulnerable in old age as in their youth, especially to indirect attacks on their Word-link. Often, though, a weakening Tether isn't worth the resources spent on hastening its death. Old age rarely lasts more than a few decades, but some Tethers have lingered for millennia.

Death

Ultimately, death comes to all things, even Tethers. If nothing else, they will be eradicated by the slow drift of continents over eons of geologic time. Few last anywhere near that long. Many live only for a century or so; a rare few survive for a millennium or more. And as human civilization has grown and changed more quickly with successive centuries, Tethers have become more ephemeral as well.

What finally kills a Tether usually depends on how it was born. Those which were generated by a singular event fade with the memory of the event itself, or the decay of the physical structure where the event occurred. For this type, a Word-bound Seneschal can hold the Tether's theme together within the Symphony as long as he survives, by his very existence, even if the memory and physical traces of the trigger are long gone. But such a Tether is a pale wraith. (And if he does not protect those traces, the final link might be severed, with deadly consequences.) If he is killed, the Tether will either become wild, or vanish immediately.

Tethers created by a continuing human activity live as long as the activity persists. These Tethers are less likely to be tied to a physical structure, and can sometimes be moved in the corporeal realm (see *Moving Tethers*, below). But if the pattern of activity is broken for long, the Tether will quickly die.

Some Tethers are tied to a specific corporeal object (often a building). If this object is destroyed beyond reconstruction, the Tether will fail.

The longest-lived Tethers are created by natural forces, and manifest in enduring physical objects: Gabriel's Tether to the Sun, David's mountain Tethers and Jean's Tether at Io, the moon of Jupiter which is part of the solar system's largest electrical circuit.

A Tether can also be destroyed by completely breaking its Word-link. This normally requires a new event of importance equal to the trigger of the original Tether. For example, if a football stadium is a Tether to the Media, and a fire burns through the bleachers during a game, the Media link may be displaced by an affinity to Fire (either Belial or Gabriel). A new Fire Tether may not form, due to the pre-existing Media Tether, but the strong new Fire affinity may cause enough interference to destroy the Media connection.

The destruction of a Tether is also dangerous or deadly to its Seneschal, see p. 35.

Moving a Tether

The lower locus of some Tethers can be moved from place to place. (This type of Tether is popular with Janus and Valefor.) See the "Mobile" Feature, p. 17.

Another example occurs when the circumstances that create and maintain the Tether can be moved. See the "Transferable" Feature, p. 17.

The upper locus of a Tether can also be moved within a Domain or reshaped at the will of the Superior. When a Tether has an affinity to other Words, it can be transferred to – or possibly stolen by! – a compatible Superior and placed in his Domain.

SPECIAL TYPES OF TETHERS

Some types of Tethers have enough in common to have special names. Less common characteristics are considered *Features*; these are discussed on p. 16.
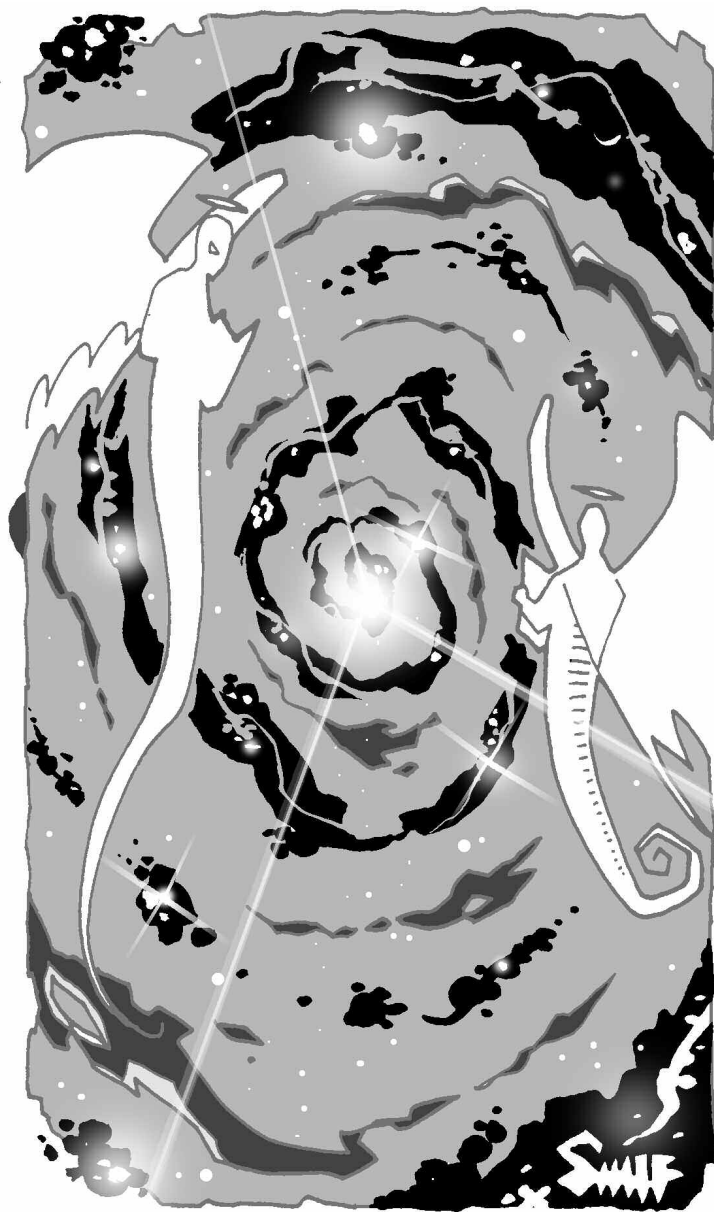
Unstable ("Wild")

The upper locus of an unstable Tether moves randomly throughout all compatible Domains. If there are multiple affinities, the locus will appear in one Domain at a time, then jump to another after an uncertain interval. For example, a four-star restaurant where a popular new cuisine originated might oscillate between Haagenti's areas of Shal-Mari and Eli's Cathedral in Heaven. A wild Tether from a major battlefield could switch among Baal's Principality, Laurence's Cathedral and Michael's section of the Groves. If the battle involved a hideous slaughter, it might visit Saminga's Principality, too. If the battle included forces worshipping one of the ethereal war gods, then the locus might also wander to that god's temple in the Far Marches.

If the unstable Tether is compatible with only a single Word (or ethereal god), its upper locus will be confined to that Domain, but may drift around or jump from place to place within it. The more powerful a Tether, the faster it moves.

If a wild Tether isn't claimed quickly, it may persist if the triggering event continues. A wild Tether can even evolve, as the conditions that keep it alive change slowly with time. This evolution can change the Tether's affinities, so that the pattern of drift between Domains shifts, even adding or dropping Domains from its repertoire.

Wild Tethers can be stabilized temporarily by performing the Corporeal Song of Sanctity (p. 25) within the corporeal locus. A Superior at the upper locus can invest some of his personal Forces in the Tether to permanently stabilize it. He then controls the location and appearance of the upper locus, and will be able to tap the Tether's Essence flow.

An unstable Tether cannot have a Seneschal, and any Tether with a Seneschal cannot be destabilized until he is destroyed.

Natural and Elemental

Natural Tethers are those that form due to natural processes, rather than human events. *Elemental* Tethers are the most common natural ones – those associated with air, fire, water and earth. Other natural Tethers can be triggered by unusual long-term groupings of animals or plants.

There is little special about natural Tethers other than their origins. However, they are often vulnerable to physical destruction or drastic environmental changes.

Some elemental Tethers are both *transferable* and *intermittent* (see *Features*, below), but in a particularly repeatable way. They are known as *transient Tethers:* a short-lived phenomenon creates the same type of Tether again and again.

If a Seneschal is bound to the Word for the *type* of Tether, any occurrence of the phenomenon can become a Tether, as long as the Seneschal is present there. If no Seneschal exists with an appropriate Word, the event may still generate a short-lived wild Tether, but any

Essence it funnels will be lost. Unless the Seneschal is also a Kyriotate, only one Tether of a given type can exist at a time.

While they live, transient Tethers are among the most powerful in the Symphony, but since they appear infrequently, they do not greatly enhance a Superior's long-term power. Theoretically, other kinds of Tethers could be transient, but the known examples of this type of Tether are elemental. Janus has a Seneschal of Tornadoes and one of Hurricanes, while Belial has a Seneschal of Forest Fires. The dead Prince of the Oceans had a Seneschal of Tidal Waves.

Most transient Tethers are natural ones, but other types may exist.

Ethereal

Tethers from the corporeal to the ethereal realm are simply called "ethereal Tethers." Most ethereal Tethers form as the result of direct worship of a particular ethereal god or pantheon – these always start out stable, and do not go through a wild phase. Also, since they originate from a temple or shrine, the consecration ritual substitutes for the stabilization process.

The power of a typical ethereal Tether waxes and wanes with the worship conducted there. These Tethers do not have an Essence flow, but will funnel Essence upward from any rituals performed within the lower locus. Many ethereal Tethers died when worship ceased, though certain very well-established Tethers (such as the Acropolis in Athens) survived much longer.

A normal wild Tether may have an affinity for a particular ethereal god as well as various Words. These may be stabilized as ethereal Tethers in the same way a celestial Superior would stabilize it. Such Tethers follow the normal Tether life cycle, and do have a normal Essence flow.

Ethereal Tethers cannot have Word-bound Seneschals (since ethereals cannot bind people to Words), and often do not have Seneschals at all.

PROPERTIES OF TETHERS

All Tethers have certain properties in common, which define their basic capabilities. In addition to these, Tethers may also have one or more *Features*, which are described in the next section.

Forces

Every stable Tether has at least one Force tied to it. Forces may come from either the Superior or a

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MICRO-TETHERS

The GM may wish to add "micro-Tethers" to his campaign. These are very short-lived wild Tethers formed by events that aren't strong enough to create a normal Tether, but still of great power. They are normally formed by the act of a single human, or a small group, and last for a few hours or days at most. Micro-Tethers are always wild, and cannot be stabilized.

These weak spots between the realms can only be used for movement, and are usually restricted to 1-4 Forces in capacity. Imps, gremlins and demonlings sometimes push through these Symphonic mouseholes, wreaking a small amount of mischief and then slipping home.

Micro-Tethers can also form to Heaven, but relievers rarely use them without orders. Sometimes one is curious enough about the corporeal realm to sneak through and look around a little.

The existence of micro-Tethers can be used to explain a wide variety of weak supernatural phenomena.

Seneschal Word-bound to the Tether (though a Superior must do the actual binding). They can increase if the Seneschal promotes his Tether and his Superior's Word, or diminish if the Tether's Word-link isn't maintained or the Word itself weakens in the immediate area. The Superior may also choose to pull Forces out of the Tether.

The overall power of a Tether is usually directly related to the number of Forces in it. A weak Tether will have only a few Forces (1-3), a typical one could have up to 10 Forces, and a strong Tether might have up to 20 or so. A few very powerful ones will have more.

A Tether with no Forces will either revert to the wild state (if the trigger's impact on the Symphony is still strong enough to maintain the Tether), or die away.

Like personal Forces, the Forces in a Tether can store Essence. This Essence may be tapped by the Seneschal as though it were from his personal Forces. The Essence reserve recharges from the Essence flow through the Tether – any time the reserve is not full, the flow will fill it up before being available elsewhere. An attuned Seneschal may only draw upon the Tether's reserve Essence while within the Tether locus. A Word-bound Seneschal can draw upon the Essence flow through his bond, as though he had a reliquary, *anywhere* but in Limbo.

Some Superiors – especially Demon Princes – take a dim view of the Seneschal using "their" Essence. Most Seneschals will only use a small fraction of the Essence

available, leaving the rest for their master. Defending the Tether against an attack is always a good reason for tapping the Tether. So is supplying Essence to other Servitors of the same Word, *if* they were given permission to draw on the Tether's resources by their boss.

The Seneschal may also put Essence into the Tether the same way he can tap it. This is rarely useful except with Tethers having extremely low flow rates.

Locus

The area covered by the lower locus is especially important to know. Which side of the boundary someone is on makes a great difference to what he can do, and what can be done to him. The upper locus is defined when the Tether is stabilized, and is controlled by the Superior who captured it.

The size of the lower locus is often independent of overall power – some very weak Tethers have a large locus, because the locus is primarily dictated by the event that created the Tether. Tethers defined largely by ongoing human activities are more likely to grow and shrink with power, though.

ETHEREAL TO CELESTIAL TETHERS

There are only three known Tethers between the ethereal and celestial realms: the Towers of Beleth and Blandine, and Gabriel's Volcano. All three of these are "solid" Tethers, manifesting as physical connections between the realms. The Towers are also the entire Domains of the two Superiors, while Gabriel's Tether to the Marches is a narrow, tortuous path up the side of her mountain.

The Essence associated with both Blandine and Beleth's Words is mostly spent in the Marches, rather than the corporeal realm; this formed the basis for their odd Domain-*cum*-Tether Towers. Blandine and Beleth are also the Seneschals for their Towers.

The reason for Gabriel's Tether is less understood. It is widely speculated that it is a wild Tether associated with prophetic visions, which thus has an affinity for her Word from within the Marches. This is plausible, since the path up the volcano is hard to find, and never seems to be the same twice. It also has no Seneschal, unless Gabriel herself acts as one.

The upper locus size is more likely to be indicative of power, since Superiors prefer more space at the top of an important Tether. Also, if the upper locus is too small, it may restrict the effective *capacity* of the Tether. Perhaps a Tether can accommodate three average celestials, but if the upper locus manifests as a single floor tile, it will be hard to cram three Servitors onto that single tile at once.

Capacity

A Tether allows people to transit in either direction. However, only a limited number of Forces can go through the Tether per round. This is the Tether's *capacity*. The Tether can be "stretched" by expending Essence to push through it: an additional point of Essence per Force beyond the capacity. Stretching the Tether creates disturbance (at both loci) equal to twice the number of over-capacity Forces. Some Tethers "rebound" after being stretched, and will have a reduced capacity for a while afterward, but this is not typical (see the *Rebound* Feature, p. 19).

Example: Caiphas ascends a Tether with a capacity of 5 Forces, but she is a 9-Force Cherub. She spends 4 Essence, and creates an 8-point disturbance at both the top and the bottom loci (in addition to the 9-point one at the bottom she made when she went celestial).

Capacity is related to the Tether's Forces – roughly 5 Forces of capacity per Tether Force. This is not a fixed relationship, though. The GM may make "narrow" or "wide" Tethers, where the ratio is different.

Flow

The rate at which a Tether gathers Essence is its *flow*. This is expressed as an amount of Essence per time unit. The flow is one of the most important aspects of the Tether to the Superior who owns it, since the total flow from all his Tethers is one of his significant Essence sources. Flow is really the defining property of the Tether, since it is driven by the "local pressure" of the Word – the same thing that forced the Tether open in the first place.

The range of flow rates runs from near zero (1 Essence per day) to very high (2-3 Essence per round). Celestial slang describes the flow rate as "fast" or "slow," or sometimes "hot" or "cold."

A Tether's flow can vary over time. It is greatly affected by the importance of the Word in the area surrounding the Tether, and the number of humans who directly interact with the Tether in ways contributing to its linked Word. The flow can change over periods as short as a day, but it is simplest for the GM to pick an average flow rate for a Tether, changing it only when conditions for the linked Word change substantially.

Influence

This is the measure of how strongly the Tether's Word affects those within the locus (see p. 8). Since the effects are left to the GM's (and players') discretion, there is no need to quantify influence. However, the GM may wish to note if the effect is stronger or weaker than usual. Influence is usually proportional to overall power.

Speed of Passage

Tethers normally take a round to transfer from one locus to the other, but some are faster or slower. Also, some are faster in one direction than the other, for reasons similar to Windy Tethers (p. 20).

Power

The overall power of a Tether summarizes where the Tether falls on the scale of each property, and the typical number and strength of the Features. However, every Tether is unique, so power is only a *very* rough guideline for what to expect from a given Tether. Celestials can sense the approximate power of a Tether (see p. 19).

Power may be the only Tether property the GM decides in advance, classifying it as weak, average or strong. The guidelines below can then be used to pick values for the other properties, if this becomes important.

Weak Tethers have only a few Forces (1-3), a capacity of only one average celestial at a time, an Essence flow between 1 per hour and 2 per 10 minutes, slight emotional influence and 0-2 Features (often negative ones). If the locus is dependent on power level, it will be small – such as a medium-sized room.

Average Tethers have roughly 4-10 Forces, can pass three or four typical celestials at once, produce 1 Essence every 1 to 5 minutes, have moderate influence on people within the locus and possess 3-4 Features. If the locus is affected by power, it will be a medium-sized building or a small outdoor area.

Strong Tethers have 11-20 Forces, have a flow of about 1 Essence per round, strongly influence anyone within the locus and possess several positive Features. If the locus size is power-dependent, it will be a very large building, or a large outdoor area.

A few Tethers exceed the ranges given for strong ones – these are often wild natural ones, which die within hours or days after their formation. There are also a *very* few stable Tethers in this class, such as Notre Dame.

Resources

This property represents the facilities and wider influence of the Tether organization in the corporeal realm. It includes the Seneschal (described in Chapter 2), staff and defenses (described in Chapter 3) and equipment, artifacts and other specialized capabilities (described in Chapter 4). Affiliations with powerful humans or human organizations also fall into this category.

This property is dictated by the Superior's policy, and the efforts of the Seneschal. The level of resources a Tether commands are often correlated with its celestial power (i.e., its importance), but can vary greatly, due to policy or just corporeal considerations. Wild Tethers naturally have no resources.

TETHER FEATURES

Besides the standard properties, many Tethers have additional special Features, both positive and negative. Weak Tethers are most likely to have negative Features, often restricting normal properties. Strong Tethers frequently have Word-enhancing effects. As Tethers grow or weaken, they might develop new Features, or lose old ones.

Which Features a Tether possesses are determined primarily by the trigger event and the linked Word, or subsequent events that change its power. The Superior rarely has any control over what Features manifest in any Tether, even when stabilizing it. Sometimes the Seneschal must discover these by trial and error, though Word-bound ones will understand their Tether's eccentricities in full.

The Features listed here are far from exhaustive – every Tether is unique, and many develop quirks: beneficial, troublesome or merely odd. The GM should be guided by the examples here in creating new Tether powers and quirks. Most Features are related to the linked Word, and should be roughly comparable to attunements in game effect.

POSITIVE FEATURES

Celestial Harbor (Common)

Any celestial may remain in celestial form indefinitely, within the Tether's bounds.

Forked (Rare)

Once in a great while, a wild Tether with two or more equally strong affinities can be stabilized by multiple Superiors, without conflict. Such a Tether has two (or possibly more) upper loci, one in each Superior's Domain. If one top point is in Heaven, and another in Hell, the lower locus is *not* protected by the Light of Heaven (see p. 51).

Ascending a forked Tether is tricky. Unless the user is a Servitor of one of the Superiors involved, he must make a Will roll to reach the correct destination. On a failed roll, he will arrive at one of the loci chosen at random –
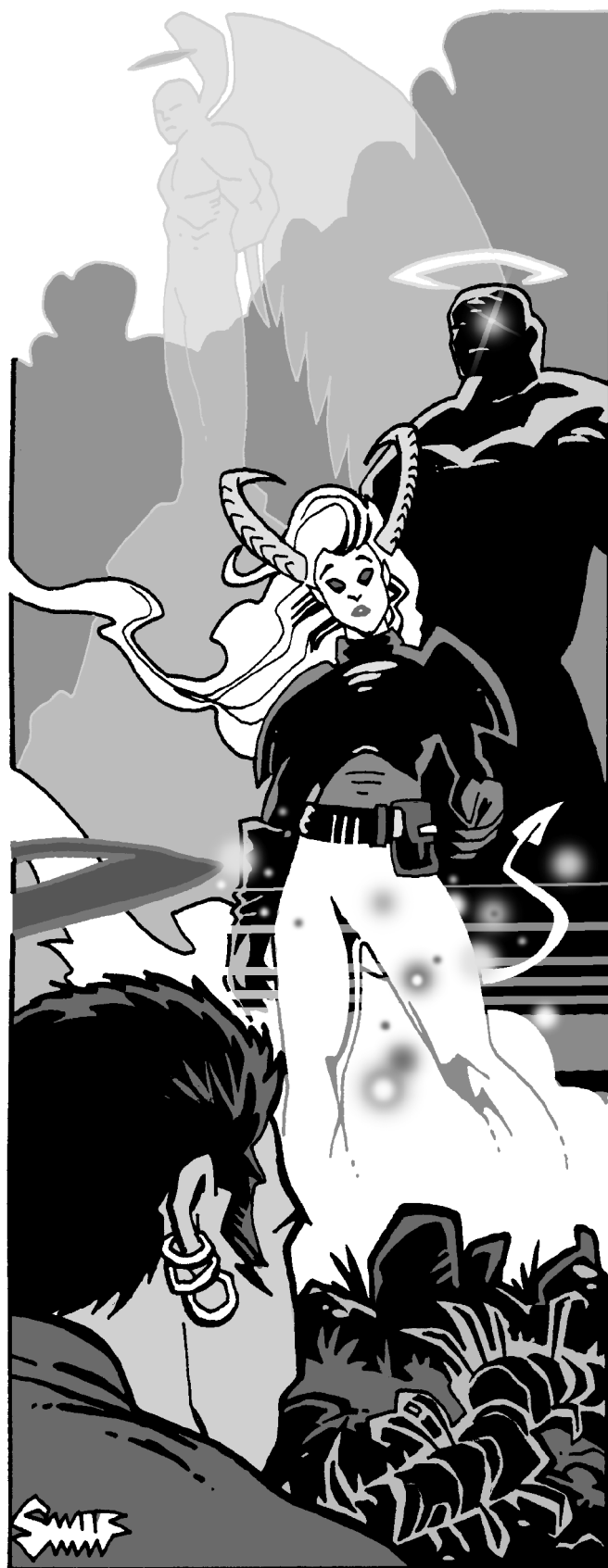
which may not be the one he wanted. (Tethers forked between the ethereal and celestial realms will not deliver an ethereal to Heaven or Hell – but the ethereal will "bounce" painfully and must try again, making another Will roll.)

Friendly (Uncommon)

Friendly Tethers get along with other friendly Tethers – that is, their loci do *not* interfere with each other (see p. 9). This allows the upper endpoints to be placed conveniently close together, making the Tethers easier to defend and allowing a quicker means of transport between locations in the lower realm. The Tether is usually only friendly to certain others, most often ones with a very similar trigger event.

Mobile (Rare)

The lower locus of a Tether may be a vehicle, though it must be a fairly large one – something the size of a small ship or a big plane. Mobile Tethers are rare; most of them are linked to the Words of the Wind, War and the War, since few other Tether-forming events are related to vehicles.

Some natural Tethers are also mobile, since they are formed by natural processes that move. Examples include tornadoes, hurricanes and tidal waves.

Quiet (Uncommon)

People taking celestial form, descending into a corporeal vessel or changing vessels do not cause the usual Symphonic disturbance (*In Nomine,* p. 55) while within the lower locus of this valuable type of Tether. Thus, the usual "noise," from people going up and down, is lacking.

Shared (Rare)

A shared Tether is one stabilized jointly by multiple Superiors. Each Superior must invest Forces in the Tether, and it must be compatible with all of them. The Essence flow is shared among all the Superiors. This type of Tether is *very* rare – the only widely known example is Notre Dame, which is owned collectively by the Archangels of the Seraphim Council.

Transferable (Uncommon)

The Tether may be moved to a new location. This Feature often isn't known until someone is forced to try to move the Tether's corporeal terminus. Such Tethers are often weak – it's hard to tow a powerful one around.

Some Tethers can be taken down temporarily and set up elsewhere, by moving the critical elements that form the Tether. These elements can include physical objects, groups of people and well-known business names. E.g., it

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EXAMPLE OF TETHER CREATION

The Game Master decides he wants a small demonic Tether for his campaign's setting, a city that is contested between angels and demons, which already contains David's *Brother Abdullah's Kung Fu Studio* (p. 74). The demonic Tether should be enigmatic and weak enough not to seem a threat (it will be a place to find "friendly" demons). There should also be a reason why angels don't just destroy it out of hand.

The GM decides that Free Lilim are always willing to make a deal, so that suggests a Tether of Freedom. To make his players question their assumptions about good and evil, he focuses on the aspect of "Walking away from relationships," but in a "good" way. He makes it a small women's shelter. For a trigger, he picks a woman's refusal to return to her husband when he follows her there. To make this more demonic, the exact trigger is when she *shoots* him fatally. If the PCs investigate this, the GM will decide what happened to that woman later: if she abandoned kids, escaped jail, etc.

This is a small Tether – the GM goes to the Quickie Tethers box (p. 22) and chooses Weak. For Features, he makes it Inelastic (p. 18), which also keeps other demons from using it as a staging area. He sketches a quick floorplan and places the locus in a hallway between a bedroom and the front door – the woman was cornered there. The locus is small, going only the length of the hall. Since this is a Tether of Lilith, it will not have a Word-bound Seneschal, and the GM decides it is too weak and recent to have even an attuned one. It is cared for by whichever Lilim is serving a Geas at the time.

To finalize the Tether, the GM picks a location for the Tether in his campaign's city and names it the Maple Street Shelter.

(This is the Generic Freedom Tether on p. 102, with the addition of one Feature and the designation of Weak.)

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doesn't really matter what building Lady Tamia's House of Pleasure is in – the Lust Tether is defined by where the Seneschal (Lady Tamia) sets up her House. As long as she keeps her steady clientele and her group of "artists," her Tether is secure.

The Seneschal *must* be Word-bound to the Tether, and must carefully orchestrate the Tether shutdown and start-up, which may involve special rituals.

Most transferable Tethers are based on continuing human activities, such as restaurants, museums and brothels. One Media Tether was moved when the local sports teams moved to a new stadium, but this was unusual and chancy.
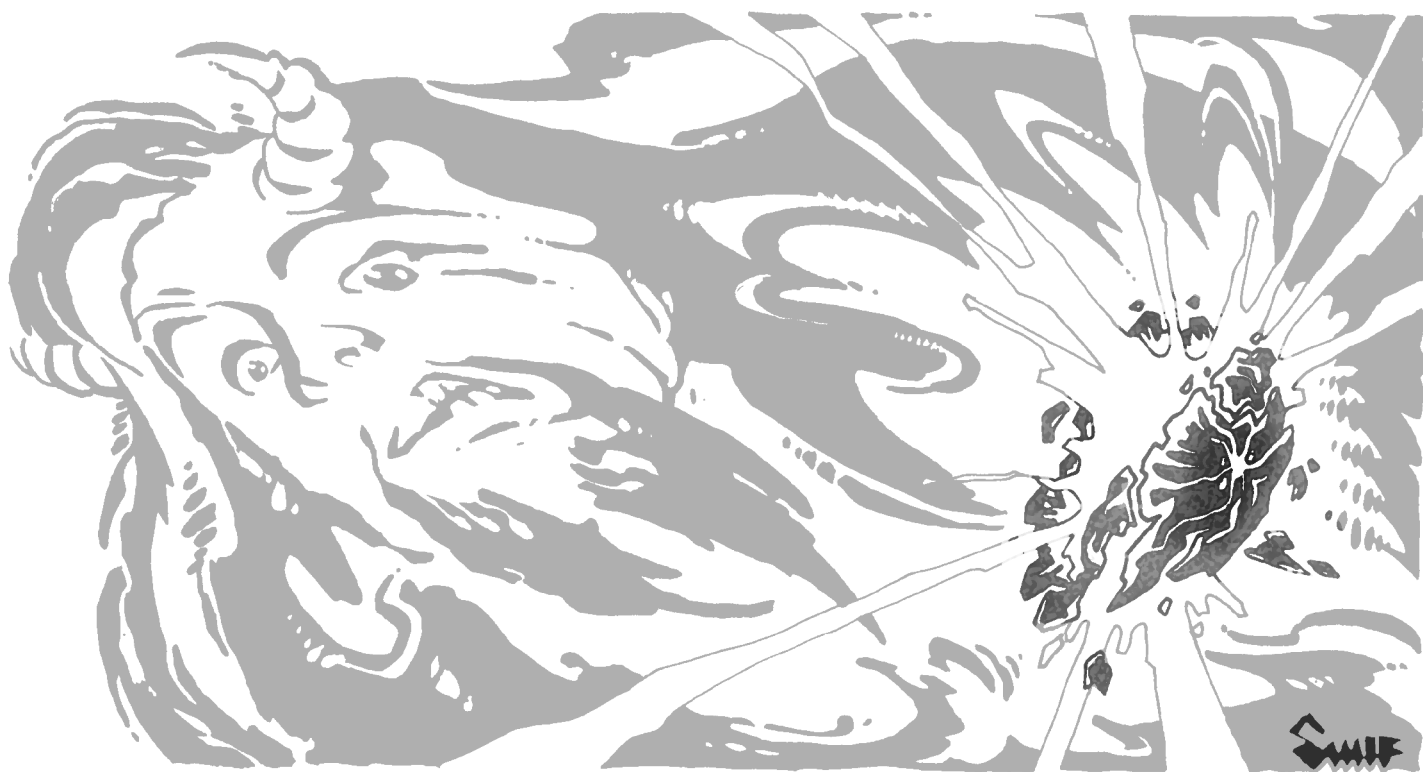
A transferable Tether should be moved quickly – a day or two is usually safe, but anything longer than a week is almost certain to destroy the Tether. (A new one *might* form in the new location, but counting on this is risky.) Special circumstances can alter this; the stadium move was not as time-critical because the continuing events that sustained the Tether usually happened days apart.

NEGATIVE FEATURES

Inelastic (Uncommon)

Inelastic Tethers can't be "stretched" to accommodate Forces beyond their capacity (see p. 14), or the Essence required to stretch the Tether is doubled or tripled.

Intermittent (Rare)

Some Tethers disappear and reappear according to a specific pattern or set of circumstances. This is rare with celestial Tethers. It is more common with ethereal ones, where the Tether's state is dictated by important mythological elements like the seasons, the phases of the Moon or the rising and setting of the Sun. Some ethereal Tethers are also controlled by worship rituals. If the circumstances are not known, the Tether's openings and closings may appear to be random.

Leaky (Rare)

Once in a great while, someone going up or down a Tether disappears, finding themselves in Limbo instead of the destination realm. Such "leaky" Tethers are usually in their death throes, about to vanish. Wild Tethers, especially ones with no strong affinities, also may exhibit this behavior.

Sometimes, instead of winding up in Limbo, the missing celestial simply *disappears totally*, Heart shattered, never to be heard from again.

Noisy (Common)

The flow of Essence through a Tether often generates a detectable background disturbance. The likelihood of this increases as the flow rate rises – a really powerful Tether is usually a source of "noise." The GM should choose a disturbance modifier (*In Nomine*, p. 54) for the delectability of the Tether. This disturbance is not subject to "echo" effects (*In Nomine*, p. 55), since it is a single, ongoing phenomenon. (I.e., there is no "buildup" of disturbance, though any additional disturbance in the Tether's locus should be added to this base level.)

One-Way (Uncommon)

Some Tethers can only be traversed in one direction, or require Essence to transit in the "hard" direction. This Feature can also be added to the upper locus by the

Superior, to prevent Servitors (or invaders) from using the Tether. Deliberate blocking is most common with Demon Princes, and usually is set up to prevent Servitors from heading Earthward via a Tether currently lacking a Seneschal.

Rebound (Uncommon)

When a Tether with this Feature is "stretched" (see p. 14), its capacity is *reduced* by that amount in the following round. E.g., if a 9-Force celestial transits a rebounding Tether with a capacity of 7, in the following round, the capacity will shrink to 5. The round after that, if no one used the Tether while it was rebounding, it will return to normal capacity.

There is disturbance from the Essence used to stretch the Tether, and the "twang" as the Tether vibrates is also perceptible – commonly double the noise from the Essence spent to push through the Tether.

Restricted (Uncommon)

A restricted Tether cannot be used without some special conditions being satisfied: being a Servitor of the Superior, performing a ritual, possessing a particular type of object or the like. Generally, the restriction is on passage through the Tether, but occasionally a Tether will exhibit restrictions on the Seneschal's abilities. (This Feature *can* affect a divine Tether, making it useless to Servitors of other Archangels.)

DETECTING TETHERS

A Tether in active use is often a source of disturbance to the Symphony, as people travel up and down it, or use the Essence available there to power Songs or attunements. Such disturbances are detected normally, according to the rules on p. 55 of *In Nomine*. On a successful check digit of 6, however, the character will also note that the disturbance is associated with a Tether, though he will not be able to determine any details about the Tether itself.

Anyone able to spend Essence consciously, if in the locus of a Tether, may be able to detect the Tether's presence even if no one is currently creating disturbance there. If the person is in corporeal form, roll against Perception -4, with any modifiers the GM finds appropriate. Suggested modifiers include: -1 for a weak Tether; +1 for a strong one; +1 if the celestial serves a Word the Tether has an affinity for, or +2 if it is linked to his Superior; +1 if the Tether has an affinity antithetical to the Word the celestial serves. Consult the check digit table below to determine what information is obtained.

If someone is in celestial form inside the locus he detects the Tether automatically, and knows its alignment (angelic, demonic, ethereal or wild). A successful roll against Perception-1 may pick up additional data, using the table below.

1 .... You know you're inside a Tether locus. If you are celestial, you have an impression of the Domain it currently links to (*E.g.*, violent, peaceful, convoluted, etc.).

2 .... You also know its alignment (demonic, angelic, ethereal or wild). If you are celestial, you can also tell approximately how quickly it is switching between Domains (if it's not switching at all, it is probably stabilized).

3 .... You also know its approximate power (weak, average, strong).

4 .... You also know what its influence effect is, and the strength of the influence.

5 .... You also know which Superior owns it, or, if wild, what affinities it has.

6 .... You can also identify the Seneschal, if one exists and he's in view.

Note that the Ofanite resonance can't locate Tethers, unless the Wheel already knows of their location, since Tethers aren't in the "public consciousness" (*In Nomine*, p. 97).

A WILD TETHER CAPTURED

At a fraternity house, during the hazing, one of the new pledges died after choking on marshmallows. (The goal was to cram as many as possible into one's mouth, and then guzzle a beer through them.) The wild Tether first appeared in one of Kobal's theaters, in Shal-Mari, drifting about the building, then vanished in favor of Haagenti's current restaurant of choice. Haagenti ate the demonling who came running to report it, and the Tether vanished shortly afterward, to re-appear in Abaddon. It frightened several of the human souls there, waiting to be harvested, but Saminga did not claim it either. It only stayed for an hour before moving back to Shal-Mari, where it hovered between a Kobalic theater and a Haagentian restaurant for several hours.

This gave both Princes time to arrive. After a quick, private conversation between the two allied Superiors, Kobal stepped aside. Haagenti moved into the upper locus, invested one of his Forces in the Tether, and towed it away with him, to anchor at one of his restaurants.

Unstable/Wild

See *Special Types of Tethers*, p. 12.

Windy (Uncommon)

Sometimes a low-capacity Tether with a fast flow exhibits a "headwind" to people descending, and a "tailwind" for people ascending. Such Tethers may require a Will roll to descend (with a modifier depending on the "wind speed"), and may add a similar modifier to the target number to ascend. Or they may have different speeds of passage (p. 15), taking several rounds to descend.

There are stories of Tethers that simply "suck up" anyone in celestial form (Will roll to *avoid* going up), or even pull celestials right out of their vessels and up the Tether.

THE SENESCHAL

The Seneschal of a Tether has a personal link to it, giving him special abilities with regard to the Tether or events within its locus. There are three possibilities.
✠ No Seneschal
✠ Attuned Seneschal
✠ Word-bound Seneschal

The duties and powers of a Seneschal are covered in Chapter 2, and the GM should design the Seneschal character using the guidelines there. Ethereal Tethers can only have attuned Seneschals, since ethereals cannot grant Words.

No Seneschal

A Tether with no Seneschal may still have a caretaker or staff assigned to it. (A wild Tether will have no one, initially.) These people have no special connection to the Tether, and no abilities related to it. This is most common in young Tethers, since a suitable candidate may not yet have been found.

This leaves the Tether relatively vulnerable to hijacking or destruction, and it may fade away quickly without someone to champion its Word-linkage. Caretakers may still promote their Tethers, though, even helping them grow.

Attuned Seneschal

The Superior who owns the Tether may grant a special Seneschal attunement to one or more of his Servitors. This links the celestial to the Tether, and gives him access to the Essence flow as long as he is in the Tether's locus. It is even possible for a human to become an attuned Seneschal, though this is very rare for celestial Tethers.

Word-Bound Seneschal

A celestial may be Word-bound to a Tether, automatically making him its Seneschal. Like other Words, this must be granted by the Seraphim Council or Lucifer, and only one celestial at a time can hold the Tether's Word.

A Word-bound Seneschal can tap the Essence flow from *outside* the Tether, as well as inside it. On the other hand, his welfare is tied to that of his Tether (see p. 35).

SPECIAL SITUATIONS

Tethers are an important aspect of the game world for celestials. They are places of refuge, transportation and communication, and a friendly local Tether can be a major source of aid to PCs. However, it also puts the characters under the close scrutiny of higher-ranking Servitors who may demand *their* assistance, or in the case of demons, use them for scapegoats or cannon fodder. Chapters 3 and 4 go into more detail on the resources of Tethers and their place in the campaign. This section provides clarifications and expanded rules for the interactions of PCs and Tethers.

TETHERS AND DISSONANCE

Working in a Tether is one of the ways a celestial can remove dissonance without petitioning his Superior. This is useful if his boss might be less than pleased by how he got it, or if he is out of favor. This is also one of only two general ways for Renegades and Outcasts to get rid of dissonance, since they can hardly ask for help from their ex-Superior.

For angels, any angelic Tether is suitable for working off dissonance. Typically this involves meditating or performing mindless menial work, to free the angel's mind to sort through his failings, understand them and learn from them. The angel can also listen to more Heavenly aspects of the Symphony while in the Tether, and find his way back to his proper place within it.

Demons *can* work in any demonic Tether to shed dissonance. However, most Princes will *not* be pleased with an underling who is trying to bypass his master's justified wrath *and* promoting someone else's Word in the process! It's safest to use your own Superior's Tether – you can always claim that it was too trivial a problem to waste your busy Prince's time on. This argument is most likely to be accepted if the dissonance resulted from Band nature, and not from violating the Prince's own restrictions.

An infernal Tether helps a demon regain his equilibrium in two ways. First, it partially shields the demon from the effects of the Symphony, as the raucous strains of the Tether's Word drown it out in the area. It also provides a place for the demon to enhance his own personal symphony, indulging his selfish nature in whatever pastimes the Tether supports. This may be direct involvement, or he may prove his superiority by *helping* humans stumble along their private roads to Hell.

There is another danger to the demon if he uses a Tether other than his Superior's. If he gains additional dissonance there, the Tether's influence may well bend his dissonance into a Discord related to its Word. A Balseraph of the War trying to work off dissonance in a Tether to Andrealphus would be likely to acquire the Lustful Discord if he failed to sustain his lies while working there. (This is not automatic, but if a PC wishes to convert the growing dissonance into Discord, the GM should keep the Tether's influence in mind.)

For all celestials, the healing in a Tether comes from within, not without – the Seneschal plays no crucial part in the process, though he may provide guidance. It is theoretically possible to shed dissonance in a Tether without the Seneschal's permission, but it's impractical and often dangerous to try, especially in demonic Tethers.

QUICKIE TETHERS

When you need a Tether in a hurry, and know roughly what power level you want, use one of the following and add cosmetic details.

Weak: 2 Forces, capacity: 10 Forces, flow: 1 Essence per 10 minutes, influence: weak, choose one positive Feature or one each positive and negative, locus: one room.

Average: 6 Forces, capacity: 30 Forces, flow: 1 Essence per 2 minutes, influence: average, choose two positive Features or three positive and one negative, locus: one building or small outdoor area.

Strong: 15 Forces, capacity: 75 Forces, flow: 1 Essence per round, influence: strong, choose three positive Features or four positive and one negative, locus: very large building or outdoor area.

As a general rule, angels cannot lose dissonance by working in a demonic Tether, nor can demons use an angelic one, and ethereal ones work for neither. A few Tethers are specific exceptions, such as Tethers to Freedom. There are also special cases where it might be appropriate, due to the particular source of the dissonance. For example, an Impudite with dissonance from killing a human *might* be able to get rid of it in a Tether of Flowers . . . *if* he can stomach it for a week. The GM may allow this if the circumstances warrant. However, close association with the other side is a fertile source for other types of dissonance, not to mention grounds for serious trouble with the Inquisition or the Game.

ASCENDING/DESCENDING TETHERS

One of the major Features of Tethers is that they provide highways between the corporeal and celestial realms. While in the lower locus, anyone in celestial form can follow the Tether automatically, if it goes "home." For angels, this means Heaven; they can use any angelic Tether automatically (barring restrictive Tether Features or Discord).

Demons can only use a Tether that connects with their Superior's territory. Shal-Mari is the only Principality that is shared on a friendly enough basis that any Tether leading there can be used automatically by any denizen, even if it belongs to one of the other Shal-Mari Princes. Tethers to the other shared Principality, Stygia, attach to one of the palaces of the Princes who rule there, and are only automatic for those of the correct Superior.

Celestials may ascend other Tethers than their native ones, but they have to make a Will roll to do so. A successful ascension (automatic or Will-based) always puts the celestial in the upper locus of the Tether – in this case he does *not* go directly to his Heart, assuming he has one.

Demons may ascend an angelic Tether, but they will take damage from being celestial within it, and will likely be greeted by a squad of Malakim at the top. Outcasts and Renegades may use Tethers to reach the celestial realm – lacking intact Hearts, they must either follow another celestial to his, or use Tethers. However, this is often a stupid move . . .

Descending a Tether is easier: a celestial in the upper locus may descend automatically. He will appear in the lower locus in either celestial form or his vessel. If he left his vessel there when ascending, he will appear where he left it. Otherwise he will appear before the Seneschal. If

there is no Seneschal, or he is absent, the character will descend to the center of the lower locus.

The Seneschal's permission is not required to use a Tether for transport, but it is a *very* good idea to get it. Demonic Seneschals often demand a price for using their Tether, unless the user is clearly on their Prince's business.

Tethers change the normal process of moving between the corporeal and celestial realms. While in a Tether locus, the *only* place you can go in the other realm is the other end of the Tether. You can't go to your Heart, nor can you return to your last vessel location in the corporeal, unless it was within the locus. "Following" someone (*In Nomine*, p. 53) who went up or down a Tether always puts you at the Tether endpoint; you follow them into the conduit. (If this would exceed the Tether's capacity, it is treated as an attempt to "stretch" the Tether; see p. 14.)

UNSTABLE TETHERS

A celestial may encounter an unstable Tether in his Superior's Domain, or he may find the corporeal end (see *Detecting Tethers*, p. 19). Ascending and descending work as usual. However, the user won't know where he'll arrive on the other end. If the Tether moves its upper locus, an explorer can be stranded on the upper end, or return from the lower end to somewhere other than his starting place. Wild Tethers can be dangerous to explore!

A wild Tether will move its upper locus in a period of minutes to a few days. The stronger the affinity to a location, the longer the Tether will linger. If it returns to a Domain, it often manifests where it was the last time it was there. If the Tether has no strong affinities to any Words, it will flit quickly among those Domains that are the best fits. An unstable Tether with weak affinities is also likely to dissipate more quickly if it isn't stabilized.

Since Tethers are valuable, a wild Tether is frequently a battleground between the minions of the Superiors who wish to claim it. Each group will race to place people in the lower locus, to sing the Corporeal Song of Sanctity (p. 25), and station watchers to spot the upper terminus if it appears in their Domain. The Superior must also be present in the upper locus to stabilize the Tether. Coordinating all this in the face of enemy action can be a major undertaking.

Naturally, the lower locus of a powerful wild Tether often becomes the site of a free-for-all, as singers try to eliminate their competition. Unfortunately, Symphonic disturbance will send an unstable Tether reeling across all the Domains for which it has affinities. Roll d666 each time a new disturbance happens (*including* the Song of Sanctity!). If the result is less than the latest disturbance, the upper locus will jump randomly. Because of this, Superiors are reluctant to appear at the lower locus.

If the Tether is never stabilized, it will fade away as the generating event weakens in the Symphony. Most wild Tethers must be captured within a few days, or be lost. Some will linger as long as a month or two; few last more than a year, though some have lingered for centuries.

NEW RESOURCES

There are some Resources that are specifically associated with Tethers and their guardians. They are rarely seen in individuals not assigned to a Tether, or to Tether-related operations.

THE SENESCHAL'S TETHER-BOND

The Seneschal's connection with his Tether will be one of two possibilities: either it's an attunement, or he is Word-bound to the Word that is the Tether itself. Both types are titled "Seneschal of *Tether name*."

In formal address, and in character sheets, a Word-bound Seneschal is named like any other Word-bound – his title is placed after his name and before his Choir/Band and Superior affiliation. Hence "Lucian, Seneschal of the Hippodrome, Calabite Baron of Factions."

An attuned Seneschal's formal name puts the Seneschal title *after* their Choir/Band and Superior's Word. E.g., "Nemuel, Elohite of Dreams, Seneschal of Siborsky Sleep Laboratory." In character sheets, an attuned Seneschal's status is listed with their other attunements and distinctions.

The Seneschal Attunement

A Superior or ethereal god may grant this attunement to *anyone*, though they usually choose a non-human. It links the recipient to a *specific* Tether, allowing them to behave as its Seneschal, as described on p. 20. This is considered a special form of Servitor Attunement.

More than one Servitor can be attuned to the same Tether. Large, important Tethers may have one or more "deputy Seneschals" with this attunement, to help with defense in case the Seneschal is unavailable or destroyed. Note that Demon Princes are loath to give too many people access to "their" Essence, that flows through the Tether. They also dislike having many Servitors with the amount of power that a Seneschal has, even if it's confined to the area of the Tether. Archangels have few worries of this sort, but the attunement process is sufficiently demanding that they grant this attunement only where necessary, usually to Servitors they are grooming for future duty as Word-bound Seneschals.

Many Superiors have a few capable and trustworthy servants whom they use as "temp" Seneschals for Tethers that lack a Word-bound, or require some extra support. These temps are given a Seneschal attunement for whatever Tether they are serving in at the moment. A person can have only one Seneschal attunement at a time.

The benefits of being attuned to a Tether are more fully described in Chapter 2, under *The Powers of a Seneschal* (p. 33).

The Tether as Word

While not strictly a Resource, having a Tether as a Word is very similar to a more powerful form of the Seneschal attunement. Any Rites specific to the Word will have to do with enhancing the Tether in some way. Attunements associated with the Word are typically ones that allow the Seneschal to sense happenings in the Tether, or to control its physical aspects or special Features.

Unlike a normal Word-bound celestial, a Word-bound Seneschal rarely has the ability to grant his special Word Rites and attunements to other celestials.

The powers and drawbacks of a Word-bound Seneschal are described in Chapter 2, under *The Powers of a Seneschal* (p. 33).

SONGS

Sanctity

These Songs are important in the establishment and maintenance of Tethers. Superiors normally grant them to Seneschals, or other Servitors who are important to the capture or defense of Tethers.

Corporeal – This Song is used to stabilize a wild Tether temporarily. It must be sung within the corporeal locus to hold the Tether's upper endpoint in place. (Ethereal-to-Celestial Tethers cannot be stabilized by this Song, but those kinds of Tethers are rare.) It must also be performed constantly to keep control of the Tether. The performer(s) must concentrate on holding the Tether in place, and cannot take other actions (such as dodging attacks) unless they break off the Song. The duration of the Song is (check digit × Essence × 10) minutes. The Song's disturbance takes effect when the Song *ends* (and the Tether's upper locus will probably skip to another compatible Domain immediately).

If more than one group attempts to control the upper locus with the Corporeal Song of Sanctity, treat it as a contest between the Songs. The highest successful check digit holds the Tether for the duration (or until the other group succeeds with a higher check digit). If the Tether was being anchored, and a new Song seizes control, the

upper end will *immediately* jump *somewhere*, though not necessarily to the Domain of the new performers. *I.e.*, you can't really seize the Tether with the Song, unless it's currently in your Superior's Domain, but you *can* use it unilaterally to break someone *else's* hold on the Tether.

Ethereal – This Song generates a request for aid, and can only be performed in a Tether. Within a number of miles equal to the singer's Ethereal Forces times the amount of Essence spent, all compatible celestials – angels for a divine Tether, demons for an infernal one – will feel drawn (but not compelled) to its location. Anyone who has experienced this before will recognize the "pull" for what it is. A successful Perception roll (with a bonus equal to the check digit) will give the exact distance to the Tether from which the call emanates. Servitors of the Superior whose Tether originates the call will also realize that fact if they make their Perception roll.

CHERUB DISCORDS

Because Seneschals are linked to their Tethers, the Cherub-specific Discords from the *Angelic Player's Guide* (p. 32) are also appropriate. Even attuned Seneschals can become obsessive. Overzealous and Trenchant Bond substitute the Tether for the attuned object (though the Seneschal will usually prowl around the Tether rather than "hovering over" it). Ritualized Responsibilities will pertain to Tether maintenance and protection: straightening picture frames, counting chairs or 24-hour patrols. Life-Linked Attunement takes a slightly modified form.

LIFE-LINKED TETHER (CORPOREAL)

When the Tether is damaged, the Seneschal will feel it as a sharp pain in his gut. The level of the Discord determines how sensitive the Seneschal is. At level 1, only major structural damage (like a hole blasted through a wall) will actually cause Body hits to the Seneschal. At level 3, broken windows and furniture will gnaw at the Seneschal's insides, while at level 6, he'll feel a twinge every time someone scuffs the woodwork. Damage is always 1 Body hit per combat round in which the Tether is harmed.

Celestial – This Song bolsters a Tether's divine or infernal nature. Its range is the Tether within which it is sung. Within the Tether's borders, any celestial of the opposite alignment will feel an acute sense of discomfort – all target numbers are decreased by the amount of Essence spent on the Song. A successful Will roll will eliminate this penalty for a number of minutes equal to the check digit, but the celestial will still feel extremely ill at ease. The duration of the Song is 10 minutes multiplied by the check digit.

Essence Requirement: 1.

Degree of Disturbance: for the Corporeal version, the check digit, at the *end* of the Song's duration; for the Ethereal and Celestial versions, the singer's Forces in the realm of the Song plus the check digit.

DISCORD

Some Discords have to do with Tethers. Some may be found in the general celestial population, while others are specific to Seneschals. (It's rare for a Seneschal to get Discord, since he can work off dissonance within his own Tether, but bad luck or repeated dissonant behavior can cause it.) Further, while most Superiors would not want to weaken a Seneschal by leaving him with any Discord – or inflicting it on him! – sometimes Discord serves the *Superior's* interests. Or it may be innocuous enough that the Superior can't be bothered to remove it. A Calabite Seneschal will have some Discord simply because of his Band.

Bound: Tether (Ethereal)

This is a variation of the Bound Discord (*In Nomine*, p. 87) that only applies to Seneschals. The Seneschal *cannot* assume celestial form outside his Tether, and must subtract his level of this Discord whenever he makes a Will roll to do so within his Tether. (If he succeeds, there is still no Essence cost.) He can ascend to the celestial plane with a Will roll, but *only* from his Tether, and his Tether is the only place he can return to from the celestial plane.

Residency (Corporeal)

This Discord is a variation of the *Vulnerability* Discord (*In Nomine*, p. 86). Usually only Seneschals acquire it, though other beings can also become trapped in a Tether. The character will take damage every round if he leaves the Tether! The basic Residency Discord, inflicting Body hits equal to its level, should be worth 5 points per level – as a Vulnerability, it's pretty severe. The GM may allow it to be purchased in a weaker form, in which case use the chart below:

Value	Damage
4/level	level/minute
3/level	level/10 minutes
2/level	level/hour
1/level	level/6 hours

Tether-Allergic (Celestial)

The character's Forces are overly sensitive to the effects of Tethers, inflicting the Discord's level in soul hits every round he is in celestial form within a "hostile" Tether. Point-value is based on how severely the character is afflicted: for 1 point per level, this only occurs in Tethers of the opposing side (e.g., Heavenly Tethers for demons, Hell-Tethers for angels). For 3 points per level, the character may only safely ascend a Tether belonging to his Superior.

Note that demons already suffer from the Light of Heaven (see p.51) – damage from this Discord is additive.

Characters may combine this with Vulnerable: Hostile Tether (*In Nomine*, p. 86), and also take *corporeal* damage while inside a non-friendly Tether locus!

Tether Needs (Celestial)

These are all just Needs (*In Nomine*, p. 89) that are particular to Tethers. They are most commonly found in Seneschals, though it's possible for another being with a connection to a particular Tether to acquire them. They do *not* interfere with a Seneschal's ability to tap the Essence of his Tether. The Game Master may wish to reduce their cost appropriately, as well as note that Superiors do not approve of a Seneschal constantly skimming Essence out of the Tether to refill himself.

Need (Event): A certain event *must* occur within the bounds of the Tether (Discord level) times per day, or the character will not regenerate Essence. The point cost depends on the nature of the event and the Tether. (A Need for sex or human sacrifices to occur within the Tether is worth more if it's a busy street-corner than if it's an apartment building.) This Need is the *character's* Discord; the Tether itself is not affected if the Need goes unfulfilled. (But see the *Intermittent* Feature, p. 18.)

Need (Occupation): The character must remain within the bounds of his Tether continually – if he leaves it for longer than (Celestial Forces - Discord level) minutes, he doesn't regenerate Essence that day. This is normally worth 3 points per level, as it is so limiting; it may be worth less if the Tether is very large, *or* if the character is permitted to travel outside the upper locus without starving his Need.

Need (Tether-Contact): The character needs to be in the Tether at least (3 × Discord level) hours a day. The value of this Discord is 3 points per level for most celestials, and 1 point per level for Seneschals, since they should be spending most of their time at their Tethers anyway.

THE SENESCHAL

He rolled his shoulders under his jacket, feeling the new leather creak, and brushed his hand against his side where he knew that the sword would hang – if he called upon it to appear. His nod to the middle-aged man who had led him to the door was perfunctory. A human Soldier, after all – useful, but hardly **important** compared to an angel of Laurence.

The small brass plate on the door said **Anna Serrar, Asst. Curator**. He squinted at it for a moment before raising his fist and rapping briskly.

The soft murmuring from inside paused, and a voice was raised. "Come in!"

He glanced around as he entered. There was a photograph of a young man on a corner of the desk – he frowned. Several charts of architectural designs on the walls – antiques, all of them – and he frowned again. The bag of knitting stowed in the corner, with something pink and fluffy poking out of the top, received his sternest expression.

The elderly woman sitting at the wide desk and cradling her cel phone between shoulder and chin glanced up. "Just a moment, dear." Her hands, resting on the desk, were age-spotted and dry, and a pair of bifocals rested halfway down her nose. Thick white hair was pinned sternly back in a bun, and she was wearing a knitted twin-set. For a moment he thought that there was something unduly sharp about her gaze, then he rejected the thought. Clearly this place was sliding into anarchy.

". . . yes, yes," the woman was saying into the phone, "but that is **quite** impossible. I need the plans checked by Saturday, before they get put out for tender. What?" A pause. "Contact Ernest, have him arrange a guard for the girl for the day, then. We'll keep an eye on her while you check them. No, no problem. Talk to Ernest. Stay strong."

She smiled as she put the phone down and looked up at him. "Good evening. Sorry to keep you waiting, but I needed to make sure those plans were checked. Business, you understand."

He smiled in return, knowing that **his** business would certainly get her attention, and half-bowed. "Abednego, Seraph of the Sword. I am here to requisition assistance in an immediate strike against a Tether of Lust I have discovered. Angelic help is preferred, but I will take Soldiers if you have nothing else." His nose wrinkled. "I am surprised that you have not noticed them yourselves before now and wiped them out."

Her forehead wrinkled as she peered up at him. "We do know, dear. Haven't you checked any of the archives for reports on local affairs? They're fairly minor, and as it is we can track who comes in and who goes out, so we're letting them stand for

the moment. They know we know, we know they know we know, it stays under control, and Hannah of Flowers down the road says she thinks she's getting somewhere with one of their Hellsworn."

He twitched at the challenge to his competence. "Are you trying to say that I'm a novice? It's a Tether to **Hell**. *If that doesn't mean something to you, it should." He glanced around the office, at the fluffy pink wool, the photograph, her spectacles, her elderly Vessel. "Perhaps you've grown slack here in this outpost, but I . . ."*

She rose from her chair, unstoppable as an avalanche, and reached across the desk to catch his wrist. It seemed a slow movement, one that he should have been able to avoid, but as he tensed his muscles she was already forcing his arm down against the desktop.

"What are you **doing**?"

Her eyes were as cold and hard as granite, and her grip was solid rock. "I am Sariel. Cherub of Stone. Seneschal of this Tether." There was nothing fluffy about her now. "Seneschal these fifty years, by the will of David, defender against the forces of Hell. Do you wish to offer me challenge, Abednego? Truly? Or shall we start again from the beginning?"

Technically, Tethers don't need Seneschals. Once a Superior has stabilized a Tether so that it leads to his Domain (p. 9), it will remain in place indefinitely. That's assuming, of course, that neither corporeal events nor the actions of other celestials disrupt the Tether's hold or alter its orientation. Since the former can happen quite unexpectedly, and the latter is part of day-to-day operations in the War, no Superior who wants to keep a Tether will leave it undefended. Even the smallest Tether is worth finding a Seneschal to maintain and protect it.

A Seneschal is whomever the Tether's Superior has appointed to be in charge of it. Most Seneschals are carefully chosen, permanently attached to their Tethers and with specific powers relating to their duties. This chapter details the criteria for becoming a Seneschal, and what they can do.

APPOINTING A SENESCHAL

Even a tiny Tether is a significant resource. Seneschals are chosen very carefully, since weak or incompetent ones will invite enemy attacks. The *minimum* requirements for becoming a Seneschal are listed on p. 34. However, as a practical matter, Superiors almost never appoint anyone with fewer than 13 Forces as a Seneschal, and major Tethers demand more powerful Seneschals to

take care of them. Furthermore, only the most reliable, trusted and experienced Servitors will be given this honor and responsibility. (There is one exception: some Princes see Word-binding a Seneschal to a Tether as an excellent way of limiting the power of an ambitious, but useful, underling, without having to destroy the demon.) It is a rare Seneschal who hasn't earned a Distinction, and those in charge of major Tethers are often Masters or Barons.

SENESCHAL TYPES

There are actually several categories of Seneschals, though one is by far the most common. The exact requirements to become a Seneschal depend on the type. The abilities possessed by each type are described in the next section, *The Powers of a Seneschal* (p. 33).

Caretakers

A "caretaker" is simply someone who has been put in charge of a Tether while its Superior looks for a permanent Seneschal. Almost always, the Tether is either newly formed, or something has happened to the old Seneschal recently. Since a caretaker Seneschal doesn't have any actual connection to the Tether – he's essentially a watchman – there are no minimum requirements. Of course, even caretaker Seneschals are usually powerful and reliable Servitors, since a Tether is particularly vulnerable while it has no regular Seneschal. This is the sort of duty which player characters might be assigned.

Attuned

A Superior can attune anyone (using the Seneschal attunement, p. 24) to one of his own Tethers, provided that the Seneschal is not already attuned or Word-bound to another Tether. An attuned Seneschal doesn't *have* to be a celestial, but there are very few Saints, Soldiers or undead that a Superior might consider powerful enough to take on such a duty. More important, most Superiors want a Seneschal to become Word-bound to his Tether (see below), and will spurn non-celestials, since they cannot be Word-bound.

It is possible for a Superior to attune someone other than one of his Servitors to his Tether. This is obviously highly unlikely, but a very few Servitors of Creation in service to other Archangels have been made Seneschals, and Lilith sometimes attunes Free Lilim as Seneschals to her Tethers (few other Princes will, except as interim caretakers).

Seneschals are rarely attuned to a Tether for long without becoming Word-bound to it, so this kind of Seneschal is uncommon. However, many Superiors maintain a small number of Servitors to be caretaker Seneschals (above) during interim periods. The Superior gives them the Seneschal attunement for their current post, to ensure that even new or temporarily vacated Tethers have the maximum protection possible.

Word-Bound

The great majority of Seneschals fall into this category; their Tether is their Word. This is the most powerful and effective type of Seneschal, and what most celestials think of as a "Seneschal."

Only celestials can hold Words, of course. The process of gaining a Tether-Word is the same as for any other: angels must be approved by the Seraphim Council, and demons must undergo an audience with Lucifer. However, because Tether-Words are so narrow in focus, and so particular to the needs and desires of the Tether's Superior, both agencies tend to "rubber-stamp" the Archangel or Demon Prince's recommendation. (Though there have been exceptions – Lucifer, in particular, has exhibited his wry and perverse sense of humor even in such routine appointments . . .)

CHOIRS AND BANDS OF SENESCHALS

Seneschals are drawn from every Choir and Band, but certain types of Tethers better suit certain types of celestials. Since becoming a Seneschal is usually permanent, Superiors try to select a caretaker who will be compatible.

Seraphim

That many Tethers must keep their true natures hidden is a factor for Seraphim. A Seraph Seneschal won't do very well in a Tether where he must constantly cover up unusual incidents, or discourage the inquisitive. The best Tether for a Seraph is one that has few visitors, or which is stable enough that supernatural incidents are rare. Alternatively, the Seneschal will need someone else on his staff to handle interfacing with the public.

Cherubim

Cherubim are very common as Seneschals – guarding a Tether is a natural application of their normal duties. A Cherub with the Seneschal attunement does *not* count his Tether attunement against his normal Cherubim attunements. It *does* count as a charge for purposes of Choir attunements, dissonance and *Self-Sacrifice* and *Nemesis* (**The Angelic Player's Guide**, p. 30).

Ofanim

Since Ofanim must be free to move around, they serve best as Seneschals of large Tethers, or one of the rare Mobile ones (p. 17). Any Tether that is constantly busy (such as a casino, an amusement park or a computer network) can also satisfy an Ofanite's need for action.

Elohim

Elohim can serve any Tether equally well. Quiet Tethers allow them to be contemplative, while active ones give them plenty of subjects for observation. They make excellent Seneschals at Tethers with a lot of public access, because their resonance is well-suited for picking up potential troublemakers.

Malakim

Most Malakim Seneschals take one or more oaths relating to their Tethers (such as "Never allow a known enemy to enter unchallenged," "Offer sanctuary to those in need" or "Punish anyone who harms my Tether"). Because they are warriors, they will be intensely unhappy if their Seneschal duties take them off the front lines of the War – Archangels try to assign Malakim to Tethers that are guaranteed to see action.

Kyriotates

Kyriotates make excellent Seneschals, especially since a Word-Bound Kyriotate doesn't need to worry about finding hosts while within his Tether (see *The Powers of a Seneschal*, p. 33). They are often given Tethers that are spread out over a large area, since they can watch multiple sections simultaneously. Though they can do without them, Kyriotate Seneschals *prefer* to have one or more mortals on their staff who can serve as ready hosts.

Mercurians

Being good at handling people, Mercurians are often given exactly the sort of Tethers that Seraphim *don't* like – places with lots of visitors, and lots of unusual explaining to do on a regular basis. Tethers in a combat zone are poor choices for Mercurian Seneschals.

Balseraphs

Balseraphs are excellent at handling cover-ups; Tethers that get frequent police visits often have a Balseraph Seneschal. Balseraphs like any Tether that lets them indulge in their most wicked fantasies, and makes them feel they are doing an important job.

Djinn

Djinn make good Seneschals at Tethers that mostly just need to be watched. They aren't very good at proactive expansion, so many Djinn Seneschals are assigned to Tethers that are considered to have already reached their potential. Like Cherubim, a Djinn with the Seneschal attunement doesn't count his Tether against his normal resonance-based attunements, but can use his Band attunements on his Tether, if applicable.

Calabim

Calabite Seneschals will defend their Tethers as passionately as any other demon, but they're not very good at keeping them neat and tidy. A Calabite Seneschal should have a Tether that can endure a lot of wear and tear, and won't be disrupted if lots of things get broken.

Habbalah

Habbalite Seneschals need to do the Lord's work; they prefer Tethers where mortals are punished. Any place that gives the Seneschal a constant supply of victims is suitable.

Lilim

Since Seneschals don't like to wander too far from their Tethers, Lilim Seneschals prefer Tethers that offer chances to "help" and get frequent repeat visits. That way, they can collect Geases and not have to go looking for their victims when it's time to collect. A brothel, of course, is the classic Tether suitable for a Lilim, but schools, doctor's offices and clinics, churches, clubs and restaurants can all serve just as well.

Shedim

Like Kyriotates, Shedite Seneschals don't need to worry about finding hosts while in their Tethers. Shedim *like* to possess people, though, so they won't be happy at

a Tether that doesn't offer a good range of victims. Since their tastes run toward the atrocious, Shedim are best suited for Tethers where Bad Things can keep happening on a regular basis . . . either hidden from sight, or *very* well insulated from the local authorities and anyone else who might take an interest.

Impudites

Impudite Seneschals cultivate *very* loyal human staffers. They like Tethers that get visited by *lots* of people . . . both regular visitors, who can be made their best friends, and anonymous strangers who can be siphoned at random. The best Tether for an Impudite is a safe, friendly haven where he's free to socialize . . . they don't want to deal with killings and other nastiness.

The Powers of a Seneschal

As described under *Appointing a Seneschal*, p. 29, Seneschals are attuned or Word-bound. The powers that derive from these two sources are described below.

A Seneschal who has no special connection to his Tether – a "caretaker" Seneschal – gains no special powers, since he is a Seneschal in name only.

ATTUNED

Any celestial who has been given the Seneschal attunement (p. 24) for a Tether gains the following abilities:

✠ While within his Tether, he is effectively at point-blank range from any disturbance emanating from within it, with no range penalty to detect it.

✠ He may assume celestial form within his Tether by making a Will roll, at no Essence cost. This may be attempted on the same round as a fatal wound to his vessel, allowing him to avoid Trauma.

✠ He may ascend from his Tether to its endpoint on the celestial plane (or ethereal Domain), or descend from *anywhere* on the celestial plane (or within *his* ethereal Domain) to his Tether, at will.

✠ He can sense damage to the Tether with a successful Perception roll even from outside the Tether. An attuned Cherub or Djinn Seneschal may also use his resonance to sense the state of the Tether – he is automatically attuned to it with his resonance, with all the usual effects. This does not count against his maximum number of resonance attunements.

✠ Being a part of an active Tether has a cleansing and strengthening effect on celestials. Every week that such

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MULTIPLE SENESCHALS

Celestials on the same side can't share Words, so two Seneschals cannot be Word-bound to the same Tether. However, it is possible to give more than one being the Seneschal attunement for the same Tether. This is uncommon – it creates complications in terms of delegating authority and sharing responsibilities, and Superiors prefer to restrict how many people have access to *their* Essence. Still, some very large Tethers have been assigned a single Word-bound Seneschal and one or more attuned "deputy" Seneschals. There are also a few cases of shared Tethers (p. 13). In these cases, the Superiors involved may each assign a Seneschal to the Tether . . . but they must agree before the Seraphim Council or Lucifer about whose Servitor will be Word-bound.

(Theoretically, a Forked Tether could lead to Heaven *and* Hell, and have a demonic *and* angelic Word-bound Seneschal. This is not likely to work well in practice.)

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a Seneschal stays entirely within the boundaries of his Tether, he will lose 1 point of dissonance.

✠ While he is within the Tether, he has access to the flow of Essence generated by the Tether (p. 14). He is expected to tap that source only in emergencies or under orders – this Essence normally goes to his Superior, and a Seneschal who keeps drawing on it is obviously not serving his purpose efficiently.

For the most part, if he leaves his Tether, an attuned Seneschal is just another Servitor. (Or Soldier, or ethereal. Note that non-celestial attuned Seneschals do not necessarily gain the ability to assume celestial form or travel to other realms.)

WORD-BOUND

The Word of a Tether inextricably ties its holder to the Tether – its well-being is his well-being, and its decline is his decline. Superiors prefer their Seneschals to be Word-bound, both because it increases their potency, and because it gives them a profound vested interest in maintaining and expanding the Tether.

The benefits of being Word-bound to a Tether are not as straightforward as an attunement. Like other Words, Tether-Words vary widely in their effects and their potency; the Seneschal of the Washington Monument is far more powerful than the Seneschal of the Little Bluff Truck Stop All-You-Can-Eat Pancake House. Any unique powers a Seneschal gains from his Word should

PLAYER CHARACTER SENESCHALS

The time may come when a player character wants to become a Seneschal. This is a decision the GM should consider very carefully. Chapter 4 goes into more detail on using Tethers in the campaign, and a game in which a player character becomes a Seneschal will become very Tether-oriented. This is a permanent decision, at least as far as that celestial is concerned, so make sure it's what both the player and the GM want. For more detail on the campaign *problems* associated with having a player character as a Seneschal, see p. 66.

Seneschals are very powerful individuals. This should be emphasized; the position of Seneschal should be out of reach of most player characters for some time. It's recommended that the GM rigidly enforce these two eligibility criteria:

✠ The character must have more than 12 Forces. Superiors simply aren't going to make anyone less powerful than that a Seneschal without an extraordinarily good reason. Even 13 Forces usually only qualifies one to be the Seneschal of a minor Tether.

✠ The character should have at least a first-level Distinction. Anyone who hasn't earned that much recognition from his Superior probably wouldn't be considered for an important job like maintaining a Tether.

Assuming the PC meets these two requirements, he still has to convince his Superior he's the right being for the job. Each Superior has his own policy on assigning Seneschals. Some select Seneschals who have no previous experience with the Tether they'll be maintaining. Most prefer to appoint someone who is familiar with the territory – ideally, someone who's been involved with the Tether since before it was established as a Tether. The best candidate is someone who not only knows the Tether intimately, but *loves* it, will enthusiastically protect it and be perfectly happy living there for the rest of his immortal existence. No Superior wants a disgruntled Seneschal chained to one of his Essence flows.

Once the character has been given the job, his Superior will bestow the Seneschal attunement (p. 24). This costs 10 character points, like any other Servitor Attunement.

In most cases, the Superior will be pushing for the new Seneschal to become Word-bound as soon as possible. If he didn't regard the Tether as an extension of himself before, he should start doing so. He needs to know every minuscule aspect of his Tether better than he knows the back of his hand before his Lord will consider putting him up for a Word.

The process of obtaining a Word is discussed in *In Nomine*, p. 28. The details of the qualification process are up to the Game Master, but a Tether-Word is as serious as any other. Even with his Superior's backing, the character must convince the Seraphim Council, or Lucifer, that he's got what it takes to hold a Word. Usually, the confirmation process for Word-bound Seneschals is routine, but some nominees *have* blown it – to the immense displeasure of their Superior.

If a player character makes it to this stage, he will be playing at a level few celestials ever reach. At that point, the player and the GM should familiarize themselves with everything in this book, and take it from there.

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be determined by the GM, in accordance with the nature of the Tether. There are several abilities that are inherent in being Word-bound to a Tether, however:

✠ The Seneschal starts with all the abilities of an attuned Seneschal (above).

✠ A Word-bound Seneschal may also tap the Essence flow from *outside* the Tether.

✠ He is permanently attuned to his Tether exactly as per the Cherub resonance. This includes a Cherub's dissonance conditions – a Seneschal will incur dissonance if he knowingly acts against his own Tether, or allows it to be destroyed!

✠ Once in celestial form (whether he assumed it in his Tether, or entered the Tether in celestial form), he may remain celestial indefinitely (or until he leaves the Tether, at which point the normal time limit commences).

✠ He is exempt from any of his Superior's dissonance conditions which would conflict with service to his Tether, *while he is within his Tether*. E.g., Seneschals of Theft and the Wind *can* stay at their Tethers indefinitely without incurring dissonance, and Seneschals of Fire don't *have* to punish the cruel. However, stepping outside their Tether makes them subject to their normal dissonance conditions – and they are never exempt from their Choir or Band dissonance conditions.

✠ By taking the Word of a Tether, the Seneschal in a sense *becomes* the Tether. This means he is not constrained by normal range limits, for resonances, Songs or attunements, while within his Tether. He may target

any such ability as if he were actually standing anywhere he chooses within the Tether, regardless of his current physical location. He must still be able to perceive the target, but with a round of concentration he may place his vessel in a trance and move his consciousness around his Tether. A Kyriotate can "multi-task" for this, by dispatching a single Force.

✠ Word-bound Shedite and Kyriotate Seneschals may inhabit the Tether itself as a host. They can manipulate the physical part of the locus as appropriate to the nature of the Tether. In a building, they could open or close doors and windows (like the Kyriotate of Lightning attunement); in a forest, they could use branches as limbs (like the Kyriotate of Flowers attunement). Kyriotates can separate their Forces within the Tether, giving them one viewpoint and one physical action for each Force they have outside other hosts.

✠ Word-bound Seneschals gain one or more Rites relating to their Tether. These should be determined by the GM, but they generally provide a significant source of additional Essence.

There are also dangers to being Word-bound to a Tether, see *Seneschals in Peril*, to the right.

SENESCHALS IN PERIL

The power of a Word-bound Seneschal will wax and wane with the power of his Tether. The reverse is not generally true, however. Unless a Tether is already very weak (see p. 10), it is not harmed directly if something happens to its Seneschal, though a Seneschal-less Tether is certainly more vulnerable.

Several situations can arise when something bad happens either to a Seneschal or his Tether.

TETHER DAMAGE AND DESTRUCTION

The process of destroying a Tether is described in Chapter 1 (p. 10). If a Tether is destroyed, attuned Seneschals simply lose their attunement. Word-bound Seneschals are in trouble.

All Word-bound celestials suffer if their Word goes into decline. Because a Tether-Word is more finite than most, it's possible for that Word to be completely erased. This has a crippling effect on the Seneschal. The connections between a celestial and his Word can be subtle and hard to define, but the destruction of a Tether typi-

cally results in its Seneschal fading away, eventually to nothing. The speed at which this occurs is up to the GM, and may depend on exactly how the Tether was destroyed, and how long it is remembered by humans – essentially, how long before the last echoes of the location's *concept* fade entirely from the Symphony.

Death is inevitable, however, unless the Seneschal can somehow recreate the Tether in some very similar form, or weave the destruction attempt into the Tether's concept. This happened with the Tether at the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, once one of the Seven Wonders of the World. Since either depends on human or natural action, it is a very slim chance of survival – but better than none.

Even physical damage to a Word-bound's Tether can be harmful, if it threatens the Tether's destruction – the GM may choose to transfer hits of physical damage to Soul hits on the Seneschal. Since physical attacks on Tethers vary in effect on the Tether itself, the Game Master will need to decide how many hits of physical damage do one Soul hit. Likewise, repairing such corporeal damage will restore Soul hits, but not lost Forces, to the Seneschal.

OUTCASTS AND RENEGADES

It is theoretically possible for a Seneschal to be bound to a Tether by his Word, but to be Renegade or Outcast. Unless the Superior *wants* to retain the Disfavored Seneschal, he will appoint a new attuned one. Since no one else can take the Word of the Tether as long as the previous Seneschal holds it, the prior holder must be hunted down.

If a Disfavored Word-bound Seneschal manages to survive, he may introduce the complicated situation of an attuned Seneschal who is a Servitor of the Tether's owner, and a rogue Word-bound Seneschal whose well-being is still tied up in his former Superior's Tether.

FALLING OR REDEEMING

When a celestial Falls or redeems, he loses any Word he once held, and this is no different for Seneschals. Likewise, changing one's nature also destroys any attunement to a Tether. A Tether whose Seneschal goes over to the other side becomes a Tether without a Seneschal; most Superiors will appoint a replacement very quickly.

TRAUMA

Most Seneschals can avoid Trauma, if killed within their Tether, by making a Will roll to take celestial form (p. 33). However, Seneschals who are killed outside their

Tether, or who fail the Will roll, suffer Trauma normally. The Tether will lack a Seneschal until he recovers; most Superiors will appoint a caretaker Seneschal to look after it in the meantime. If a Seneschal stays in Trauma too long, particularly if he is Word-bound, the Superior may have to make a difficult decision: replace him permanently, or keep waiting for him to recover. Of course, the fastest way to replace a Word-bound Seneschal is to destroy him . . .

DEATH

When a Seneschal is permanently killed, his Heart will shatter, alerting his Superior. A Seneschal's death usually has no significant effect on his Tether, other than leaving it relatively undefended. However, if the Tether was dying, and only being held together by a Word-bound Seneschal's presence, it will die with him. Also, if the Tether was orphaned, the death of a Word-bound Seneschal breaks its final connection to the Word of the lost Superior who stabilized it. It can simply die, or if there is still power left in it, it may return to a wild state.

Remnant Seneschals

If a Seneschal loses his last Celestial Force, he normally becomes a Remnant (but see *Sapient Tethers*, p. 15). Since neither attunements nor Words are lost in becoming a Remnant, the crippled character is still the Tether's Seneschal – but he may no longer realize this. He will retain those powers which do not depend on Celestial Forces, including the ability to tap Essence from the Tether. The link to the Tether will dominate the Remnant's mind; he will not want to leave it, and may become obsessive about the place.

ORPHANED TETHERS

The fate of a Tether when its Superior dies (or Falls, or becomes redeemed), is discussed in Chapter 1 (p. 10). The fate of such a Tether's Seneschal is closely related.

If the Tether is taken over by someone else, the Seneschal may choose to realign himself with the new Superior. If he chooses not to, the Superior will sever his attunement, and possibly destroy him, depending on the Superior. If the Seneschal is Word-bound and not destroyed, the problem is the same as for an Outcast or Renegade Word-bound Seneschal, p. 36.

If no one takes over the Tether, the Seneschal may still have the choice of switching to a new Superior. This is highly unlikely for Word-bound Seneschals. If there were a Superior whose Word was compatible with that of the Tether, that Superior *would* take over the Tether, and either adopt or remove the Seneschal. Serving a Superior whose Word is incompatible with your own is very difficult; few celestials or Superiors would consider this option. An attuned Seneschal could join a new master's service – but if his Tether is not compatible with his Superior's Word, the Superior will probably remove the attunement.

The final possibility is that the Seneschal may go on attending to the orphaned Tether, with no Superior for either. Such Seneschals must operate very quietly, as they rarely have much support from the celestial realm. If the Tether eventually fades, then an attuned Seneschal loses his attunement, and may decide where to go from there. A Word-bound Seneschal usually dies with his Tether.

SENESCHALS AND DISCORD

Seneschals have some of the most important jobs on Earth, and they are supposed to be elite Servitors. Most Superiors will have a long, hard talk with a Seneschal who's picking up dissonance or Discord. (Someone who has Discord already – with the exception of Calabim, and possibly a Lilim's Geases – would never be made a Seneschal in the first place.) However, it does occasionally happen that a Seneschal acquires Discord. If his Superior finds out about it, the Discord may be removed, or it may be allowed to remain, if the Superior deems that it won't inhibit the Seneschal's ability to carry out his duties. If it is removed, the Superior may *replace* it with another, more suitable Discord (see some of the Seneschal-specific Discords on p. 26). In any case, the offender will be on strict probation – Superiors are far less willing to take chances with a Seneschal than with other Servitors. If there's any indication that a Seneschal is in danger of Falling or going Renegade, he will be quickly replaced.

CONSECRATED GROUND
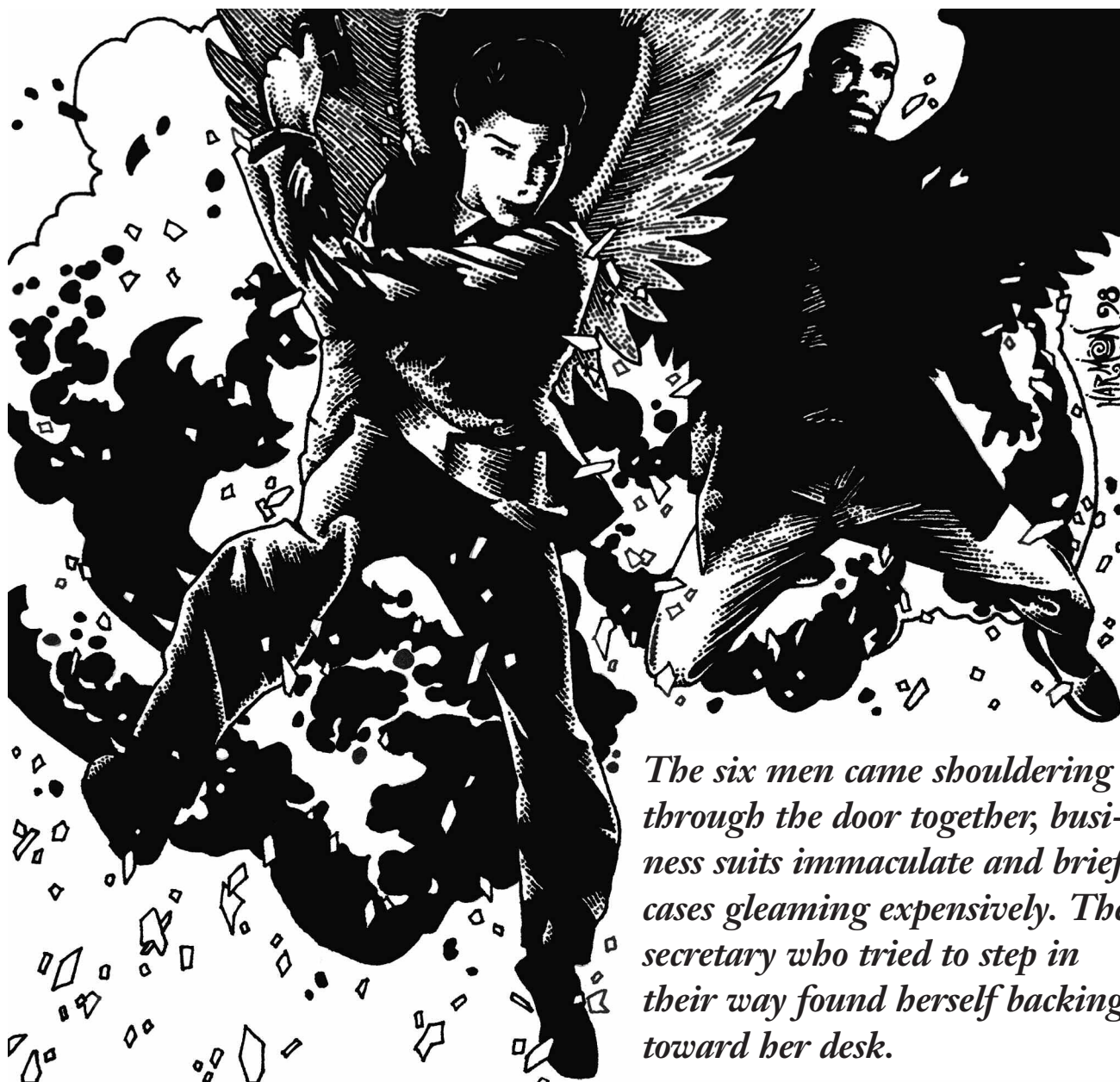
The six men came shouldering through the door together, business suits immaculate and briefcases gleaming expensively. The secretary who tried to step in their way found herself backing toward her desk.

"We," said the one in the lead, eyebrows drawing together, "represent the Internal Revenue Service. Where is Francis Pequod, the owner of this establishment?" As he spoke, he snapped his briefcase open and slipped a thick brown paper envelope from it.

The secretary looked around helplessly. The wide window onto the street was already beginning to gather bystanders. Drawing herself up to her full height, she gave her coldest stare. "**If** you would be good enough to go through to the waiting room, I will see if Mr. Pequod has . . ."

The flying wedge brushed by her; the last man took her by the shoulders, and marched her round to sit her back in her chair as she gasped with shock. His eyes were watchful as he said, "We're freezing all accounts. Account books on the desk, madam, now, and **don't** press that button there . . ."

As the other five men turned the corner into the corridor, they glanced at each other and the one in the lead nodded. The last two turned down a side passage, clearly familiar with the route, while the first three ran briskly up the stairs, footfalls silent on the heavy carpet. They didn't pause as they came to the door at the top with the heavy brass nameplate, but the first man put his shoulder to it.

It flew open with a bang, revealing a thin man in an Armani suit and heavy glasses, poring through a ledger. He raised his head sharply. "What is – "

"Audit," the first man snapped, slamming his briefcase down on the desk. "Mr. Pequod, we are here from the IRS to examine your ledgers."

The thin man rose, peering through his glasses. In a voice that was all honey and sweet reason, he said, "We're willing to cooperate, of course, but you will find absolutely nothing here."

The first man's hand faltered on the catch of the briefcase, and he shook his head, then his face tightened again. "On the contrary. We are entirely certain, Mr. Pequod, that your firm is guilty of tax evasion, barratry and a number of other charges."

The entire building shook, as something detonated on a lower floor.

Pequod went sharply pale, eyes narrowing to frozen shards behind the spectacles as he stared at the three men in business suits. He spat, in a tongue that mauled the air, "**Let me by, or know the wrath of Asmodeus . . .**"

Flaming swords blazed in the hands of the three men, and dark wings spun outward from their backs as they dived for him before he could continue. Another explosion rocked the building, and the first man sang, "Just think of us as Auditors."

Blood slicked their swords when they had finished, and one of them was a mangled body on the ground, while the other two had gashes and burns across their bodies.

"Mean bastard," the first survivor commented, opening his briefcase fully and distributing chunks of plastic explosive around the office.

"Hurry," the second said, more urgently. "We've got 15 seconds estimated response time on their reaction forces."

The growl came from the corner, as another explosion rippled through the floor. Both men turned to look at it, and saw the growing flicker of darkness solidify into a bruiser's body, a dark malevolence in his eyes as he stepped away from the space and a new figure began to manifest.

"Out of time," said the first, and the two of them dived through the window. Behind them, the office went up in a ball of flames, and the Symphony rocked with the explosion.

Resources of a Tether

A Tether has resources in more than one realm. It has corporeal resources in terms of its level of staffing and security, physical size and equipment, local influence and reputation. Its celestial or ethereal resources are in terms of the strength of its Seneschal, the level of power in the place, the number of defenders on-call and its reputation among allies and enemies.

Staffing varies depending on the size, power and age of the Tether. The personnel may be anything from a single human assistant, or a minor celestial or ethereal spirit, to a group of Servitors under the Seneschal's command and a large human staff. Equally, security depends on the importance of the Tether and its nature, ranging from a set of beehives, to a high-tech circuit of cameras and pressure sensors. The equipment available may be as little as a set of well-polished swords or a cabinet of herbal medicine, or as much as military vehicles, rocket launchers and a well-oiled interrogation suite. Local reputation and influence may vary from being a spot remembered only by older residents as a murderer's apartment, to Notre Dame.

The strength of the Seneschal depends on the strength of the Tether. He may be the weak 9-Force Seneschal of a fading Tether, barely able to move one person at a time to its terminus in its master's Domain. He may be the 18-Force Seneschal of a major and well-established one, capable of funneling large amounts of Essence. Equally, a minor Tether may have been forgotten by most enemies and ignored by allies due to its weak status, while a major one may be known to all celestials in the district, marked as important in the files of Superiors and regularly taken into account during operations in the area.

A *weak* Tether is likely to be without any celestial assistance for the Seneschal. He may command a lesser spirit, a couple of human Soldiers or some comprehending but normal humans, but no more than that. Security is at

the straight "burglar alarm" level, and the locus of the Tether itself is probably only a single room. There is little if any money available to the Seneschal for Tether resources (though he can usually come up with a few days' worth of individual spending money). He will have to be constantly working to support the Word of his Superior and to keep the Tether functional. He may have a couple of attached rooms, or control the building that the Tether is located in (if it is a small building) but not more than that. Physical resources will be on the level of a few spare guns, or perhaps a Relic (which the Seneschal is unlikely to want to let go of) and basic first-aid equipment. Celestials may come to work off dissonance at the Tether, but rarely more than one at a time.

The Tether itself has minor influence in the local community. It is of interest only to certain factions or a small group of people, and is not likely to have national influence – except possibly among people with similar interests. Enemy forces may not have yet realized that it exists, if new, or wrote it off as unimportant long ago, if old. Allied forces won't expect major assistance from it, if they are aware of it at all. In weak Tethers to Heaven, demons in celestial form may survive for three or four rounds before the Light of Heaven (p. 51) burns them away.

An *average* Tether may have a celestial or two as assistants to the Seneschal, together with a couple of imps or relievers, and at least one Soldier or several aware humans as staff. Security is reliable, with regular patrols likely, and high-quality burglar alarms or cameras, monitored and efficient. The Seneschal will have a regular income, sufficient to keep the Tether functional and to spread the influence of his Superior's Word in the area. The locus may be the size of a small building, or an outdoor area, and the Seneschal likely exerts some control over the surrounding area – the neighboring building or the countryside directly around the locus. If he does not control it directly, he will certainly have it monitored. Physical resources depend on the Word of the Tether's Superior. They are likely to include a reliable stock of weaponry (which may range from SMGs to rapiers), up-to-date medical equipment, cells, and possibly interrogation rooms, and records on the local area and points of interest. Tethers sited in a town are generally better-equipped than Tethers in the country. There will usually be at least one celestial working off dissonance at the Tether.

The Tether will have a definite influence in the area for its Superior's Word. It will be known to those in the local community who have an interest in the field. It may have national influence with like-minded organizations. Enemy forces know it exists, and may be aware of who the Seneschal is or have some idea of its capabilities.

Allied forces are aware of it, and are likely to request assistance from it if they are in the vicinity and need help. The Light of Heaven is strong enough to burn away most demons within the locus of the Tether in two or three rounds.

A *major* Tether has three or four Servitors on the staff, possibly a few minor celestial spirits as well, and several Soldiers and aware human servants. Security is high, with regular patrols, high-tech surveillance or permanent guards, or all three. The Seneschal controls a sizable income, but most of it is for Tether-upkeep and supplies for visiting celestials who need money or goods, and for the spreading of the Superior's Word. The locus is likely to be a large building or outdoor area, and the Seneschal will control, influence or monitor the area surrounding it. Physical resources depend on the Superior's Word (being excellent in that area) but will include at least basic first-aid facilities and weaponry. They may also extend to high-quality surveillance equipment, criminal records, beauty parlors, target ranges, a garage or whatever is appropriate to the Superior's Word. Celestials often work off dissonance at the Tether.

The Tether will be a well-known spot to all the local community, and may be one of the most important places in a town. It has national influence with those who respect its authority in a field. Enemy forces are quite aware that it exists and whom the Seneschal is, and will be forced to factor it into all plans in the area. Allied forces know of it, will inform the Seneschal of their operations in the area and frequently request assistance. The Light of Heaven will destroy most demons within the locus in a couple of rounds.

The most powerful of Tethers, such as Notre Dame in Paris, are beyond any practical attack short of all-out war. Security is immense, there are a large number of Servitors on the staff of the place and the entire area is steeped in sanctity or reeks of diabolism. They are globally known, and avoided by the enemy. Should any demon except a Demon Prince attempt to take celestial form within a Heavenly Tether of this magnitude, it will be utterly destroyed within the round.

These days, in the wake of the Purity Crusade, the strongest of the Ethereal Tethers have been destroyed. The ones that remain are mostly weak or dying, with only a few average ones left across the world. At their peak, some of the major Ethereal Tethers could rival Notre Dame for potency and intensity. Now, many pantheons are destroyed or shattered. Their Tethers weakened with them, destroyed by other faiths or subsumed into the Word of a celestial Superior (much to the bitter fury of the ethereals who once claimed them).

Uriel, in his Crusade, destroyed the main coalitions of Ethereal power or drove them into hiding, and his human supporters and Soldiers attacked their Tethers on Earth simultaneously. Since then, even those angels who did not wholeheartedly approve of the Purity Crusade have frequently prevented Ethereal Tethers from being formed, or destroyed them when they were found. The demons, for their part, tend to destroy Ethereal Tethers on the principle that they divert power from the demons (who can use it *so* much better). Exceptions to this rule are Servitors of Beleth, as their mistress has extended some measure of protection to those ethereals allied to her. They will assist, and even encourage Ethereal Tethers, but expect to become *de facto* controllers of the Tether in return. Other demons may occasionally assist or ignore Ethereal Tethers, if so instructed by their Princes (who may see the ethereals as allies, or useful tools or distractions).

Minor Ethereal Tethers are a contrast to angelic or demonic ones. The ethereals are desperate not to lose any of their few remaining Tethers, and are aware that they may be attacked by either side without any worries about escalating the War. Those Ethereal Tethers which are not beholden to Nightmares are low on resources. They also have far fewer defenders than the ethereals would like – many angels try to kill ethereals when they find them, and demons try to co-opt them. Still, minor ethereal spirits can be overlooked, and Tethers like to have several "on staff." Major ethereals may also be in residence, if their presence will not bring down celestial attention. They have lost so much that they cannot afford to lose any more; Tethers will be defended to the utmost, and quietly expanded wherever possible.

The few average Tethers that remain are strongholds, with definite influence over the local population, and regularly house as many powerful ethereals as the pantheon believes it can conceal on Earth. Such Tethers will be kept secret from nearby angels or demons, or made prohibitively expensive to attack (which is rarely possible). The ethereals may attempt to try to stay neutral in local power struggles, or make themselves too valuable to both sides to be destroyed, but this is an insanely risky course of action. Secrecy is preferable. Any Tethers on this scale which Beleth knows of will have Servitors of Nightmares as regular "assistants" or "advisors," and be used by her in the same way as Tethers of Nightmares.

However, recent upsurges of interest in mythology, archaeology and occultism have increased the flows of Essence to Tethers that remained, and begun to establish some new ones. Those ethereals still maintaining Tethers have learned the value of patience and secrecy; any expansions are done very cautiously, avoiding celestial attention.

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INANIMATE DEFENSES

Any stronghold is a possible target in times of war, and there is a War raging across Earth. This means that all Tethers are possible targets at all times and need defenses. Sensibly arranged barriers and security lower the chances of enemy attacks penetrating or destroying the Tether; clever ones can even keep a Tether from being discovered in the first place.

Therefore, Tethers are as well-defended as the situation and resources allow. One located in the open air will have difficulty installing high-tech defenses, and a Tether which is frequently passed through by the public will have trouble stopping unauthorized personnel from entering. Newly claimed Tethers are still setting up their guards, while dying ones may have their equipment in disrepair.

When preparing the defenses of a Tether, Servitors of other Superiors can often provide useful services. Servitors of Lightning or Technology can install security systems or cameras. Animals or Flowers may suggest or supply animal or vegetable defenses. The Sword, War or the War are sources of military advice, while Trade or the Media have political and business influence, etc. While angels will usually assist other angels freely (except perhaps the Servitors of Archangels their Lord is Hostile toward) demons are in a more difficult position.

Demons may be able to enlist the aid of Servitors whose Princes are Allied to theirs, but cannot trust any other demons; assistance must be obtained through Geases, blackmail or similar pressure. The paranoia and distrust of most demons will not tolerate minions of some other Prince knowing too much about one's own Tethers, which might be used to betray or manipulate them in the future.

The first step upon the acquisition of a Tether is to examine the physical layout of the site, taking care to check for any hidden locations or passages, attics, cellars, air vents or sealed rooms. The architectural plans of the building are useful here, as is engineering help to be sure that the dimensions of the Tether are entirely mapped out. Any hidden areas or unknown openings may be used by enemy forces; if such places do exist, they must be blocked off, filled in or guarded suitably. Non-obvious, potentially dangerous areas are gaps between stories (between the floor of one story and the ceiling of another) or hollow spaces in the walls, which can be exploited by an attacker. Accurate architectural plans must also be *removed* from the public domain, or any general archives, to prevent enemy forces from planning infiltrations too easily.

The next step is to reconfigure the interior layout of the Tether to suit the needs of the Seneschal and his

forces. If the locus of the Tether is an area which can be kept secret or unused, then it should be; what the enemy doesn't know about or can't locate, they can't attack. In such a case, the locus would be the closest-guarded point of the Tether, with a lightly guarded zone around it, configured to keep the locus secret, but with concealed entrances and exits and appropriate surveillance. If the locus of the Tether is a place which visiting humans *must* pass through, then it cannot be conveniently blocked off. It should either be disguised, if possible (with the Seneschal and his staff keeping a low profile) or have a secured zone around it to restrict access and filter visitors.

It is important to make sure that the locus of the Tether can be barricaded against outside attacks – and that it cannot be barricaded *from* the outside to trap people within it! There are few things more annoying than bringing down reinforcements from Heaven or Hell, and then finding that you can't get them through the door.

One vital area for angelic Tethers is an escape route arranged for the evacuation of innocent humans during normal emergencies or infernal attacks. The Seneschal and any angels will probably fight to the death, or retreat celestially, but if the Tether is at all public then it may be necessary to get humans out of the area. Demonic Tethers are less conscientious about this.

Other important areas in Tethers include cells where prisoners can be kept, rooms where angels or Soldiers can rest and heal, records storage and (if appropriate) a control room for any electronic surveillance. These areas have to be within the lightly guarded outer zone, if not within the more heavily guarded locus itself.

A major problem with all architectural restructuring is if the Tether itself is already laid out in an inconvenient form that cannot be rebuilt. In the case of buildings, this may be due to human preservation orders (if it is an antique building) or natural layout (if it is already well-established, such as the Supreme Court). Natural sites can also be hard to restructure into an easily guarded form without destroying what it is that *makes* it a Tether. In that case, the Seneschal and his staff can only improvise, and do their best with what they have.

The Seneschal must also take notice of nearby buildings (or other concealment, in pastoral settings), and estimate potential angles of attack. A sniper could be stationed in a window or on a roof. An enemy could use the house across the road to spy from, or hide a party of attackers for a surprise assault. Nearby structures could be bases for constructing an underground tunnel beneath the Tether or setting up a rooftop attack. In an overkill scenario, an enemy could simply fill a nearby house with explosives and hope to take the Tether out in the explosion.

It is difficult to guard against all the possible dangers inherent in nearby buildings. Ideally, such places are inhabited by Soldiers or fellow Servitors, and form an outer ring of defense for the Tether, but this is rarely possible. In that case, all that can be done is to note avenues of attack, and have them kept under surveillance.

With the outermost perimeter secured, the Seneschal can turn to the physical defenses of the Tether, and matters such as surveillance systems, guards and patrols, walls, locks and barriers. Even such things as pit-traps, though old-fashioned, can still be effective.

Servitors of Lightning or Technology are the archetypical users of high-technology systems for security and locks. Still, most modern Tethers with the facilities for electricity and a competent assistant will attempt to cobble *something* together; it is simply too useful to do without. Infra-red detectors, pressure sensors and beams of light are helpful when dealing with intruders who are winged or invisible.

Some Tethers reject technological help on ideological grounds, such as those of Dreams and Animals, though there are exceptions for even those Words. Others may not be able to install the appropriate facilities – such as Tethers set out in open ground, sites of battles, monuments or areas of wild nature. Vigorous imagination may provide an excuse for electrical systems to be installed at such areas (for *son et lumiere* displays, a conservatory station or a curator's cabin). In that case, the Seneschal can expand the technological cover, once he actually *has* on-site electricity, as long as he does so covertly.

Kyriotates and Ofanim of Lightning are a menace to demonic technological systems, given their ability to infiltrate computer networks or pass along phone and power lines. In self-defense, demonic Seneschals often place a Force Catcher (***Liber Reliquarum,*** p. 61) inside their central computer, to trap any Kyriotates who try to possess it. They also install excess lengths of telephone wire to render it impossible for Ofanim to enter the Tether through a telephone connection. (Ofanim of Jean have a maximum range of about 600 yards.) Installing excess power lines is harder, but a dedicated demon will try, lest every light-socket, wall switch or electrical plate turn into a potential entry-point.

FILE ROOM

PUBLIC AREA

PUBLIC AREA

PUBLIC AREA

TETHER POINT

TO THE CATACOMBS

BARRACKS

PRISON
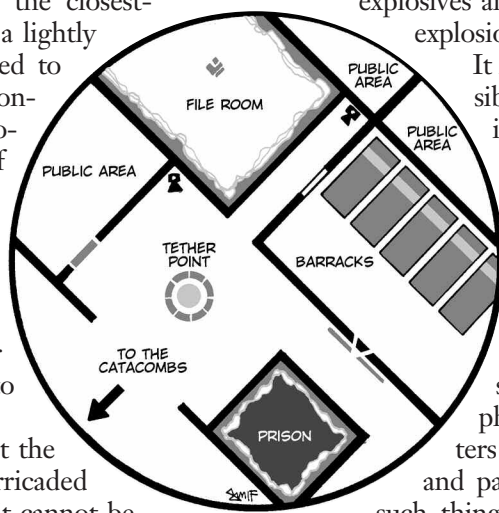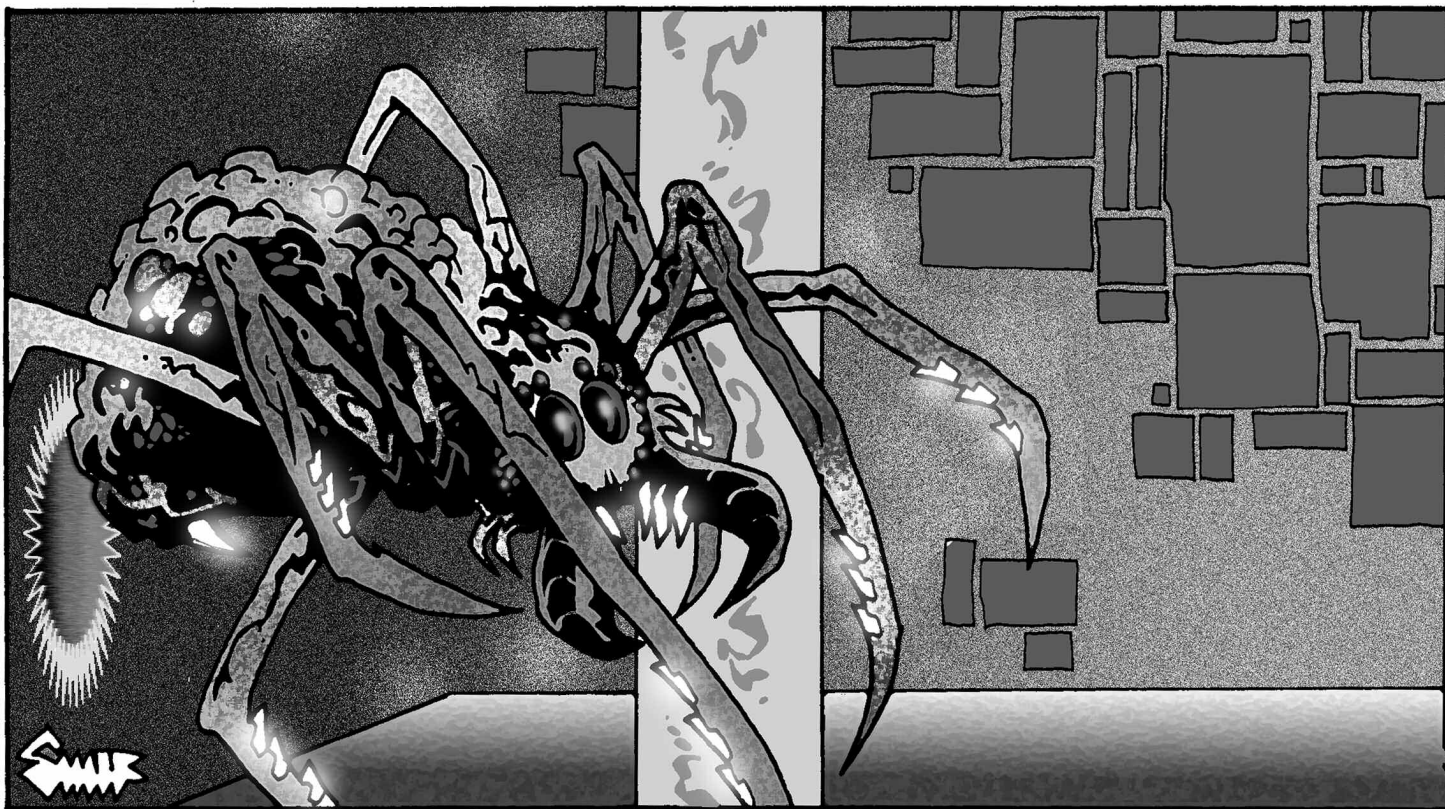
It is unwise to run the Tether's entire technological system off one fuse, or one electrical connection, as this makes it extremely vulnerable. It is even more unwise to let information about the Tether's defenses fall into unsafe hands. In Tethers where there is a publicly known electronic security system, there is also usually a secret backup, with additional Features known only to *trusted* Tether staff. Records submitted to public authority are incomplete, if not outright fabrications, because anyone could look them up.

The materials out of which a Tether is constructed are also a source of concern to the Seneschal. Wooden or vegetative walls are vulnerable to fire, metal is subject to corrosion and rust, stone walls may not be feasible and "no walls at all" is an obvious problem in itself. Sometimes the structure can be strengthened, given time and resources, or surrounding cover can be cleared away to keep enemies from approaching the border without being seen.

Certain Tethers are able to command animal defenses: Tethers of Jordi, which are usually *full* of animal life; Servitors possessing animal Vessels, Kyriotates with a supply of animal hosts or simply trained watchdogs. Less-intelligent animals are usually best employed as guards on the outer layers of security, or paired with more intelligent watchmen. One should not think solely in terms of canines. A flock of geese loosed into the

Tether's back yard at night will give *very* full warning of any intruders, and a few beehives set in awkward locations can prove painfully efficient. More elaborately, a gene-splicing Tether of Technology might breed exotic monstrosities to prowl the corridors of their laboratories by night.

In contrast to this, an efficient Tether should have defenses against attack or spying *by* animals. The smallest insect may be a spy for a Kyriotate of Jordi, or the most helpless and pathetic alley-cat be the Vessel of a Balseraph of Beleth. Highly technological Tethers can employ hermetically sealed rooms and airtight doors, while less well-equipped ones may have to make do with mosquito nets and frequent checks. In either case, a paranoid Seneschal will do his best to prevent any animal from entering the locus of his Tether, unless it is absolutely guaranteed as harmless.

Tethers of Novalis have a major advantage in using plants as living defenses, but Tethers to other Words are capable of intelligent placement of vegetation. Beds of rosebushes can be planted with particularly thorny varieties, and other attractive flowers can be chosen for tendencies to stain clothing and flesh, entwine legs and be noisy when trodden upon. If the Seneschal is free to plant *anything*, he can litter the path of intruders with nettles, thorn-bushes, poison ivy, carnivorous plants, thick hedges and anything else painful and hindering.

CONSECRATED GROUND
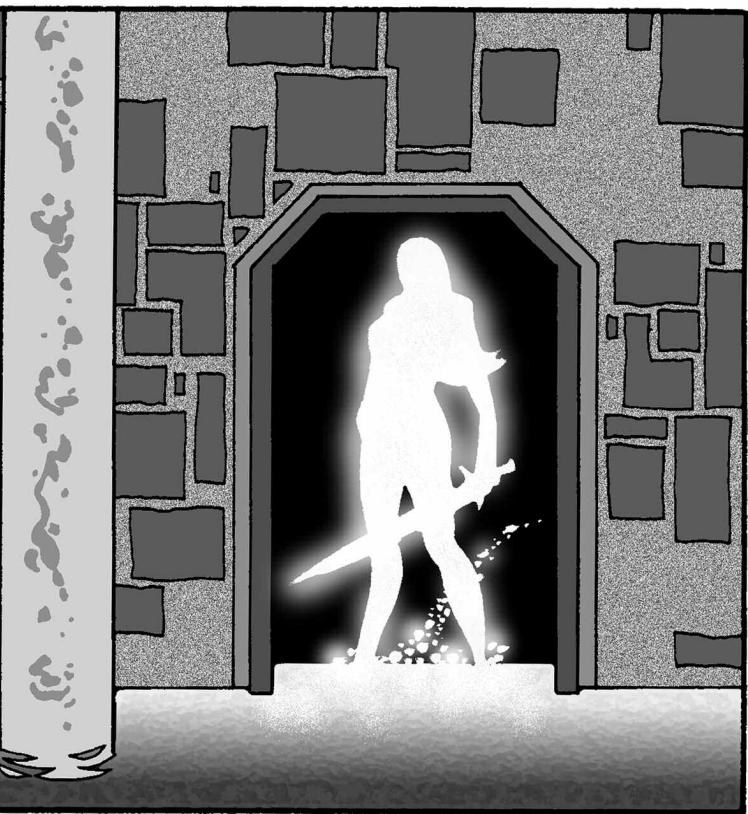
Defenses *against* plants are easier. A Seneschal merely needs to scour his Tether with weed-killer, clear the neighboring area and forbid any potted plants or window boxes to be brought into the Tether. This may prove somewhat *obvious*, but is at least a definite, thorough action which can be taken.

It is a regrettable fact that a Tether must often be defended against those inside it. Public Tethers with staff who are ignorant of the true purposes of the Tether, or which have the general public passing through frequently, are vulnerable to attacks from these innocents. Humans may be possessed as hosts, or have been lied to, threatened or blackmailed. Passwords and countersigns can be used to identify duplicates or cases of possession, but will not show those who are deceived, Shedite-possessed or forced into cooperation with the enemy. For this reason, it is good policy to keep a close check on the human staff of the Tether, noting any odd behavior on their part which may indicate possible betrayal.

It is nearly impossible to defend against an outright traitor already within the Tether's premises. Therefore, a Seneschal must take any accusations which are backed with reasonable proof *extremely* seriously, and should request any appropriate help to deal with such betrayal.

Some sort of regular patrol is vital to any Tether, to check for infiltrators and signs of attack, and to make sure that no entrances have been left open or unguarded.

This is dependent on the size of the Tether; a large Tether will require more frequent checks, and more resources to maintain effective security. Too-regular or too-predictable patrols should be avoided unless the patrols are *absolutely* efficient, and so secure that nobody could possibly penetrate the perimeter. Otherwise, enemies may be able to sneak past once they have established the timing. It is also useful to have passwords for human guards, so that they can identify themselves, and Force Catchers, to keep body-snatching to a minimum.

Another threat which a Seneschal must guard against is a threat to the *nature* of his Tether, and to the Word that he serves. A Tether to Novalis may be endangered by a campaign to have its parkland rezoned, or a Tether to Vapula by a proposal to remove its experimental facilities for humane reasons. In such cases, the Tether could be destroyed – or at least weakened – by the actions of the corporeal world around it, whether or not this is due to prompting from the enemy. The Seneschal must prevent such a thing from happening. More subtly, outside interference can place unwanted outsiders on the staff of the Tether, if it is a public institution, or cause inconvenient investigation.

Where applicable, he should try to cultivate local popular support; this is relevant in such cases as museums, public monuments, a piece of open land or some area generally understood as valuable to the community. Sometimes the Tether is secret from the community, or would be disliked by a portion of it (such as a racist group's meeting hall or an arms dealer's warehouse). In those cases, it is more efficient for the Seneschal to make allies among those who patronize it, and use their influence to keep it functioning. If the Chairman of the local council frequently visits the brothel that happens to be a Tether of Andrealphus, he is likely to stop any public morality campaigns to close it down.

On the principle that the best defense is a good offense, many Seneschals stock weapons, ranging from a few smoke bombs or tranquilizer dart guns to rocket launchers, flame-throwers and Relics. Such weapons are usually stored in such a way that only the Seneschal and trusted members of his staff can access them, and may be kept entirely secret from others at the Tether. They are likely to be stored in a central location, so that someone can pass them out rapidly.

It is nearly impossible for a Tether to include *all* the above defenses. Most Tethers will only have a few of them, being constrained by their location or capabilities. However, as long as the War continues, defenses will continue to be necessary. New ways of infiltrating or attacking Tethers are continually being invented by ingenious celestials and humans, and new defenses are created in response.

SOLDIERS, SERVANTS AND SPIRITS

The defenders for a particular Tether will be dependent upon its importance, the degree of hostility with which its Superior responds to intrusion and the level of secrecy of the Tether. If it is an entirely secret outpost, then its defenders should be operatives who can act with minimum Symphonic disturbance, in regard to Songs, attunements and natural resonances. Calabim are *not* assigned to Tethers which are supposed to be secret.

In typical Tethers, there will always be a Seneschal, who may command forces of celestials, ethereal spirits, Soldiers, Saints, undead, relievers or demonlings. The level of his forces will depend on the magnitude and importance of the Tether. Just because a Tether is a minor one does not mean that it will be lightly staffed. If it is the only Tether in the heart of enemy territory, it will be given as much support as is needed to keep it open. And if that means half a dozen Cherubim working as cleaning ladies . . . they also serve who only stand and wait.

Celestials may be assigned to a Tether deliberately by a Superior, or may be assisting out of personal choice. They may be temporary helpers, working off dissonance, or given duty there for the duration of a crisis. They may even be unwilling visitors: prisoners, candidates for redemption, Renegades, Outcasts or under Geas.

DESCENT TO POSITIONS

One tactic used by attackers and defenders alike is to position celestials strategically *outside* the Tether locus and have them ascend to their Hearts. When the Tether comes under attack, they simply descend to their last corporeal location. So long as they are outside the terminus, they will not be dragged off course. However, attackers and defenders alike *know* about this trick, and plan against it. While putting something large and solid in the target area will merely displace the returning celestial, there are numerous other ways to reduce his effectiveness. Attackers search out tactically sound positions for defenders to go to, and booby-trap them (subtly or not), while defenders listen for the Symphonic disturbance of someone going celestial, and arrange appropriate surprises. Servitors of Dark Humor are particularly enthusiastic about this tactic.

Those who have been assigned to the Tether as assistants to the Seneschal will need to take Roles which fit the Tether, and don't make them too conspicuous – or obvious targets. Such roles may include positions as guards, assistants, menial workers, secretaries, janitors and engineers, or even guard dogs and pets (either animal vessels or hosts). Visitors who are helping out of personal choice, or working off dissonance, are likely to have already established Roles that do not mesh with the Tether, making them more obvious to spies or onlookers. Prisoners, Renegades or geased assistants have this problem also, and probably to a greater degree.

It is rare for a Tether to be as fully manned as a Seneschal might wish. Any Tether is an outpost in corporeal territory by its nature, and a target for the other side of the War. Celestials volunteering to help are likely to be received with enthusiasm, unless they are violently inappropriate (Servitors of Flowers in a Tether of War, or Servitors of Death in a Tether of Lust). One source of convenient staff for a Tether is local celestials who happen to be working off dissonance with service. While such celestials are usually glad to prove their dedication to cause and Superior by defending the Tether to the best of their ability, they may be undependable in some way. After all, they managed to earn dissonance in the first place.

Different Choirs and Bands are given different duties when working in a Tether. Cherubim and Djinn gravitate to jobs as guards, watchmen or similar security roles. Mercurians and Impudites both enjoy positions that bring them into contact with people in the Tether, such as receptionists, tour guides and other "front line" jobs. Elohim will accept the task most fitted to their skills, whatever it may be, while Habbalah are useful in a monitoring role that lets them sense the emotions of those around them, watching for trouble. The Punishers are also good at deflecting non-physical threats, in more "front line" jobs. Kyriotates and Shedim need to be found convenient hosts around the Tether, but are then excellent for surveillance duties. Ofanim require a job that lets them move around the Tether, such as message-carrier, patroller or guide. Calabim must be given tasks that allow them to demolish something *other* than the Tether, such as waste disposal, *busy* guard or grounds maintenance (if you don't mind your hedges clipped back to the ground). Seraphim are suited to duties of evaluating visitors, internal security, and general organization. Balseraphs usually take the task of handling investigators or arranging expansion of the Tether, both of which may require creative lying. Like Impudites, Lilim prefer to work with people, in positions that will let them build up Geases: appointments secretary, personal assistant, financial controller, etc. Malakim will take any task that they

are given – preferably one that involves the smiting of evil – but often grow unhappy if they are assigned to a Tether where there is rarely actual combat. They feel their presence would be better used elsewhere.

Saints, undead and sorcerers may all be present at Tethers as regular staff, temporarily allied or just passing through. Saints will be operating in the interests of their Archangels, and are likely to have some specific goal to fulfill. They are rarely assigned permanently to a Tether, though they can be useful if their current mission takes them near it or are given orders to lend assistance there. The undead are similarly at the command of their creators or Princes: intelligent undead may have their own jobs, but unintelligent ones can serve as guards for a Tether. Saminga's Tethers typically have a private army of zombis, who serve as mindless but efficient guards and enforcers. Sorcerers are likely to be independent agents and thus unreliable, unless they have become fully allied to Hell (and are under some demon's direct control) in which case they will function like Hellsworn Soldiers.

Mortal assistants fall into three categories: full Soldiers of God or Hell, 5-Force humans aware of the nature of the Tether, and mundane helpers who are unaware of the Tether's nature.

Soldiers are extremely useful, and may have actually been recruited at the Tether itself, if they worked there earlier. Their greater abilities allow them to act as more efficient defenders than normal humans, and without any Symphonic disturbance – making it easy for celestial forces attacking a Tether to underestimate or ignore them.

Otherwise-normal humans who are aware of the War, and of the Tether's nature, can be useful despite their lack of any special powers. Many Tethers need secretaries, security guards, cleaners, receptionists, clerks, tour guides and other general workers. Any appropriately skilled human can handle telephone requests for help or facilities; keep the place in order; guard prisoners; address envelopes for a keep-this-institution-open campaign; arrange driver's licenses, credit cards and fake identities; carry a gun; and do all the other things that are needed there.

Mundanes unaware of the War or the Tether's nature may still be employed in large Tethers, or be frequent visitors there. While they cannot be relied upon to the same extent as aware humans, they are still capable of supporting the Tether's understood purpose in the corporeal world. They may even be misinformed about the Tether, believing it to be an outpost for the Secret Service, a private agency or perhaps the home of a group of rock-and-roll elves with a sideline in drug-dealing. A possible problem with such staff, however, is that they may become unwitting spies for the other side, having no

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COMMON SONGS FOR TETHER GUARDS

Songs commonly used by Tether staff (either Celestials or Soldiers) fall into three basic categories: offensive, defensive and non-combat but useful.

In the offensive category, Thunder is effective (though dangerous to friends in the area), as are Ethereal and Celestial Entropy. These are Symphonically noisy, but if somebody is attempting to break into the Tether, your location is already known. All forms of the Song of Charm are useful to weaken an enemy, and Celestial Light is effective for a quick and dazzling strike against opponents in both corporeal and celestial forms.

For defense, the Song of Corporeal Form armors the vessel or body. The Corporeal and Ethereal Songs of Shields can be used to shield a person or area; these can both be used to block a doorway, if the person Singing is close enough. The Song of Harmony, in Corporeal and Ethereal versions, can be used to stop a fight or slow an attacker.

Miscellaneous useful songs include all forms of the Song of Healing; also the Ethereal Song of Attraction, to divert a possible enemy's attention. The Song of Possession can be used to take the Vessel of an enemy and render him powerless for later questioning. Finally, the Celestial Song of Tongues is useful for rapid communication elsewhere – including calls for help.

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knowledge of the importance of information about the Tether. The security leak may be as straightforward as a private detective asking for general information about employees, or a newspaper reporter questioning them about the place's layout or accounts. Such data could reveal the identities of celestials there or let an attack be planned. For this reason, unaware humans are rarely given sensitive positions in a Tether, or allowed to see any important events or information.

But in the end, it cannot be denied that Tethers are *formed* by mortal actions, supported and strengthened by mortal beliefs and work. Much as some celestials might prefer to keep humans entirely out of the area – for their own safety, even – there are always going to be some in the vicinity. A well-organized Tether develops strategies for keeping mundanes away from private areas, evacuating them rapidly if it should be necessary or – in the case of outright emergency – using them somehow. After all, a mass sacrifice could be helpful if one needed to attract the attention of Saminga . . .

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TYPICAL DEFENDERS

Superiors have various opinions as to what types of Servitors are best suited to defending a Tether. Some favor angels or demons geared toward a military defense, removing attackers in a fatal manner, while others prefer to immobilize attackers or render them incapable of violent action. A number of Superiors have Choir or Servitor Attunements particularly suited to safeguarding a Tether in the manner that they prefer, and will commonly assign Servitors with such attunements.

Among the Archangels, Blandine, Eli, Jean, Marc, Novalis and Yves tend toward a less aggressive response to attacks on their Tethers, attempting to capture or identify attackers or defuse fights. In these circumstances, Novalis favors Servitors with her Seraph attunement (to enforce peace), while Jean often uses Kyriotates (as it is rare for a Lightning-Tether to be without useful items to possess). Yves uses Seraphim (to be able to truly Name an attacker) and Marc's angels would rather make a bargain. Eli's guards get . . . creative.

All the other major Archangels usually react offensively to any attack on their Tethers. David, Dominic, Gabriel, Janus, Jordi, Laurence and Michael prefer combat-capable Servitors who can give as good as they get – or more so. Laurence particularly favors Servitors with his Hunt attunement (though not the Seneschal himself), as they can then pursue the attackers. Janus frequently has Seraphim on duty who can explain the situation to bystanders with suitable Fast-Talk. David employs Servitors with his Cold Touch attunement, to be able to capture attackers easily. Jordi often sets Kyriotates to the task of guarding his Tethers, as they can possess an expanded number of the animals likely to be present. Dominic, Gabriel and Michael simply use effective defenders; Fire and War are particularly fond of overkill when their Tethers are threatened.

Among the Demon Princes, Andrealphus, Asmodeus, Beleth, Kobal, Kronos, Lilith, Nybbas and Vapula prefer a subtle response to attacks on their Tethers. Andrealphus assigns Servitors with his Dark Desire attunement, to distract attackers, while Asmodeus uses those with Dissonance Binding, for capture and interrogation. Beleth employs her Calabim, as they can determine what most terrifies an attacker, and Vapula sets his Impudites to watch for celestials with their special Essence-sensing glasses. Kronos also uses his Impudites for guards, or Balseraphs with useful Choir resonances. Lilith employs whomever she currently has Geases on, as well as her own Daughters; those Lilim with a Band attunement from Malphas are very effective, given their ability to utterly distract their victims. Nybbas merely insists that any incidents be filmed.

The other Demon Princes are quite willing to return an attack in kind. Baal, Belial, Haagenti, Malphas, Saminga and Valefor will all respond with force, and will up the level of the assault if necessary. Baal assigns Habbalah to be on guard for combat in their vicinity, while Belial uses Calabim for their increased attack and lack of Symphonic disturbance. Malphas also favors Calabim, to break up attacking parties, and Saminga employs Shedim in graveyard-Tethers, as they then have a large supply of potential hosts. Valefor often uses Balseraphs, to explain matters to the authorities after the fight is over.

Minor spirits, such as relievers, demonlings and weak ethereal spirits, are a very useful resource, and are one of the most common types of servant to be assigned there. They can be given cheap, weak Vessels, such as animals or birds, and they can perform tasks which are too important for humans and too minor for full angels or demons.

One perennial task for minor spirits is the carrying of messages or relics from the Tether to its end-point in its master's domain. This "mail run" may be cycled up and down several times daily, in the case of the larger Tethers. It can be used to keep in constant contact with Heaven, report the latest news and bring down the latest orders.

Another function for minor spirits is surveillance duty. They can mind cameras and watch doors or windows in areas where a human being could not be trusted, or where it would simply not be feasible to put a human. Relievers of Novalis or Jordi can comfortably watch the edges of a Tether in animal or bird form, or even as fish, while gremlins and imps can guard the roofs and cellars of demonic Tethers.

Minor spirits can also act as spies, serving as the eyes and ears for Seneschals who lack other convenient staff but cannot leave the Tether. A reliever or imp is quite capable of wandering around the immediate area, taking messages or spying on somebody nearby, and reporting

back with information. In cases where a Seneschal has no other knowledgeable staff, a few minor spirits may be vital to keep track of what is going on in the world outside the Tether.

Such minor spirits are usually very loyal, conscious of their relative vulnerability and of the fact that they have attracted their Superior's favorable notice to be assigned to the corporeal world. They will be eager to improve their standing further, and certainly (in the case of demons) take full advantage of their assignment to Earth duties, indulging themselves as they never could in Hell.

A final possibility is that of non-human corporeal assistants: usually animals in Tethers of Jordi, or occasional living artifacts (*Liber Reliquarum*, p. 104). Though some Servitors of Technology claim to have produced artificial intelligences, no one has yet provided proof of this. Such entities, while not having a human viewpoint on the matter, can (if aware of the Tether) act to maintain it. Sufficiently advanced "expert system" programs, though non-sapient, are capable of controlling cameras or technological safeguards, while animals can act as guards, spies, and hosts for any nearby Kyriotates. In such Tethers, the absence of any humans by no means implies safety . . .
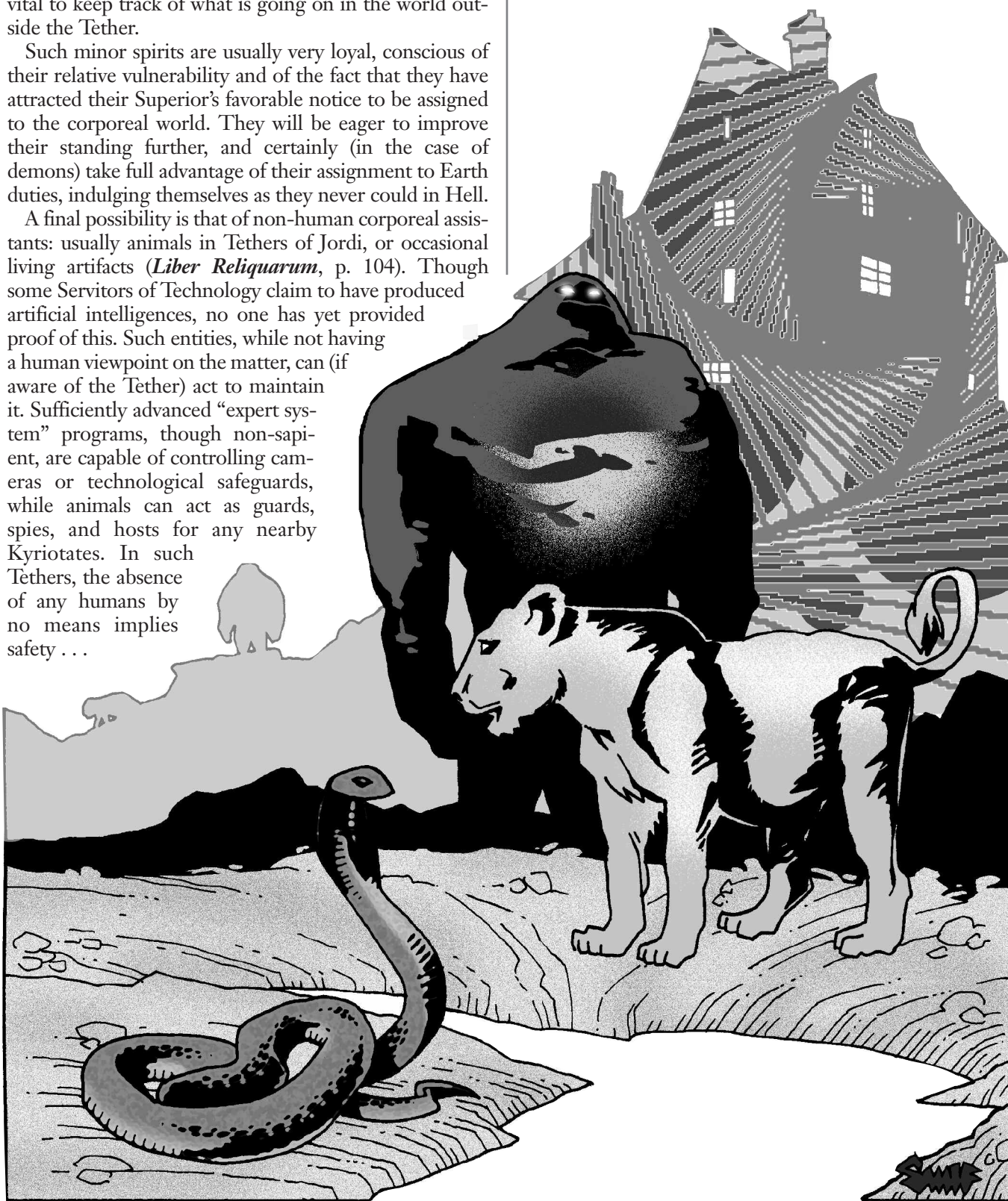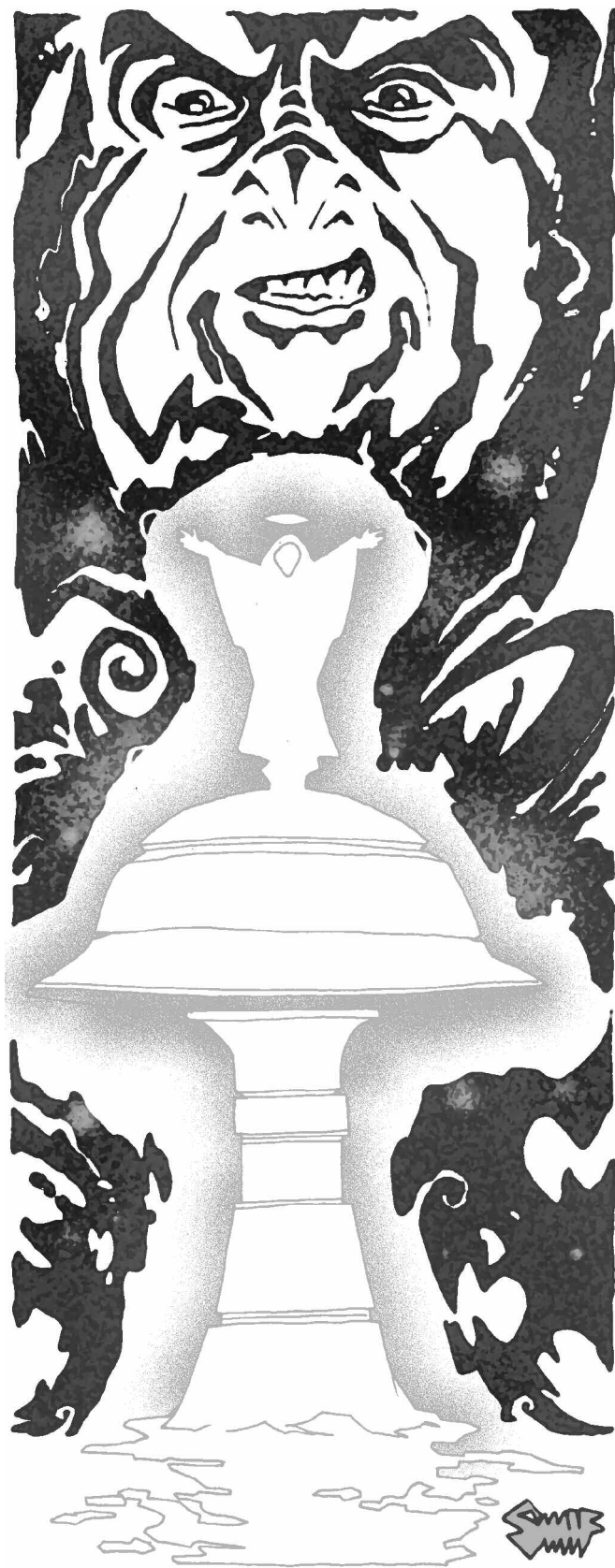
Calling for Help

Rare as direct attacks on Tethers are, given the nature of the War and the fact that a blatant assault is a major tactical move, they do occur from time to time. They may be attempts to capture some person or item from the Tether, distract attention from elsewhere or simply destroy the Tether utterly.

In such a case, while a Seneschal is expected to try dealing with the attack with the forces he has available, he always has the option of calling for help from his Superior. A Tether is too valuable an outpost and expression of the Superior's Word to be lost. However, a Seneschal rarely starts by invoking his Superior personally. Instead, he calls for help to the other end of the Tether. He can ascend himself – rare, as that leaves the physical Tether undefended – send a messenger through, use the Celestial Song of Tongues or transmit the message via some other means of communication. (Servitors of Lightning or Technology might use e-mail, for instance.)

At the other end of all fixed Tethers is a defined point in the Domain of the Tether's Superior (see *The Other End*, p. 51). There is likely to be some watcher nearby, even if only a reliever or gremlin, who can fetch appropriate forces to defend the Tether. Any celestial or ethereal with a Vessel will give assistance, unless the circumstances are highly unusual in some way. To lose a Tether weakens the Word of the Superior, and a weakened Superior weakens his Servitors. There is, also, the minor matter of punishment for those who do not hasten to defend Tethers . . .

The collected forces may arrive in a few seconds or take several minutes, depending on the Superior's level of organization and the priority placed on the Tether; major Tethers get more reinforcements, faster.

An attacking force will be well aware that reinforcements could appear at any second from the other end of the Tether. This usually results in an attempt to complete the mission without the Seneschal noticing, before the Seneschal can call for help . . . or to kill or incapacitate all those capable of calling for help within the Tether. The first is difficult. The second depends on the nature of the Seneschal and the level of security of the Tether. The third often culminates in the destruction of the Tether itself.

However, an open attack and an attempt to destroy a Tether is a *major* move in the War, and is generally the result of a direct order from a Superior. Smaller operations, such as theft, kidnapping or spying, are usually of a scale to be dealt with by the Tether's own resources. In such cases, the Seneschal will not *need* to call for help – and would risk his own Superior's displeasure if he did.

THE LIGHT OF HEAVEN

It is an unfortunate fact for demons that if they assume celestial form in a Divine Tether, the concentrated nature of Heaven that permeates the Tether instantly begins to destroy them. (It greatly annoys them that angels are not similarly afflicted in Infernal Tethers.) This makes Divine Tethers a convenient point for interrogating captured demons, in the knowledge that they cannot escape celestially, or for relieving host bodies of possessing Shedim.

A demon can enter a Divine Tether in corporeal form without ill effects, and is unrestricted in his movements so long as he is still within his vessel. He may also sleep and ascend to the Marches while within a Divine Tether, as this does not expose his celestial form to the concentrated divinity of the Tether. This does not, however, permit him to realize that he is *inside* a Divine Tether, as he has avoided exposure to it.

A demon in corporeal form has no definite way of knowing if he is within a Divine Tether, although observation of the area or the inhabitants may be enough to make him realize his danger. A Tether, after all, strongly exemplifies the Word of its Superior, and an aware demon may come to realize that he is in an area that could well *contain* a Tether. A Perception -4 roll within the locus may pick up its existence (see p. 19). The presence of a Seneschal, other angels, Soldiers or relievers may also be clues that the area is too well-manned and well-protected to be other than a Tether.

However, when a demon begins to assume celestial form, he will at once realize if he is inside the boundaries of a Divine Tether, and may abort his attempt to take celestial form. To do so requires no extra effort, but the 2 points of Essence are still spent, causing normal Symphonic disturbance, and are lost. He does not, however, cause the full associated disturbance (equal to his total Forces, *In Nomine,* p. 55), as he failed to fully go celestial.

In game terms, any demon in celestial form within a Divine Tether takes *d6 multiplied by the Forces invested in the Tether* soul hits of damage per round. If the demon moves outside the boundaries of the Tether, he ceases taking soul hits, but the damage already inflicted is not removed.

To be bared to the pure, *distilled* Light of Heaven is an agonizing thing to a demon. The accompanying sensation is one of horror and pain. The demon is celestially naked against the focused glare of Heavenly brilliance as it rips at his Forces, shredding him and doing permanent damage with every passing second. It is a rare demon indeed who can abide such pain and force himself to stay *within* a Divine Tether, assuming he has any choice in the

matter. The natural instinct is to flee from the scorching radiance and the inevitable dissolution. In game terms, a demon should make a Will roll at the beginning of every round spent within a Tether in celestial form. Failure requires that he attempt an escape by any means possible, driven to near-insanity by his disintegration.

(Few know that a demon *can* survive in Heaven itself for a time before it is burned away by the more diffuse Light in Heaven (*Heaven and Hell*, p. 60). Some who do know speculate that a Tether is a focused bit of Heaven, connected to Earth, and is therefore like a magnifying glass concentrating the sun. Others blame the Essence the Tether funnels – in Heaven, it is merely "background radiation," while in Tethers it is concentrated and damaging.)

THE OTHER END

Tethers debouch at some defined spot in the domain to which they connect. Any given Tether has a fixed terminus to which the corporeal location is anchored; this is clearly perceptible as a Tether end-point, even to the lowliest soul or celestial spirit.

The appearance of an upper locus and its location in the relevant area are dependent on the Prince, Archangel or ethereal god who governs it. Although it often bears the seal of the Superior in question, it may be anything from a doorway to a mosaic to a couch or cliff. The more organized Superiors have end-points laid out in a structured and guarded pattern, while less organized ones leave them scattered across their areas of power, and in some cases not guarded at all.

Blandine: Dream's Tethers are scattered throughout the celestial portion of her Tower, the end-points appearing as small empty rooms of palest ivory or marble, with Blandine's seal set into the floor. The most powerful Tethers are in the higher levels, while the weaker ones are on the lower levels. Relievers keep guard at the entry to each room. Within the Tower is a great archway that connects the ethereal section of the Tower with its Heavenly part.

David: The end-points of David's Tethers manifest as carved cave-mouths opening onto darkness, or as solid slabs of rock, ranging from pale marble to deepest onyx, set into the walls of his catacombs and carved with his seal. Their layout throughout the Catacombs is known only to David and the Servitors of Stone, though it is believed to follow some secret pattern. Relievers or Cherubim wait patiently in niches near each end-point, watching for any trouble.

Dominic: Tethers of Judgment are laid out in a neatly radial pattern throughout the Celestial Tribunal, center-

ing above Dominic's Chancery. They appear as austere arches in the wall, each with a plaque above it stating the location of that Tether, and each with a Cherub stationed beside it. Central maps of all the Tethers are available to Servitors of Judgment, from the Chancery.

Eli: In the Halls of Creation, the terminus of a Tether may manifest as anything from a room to a work of art to a fountain. Older end-points are found toward the center of the Halls, and newer ones toward the outskirts; it is believed that the Halls expand as more end-points are formed. A group of (often frustrated) Servitors of Creation attempt to keep track of the Tethers and map the new ones, but their records are incomplete. Known locations are watched by relievers.

Gabriel: Gabriel's Tethers appear as constantly burning flames, hanging unsupported in the air or rising from braziers or pools of lava, hot to the touch but not actually damaging. There is no logic to their location in the Volcano. Soldekai keeps charts of them in his offices, but it is rumored that from time to time the Volcano itself changes *around* the end-points. It is considered an honor to guard these locations, and young angels volunteer for the task.
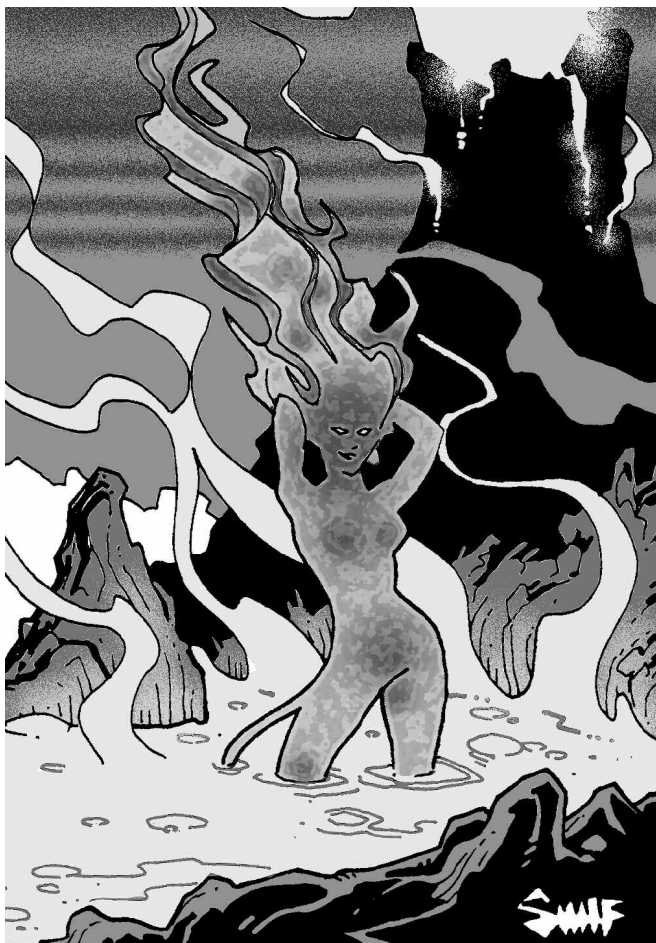
Janus: The upper loci of the Wind's Tethers are all in mid-air, scattered randomly among the trees of the Groves. There seems to be no particular logic to their height off the ground or their distance from the center of the Groves. Several Seraphim of Wind make it their business to keep track of them. They manifest as curling miniature cyclones, meant to be passed through from the top downward; there are at least a few relievers watching each one, and often a Cherub or other full angel.

Jean: The Archangel of Lightning has his Tethers laid out in a logical and structured manner throughout the Halls of Progress. The more powerful Tethers are closer to the center of the Halls, and the weaker ones farther away. The end-points appear as sculpted metal archways filled with rippling sheets of lightning. Nearby computer screens display their destination and other relevant data, and relievers or young angels stand by them. A full schematic of all current Tethers of Lightning can be accessed (with appropriate authorization) from any workstation in the Halls of Progress.

Jordi: The end-points of Jordi's Tethers appear as naturally formed gateways in the Vale – archways formed by two trees, a cleft of rock, a cave or a tunnel mouth. They are scattered outward from the Council Fire in random directions, but the more powerful Tethers are closer to the Fire, and the weaker ones farther away. All are watched by the patient spirits of animals.

Laurence: The Church of the Sword has a multitude of side-chapels which contain the end-points of Laurence's Tethers. They are arranged down the long aisle from strongest (closest to the altar) to weakest (closest to the door). In each side-chapel, an angel guards the door, and the terminus itself appears as an oval of steel set into the wall with a sword, point-down, embossed upon it.

Marc: In Marc's Bazaar, the end-points of Tethers are neatly laid out in a cross-hatch pattern across the field of tents. Stronger ones are closer to his Tower, weaker ones are farther away. Each appears as an elegant marble arch, with a sign above it indicating where it goes to in the Corporeal realm. Maps within Marc's Tower itself allow a searcher to easily locate the required Tether. All loci are watched by groups of relievers, and the major ones closest to the Tower also have an angel or two on duty.

Michael: War's Tethers manifest as rough stone arches in his Camp in the Groves, radiating out from the Dueling Grounds, with the most powerful Tethers closest and the weaker ones more distant. They are laid out in a sensible pattern for the easy shipping of goods or reinforcements, and are guarded at all times by angels, relievers or human souls. It is rumored that Michael has hidden Tethers linked to far corners of the Groves, for use in emergencies or surprise attacks, but if so, he keeps them secret.

Novalis: In the Glade, Novalis has her Tethers appear as rose trellises, intertwined trees, knot gardens and flowering bushes. They are dotted around her Domain in a pattern which Novalis states makes perfect sense, and which the Servitors of Flowers understand, though nobody else does. Relievers inhabit the foliage by all the end-points, to inform travelers of where they lead and watch for trouble.

Yves: Yves' Tethers manifest as small book-lined passages throughout the Library, which one walks down to reach the Corporeal realm. They can be found in a rough spiral upward through the Library, laid out in alphabetical order. Each end-point has a small card by it giving details of where it ends, and a guardian Cherub or other angel to watch it. (The Library has also been known to drop people out in, or bring people in from, random libraries, museums or bookstores, without requiring a Tether point at all. However, this is more likely to be immediately annoying than obviously helpful.)

Andrealphus: The end-points of Tethers to Lust are randomly located in his Court, appearing as archways curtained with silks or gauzes with the Prince's seal set in the floor beneath. The most powerful Tethers link to the center of the Court, with a couple terminating directly in front of Andrealphus' throne, while less powerful ones are scattered farther away through the building. While only the major ones have actual guards, almost all the end-points have public areas (for orgies or other entertainment) located by them, resulting in immediate attention if anything happens.

Asmodeus: Asmodeus' Tethers all connect to the Hall of Loyalty, providing easy transport for Servitors and Renegades alike. The end-points manifest as metal-walled niches in the walls, laid out in a logical pattern to which only Asmodeus and his favored Servitors hold the key; all end-points are indistinguishable and unmarked. A Djinn sits by each niche, watching for any disturbance.

Baal: The end-points of Baal's Tethers connect to a ring of bunkers spaced around his Fortress in Gehenna. Each bunker has a guard of damned souls and a commanding demon, and has a store of weapons and supplies located next to it. The bunkers themselves are bare concrete inside, with Baal's blood-red sigil on the wall.

Beleth: Nightmare's Tethers are mostly scattered within the celestial segment of her Tower, the end-points appearing as small empty rooms of twisted ebony and warped black marble, with Beleth's seal set into the floor. The most powerful are on the higher levels, while the weaker ones are on the lower levels. Imps or gremlins keep guard at the entry to each room, clustered in the inhuman ornamentation. Within the Tower is a great archway that links the ethereal part of it to the portion in Hell proper.

Belial: Belial's Tethers are strewn about the slopes of the great Volcano of Sheol, and appear as raging, ever-burning fires or roiling pools of lava. There is no pattern or logic to their placement, save that the very strongest Tethers lie close to the peak of the volcano. Belial himself has sponsored a mapping effort, at Baal's suggestion, but a cohesive chart has yet to be obtained. The Tethers, where found and known, are guarded by Calabim or Djinn.

Haagenti: The end-points of Gluttony's Tethers connect to the back rooms of restaurants and dining parlors throughout Shal-Mari, manifesting as doorways with Haagenti's seal embossed above. They lie in a pattern roughly centering on Haagenti's most current place of relaxation and feeding; a group of his Balseraphs and Djinn attempt to keep track of their locations. The owners of the establishments – ranging from damned souls to full demons – act as guards and watchers over the Tethers.

Kobal: Kobal's Tethers are tied to his cinemas and theaters along the Cineplex Sprawl, the end-points appearing as glimmering movie screens through which the traveler passes, or empty theater stages with fantastic backdrops. The more important Tethers are linked to the bigger cinemas or theaters, while the smaller ones are bound to lesser outposts along the farther end of the Sprawl. Gremlins and imps watch the smaller end-points, and full-grown demons watch the larger ones.

Kronos: In the Archive, Kronos binds his Tethers to hairpin-thin corridors that lead between stacks of files, where one walks along the passage and emerges upon Earth. The actual point of transition is marked by Kronos' sigil on the wall, floor or ceiling, and is guarded by a demon lurking in the vicinity. Only Kronos and some of his most powerful Servitors understand the layout of the end-points in the Archive. Those Servitors of his who know the terminus of a Tether in their section of the Archive guard the information and sell it at a high price.

Lilith: The loci of Lilith's Tethers are anchored below the Guildhall of Free Lilim in Shal-Mari, appearing as elegantly cryptic mosaics in the echoing cellars. Only the older Lilim, or Lilith herself, know which point connects to which Tether, but they are always willing to share the information – for a price. Junior Lilim often monitor the Tethers, working off a minor Geas by doing so. Rumor has it that Lilith has secretly anchored Freedom-Tethers to hidden areas in other Principalities, but this has never been proven.

Malphas: Factions' Tethers link to nooks and crannies in Stygia: recesses behind curtains, secret rooms, attics, cellars and other hidden places. The most powerful Tethers connect to areas in the Villa Discordia, with the less powerful ones scattered around it; accurate maps of the end-points are said to exist, and are frequently sold at ruinous prices. All the end-points are watched and guarded by full demons, most of whom will expect a toll to allow passage, whether or not the traveler is already operating on orders from the Prince.

Nybbas: The end-points of the Media's Tethers are sound-stages and penthouse apartments in Perdition, marked by Nybbas' seal in the floor, or huge television screens. Up-to-date maps are always available (and mostly complete) from any high-level representative of the Media, in the latest graphical format. The most powerful Tethers are either in or grouped around Nybbas' own skyscraper, with the others radiating out into the Principality. All are guarded by imps or demons, who *always* carry cameras.

Saminga: Death's Tethers lead into rooms and passageways in the Bone Citadel, with the locus itself appearing as a slimy, carved bone archway with Saminga's seal above it. The most powerful are located near the top of the Citadel, below Saminga's laboratories, while the lesser ones are farther down, with the weakest being barely above the Essence-smelter. Damned souls guard all the end-points, desperate to escape having their Forces stripped, and demons supervise the most powerful ones.

Valefor: The Palazzo Furto is linked to the most powerful of Theft's Tethers, which appear as curtained archways or bolted doors, all with Valefor's seal marked in the ground before them. Weaker Tether end-points are scattered around it, in the alleyways or lesser buildings nearby in Stygia. Knowledge of which end-points lead to which Tethers is rare, and more valuable than many stolen goods traded in Valefor's court. Imps and gremlins watch most loci, but full demons guard the powerful ones.

Vapula: The end-points of Vapula's Tethers appear as electronic gateways, crawling with futuristic technology and wiring, usually sparking and hissing in a manner guaranteed to unnerve all travelers. (The ones that look *safe* are even more unnerving.) The most powerful Tethers are linked directly to his Laboratory or the area around it, while weaker ones are scattered farther afield, among other laboratories and the Forges. A system to provide easy location of all end-points is currently being beta-tested, and has been for the last 50 years. For the moment, everyone still has to depend on the out-of-date paper maps. All end-points are watched through video cameras and similar technology.

CONSECRATED GROUND
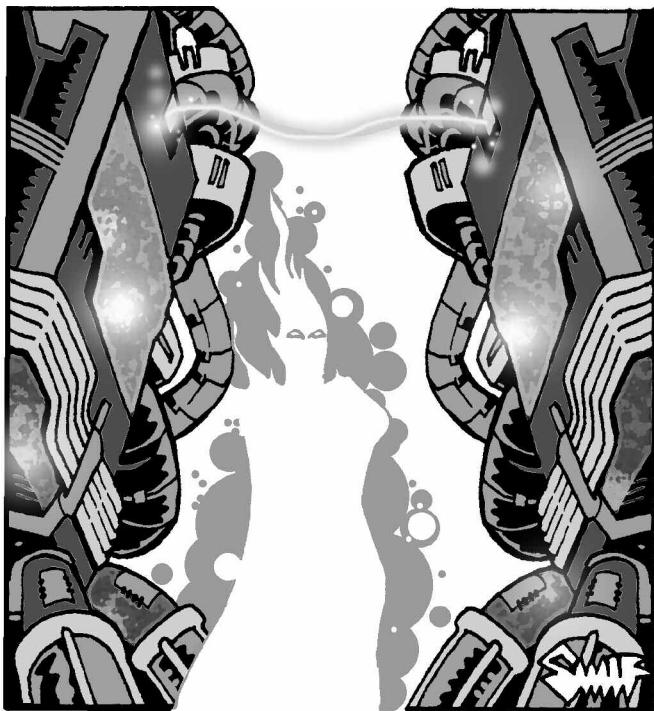
PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

Many Tethers have exceptional physical defenses and a reliable Seneschal and staff – but nothing is proof against every conceivable attack. However, some tactics are more common than others, and have had standard strategies of defense developed against them.

An all-out frontal assault is *extremely* rare. As mentioned elsewhere, this is a *major* move in the War, liable to lead to escalation and counter-moves on both sides. Even given all this, however, they do happen from time to time. Results range from the Tether's destruction to the arrival of a Superior – or Superiors.

One frontal assault tactic which is occasionally tried – by the inexperienced – is to send in an agent or two full of Essence, with the Song of Thunder. This is akin to sending a child armed with a battlehammer. Even *if* the Song functions, and all within earshot are affected (which is by no means certain), the agent had to perform the Song without any *allies* nearby, lest they be incapacitated by the Song! He is therefore alone, in the middle of enemy territory, having just made an *extreme* Symphonic disturbance. While he may have stunned a number of the Tether's staff – even possibly including the Seneschal – he cannot be certain that he has affected them all.

There are more sensible forms of basic assault. These involve scouting the area and obtaining maps of the Tether ahead of time. It is also advised to develop plans to neutralize guards and the Seneschal as quickly as possible once inside the Tether's boundaries, before they can summon additional help. Once in, tactics include wrecking the Tether's corporeal endpoint with explosives, violence or somehow destroying its link to the Superior's Word (such as defoliant in a Tether of Flowers).

The Seneschal can counter these strategies by making sure that no accurate plans of the Tether's layout and security are on public file, and watching for scouts. (Tracking them back to *their* base is also useful.) Alert, capable guards can slow or stop attackers. Ensuring that all the Tether staff have been briefed on general battle strategies, or "where to go in case of emergency," can prevent a total collapse of defenses. If the Seneschal has reason to fear explosives or large weapons, he can check for bulky items being carried into the Tether or left there. Bomb disposal training and tactics are entirely appropriate!

However, infiltration missions – to spy, steal, kidnap or murder – are far more common. This sort of assault relies on stealth and speed, and is more difficult to counter. If the Seneschal is aware that he has some important item or person within the Tether, he can temporarily raise security, possibly by calling in favors for the duration of the danger. For this reason, Seneschals will expect to be informed of the probable consequences should they host guests or store items for other celestials. Dumping important prisoners or vital Relics on a Seneschal, without explaining the matter, can lose the item or person in question – as the Tether may not have its full defenses up. This may also gain the enmity of the Seneschal, and his Superior, for inspiring an attack on his Tether.

It is vital for Seneschals to stay in touch with the neighborhood. Not only will this help them promote their Superior's Word – which is always necessary – it will also alert them to "strangers in town" and to matters which might affect them. If a Seneschal of a Tether of Lust discovers that several probable Servitors of Creation have been seen, she has reason to be worried.

Staying in touch with local events will also keep the Seneschal aware of attempts to attack the Tether through its connection to the Superior's Word. Examples of such threats include rerouting a highway through a Tether of Novalis, closing down a museum that is a Tether of Kronos or banning animal experimentation in a laboratory-Tether of Vapula. The local contacts that the Seneschal has built up, however, may enable him to defuse such attacks before they come anywhere near his Tether. It is *always* preferable – even to the most vigorous combatants in the War – to stop fights *before* they get near one's own Tethers. If the town planning motion can be defeated in Town Hall, or the protest march defused before it gets near the laboratory, this is much better than having the threat get to the Tether itself.

Monitoring the local area can also alert a Seneschal to attempts to establish enemy Tethers – or simply enemy bases – and let him prevent them, personally or by calling in assistance. Attacks on Tethers are major moves in the War, but *preventing* them from being created is merely par for the course. Alternatively, the site in question may be one that could be linked as a Tether by the Seneschal's Superior or an ally. It is then the Seneschal's duty to report it at once and arrange for any necessary action.

A strong, well-constructed Tether will have a defensible locus; an intelligent, trained staff; and friends in the celestial and mortal communities around it. The staff will be able to spot dangers and attacks from a distance, rather than being unaware until their doors are being knocked down. They will be able to mount a defense if matters do reach the point of all-out attack. Ultimately, the Tether will be a refuge in times of war, and a support in times of peace.

TETHERS IN THE CAMPAIGN

The Impudite fidgeted in the bowl-chair, his neon-colored windbreaker squeaking against the plastic of the seat back, and tapped one foot against its base. "Come on, man. It's one of those situations where we all win. They lose the relic, we get it, you get to look good with your Prince."

The Balseraph looked down his nose, and adjusted his dark glasses. High in the corner of the room, the closed-circuit camera whirred quietly. "I do? I could be wrong on this one, Mark, I'd really hate to be wrong, but you know, it kind of strikes me that leaving a big obvious trail to my Tether here is not the sort of thing that's going to look good with my Prince, you know?"

"They won't follow us," the Thief declared confidently.

"Indeed." The Balseraph tented his fingers. "I've got this big credibility gap here, you know?"

The Taker tried one of his practiced smiles. "Hey, we're professionals. You don't think we're planning to get caught, do you? Look at me now. I'm being all sorts of sensible, getting the escape route set up, borrowing a few smoke grenades, all that stuff."

"You want to be sensible?" The Balseraph settled back behind his desk. "Fine. Let's talk price."

"Price?" Mark did his best to look hurt. "I thought we were discussing this between two demons who worked for two friendly Princes."

"We are," the Balseraph stated. "That's why we're still talking and why I didn't have Marco toss you out the door first thing."

Mark sighed. "OK, OK. I suppose we could make some sort of contribution toward your Tether funds. We've got this emerald set that Jeffrey picked up three towns back . . ."

The Balseraph shook his head. "Nothing that we're going to have trouble fencing. I was thinking of something a bit more significant, you know?"

"Hm." Mark thought fast. He didn't want to offer more than the Balseraph was prepared to accept, but the Serpent didn't look in the mood to let him off lightly. "I don't suppose you've got your sights on anything from inside their Tether? I mean, hey, Judgment-Tether. They've probably got all sorts of files, photos, big important bits of evidence, whatever. You tell me what it is; we may be able to get it for you."

The Balseraph looked mildly thoughtful, eyes unreadable behind the slick onyx glasses. "Well . . . no, it's probably unreasonable."

"What is?" the Taker asked, doing his best to look as bored.

The Balseraph shook his head again. "No. Don't worry, it's quite impossible. Tell you what, I'll just settle for 5 Essence from each of you, and that pistol-relic that your Habbalite friend has."

*Mark sat up bolt upright. "Are you out of your **mind**? Are you under some kind of delusion that you've got green skin and pointy horns, man? You're a gouger. You're a vicious bastard. You cannot be serious."*

"I do, however," the Balseraph murmured, "control the only Hell-Tether in this district – besides the Game's. You could always try them."

"Look." The Impudite controlled his breathing. "Tell me what it was you were thinking about that you wanted from the Tether, OK? You're not a Thief. It might be easier to get out than you think. Just give me the facts."

*The Balseraph smiled easily, leaning forward. "I'm always prepared to be reasonable. And perhaps an expert **could** get hold of it for me. In that case, I'd be glad to significantly reduce my fee . . ."*

CAMPAIGN EFFECTS OF TETHERS

Tethers have a great deal of impact on the political and tactical landscape in their area. If the Tether is hostile to the player characters, it is a source of resources and refuge for the enemy. It is also a target for plots to weaken or destroy it. If it is friendly, it is a stronghold for the PCs, who will also want to defend it from direct and indirect attacks.

USING TETHERS IN THE CAMPAIGN

The main roles of Tethers in the *In Nomine* world are described below. The corporeal aspects are emphasized here, since the corporeal realm is the primary place player characters will interact with Tethers.

Bases

The most visible functions of Tethers are as outposts of the Superior's organization on Earth. Most Tethers can supply limited reinforcements at need, calling them down from the celestial realm if necessary. Tether staff can supply information on the corporeal aspects of the locality, and can refer newcomers to appropriate local resources for housing, ID, vehicles, Role-creation and other aspects of moving into a new corporeal area.

Many Tethers have a Servitor whose job is gathering information on local celestial activities, enemy and friendly. These "intelligence officers" are invaluable sources of data on the celestial population and their current whereabouts and projects . . . if the PCs can stay on their good side. At the least, the local spymaster will want to know what the characters are doing there, and any information they have or discover. In smaller Tethers, the Seneschal serves this function.

Another common Feature of larger or more important Tethers is a supervisory staff – the first layer of celestial "middle-management." Player characters may be assigned to one of these local supervisors, if they aren't special agents reporting directly to a Superior. Even if they are special agents, they may be assigned a local Tether contact for routine reports and requests. In smaller Tethers, the Seneschal fills this role as well. (The

Game Master may find it helpful to provide such a supervisor or contact – it reduces the need for player characters to contact their Superiors directly, and gives them a source of local knowledge.)

Some Tethers are set up to provide special services to all their side's celestials. These services are related to the Tether's Word: healing at a Flowers Tether, fencing of items corporeal and celestial at Theft, creating false computer records for a Role at a Lightning base. These services are often found outside of Tethers as well, especially if there are no appropriate Tethers in the area, but Tether-based services are the best of their kind.

Havens

When being pursued by the enemy, a friendly Tether is a welcome sanctuary. Few opponents will invade a known Tether, and the ones who do quickly regret it. Tethers are also a good place to break one's back trail – the noise of frequent celestial activity can mask a vessel-change or a switch to celestial form. Ascending to the celestial realm and returning via another Tether elsewhere will confound all but the most persistent trackers.

A Tether can also provide a mundane resting place; most can provide safe temporary quarters for a visiting celestial to leave extra gear, or rest and heal. Helping out around a Tether is also one of the easier cures for dissonance.

Hangouts

Some Tethers are public gathering places like parks, bars, restaurants, theaters, brothels, museums, stadiums, coffeehouses and racetracks. These often turn into favored social hangouts for celestials serving that Word, and their friends and allies. Besides being a good place to relax and watch the Symphony go by, they offer excellent cover for the comings and goings of celestials. Many include "back rooms" where skullduggery can be planned away from prying eyes and ears, without the meeting being too obvious.

General Stores

Most Tethers keep at least a "slop chest" of handy corporeal equipment and clothing. This is useful to outfit newcomers, provide replacements for combat-shredded clothes and equip Servitors with useful corporeal objects that can't be carried around openly, like guns or swords. Many have more extensive stockrooms, a selection of clothing for a variety of temporary roles and a spare vehicle or two. Nearly all modern Tethers can supply Servitors with at least a few days' living expenses in the local currency.

Another common Feature is an "Essence kitty" – a number of reliquaries which are kept filled by those celestials passing through the Tether, or using its services. Servitors heading to the celestial realm are also encouraged to deposit "spare" Essence, since they are less likely to need it celestially. Withdrawals from the kitty are at the discretion of the Seneschal – this is generally allowed for cases of "friendlies" in great need, or if the petitioner is a local resident with a history of contributing. The kitty is normally kept separate from reliquaries maintained for Tether defense (see Chapter 3).

Many Seneschals keep a small stockpile of artifacts, which may be loaned out to Tether staff or other Servitors of the Tether's Word. These will usually be common talismans and relics, though all sorts of odd things tend to accumulate "in the attic" over the years. Strange items are often recovered from the street after battles, picked up in curio shops by sharp-eyed staff or left behind by those being re-assigned to the celestial realm. Some Seneschals run a side-business in trading

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artifacts; this is especially common at infernal Tethers and those to the Wind. Tethers of Trade all maintain an inventory of common items for sale to the local Host, and will also buy or trade items with angels in the area.

Powerful artifacts are rarely available – these are either present for Tether defense, or kept by the Superior in the celestial realm. Likewise, Servitors on both sides have standing orders to hand over any powerful artifacts to their Superior, though few Seneschals will refuse such items if they are offered.

TETHER ABUSES IN THE CAMPAIGN

Easy access to friendly Tethers can lead to problems in the campaign. It's best to stop potential abuses before players become used to them; the following sections cover some of the pitfalls and possible solutions.

Reinforcements and Resources

Players may want to have their characters run for the nearest Tether for reinforcements – or heavy weaponry – the moment they hit stiff opposition. This is reasonable if the PCs really can't succeed without a little extra muscle (or a specialist in scuba-diving, or a military assault helicopter). The GM should keep in mind that Superiors have limited resources, which must be allocated to many different activities. A Tether's own resources are even more limited.

Seneschals will carefully weigh the circumstances before committing any additional personnel, or calling upstairs for more help. If the mission is important, the group *really* needs some help, has a reasonable plan, and has already done as much as they could, then the Seneschal should provide a little extra assistance. After all, it will reflect badly on *him* if an important mission failed because he didn't give it proper support.

TETHERS AND THE WAR

Tethers are a major strategic factor in the War. Short of major effort by a Superior or corporeal transport, they are the only way to move large numbers of celestials to a specific area on Earth – they are the beachheads of any major move. Unfortunately, they are mostly known to the enemy, but they are also citadels strong enough to hold off anything *but* a major military action that would draw unwanted human attention.

Because they are known enemy bases, they are often carefully watched. Unfortunately, between the difficulty in distinguishing celestial from human, and the masking of mundane activity around a Tether, it is hard to get reliable intelligence on what is happening inside the Tether, or what outside activities it is supporting.

The result is that the distribution and power of Tethers in an area strongly affects the course of the War there. The side with the major advantage in Tether power tends to own the city. An area dominated by infernal Tethers (such as Los Angeles, in *Fall of the Malakim*) will be mostly controlled by demons, and angels are hard-pressed to operate in such a place. Conversely, San Francisco is dominated by angelic Tethers, so demons there are few, and constantly under scrutiny, harassment or redemption attempts by the Host.

Where there are a number of Tethers, but neither side has a dominant position, both operate relatively freely and the city is a usually a battleground. Where there are no nearby Tethers of any kind, neither side has much support (or often, much interest in the location), and celestial activity there will be minimal.

Due to the nature of Tethers, most battles over them must be fought indirectly, using human agents (witting or unwitting).

However, the help they get may not be exactly what the PCs asked for – but it's what the Seneschal can get for them. It may be an artifact with a useful Song, a couple of Malakim of the Sword, a grenade launcher or half a dozen 7-Force Calabim with cheap handguns and itchy trigger fingers . . .

Invoking Superiors

A Tether is an easy place to call the owning Superior. This may cause trouble if players overuse this capability. There are a number of ways to deal with the problem:

✠ Few Superiors like being called to deal with minor matters; that's what *Servitors* are there for. If a Superior is invoked for any reason other than to report successful completion of a major mission, or to deliver an *important* and time-critical report, the PC should regret calling (no matter what the check digit of the invocation roll is). The Superior will pointedly remind the offender that the Tether has a perfectly good Seneschal who can pass on reports, make minor policy decisions and provide assistance.

✠ Superiors can summon Servitors to Tethers to give out rewards or punishments for recent missions, based on reports relayed through the Seneschal. If player characters insist on invoking their Superior merely to get rewarded for their last job, the GM should feel free to give them little or nothing. It's the *Superior's* prerogative to decide when and where to reward his Servitor. Seneschals can also be used as conduits for minor rewards that don't require the Superior's own attention.

Generally only additional Forces, Rites, attunements and distinctions are beyond a Seneschal's abilities. Skills and Songs can be taught, at whatever learning rate the GM deems reasonable, and some Seneschals are also Songmasters (*Liber Canticorum*, p. 25).

✠ Seneschals may get tired of celestials who keep showing up and calling the boss to visit. Infernal ones are especially unhappy when a Prince shows up on the premises, but even angelic ones can have reason to be nervous when their Lord shows up. An unhappy Seneschal is *not* likely to help out the offender in the future.

TETHERS AND SUPERIORS

Tethers are strongly linked to a Superior's power; they are both a component and a reflection of it. The total power of all a Superior's Tethers is a good measure of his influence on the corporeal realm, and the strength of his Word there.

The number and power of Tethers that a Superior *can* have is directly related to the strength of his Word in the Symphony, especially in the corporeal realm. Thus, if his Word grows in strength, his Tethers will increase in power, and new ones are likely to appear. If his Word is waning, his Tethers will begin to fade, and some of them may die. If a Tether is destroyed, but the Word is still as strong, another Tether to the Word may shortly pop up elsewhere. (Or it may not; Tethers are ineffable, and these are general trends, not hard and fast rules.)

While the number of Tethers a Superior *may* have is related to the strength of his Word, a new Superior (like Furfur, Prince of Hardcore, from *Night Music*) initially has no Tethers. He may acquire them quickly once he has a place in the celestial realm to anchor them, until the limit of his Word's power is reached – as determined by the Game Master. Mature Superiors, such as the major ones listed in *In Nomine*, see little change among their

Tethers: a dying one *here* is typically balanced by a young one *there*. They move around over time, but the total effect is about the same, unless the Word experiences significant change in influence.

On a more practical level, Tethers are a major source of Essence for Superiors (though not the only one), so they can affect how much the Superior can accomplish in a given period of time. They also are direct paths to the corporeal, allowing the Superior to spread his influence there by sending Servitors to Earth, using the Tether as a support base.

Each Superior has his own policies for Tethers; these are greatly influenced by how his Word behaves. Some have a lot of small, weak Tethers; others tend to get a few powerful ones. No Superior can dictate where and when a Tether will appear, though they *can* choose not to stabilize one that appears particularly unfavorable, in the hope that a better one will spring up later, elsewhere. Since no one understands exactly why Tethers form where and when they do, this is a real gamble. Many Superiors will have their Servitors spread their Word in areas where they would *like* a Tether, in the hopes that the resulting natural actions of humans will generate one, but this is often fruitless.

The importance of Tethers to Superiors makes Tether-related missions important to them – some typical rewards and punishments for success and failure are listed on p. 68.

FREQUENCY AND PLACEMENT

Tethers are long-term campaign Features; formation and death are relatively rare events. Most Tethers should have histories measured in decades or centuries, and be expected to stay around for the duration of the campaign. Most are well-known to all celestials in the area, though a few have been kept hidden for strategic reasons. This means that Tether placement is an important early step when setting up a new campaign.

The Game Master first needs to decide how common Tethers are, and where they are placed relative to the usual area the player characters will operate in. Some Tethers are described in this and other *In Nomine* books, but the frequency and placement of other Tethers are left to each GM. He may also change or eliminate published Tethers, of course.

In the official *In Nomine* universe, Tethers are fairly rare – they aren't found on every street corner. Most major cities have a few on each side, but the numbers aren't necessarily related to population, or anything else obvious. *Tether formation is an ineffable process.*

Choosing the frequency of Tethers in the world will affect the campaign in two major ways. First, it dictates how far, on the average, a celestial must go for major help, short of invoking his Superior. If Tethers are common, player characters are more likely to seek help there, because there will be one fairly nearby. Of course, their enemies will have more or less equal access. This can lead to escalation of NPC activity if the GM isn't careful. (See *Tether Abuses in the Campaign*, p. 59). If Tethers are very rare, celestials are likely to have little access to outside support. This may encourage them to invoke their Superior more often, which can lead to another kind of NPC escalation problem.

The second game-world effect of Tether frequency is on the power of Superiors. Tethers are a major source of Essence to Superiors (though there are others). More Tethers generally means more Essence, while fewer Tethers means Superiors must depend more on other sources, or the GM will want to increase the Essence flow to compensate. The other power-amplifying effect is on the Superior's *reach* into the corporeal. They have the most corporeal influence where their Tethers are. If they have fewer Tethers to work through, their influence is correspondingly diminished.

A good first choice is to have a small number of Tethers – perhaps two or three – of each side within easy reach (*e.g.*, an hour's drive) of the campaign setting. These might not include *any* of the PCs' Superiors. This makes it easier to deny help, if the Game Master wishes. At least one should probably be neutral or friendly.

Tethers do not form uniformly on the Earth's surface, nor do they necessarily follow population density. This allows the GM to include a disproportionate number of Tethers in one place, if that's important, without raising the overall number of Tethers in the campaign.

Most major cities will have at least one Tether on each side; this is virtually certain for any city with more than a million people. Many really obvious candidate locations *will* have Tethers, though there are mysterious exceptions. The U.S. space launch facility at Cape Canaveral, for example, is almost certainly a Tether to *someone*. On the other hand, a lot of Tethers form in otherwise obscure locations, where some event of strictly local significance happened. See Chapter 1 for more guidance on Tether formation.

Nearly any locale will have at least a half-dozen plausible locations for Tethers, though not necessarily for all Superiors. Since Tether-formation is fundamentally ineffable, the Game Master should feel free to place Tethers in useful, if relatively obscure, places, and pass over more obvious candidates that aren't useful in his campaign.

CAPITAL TETHERS

Tethers often form where humans see significance, and there are few places so *full* of significant locations as the capitals of countries. There are also few places where celestials are so eager to claim even the smallest link to their Word, to use as a base of operations to influence (or at least observe) the politics of a nation. Hostile celestials will try to uproot such "weeds" before they're stabilized, of course. However, another aspect of capitals is that the local humans take a dim view of people causing mayhem or destroying local monuments.

Between the concentrated human attention, the protection of potential Tether-sites and the value of such sites, there are usually an inordinate number of Tethers in capital cities and their surrounding areas. Capitals such as London and Washington, D.C., contain Tethers to most of the major Superiors on both sides, even if only as small, quiet links.

PCS, POLITICS AND TETHERS

Because of the services available at Tethers, player characters may seek aid there. How successful they will be depends on many factors, including the relative status of the petitioning group, the importance of their current mission and what the Tether can spare. But the primary factor is the relationship of the requester's Superior to the one who owns the Tether. The political affiliations of the character's associates will influence reactions, especially in the negative direction . . .

The assistance requested also affects the chance of success. Simple needs are most likely to be granted. These include ascension to the celestial realm, passing on of messages and shelter. The cost, if any, for these services is usually just information on the PC's current mission and situation, and maybe a little Essence.

Help that consumes Essence, such as performance of the Songs of Healing, typically requires repayment of the Essence used *plus* a little extra. "Refills" of Essence are generally only available to Servitors of the Tether's master, and only with good reason.

While Seneschals theoretically have access to lots of Essence by normal celestial standards, this is primarily for defense of the Tether itself. Any Essence tapped by the Seneschal is Essence that is *not* going to his Superior. Angelic Seneschals are careful about Essence use simply out of responsibility to their Superior – their job is to strengthen their Superior and his Word, not weaken it. Demonic Seneschals don't care, but their master will suspect "skimming" if too much Tether Essence is diverted.

Requests which require substantial time or commitment of limited Tether resources – backup forces, artifacts, setting up a new Role or even just corporeal money – normally have a equivalent cost, unless the Tether belongs to the requester's Superior and the assistance is directly related to an important mission. The price for such a petition will often be some major task related to the Seneschal's own projects.

The following sections provide general guidelines to handling the interaction of characters with Seneschals and staff. Tethers of a character's own Superior, or the Superior's allies and associates, are all considered "friendly," while those of "Hostile" or "Enemy" Superiors are grouped together as "hostile" Tethers. Other Tethers of the same side are "neutral."

Ethereal Tethers are generally hostile toward angels, especially to Servitors of the Sword. They tend to be neutral-to-friendly to demons of Nightmares, and neutral to other demons, though this varies with the nature of the ethereal god.

Long-Term Relationships

The petitioner's personal history can modify the nominal political situation. Out-of-favor or other "problem" characters can have difficulties at their own Superior's Tethers. This is especially likely if they've brought trouble back to the Tether, or made frequent demands on the local staff and resources without returning the favor.

On the other hand, PCs who have frequently helped out a Tether's staff will generally get *some* return, even from a nominally hostile Tether. Petty politics are especially important at infernal Tethers, where a demon's reputation often outweighs considerations of Superior politics – at least while no higher-up is watching.

FRIENDLY TETHERS

A friendly Tether is first and foremost a place of safety – short of a major attack, Tethers are a haven from pursuit. (However, even the friendliest Seneschal will have *words* with someone who brings a squad of Fire Calabim – or a police SWAT team – to his doorstep.) It is also a place where a little more disturbance from a few Songs won't draw unwanted attention. If the Tether belongs to a celestial's own Superior, it is also a good place to contact him, either by sending a message or by invoking him.

Friendly Tethers can be used as celestial short-cuts between places in the corporeal realm (in Hell itself, Servitors of friendly powers may buy passage with Essence or information). They can also be used to ascend to seek favors from higher-ups. Although ascension at a Tether does not *require* permission, it is always good politics to request it from the Seneschal or his subordinates, and a little Essence "donation" is appropriate, unless the celestial is low.

Support services normally available include Songs of Healing (and sometimes other useful Songs), dissonance removal and various mundane services like vehicle and other equipment loans, temporary IDs, Role creation and verification and anything appropriate to the regular corporeal activity of the Tether.

Major assistance, such as the loan of staff or artifacts, will require at *least* the Seneschal's direct approval. The petitioner will also have to provide a good explanation of why this is important to the Tether and its Superior.

Dealing with a friendly Tether has its drawbacks. The PC may have a supervisor at the Tether, who will give him orders and demand progress reports. Or there may be NPCs with distinctions who will commandeer the visitor and his friends. The Tether staff will also feel free to call on local "friendlies" for assistance with *their* problems . . .


REACTION ROLLS FOR TETHER STAFF

In some cases, the GM may wish to make a reaction roll when a PC requests something from a Tether. Some suggested modifiers are:

Own Superior's Tether: +4
Allied Superior's Tether: +2
Associated Superior's Tether: +1
Neutral Superior's Tether: +0
Hostile Superior's Tether: -2
Enemy Superior's Tether: -4
Other side's Tether: -6
Angel at Ethereal Tether: -3
Sword Servitor at Ethereal Tether: -6
Demon at Ethereal Tether: -2 to +2
Nightmare Servitor at Ethereal Tether: -1 to +3
Character has distinctions: +1 per level of distinction
Character has "connections" (e.g., Judgment, the Game): +2
Character has corporeal Status: no effect
Character has obvious Discord: -1 per level (angels only)
Character's companions serve hostile Words: -1
Character's companions serve enemy Words: -2
Character has made significant requests recently: -1 to -6
Character has significantly aided Tether recently: +1 to +4

NEUTRAL TETHERS

Most services of a friendly Tether are also available at a neutral one . . . at a price. However, very few neutral Seneschals will put major resources at risk, so loans of staff or artifacts are extremely unlikely. Services which are particularly appropriate to the Tether's Word are the easiest and cheapest to get: healing at a Flowers Tether, false ID at a Game one, a monetary loan at Trade.

Demons usually find that using neutral Tethers as short-cuts to distant corporeal places is more expense than it's worth. Not only will the Seneschal want payment, but passage through one or more neutral Principalities is difficult and expensive. Servitors on a direct mission from a Prince, with appropriate proof, can often intimidate their way through.
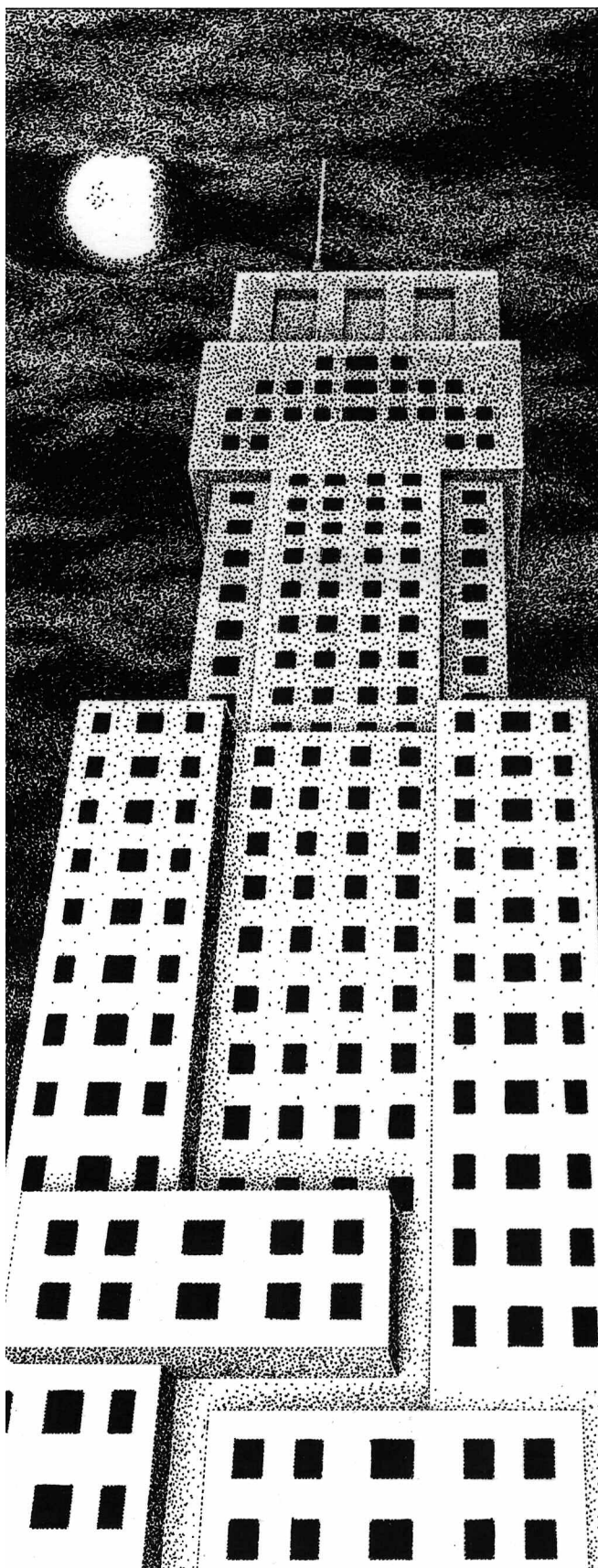
Requests at a neutral Tether require an audience with the Seneschal, unless he has delegated this responsibility to an underling. The Seneschal will be looking to come out ahead in the deal, either in the form of Essence, services or goods, or advancement of his Tether or his Superior's Word. Demons will want a little something on the side for themselves, too.

With a good explanation of why the current task will forward the Seneschal's cause and his Superior's Word, basic aid may be free. On the other hand, if the petitioner's current activities are bad for the Tether or its Word, he had better either cover that up, or be prepared to pay through the horns (or halo) . . . Intimidation is rarely a good tactic when dealing with Seneschals – only a *direct* request from a Superior is likely to impress them, since they are usually more powerful in their own Tether than anyone but the most powerful Word-bound or a Superior. For demons, blackmail is a viable tactic . . . if you want a Seneschal for a personal enemy.

Infernal Seneschals are very unlikely to take payment in promises of future favors (except ones backed by Geas); they didn't get where they are today by *trusting* people. Even angelic Seneschals will want payment up front – in the uncertainty of the War, the petitioner may not be around to repay the favor.

There are certain advantages to dealing with neutral Tethers. For one thing, they rarely call for help, except as part of a specific deal. For another, they are unlikely to report deals to the PC's own Superior, which makes them handy if the character is up to something his boss might not like.

HOSTILE TETHERS

Sometimes the only Tethers in town are hostile to the characters – not on the opposite side, but belonging to a Superior who dislikes the Servitors' master or masters. Depending on the situation, this can mean the Tether is entirely off-limits, or that there is a prickly relationship between the Tether staff and other celestials.

In areas that are dominated by one side or the other, the weaker group's Seneschals will rarely bother with infighting. They have enough problems without antagonizing those who are theoretical allies. They usually provide help, if grudgingly. They are also more likely to *request* help from nominally hostile Servitors. (And more likely to form relationships with them which would otherwise be nearly unthinkable, if the situation is at all stable.)

In areas that are contested, or where the Seneschals belong to the ruling faction, Servitors of opposing Superiors may be made to feel very unwelcome, refused assistance and resources, or denied access to the Tethers entirely.

Sometimes hostile celestials are forced to co-exist, either because they're outnumbered by the other side or because the outsiders have political clout (such as being from Judgment or the Game). Then, Seneschals must carefully balance their overall goals with their Superior's goals. The other Servitors will be doing the same. Seneschals may use the opportunity to get in some licks of their own. They might charge several measures of Essence to permit ascending, insist that any assistance be repaid with janitorial service or even "requisition" an artifact the visitor is carrying.

Investigative Servitors of Dominic and Asmodeus are particularly likely to be at the mercy of a hostile Seneschal at one point or another. They are also particularly likely to show up on the player characters' Tether-doorstep before starting a sweep of the local celestials. Since their respective bosses keep a close eye on them, they're *probably* not worth the effort to actually attack – but little inconveniences can make life interesting.

Servitors of the Wind and of Theft may also breeze through areas where they are less than appreciated, but they rarely stick around long enough to be troubled by the lack of friendly Tethers.

In general, dealing with a hostile Tether is like dealing with a neutral one, with a lot of gratuitous harassment, a *much* larger price tag and less chance of success. Using hostile demonic Tethers as corporeal short-cuts is especially dangerous.

THE OTHER SIDE

In some ways, dealing with the other side's Tethers is easier than with a hostile Tether on one's own side. Requests are *more* likely to be granted, though the final price tag will usually be higher. To start with, both sides are always looking for converts and agents; aiding someone from the other side gives a prime handle for blackmailing them into further return cooperation. One dan-

ger, of course, is that the petitioner's Superior will be *very* unhappy, unless there were orders for such collaboration. Also, if the group includes uncompromising types (Malakim, or Servitors of the Sword, Judgment, the War or the Game), such a tactic may cause internal strife.

There are four circumstances where a Tether staff might cooperate with celestials from the other side:

✠ The PCs can be used for the Seneschal's own purposes (or his Superior's), or they appear ripe for "turning." This is especially relevant with Renegades and Outcasts.

✠ The request is for aid against a common enemy. This is primarily useful for angels seeking help from demonic Tethers. Infernals are happy to cooperate with angelic cannon-fodder, during feuds with Servitors of enemy Words.

✠ The characters somehow manage to masquerade as allies.

✠ The Tether serves one of the more "laid-back" or pragmatic Superiors, like Novalis, Marc, Andrealphus or Lilith. Kobal's Tethers are usually quick to "help" *anyone*, but no one with any sense would ask them . . .

The petitioners should expect to be used by their "allies," on top of whatever overt price they had to pay. If they're lucky, that's the worst that will happen.

STAFF PLAYER CHARACTERS

Players may wish to introduce characters who are Tether staff, or a PC may harbor ambitions to become a Seneschal. Since staff – especially Seneschals – are generally expected to stick close to their Tethers, the Game Master should consider the implications carefully. It can be difficult, but there are ways to handle the problems.

THE TETHER-BASED CAMPAIGN

One possibility is for the entire campaign to revolve around the activities at a Tether. *All* the characters are staff, or celestials and Soldiers who work in the area and are regular visitors.

Besides the obvious plots involving promotion of the Tether's Word, or enemy attempts to weaken or destroy it, individual scenarios may revolve around visitors to the Tether, human or otherwise. This is also a good setting for character relations stories involving heavy roleplaying. Many television series have worked successfully with similar "single-setting" situations – everything from *Cheers* and *M*A*S*H* to *Deep Space Nine* and *Babylon 5* to long-running daytime soap operas. As with TV series, however, the problem is to keep the plots fresh.

The Vengeance Gambit

A variant of the Tether-based campaign is one that starts with the *destruction* of the Tether (obviously a Word-bound Seneschal PC would be in trouble here). The pursuit and punishment of the offenders becomes a major focus for the character group. They may even become Outcasts or Renegades because of their failure to protect the Tether.

Sustaining this sort of story arc is hard – it works best if the enemy isn't immediately obvious, or there are subtle layers of conspiracy and double-crosses involved. Otherwise it tends to degenerate into a pursue and destroy mission, which either ends too abruptly, or drags on with the enemy barely escaping every time, to the mounting frustration of the players.

"It's My Day Job"

If only one or two PCs in a group work for Tethers, they can be given Roles that place them at the Tether only during the day. In their "off hours," they are free to pursue other activities – the main plots of the campaign. This isn't very different from characters who have higher-level Roles that demand lots of maintenance.

This concept works best if everyone in the group has day jobs, which function as "down time" from the GM's point of view. If there are several Tethers in the area, perhaps some of the PCs work for different ones, getting together at night to hunt the enemy . . . or cause mischief.

Tether Service as a Character Background

Many celestials begin service in the corporeal realm as Tether staff. Some start as "runners" while they are still imps, gremlins or relievers. Others are assigned staff duty when they get their first vessel.

Tethers are an ideal learning environment for newly corporeal celestials – they can stay there with little in the way of initial equipment or resources, and be introduced to human society in easy stages. As they pick up Earthly skills and behaviors, they can be given a more independent role and begin pursuing other projects.

Unlike a current staff assignment, Tether service in a character's backstory is unlikely to cause campaign problems. Instead, it offers the GM ways to bring in older celestials – and humans – whom the character might owe a few favors, or want revenge on.

SENESCHALS

Seneschals are usually picked for loyalty and competence. Sometimes, a Prince picks someone who seems over-ambitious, and seeks to have that demon Word-bound to a Tether, diverting him from ever being able to threaten the Prince's power. Competence and loyalty or ambition are common enough in player characters and, for whatever reason, becoming a Seneschal is a laudable goal. Tethers are a source of responsibility and power, and a capable Seneschal can enjoy many rewards from his Superior. For the requirements and perks of being a Seneschal, see Chapter 2.

On the down-side, especially from the Game Master's point of view, an Attuned or Word-bound Seneschal is stuck in his Tether and the surrounding area.

Seneschals shouldn't leave their Tethers frivolously, and if the GM wishes to change the campaign setting, a Seneschal character will be have to be retired, staying with the Tether. (Such a promotion may be a good way to *intentionally* retire a character, though.)

Another potential problem is that Seneschals are powerful characters – normally at least 13 Forces, with access to abnormal amounts of Essence and often control of lesser celestials and Soldiers. It may be implausible to have other PCs at the same power level routinely working together – so other players may have to play the Seneschal's staff, at much lower power levels. However, a Seneschal with a large NPC staff may be a good choice for a solo campaign.

Also on the down-side, from the *character's* perspective, is that Seneschals are diverted from the path of promotion. He may still gain other Distinctions, but it will be for subtle work rather than leading attacks upon the enemy. Most important, once Word-bound to a Tether, the character cannot expect to ever get a more potent Word, and suffers all the problems of being bound to a Word that can be corporeally destroyed.

Angels are selfless enough that this diversion from the promotion path does not distress them. Demons are selfish enough that immediate power and potential security sounds like a good bargain, especially if their Prince seems to think they're getting uppity.

Retaining Mobility

Fortunately, there are ways to balance a character's desire to become a Seneschal with the requirements of a given game.

✠ A Seneschal *is* moving off the promotion track, and losing the chance at any other Word. Therefore, a Superior with plans may refuse to allow his Servitor to become more than a caretaker or perhaps Attuned Seneschal. Or Lucifer or the Seraphim Council may refuse to Word-bind the character for *their* own reasons.

✠ If the Tether is potentially Transferable or Mobile (p. 17), a Word-bound Seneschal *can* go adventuring, if he brings his Tether. A Transferable Tether must be set up in a new location – an adventure in itself – while a Mobile Tether can simply be packed up and shifted. Tethers to the Wind and Theft are particularly *likely* to be Mobile, if often weaker than stationary strongholds.

✠ A Kyriotate, even if Word-bound to its Tether, is still able to multi-task. So long as it is not driven out of all its hosts in an area, it can spread itself around the globe while still keeping an eye on its responsibilities.

✠ The character may be Word-bound to *transient* Tethers (p. 12), and can go any place where the conditions for the transient Tether-phenomena might occur.

CREATING TETHERS

The mechanics by which Tethers come into being are vague and ineffable – only the Game Master decides where a new Tether will form and why. The actions of celestials and ethereals are more likely to hinder the formation of links than help. The more disturbance or supernatural "coaxing" (such as with resonances), the *less* likely it is a Tether will appear. There are, of course, exceptions; at least twice, Gabriel has directly inspired humans enough that *their reactions* formed Tethers after she left.

Soldiers – and even Saints or undead – can try to assist Tether-formation in mundane ways, but even then, the creation of one is by no means assured. Superiors are always experimenting with new ways to tease Tethers out of the Symphony. Unfortunately, sending 50 human servants to promote one's Word in a certain location has met with no better success than spreading them out with instructions to watch likely locations for naturally arising Tethers.

Attuned Seneschals

If a player character is already Attuned to a stationary Tether, and the Game Master wishes to change the location of the campaign, it is still possible. *Note:* most of the ways to get out of this situation will involve a loss of celestial status – losing the power and responsibility of a Seneschal does not happen without repercussions!

Most Attuned Seneschals hope to earn the Tether as a Word, and since they are Attuned *to a specific Tether* they are unlikely to *be* moved by their Superior. But it can happen.

✠ A Servitor may be a "professional temporary Seneschal." He is routinely attuned to a new Tether and moved along when the situation is stable, or transferred to Tethers where the previous Seneschal (Attuned or Word-bound) has died or performed *very* unsatisfactorily, until a new, permanent, Seneschal can be found. This is not a job many Servitors are assigned to, but most Superiors maintain a handful of professional temp-Seneschals, and the character might be chosen to replace one who settled down or was killed. This is the only method of moving around that does not have a stigma attached, but the celestial is usually assigned to a Tether *somewhere*, and not able to travel freely.

desire intellectually, even other demons are going to be revolted by the idea.)

Losing a Word traumatically usually results in death; however, it can be removed. A Word-bound Seneschal *can* have his Word stripped from him, along with the Forces bound into the Tether. This is not trivial, even for Lucifer – though Lucifer might have plans that require it. Most often, a Word is stripped from a Seneschal only if he has failed dramatically, but is still (somehow) too valuable to lose, or if the Tether is about to die and the Superior very much wishes to keep his minion alive. Most angels would rather die with their Word. The Seraphim Council has never been known to remove the Word of an angel who was not cooperating, though they are more likely to be compassionate and make the offer. Lucifer is less likely to do it from compassion, but the cooperation of the demon is not required.

However, in the **In Nomine** world, it is *very rare* for even Attuned Seneschals to be moved (unless it's the celestial's job). It is even more rare for a Word-bound one to survive the loss of his Tether. The character will not be unscathed, and his loss will color the reactions of other celestials. Celestials pity (or mock) someone who lost a Tether through misfortune, and look down on someone who gave up the post voluntarily or made too many errors to keep it. If a demon was stripped of his Word by Lucifer, it makes his fellows nervous. Distinctions and other Attunements may be removed by an annoyed Superior. Forces may be stripped away (especially if the Tether was lost by violence). Future advancement will be difficult for a long time, and depression or neuroses would be plausible to roleplay. The celestial could be sent to the celestial realm to heal or because he is in disfavor; this may not suit the GM's purposes in many campaigns.

TETHERS AS A GM TOOL

Tethers can provide campaign elements for the Game Master, as well as being useful to player characters and as "local color."

One use is as a campaign focus. The PCs are specialists in Tether work, involved in hunting or encouraging new ones, or a special-operations team specializing in destroying Tethers. Another possibility is the Tether-staff campaign, where all the PCs work at the same or nearby Tethers. However, this type of campaign may encounter problems with the restricted mobility of Tether staff (see *Staff Player Characters* on p. 65).

"Tether" is merely the word preferred by most English-speaking celestials, along with "Strong," "Average" and "Weak" as classifications. Some celestials prefer Hebrew, others Latin. Many use an appropriate word in the language of the country they work in. Some – usually Creationers or Wind-Servitors – have tried Esperanto or other human-designed languages.

The preferred word in Hebrew is *Hibbur*, pronounced "hib-BUR," and meaning "a joining" or "connection." Large is *gadol* ("ga-DOL," big, mighty), average is *memutstsa* ("memuts-TSA'," average) and small is *katan* ("ka-TAN," small, young). A micro-Tether would be one that was *ketantan* ("ketan-TAN," tiny).

In Latin, one common term is *Castellum*, pronounced "cas-TEL-lum," and meaning "castle" or "fortress." Large is *magnum*, average is *medium* and small is *parvulum*. *Minisculum* could refer to a micro-Tether. Calling a Tether a "Sanctum" (sanctuary) is also appropriate, as is "Vinculum" (chain).

✠ A Servitor can screw up (or be framed!) so that the Superior re-evaluates the being's capability to manage the Tether.

✠ A celestial can find himself unsuited to the job, or develop an emotional relationship with someone who is not tied down, and request release. Since an unhappy caretaker is less effective than one who *wants* the post, such requests are easily granted – though rarely cheerfully.

✠ The Tether may begin to fail, or be successfully attacked so that it is abandoned prematurely, and the character is freed from his obligations.

Afterward, the Servitor will be sent on tough missions to make up for the amount of energy his Boss wasted granting and removing the Seneschal Attunement.

Moving the Immovable Object

For a Word-bound Seneschal, the process is more traumatic. It is a rare celestial who can contemplate losing or changing his Word. Some can joke about it, but it is akin to joking about tearing out one's eyeballs – anyone actually doing it is regarded as mentally unstable. (Some demons *are* that unstable. They have been stuck with a pathetic Word, in their opinion, and they want something *better*, even if they have to hack off bits of themselves to get it. Though others may understand this

Many possible plots involve Tethers. They can be McGuffins – the target of a wide-ranging hunt. This might be for a suspected secret Tether, or trying to locate the corporeal end of a wild one whose upper locus was spotted but not traced. Other plots involve trying to recover a McGuffin from a safe place in an enemy Tether, or racing to reach safety at the nearest Tether before someone steals a McGuffin from the group.

Characters can be drafted to help out at a local Tether, or ordered to assault one (either to destroy it or as a diversion).

The subtle, indirect war of Tethers in an area provides wide scope for plots. PCs may be involved in encouraging humans to act in ways that would weaken or eliminate an enemy Tether, or strengthen or maintain a friendly one. These battles are often fought more in the press and the local city council (or planning board) than in the streets. Cultivating and influencing critical humans, or humans en masse, is an essential part of Tether warfare. Favor-trading, bribery, blackmail and even murder are battle tactics. Media access, grass-roots citizen groups and lobbyists are major weapons.

A new Tether in the area is a rare event, so direct battles for a wild Tether are likely to be "once in a campaign" plots. However, celestials may be assigned long-term "human-herding" projects that would favor Tether formation. They can also be assigned to oppose similar enemy attempts – it may be a long shot, trying to nurture Tether-formation, but will enemy Superiors want to take the risk it might succeed?

Chapter 6, *Adventure Seeds*, contains a number of more exotic plot seeds built around Tethers.

Rewards and Punishments for Tether Operations

Tethers are important and rare. A character who is instrumental in the acquisition of a new Tether by his Superior, or in the destruction of an enemy Tether, is in line for a *major* reward. This is likely to be a second- or third-level distinction, a rare and valuable Servitor Attunement, the addition of several Forces or sponsorship for a Word. (A position as Seneschal of a new Tether is another common reward, but one best reserved for NPCs – see *Seneschals*, p. 66).

A crucial role in deflecting an attack on a Tether, or significantly enhancing its power, is usually worth a new Force, a Servitor Attunement or a first-level distinction. Lesser roles or more minor services to the Tether draw typical mission rewards.

Being primarily responsible for loss of a Tether, on the other hand, is *not* a good career move. Demons in this position are likely to be stripped of Forces, distinctions and attunements; they will then draw the worst missions, where they are marked "expendable," if their Prince does not destroy them outright. Members of the Host are more likely to be stripped of distinctions and given the worst scutwork jobs their Archangel has, often with "expendable" written on their files . . . Angels may also develop serious dissonance from such a disaster; some will turn Outcast or even Fall.

Lesser responsibility for a major Tether disaster, or primary responsibility for a minor one tend to result in more normal punishments. The bunglers can expect loss of distinctions, artifacts and corporeal amenities, assignment to unimportant tasks, no replacement for lost vessels (or replacement with a particularly bad one) and general loss of favor with the Superior. Demonic punishments are more variable, depending on the mood and whim of the Prince involved.

times when circumstances appear *sure* to produce one – and don't. Other times, a seemingly trivial action forges a powerful link that lands directly in front of a Superior.

Tethers are direct links to a Word or entity, infused with the essential nature of that being, brought about because something within the Symphony resonated intensely with a concept. The first thing anyone notices, upon finding themselves in a Tether, is its emotional influence. A link to Nightmares raises goosebumps; a tie to Baal speeds the heart with thoughts of glorious slaughter; people relax and play in a garden of Flowers. This atmosphere, far more than any other aspect, shapes first impressions of the location. Those who are associated with the same Word will feel at home. Those bound to hostile Words are uncomfortable and edgy.

Even Tethers to the ethereals are haunting places, echoing with the faded glory of the gods who were worshipped there. Celestials may recall that there were days when angels and ethereals fought, and the ethereals were not the only ones who died. Or they may recall alliances, in the days when the ethereals were not just a minor foe.

The birth of a Tether is, almost always, Symphonically quiet – but it was generated by powerful natural phenomena or intense concentrations of human thought and emotion, and celestials should never forget that. The Tether itself will not let them, while they are near. Demons may try to ignore this, since it's hard to mock the "little monkeys" when they're a major source of something that not even a Superior can create. Angels may stop and smile at a Tether's aura, knowing the rightness of their battle to keep humans free of infernal influence.

Sometimes a nearly dead Tether can be revitalized. This may incorporate a Symphonic extravaganza, as the Word swells and explodes through the area. Minions of the opposite side can develop splitting headaches, or worse. Servitors of the Tether's reawakened Word will rejoice, perhaps even despite themselves.

From a Game Master's perspective, adjectives are invaluable. The characters should never encounter "just a Tether." Each Tether has a subtly different atmosphere, shaped by the event that formed it. A Tether of Blandine can be a place of quiet hope, or filled with the heart-pounding memory of when someone took a breath and jumped into the unknown to catch a dream.

ATMOSPHERE

Sodden, hungry and cold, the soldiers crouch in their trenches. They mutter curses and check their gas masks again and again, for they remember the victims of Boche mustard gas they've seen: blinded, coughing blood, their guts rotting inside them. Gunshots rattle overhead.

In the cold drizzle before dawn, without even moonlight to see by, they are given the order to charge, and they do. Shells and shrapnel kill them, machine-gun fire cuts them down as they run with their bayonets. The survivors tumble into trenches, separated and alone.

Like a nightmare, the call to charge comes again. Again, they do. And their footprints in the mud are the start of a path into Hell.

Tethers are not merely bundles of Features and statistics on Essence flow. They are also not *only* tactical strongholds to protect those of one side and be attacked by those of another. Tethers are unpredictable – there are

CASTELLA MUNDI

FORTRESSES OF THE WORLD

The three angels gathered around the map spread on the table. His wings folded back in sprays of emerald feathers, the Seraph leaned forward to frown, six-eyed, at one of the towns.

HARMON 98

"Are you sure that is the quickest route?" the Cherub asked. He crouched back against the ivory wall lazily, dark pinions curling above his wolfish body in an arch of shadows.

The pale-skinned Elohite nodded, looking up with sea-deep eyes. "I have calculated distances, and taken the available Tethers into account. We are under particular instructions to check the Seneschals in the area."

"Something which hopefully will not produce more than the odd case of dissonance," the Seraph muttered. "At least this chart should be up-to-date, given the information feed from the relevant Cathedrals."

"Nobody could have predicted the Creation Tether last time," the Elohite pointed out mildly. "It was only just established, and did not appear on any charts."

"Least of all Creation's." The Cherub sounded amused.

"One should not be prejudiced." The Seraph shifted his wings, an uneasy movement. "However, we **should** not have any of theirs on our route – do we, Eluzai?"

"We do not." The Elohite's reply was bland. "One of Fire, two of War, one of Flowers, one of our own Judgment, two of Stone, and one of Trade. We have particular instructions to check the Trade Tether for any signs of bargaining with the Lust Tether that is noted to exist in the same town. Have you seen the file on that one yet, Jason?"

The Cherub shook his head. "I was getting the travel arrangements sorted out. If we go down to our own Tether in Wantchester, there," he pointed to a circled spot on the map, "then Margaretha will have a hire car ready for us, and all the usual documents. We can be off nice and early, and miss the rush hour traffic."

"A very corporeal preoccupation," murmured the Seraph, disapprovingly.

"We wish to perform our duty rapidly," Eluzai stated mildly. "Avoiding rush hour traffic will save us at least an hour."

Jason nodded. "Less risky, too."

The Seraph glanced between the two, then nodded. "Very well. How long is this entire trip likely to take?"

Eluzai considered. "Probably three or four days, assuming that we do not need to investigate deeply in any one place. If we do, then the time factor rises."

Jason leaned forward to consider the map. "If we do get stopped or delayed before the Stone Tether at Wittleton, we might do better to ascend from wherever we are, and then descend to the Stone Tether. We'll save at least half a day's driving, and Stone is usually reasonable about us using their Tethers for passage."

Eluzai folded his arms. "It negates some of the impact of the arrival of a triad of Judgment, though, if we descend celestially, or it emphasizes it in the wrong way."

The Seraph tilted his head to one side, then the other, then shrugged. "We will decide as the current circumstances dictate. Both positions have merit." He paused. "Have you made this circuit before, Jason?"

Jason nodded. "Three times now. No new Tethers since the last time. I prefer it to some of the other circuits – I don't want to end up boating down the Ganges again."

"Subjective," murmured Eluzai, "but understandable."
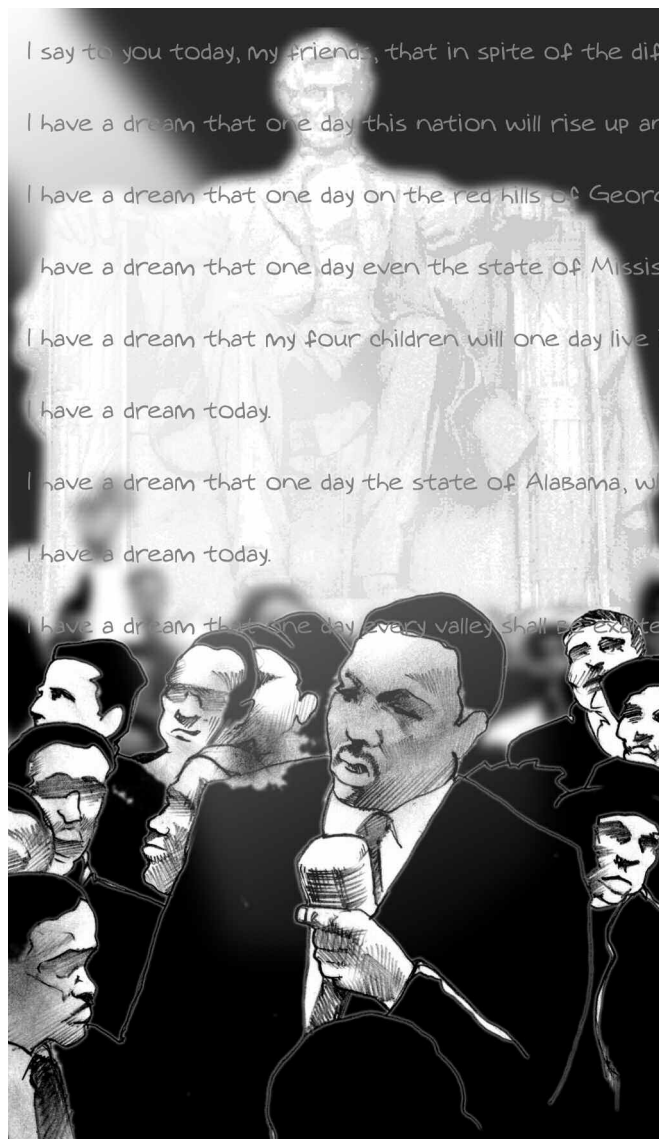
The following sections provide a sampling of the Tethers of the major Superiors. Each lists that Superior's policy toward claiming, maintaining and attempting to create Tethers; a major Tether; and a site which is somehow unusual (e.g., with a non-intuitive link to the Word, or in an obscure location). Each also includes a generic location which can, with minimal alterations, be placed at nearly any location the Game Master desires – even in his home town. Also listed is a small selection of the other Tethers the Superior possesses.

BLANDINE

Tether Policy

Blandine is not as interested in Tethers to the corporeal world as most other Archangels. Her primary work is in the Marches, night after night (and it's always night *somewhere*), protecting the dreams of humanity from Nightmare's predations.

But many human dreams – both literal and metaphorical – are affected by what happens in their waking hours, so Blandine will not abandon all interest in the corporeal realm. Blandine's Servitors are rarely instructed to help bring about new Tethers, but neither do they ignore Tethers which form due to human activity. Blandine is not picky about where such fortunate links appear; most are small, as dreams are very personal things. She also protects her existing Tethers, if only for the sake of that Tether's caretaker; a flourishing Tether is a *Seneschal's* most precious dream.

Major Tether: Steps of the Lincoln Memorial, Washington, D.C., USA

" . . . I say to you today, my friends, that in spite of the difficulties and frustrations of the moment, I still have a dream . . . I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: 'We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal.' . . . I have a dream that my four children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character. I have a dream today."
  – *Dr. Martin Luther King, August 28, 1963*

This is perhaps the ultimate example of a single, dynamic event carrying enough power to create a Tether instantly. Forever remembered as the "I Have a Dream" speech, Dr. King's impassioned words – with 250,000 civil-rights demonstrators hanging on every syllable as they crowded around the Lincoln Memorial steps, at the west end of the Reflecting Pool (and millions more watching on television) – created a Tether to Dreams on the spot.

Another tribute to the extraordinary power of this Tether is its close proximity to a Tether of David, the Washington Monument (**Fall of the Malakim,** p. 12). David and Blandine are not on the best of terms, and Tethers – especially to Words often opposed to each other – rarely form so close together.

The Seneschal, a Menunite (Blandine's Choir of Hope, **The Marches,** p. 15) named Tara, watches over the Tether in the role of a National Park Service guide.

Unusual Tether: Siborsky Sleep Laboratory, Moscow, Russia

At the height of the Cold War, the Russians spent some of their considerable military budget on *extremely* speculative attempts to find new weapons to use against the West. One of these experiments went on for years in the Siborsky Sleep Labs, in a sub-basement of an anonymous Moscow building near the Kremlin. There, Dr. Antonin Siborsky dosed volunteers (and the occasional political prisoner) with LSD, peyote, mescaline and a number of other synthetic drugs he came up with himself. He hoped to develop untapped psychic potential and create an army of "dream warriors." While Siborsky was unsuccessful in training any useful tools for Mother Russia, the subjects' dreams attracted Blandine's attention, even more so than usual. *Despite* the hellish nature of Siborsky's work, those dreams were vivid, surreal and altogether wonderful – one might even say divine. Today, the lab is underfunded and the Tether is fading in power. So far the attuned Seneschal, an Elohite named Nemuel, has not been able to get into a position of authority and get sufficient funding for Siborsky's work. However, he hopes to do so, and channel it from a fortunate accident to a force that actually promotes goodness as well as good dreams.

Generic Tether: Golden MomentsDay Care

Even in poverty-stricken inner-city slums, little children still dream. They dream of a better life, of green grass and yards, of nights free of sirens and gunfire, of success and future happiness. The workers at Golden Moments Day Care nurture these dreams, allowing them to grow and thrive for as long as possible before they are dashed against the hard stones of everyday life. A talented, lucky few may even realize their dreams. That's enough to keep the Seneschal and a rotating crew of angels (there to work off whatever dissonance the War has forced upon them) working hard to maintain this humble Tether.

Other Tethers

Blandine's most famous Tether, of course, is her Tower, bridging Heaven and the Marches (**The Marches,** p. 86). Tethers to the corporeal realm include the Sojack House (**The Marches,** p. 9); a small private garden where Bell Blossoms grow (**Liber Reliquarum,** p. 52); the "Field of Dreams" baseball park in Dyersville, Iowa; and, within the *ethereal* part of her Tower, a Tether to a re-creation of the Library of Alexandria (**Liber Reliquarum**, p. 118).

ᗡAVID

Tether Policy

David's Tethers fall into two categories: elemental and communal. Elemental Tethers mostly formed with the Earth, though some rock formations have become Tethers as a result of human worship. Communal Tethers arise when groups coalesce and thrive under adversity. Many old cities have Tethers of Stone dating back to when they were villages.

David does little to encourage new Tethers. New elemental ones are unlikely; communal Tethers form only when humans prove themselves worthy, consecrating a place with their blood and sweat. The energy he saves by not seeking Tethers, he expends in defense of those he holds. Even the least of David's Tethers is heavily fortified; sometimes they can be eroded, but direct assaults are almost unheard of.

Major Tether: Uluru, Central Australia

Rising 1,100 feet (335 meters) above the ground, 2.2 miles (3.6 km) long and 1.5 miles (2 km) wide, Uluru (also known as Ayers Rock) is one of Australia's most famous landmarks. Despite its remote location in the center of the continent, it's a popular tourist attraction. It has been a sacred site – and a Tether to Stone – since humans came to Australia. Recently, the local aborigines gained freehold title to Uluru Kata Tjuta National Park. They now run the nearby Yulara Village tourism complex, while preserving the many sacred sites on and around Uluru that are off-limits to outsiders.

The aborigines also had ties with the ethereal spirits of the Dreamtime (**The Marches,** p. 103), and Uluru was once also an ethereal Tether, Forked (p. 16) between their Domain and David's Catacombs. David didn't mind sharing, but the Purification Crusade drove ethereals away from Uluru, and destroyed the Tether to the Marches. However, ethereal spirits are still sometimes called here. The Elohite Seneschal, Ulowa, becomes taciturn if questioned about them, saying only that no ethereals have ever bothered him, and he doesn't go looking for trouble. If the fork were somehow re-established, he would not comment.

Ulowa appears as a dusty old aboriginal guide. He discourages the unfit and the disrespectful from attempting the ascent to the top of the rock; litterers and vandals sometimes have unfortunate accidents.

Unusual Tether: Brother Abdullah's Kung Fu Studio

Ten years ago, this two-story brownstone house in the inner city was a crackhouse. It was so notorious, and had such a debilitating effect on the surrounding African-American community, that it had long been a Tether to Fleurity, the young Prince of Drugs. Then a man named Mohammed Faris Abdullah came to the crack house with a posse of his Black Muslim brothers. They drove away the dealers, helped the willing addicts get cleaned up and kicked out the rest. The Nation of Islam moved into the building, set it up as a community center and has held it ever since.

All this, they did unaware that they were facing diabolical opponents, or that they had just demolished an infernal Tether without any celestial assistance. That event spontaneously rechristened the building as a Tether to Stone. It now has a Malakite Seneschal, Salah, who has recruited Mohammed as a Soldier to the Divine cause. Mohammed now teaches kung fu to local youths, but that's just a small part of what goes on there.

Most of the other humans who live and work there are unaware of the Tether's true nature. The Nation of Islam is a controversial organization and largely an American phenomenon, with few connections to mainstream Islam. It's known for making inflammatory statements about race, gender and religion, and many of the people who frequent the Tether (including Mohammed himself) have little love for white people. Not all of his neighbors approve of his methods, but no one can deny that he's done more good for the community than any official agencies.

Elijah,
Abdul saw a man in the neighborhood yesterday who is known to be Hellsworn. He's staying at the hotel on 10th. Make sure he finds his way out of here. Now.
Peace, Mohammed
P.S. – did you see the article on us? Blasphemers.
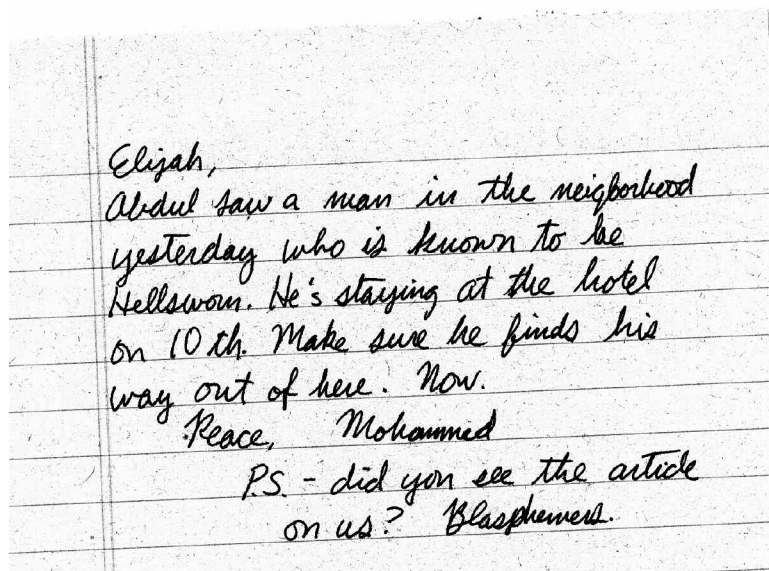
Generic Tether: The Independent Citizen's Militia Headquarters

Separatist groups are popular in many parts of the world. Some are organized along ethnic, linguistic or political lines; others are simply outlets for testosterone-driven weekend warriors. Many are connected to fanatic or apocalyptic religious movements (and many aren't). Despite occasional connection to terrorist or racist activities, the militant nature and defensive orientation of such groups makes them breeding grounds for Soldiers of David.

In the United States, the Independent Citizen's Militia is one such organization. They look after each other, they're active in their community . . . and they stockpile lots of guns. Their backwoods headquarters became a Tether after they defended it in battle . . . not physical, but legal. Local politicians, alarmed at the "survivalist wackos" in their back yard, tried to pass ordinances against the Militia, and sued to reclaim the land on which the group had built their bunker-style HQ. The Militia successfully defended themselves in court, and doubled their membership as a result.

Other Tethers

The Catacombs of Rome; Enchanted Rock, in Texas (*Night Music,* p. 91); a tower on the Great Wall of China; Masada, in Israel; the coal mine in Pennsylvania that saw the birth of the miner's union; the deepest tunnel in the Rock of Gibraltar; and the Washington Monument (*Fall of the Malakim,* p. 12).
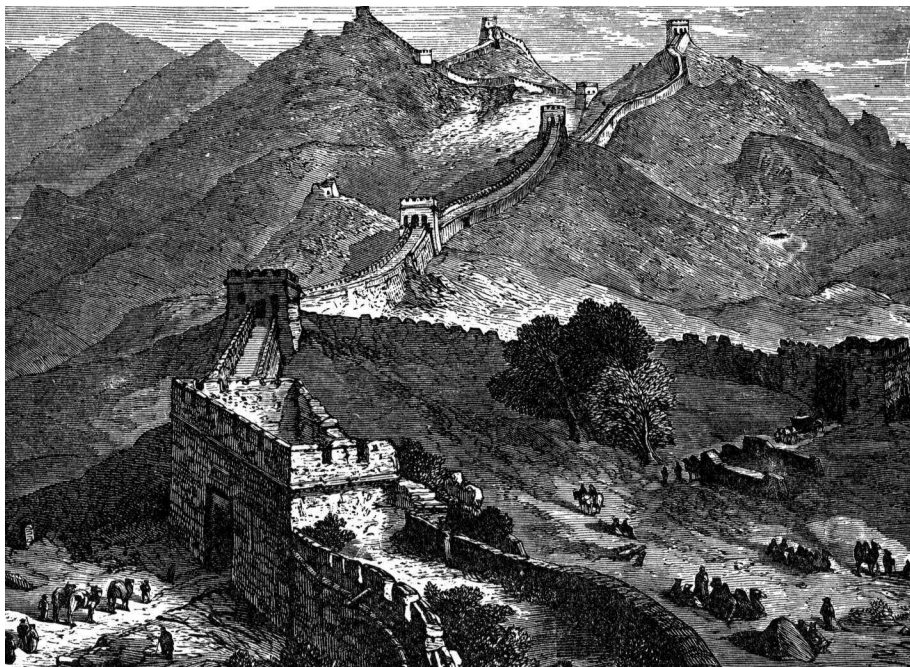
DOMINIC

Tether Policy

Dominic actively seeks new Tethers – anywhere that strengthens his Word is another Divine beachhead on Earth, and another base from which his servants can execute judgment on the world. He is particularly interested in law courts, and would make every such establishment a Tether of Judgment if he could. As it is, he has servants working in nearly every major legal arena, always on the lookout for potential Tethers, or events that might lead to one.

Major Tether: The Code of Hammurabi

One of Dominic's oldest and most treasured Tethers is also one of his smallest. The fabled king of Babylon, Hammurabi, introduced the first known comprehensive legal document, a code supposedly of divine origins, setting down uniform "eye for an eye" justice to apply to all. The parallels between Hammurabi's code and the laws given down to the Hebrews by Moses are remarkable . . . and not coincidental, say Servitors of Dominic. Hammurabi's laws influenced numerous later civilizations.

The Code of Hammurabi is the name of the code itself, but also of the physical object on which it is engraved. It is an 8-foot-tall black diorite stele, originally erected in Babylon so that all citizens could see the law. It was taken to Persia by conquerors in the 12th century B.C., and remained there until

1902. The stele now resides in the Louvre in Paris, and the locus radiates out a few yards. Its Seneschal is a Seraph Master of Law named Deuteronomy, believed to know more about human laws than any human who has ever lived.

Deuteronomy patrols his area of the museum in animal vessels at night to protect it from minions of Valefor. Theft's Tether (p. 109) has been in the room with the Mona Lisa since before the stele was brought there. The Seneschals are currently on speaking terms, as they try to convert the other to their side with words alone.

Unusual Tether: Avrillac Chapel, Bourges, France

Everyone knows about the medieval witch-hunts, in which hundreds of innocent Europeans died after pernicious "trials." What is less well-known is that local churchmen often exerted their influence *against* the trials, which were more often initiated by greedy landholders than fanatical clergy. In a small chapel in France in the 16th century, a country friar ran an "underground railroad" of sorts, giving sanctuary to dozens of souls fleeing accusations of witchcraft. Every one of his charges was innocent, but when local authorities caught him, he himself was put on trial. Miraculously, the judges acquitted him after he gave an impassioned speech in his own defense.

The friar became a Saint upon his death, and as a result of his defense of the innocent, his chapel is now a Tether of Judgment. A Mercurian Seneschal with the Role of a priest has maintained it since the medieval era. Today it is a small, weak Tether, its history known only to the locals.

Generic Tether: Brown Count Courthouse

Circuit court judges have always held a tremendous amount of power locally, for good or for ill. In small U.S. towns and rural counties, they *are* the law, with few recourses for those wanting to appeal their idiosyncratic judgments.

Fortunately, the Brown County Courthouse has been blessed for the last 37 years by the Honorable Benjamin R. Kingsley. Judge Kingsley is a cantankerous Southern Baptist who is as deeply familiar with the Constitution as he is with the Bible. He has never found them to be in conflict, and he has never, in 37 years, made an unjust decision (though some of those who have tried, and failed, to influence him might disagree). With an even-handed mix of uncompromising judgment and (when it is warranted) compassion, and some occasional unortho-dox rulings, he has managed to push hundreds, possibly thousands of people coming through his courtroom toward their destinies and away from their fates. Dominic noticed Judge Kingsley about 20 years ago, and appointed a Cherub to watch over him. Ten years ago, his foresight was rewarded, when the Cherub called the Archangel of Judgment to consecrate a new Tether.

Other Tethers

Judge Roy Bean's courtroom in west Texas; Judgment Glade (**Heaven and Hell,** p. 17), an ancient Yuba Indian site near Sacramento, California; the Nuremberg Tribunal chamber in Germany; the Palais de Justice in Paris; the Supreme Court building in Washington, D.C.; the Inner Temple in London; and the World Court building in the Hague.

ELI

Tether Policy

The most stereotypical locations for Tethers of Creation are in art studios and maternity wards, but Creation is vast and varied – and so are its Tethers. Since Eli has left Heaven for tasks unknown, it has fallen upon his Seneschals to manage themselves and get by as best they can. Indeed, what organization still exists among his Servitors on Earth is coordinated by his Seneschals and elder Word-bound. At any time, most of his Tethers contain a hodgepodge of entities, from servants of Creation to allied celestials. Some of his Tethers are now "in service to" other Superiors with the understanding that they still continue to support Creation and its Servitors. Few Archangels will turn down the offer of a stable, established (if sometimes troublesome) Tether as a stronghold!

Several of Eli's weaker Tethers have been destroyed by infernal attacks, but most have proved surprisingly resilient . . . possibly due to the larger than usual number of angels and soldiers who "hang out" around them. Mysteriously, not only have new wild Tethers appeared in the Halls of Creation since Eli's "vacation" started, they have been stabilized in odd locations, though rarely with a Seneschal attuned to them. And so far, Judgment has not caught Eli in the act.

Major Tether: Stradivarius' Workshop, Cremona, Italy

"God needs violins to send His music into the world, and if any violins are defective, God's music will be spoiled."
– *Antonius Stradivarius Cremonensis*

This Quiet (p. 17) Tether formed when the young instrument maker created his first professional violin. For over 70 years he continued to create remarkable works, always trying to improve his craft (the best examples of which are guarded by relievers).

The Tether still exists, supported by musicians and scholars. The Seraph Seneschal, Heman, is a respected authority on ancient instruments, and is often consulted when authenticity is in doubt. The Tether is a closely held secret, known mostly to Servitors of Creation and Destiny. Heman pre-dates the Fall and, on occasion, has been known to have Yves over for tea.

Unusual Tether: U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, Arlington, VA

While nothing is created here, the hopes and dreams of millions of inventors have passed through its doors. It became a Tether within a few years of being built and has grown into a major one with breathtaking speed. It is currently in service to Jean, who takes a keen interest in what humans are producing . . . and which items might have a more diabolical origin. That such a morass of bureaucracy should have fallen into the hands of angels – by a lucky fluke – is a particular source of annoyance to Kronos. The Tether staff are constantly ferreting out fateful attempts to denature its link.

The main building throngs with entities serving Heaven; they watch for influence of the diabolical, tend the computers and manage the day-to-day affairs of the massive organization. The Word-bound Seneschal, Samantha, has worked behind the scenes, usually in the Role of a minor clerk of some sort, for over 150 years. As a powerful Seraph, holding a Distinction from Jean, she is uniquely suited for monitoring and guiding the work of the office for Heaven. Some patents are advanced quickly, while others find themselves mired in red tape. Still others are never heard from again, but teams of angels are sent to investigate the people who have submitted the application.

The defenses of the Tether are impressive and are daunting in their variety and ingenuity. More than one group of demons has met its end against the defenders of this place.

Generic Tether: Dan's School of Food and VCR Repair

Despite its off-putting name and weird clientele, some of the best – and certainly some of the most avant-garde – food in the world can be found at Dan's place. Once an amateur chef and a not-so-talented electronics repairman, he opened the school on a lark. One visitor commented after dinner that he was a much better cook than he was a repairman. After an evening of talk and much drink, they formed a plan: Dan would teach cooking and his new friend would find someone to handle the business aspects.

The friend was Connor, Seraph of Eli and the Angel of Cooking. The school was a big success; talented students found it by word-of-mouth, learned their craft from Dan and went off to create their own unique dishes. After a particularly successful class in "Cooking with the Right Side of Your Brain," a man wandered in, sampled some of the results, smiled beatifically and left. On his next visit, Connor discovered the school was now a minor Tether (which did not surprise him), *stabilized* (which did) – and that *Dan* was its unknowing attuned Seneschal (which floored Connor utterly). Since then, the school has become a gathering spot for Eli's Servitors and anyone who loves good food.

Other Tethers

Leonardo da Vinci's workshop in Florence, Italy; the Kärtnertort Theater ("Theater at the Carinthian Gate") in Vienna, where Beethoven's Ninth Symphony was first performed on May 7, 1824; and the destroyed Watts Tower in Los Angeles – which may have the potential to re-open (***Fall of the Malakim,*** p. 42).

GABRIEL

Tether Policy

Gabriel is not stable enough to deliberately seek out new Tethers, or direct her Servitors to cultivate potential sites for her. Her actions are as incomprehensible here as elsewhere; she may arrive to claim a tiny Tether formed by one man's inspiration, while ignoring sites that seem *clear* potentials for major Tethers. However, if she is called by her Servitors to consecrate a Tether, she will come; this is part of her ancient role – to bring Fire from Heaven to Earth.

Soldekai, her Chamberlain (***The Marches,*** p. 20), keeps track of her Tethers as well as he can, organizes staff rotation and takes reports from the Seneschals. If he finds a likely site, he will send Servitors to investigate, seeing each link as a new bridgehead.

Major Tether: The Vatnajökull Volcano, Iceland

This Tether of Gabriel was formed by a purely natural volcanic eruption, an expression of fire itself. On the evening of September 30, 1996, an eruption took place under the ice of Vatnajökull glacier in Iceland. It was preceded for a day by hundreds of minor local earthquakes, between 3 and 5 on the Richter scale. Local Science Institute seismologists warned the government of the likelihood of a volcanic eruption.

By October 1, the lava and resultant steam had melted a fissure in the ice 5 kilometers (3 miles) long. On October 2, the eruption broke through the ice surface at the northern end of the fissure, and explosions were seen in the crater. The eruption column rose 4-5 kilometers (around 3 miles) above sea level. Earthquakes and active

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and I am jealous that our Lady came to see you, I confess it. It has been three years since I saw her last. We've been sheltering a Hellsworn servant of Kronos who decided to repent – the Seraph who was escorting him said he was sincere, but we're having to keep him inside all day, and he's tying up the phone line with damned Internet links. The sooner some Laurencians come and pick him up, the better.

Let me know how you're doing w/ that Faith For Firemen project.

Kiss Isabelle for me.

Vivienne

(4)

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eruption continued until the beginning of November; the resulting floodwater from the glacier caused widespread destruction, and would have caused far more if engineers had not made preparations to divert it.

Gabriel consecrated the Tether, appearing amid the flames and steam to bind it to her Word. The Seneschal is Ahaziah, the Kyriotate Angel of Active Volcanoes, who uses nearby seismologists or animals as hosts. He possesses the Ofanite of Gabriel attunement, and is fond of taking his hosts swimming in lava, shielded by the attunement. Given Iceland's volcanic nature, he is hoping for more eruptions in the near future . . .

Unusual Tether: The Daston Room

Jeremy Daston, an unemployed bicycle repairman, was also a poet. One night, in the throes of inspiration, he scribbled all over the walls, ceiling and floor of his room, before moving onto the door and down the corridor outside. The intensity of his inspiration formed a potential Tether, which a local Mercurian stabilized with the Corporeal Song of Sanctity (p. 25) long enough to call Gabriel. The Mercurian, Vivienne, acquired the boarding house in which the room was and became the new landlady; she has preserved the room in precisely the same condition, and touts it as a local landmark. This is a recent, minor Tether, but the boarding house provides accommodation for visiting angels.

Generic Tether: The Burned Hill

Outside a small town in the countryside, there is still the charred spot on a hilltop. Long ago, a sadistic and vicious prison was torched there, with the governor and some of the crueler wardens still inside it. The passion of this act of vengeance, by the families of convicts who had died there, formed a Tether, and a passing Malakite called Gabriel to accept it. The Malakite, Edward, has remained there since, and these days runs an ironmongers at the foot of the hill. The Tether is a minor one and old, but still potent.

Other Tethers

Other known Tethers of Gabriel include a certain field near Bethlehem (lost a while ago and not yet relocated); Kilauea Crater in Hawaii; and St. Ignatius' Orphanage in Manhattan, New York City (***The Marches,*** p. 23).
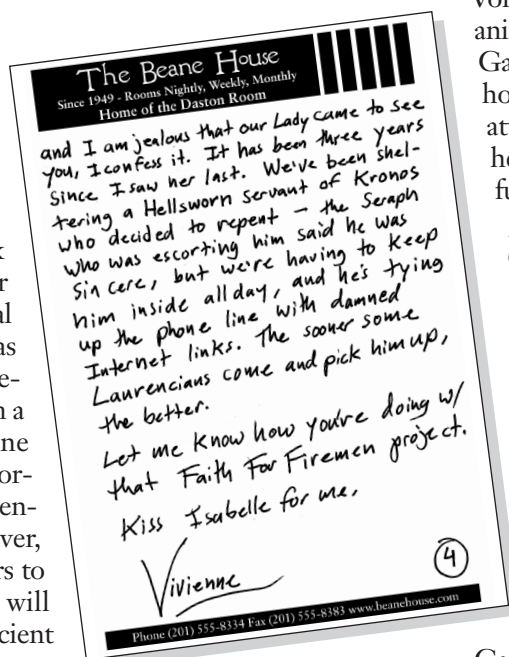
JANUS

Tether Policy

Janus, like his Servitors, is loath to be tied to any one place. Tethers are undeniably useful, even essential, but for the Archangel who eschews boundaries and stability, anchoring his Word to a fixed spot on the corporeal plane is skirting the edge of his own nature. Thus, Janus' care for his Tethers is decidedly fickle. Many Wind Tethers that other Superiors would have fought to preserve have faded for lack of attention. Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, and Muroc Dry Lake Bed (now Edwards Air Force Base), where Chuck Yeager broke the sound barrier in the X-1, were both potent Wind Tethers for years, even without Janus' active support.

The Wind isn't suffering for lack of Tethers, though. Janus possesses more Transient and Mobile Tethers (p. 12 and 17) than any other Superior, and storms and revolutions alike are constantly creating new ones. The combined Essence the Archangel of the Wind receives in sporadic surges from all of these is at least as great as that provided steadily to Superiors with a narrower focus.

Note that Word-Bound Seneschals of Wind Tethers are exempted from his normal dissonance conditions (p. 34), so long as they are within the bounds of their Tether.

Major Tether: The Palast Church, Wittenberg, Germany

Nothing delights Janus more than the irony of this Tether, the site of Laurence's Last Lesson (see *Night Music,* p. 9). On October 31, 1517, a Doctor of Theology named Martin Luther, secretly inspired by Archangel Laurence, posted 95 theses on the door of the Palast (Castle) Church in Wittenberg, Germany. Laurence wanted to effect change in the Roman Catholic Church. Change resulted, beyond his wildest expectations. The Protestant Reformation and the Catholic-Counter-Reformation flowed from the door where Luther hammered his theses, wreaking immeasurable change on the whole of Christendom. Janus heartily approved, and has shown unusual diligence in seeing to the maintenance of what is now a quiet, historical tourist attraction. The Seneschal is Jaminiah, a Seraph Master of Motion who gets along well with local angels of the Sword, despite his master's biases.

Unusual Tether: The Tether of Hurricanes

Any storm *might* become a Tether to the Wind while it lasts, but Janus' mightiest Tether is always focused on the greatest gale blowing anywhere on Earth at a given time.

When the winds blow strongest, Za'afiel, an Elohite Master of Motion and the Seneschal of Hurricanes, is there (and sometimes the Kyriotate Seneschal of Tornadoes is, too, hoping to ride the hurricane's spin-offs). Za'afiel looks for opportunities to wield his awesome power for good, even in ways that mortals left devastated in his wake may not recognize. In December 1997, for example, supertyphoon Paka blasted Guam with winds that reached 236 miles per hour – the fastest ever recorded on the Earth's surface. Yet nobody died, and some observers speculate that Janus' designs in Guam have yet to be revealed. In those rare periods of worldwide atmospheric calm, no one knows where Za'afiel goes . . . though he has noted, with wry Elohite humor, that Earthly storms are nothing compared to Jupiter's Great Red Spot . . .

Generic Tether: The Weekly Gazette

Beneath the innocuous-sounding, generically labeled masthead of the *Weekly Gazette* is a lethally accurate account of what really happens in the city. Unlike most painfully earnest "alternative" papers, the *Gazette* is powered by a dedicated professional staff and a small clutch of roving reporters with a knack for finding dirt in the most embarrassing places. Decried by the power elite as a haven of radicals, and by the politically correct intelligentsia as a simmering pot of reactionary venom, the *Gazette* targets all sides. It has caused more political turmoil and exposed more hypocrisy than any mainstream media outlet. Originally founded as a pet project by a wealthy anarchist, the paper's history of rocking the establishment eventually led to its offices becoming a small Tether of the Wind. The Tether is now lovingly overseen by Opheliah, a Mercurian Friend of the Unseen.

Other Tethers

Bonneville Salt Flats, Utah, where land speed records have been broken since 1914; the Mount Washington Observatory in New Hampshire, and the Cape Denison-Commonwealth Bay region on the coast of Adelie Land, Antarctica, both of which lay claim to being the windiest spots on Earth; the Cyclone roller coaster at Coney Island; the Fujiyama roller coaster – currently the fastest and tallest in the world – at Fujikyu Highland Amusement Park in Japan; the Sierra Maestra mountains in Cuba, Fidel Castro and Che Guevera's guerrilla stronghold; and Khamsin, an ever-blowing sandstorm in the Middle East, whose Seneschal bears the same name as his storm (***The Final Trumpet,*** p. 83).

JEAN

Tether Policy

Jean appreciates that Tethers cannot be distributed as optimally as one might wish. Therefore he has his Servitors encourage appropriate human activity in areas where it would be strategically useful for a Heavenly stronghold, in the hopes that it will give rise to potential Tethers. He will always stabilize a Lightning Tether if his Servitors notify him – it would be foolish to do otherwise – but prefers to encourage links, rather than rely upon merely discovering them.

Tethers are as well-equipped as is possible without revealing celestial technology to humans. The Seneschals are assigned angels or relievers who require Earthly experience, to give them exposure to the mortal world. If they do not function well with the Seneschal, they are sent on to another Tether, resulting in frequent inter-Tether staff exchange among Lightning's Servitors. Jean monitors his Tethers closely, expecting weekly progress reports and file updates, and personally investigates any irregularities or slackness.

Major Tether: The Hoover Dam

The Hoover Dam, set across the Colorado river, was erected to create Lake Mead and thus form one of the earliest and most important sources of hydroelectricity in America. Its electricity-oriented nature, together with its size, made it a potential Tether to Jean.

The building of the dam began in 1931, when some 16,000 workers toiled on its construction. Many of the workers had families, wives and children, who came with them. The dam site was undeveloped and dangerous, but the Great Depression was affecting almost all of the United States. Desperate for work, people came from every part of the country to work on Hoover Dam. The work took more than three years, and the workers had to camp out in tents or shacks along the Colorado River; hundreds died from industrial accidents, heat, polluted water or disease. But when the dam was completed, the Colorado River was controlled for the first time in history. Farmers received a dependable supply of water in Nevada, California and Arizona. Los Angeles, San Diego, Phoenix and other towns and cities were given a source of cheap and environmentally friendly electricity, permitting population growth and development.

The Seneschal of the Tether is Geliloth, an Ofanite of Lightning who constantly travels up and down the structure of the dam, checking on the machinery in a conscientious manner reminiscent of his Archangel.

Unusual Tether:
The Syracusan Bath

There is a public bath in the city of Syracuse in Greece, dating back to 250 B.C., whose remains still – barely – stand. It is the place where Archimedes jumped out of the water and ran home naked, crying, "Eureka!" ("I have found it!") as he realized that the volume of a solid object could be ascertained by placing it in water and measuring the overflow. This moment of inspiration created a Tether to Lightning – though now weak, it is still guarded by Jiphthael, the Cherub Seneschal, who does her best to keep the story in public memory.

Generic Tether:
The Research Laboratory

This laboratory is part of a local university (or large corporation), and is dedicated to superconductivity research. It is not noted for any particular great achievements, but it has been the scene of at least one breakthrough in its field – though it is only known in minor science periodicals. The staff are dedicated and enthusiastic, and the laboratory often acquires research assistants from other universities who know of its reputation. This minor Tether has Hadad, a Kyriotate, as the Seneschal; Hadad enjoys personally testing the latest research by possessing it, when it can get away with that. The lab provides shelter to Servitors in need, and is occasionally a base for observation elsewhere.

Other Tethers

Other famous Tethers of Jean include the garden at Kensington where an apple fell on the head of Sir Isaac Newton, inspiring him to conceive the theory of gravitation; the world's first central electric-light power plant, in New York City; the MIT Media Lab, in Boston; the Radio Astronomy dish at Arecibo, Puerto Rico; CERN, an European experimental particle physics lab in Switzerland and an unusually shining example of international cooperation in the field of science; a university building somewhere in Ohio (**Heaven and Hell**, p. 72) and a now-obscure location in Gujarat, India, where the mathematical concept of "zero" was invented by the astronomer Brahmagupta, around 600 A.D.

JORDI

Tether Policy

Jordi is eager to find new Tethers, seeing every link as an outpost of the animal world against the human civilization that spreads across the corporeal world. He does not seek Tethers inside cities and technological places (though he will accept them if called by a Servitor) as he prefers to keep his Tethers in natural places still tenanted by wildlife. Sadly, this is happening less and less often.

In these modern days, Jordi is aggressive about the creation of new Tethers, though he is reluctant to let them be used as wholesale bases in the War. Servitors will often

be sent to likely locations, with orders to increase the affinity to his Word, or to protect humans or animals that might form a Tether-potential. Older Tethers are expected to be able to endure without too much attention; while the young require nurturing, mature Tethers should, by the law of the wild, be able to sustain themselves or perish.

Major Tether: The Vale

For millennia, there has been a hidden valley in the depths of Africa where no human ever trod, and where animals of all kinds could find safe haven from humanity. As the years wore on, its untouched nature and position as a sanctuary for endangered species made a Tether of it. With an Ofanite named Arah as Seneschal, watching from above in one of several avian Vessels, it became a Tether of medium size, but largely remained out of the War.

However, in the 19th century a new theme entered the literary world and spread to become a popular fantasy.

> We've had to kill two explorers this season. See if the Stone-Tether downstream will divert the river to help guard the south border.
>
> The golden monkeys breed well – Soon we may let them outside the Vale.
>
> Cheraunah has lost his Vessel in a fight between two lions. Send me another Cherub. A smart one.
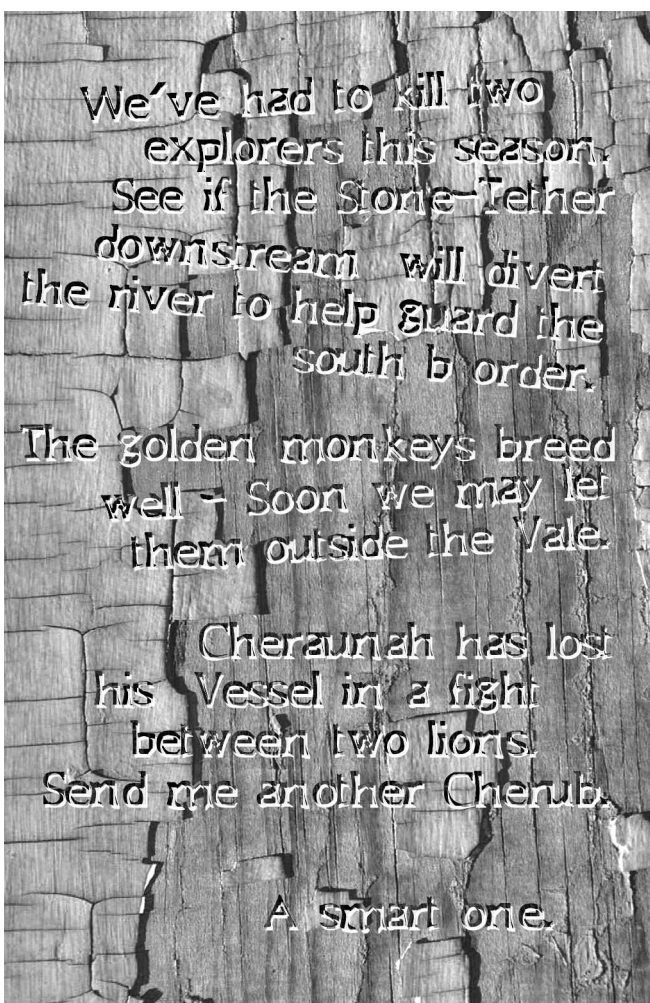
Some idyllic valley, far from the hand of man, was a Lost World where species survived which had died out everywhere else. This cultural belief grew and developed. By the 1990s, it was even spawning multi-million dollar films about valleys of extinct animals and dinosaurs.

The Tether grew in strength notably with this flow of new Essence, and has been able to expand its borders while still remaining a secret. It is, after all, its *nature* to be a hidden valley. It is now a major Tether, and Arah has several celestial assistants who help patrol the valley and discourage explorers. Jordi himself, while no fonder of humans than before, is quite happy to have them contributing to his Word and Tether, and even finds some irony in this.

Unusual Tether: The Hives

Around the gorge of a small jungle river in India cluster hives of the black Indian bees, small, fierce and deadly, that have been breeding there for over 1,000 years. Strewn at the edges of the hive are the skeletons of jungle animals who disturbed the nesting bees and paid the price. The Seneschal of the Tether is Maziri, a Kyriotate who came on the place while traveling in a pack of wolves, and realized its natural linkage to the Word of Animals. This is a minor Tether, but is useful for angels entering India, who can travel down the river into more populated parts. Those descending without first alerting Maziri are liable to be very badly stung.

Generic Tether: St. Martin's Churchyard

St. Martin's was a small church in the back streets of a large city, run-down and not well attended. The vicar, however, was extremely fond of cats. He took care to give sanctuary to all the local felines (and occasionally other pets) that needed help, shelter or first aid, and convinced others to help him. The intensity of his commitment created a wild Tether, discovered a few decades ago by Cerilan, a Cherub of Jordi. Cerilan now works as the verger, keeping the churchyard neat and tidy. The Tether is a minor one, not well-known, but is occasionally used as a sanctuary by angels who need a place to hide from local demons.

Other Tethers

Other famous Tethers of Jordi include the Gerald Durrell Zoo in Jersey, dedicated to the upkeep of endangered species, and the shores of the Carmargue in France, famous for their wild horses.

LAURENCE

Tether Policy

Tethers are resources; Laurence husbands them carefully. Every divine Tether is a staging area against Hell. The Archangel of the Sword factors in all of them when planning strategy, but he has the greatest control over his own, so he aggressively cultivates opportunities to acquire new Tethers.

Because of his strong patronage of the Roman Catholic Church, many Tethers of the Sword are Catholic holy places. By no means is every major cathedral a Tether, however, nor are all of Laurence's holy Tethers Catholic. When Protestants, Jews, Muslims or Hindus wage war against Hell, *their* holy places sometimes become Tethers. Laurence doesn't disdain these, though he does show a marked preference for those which fall under the aegis of his favorite religion.

Major Tether:
St. Peter's Basilica, the Vatican

Often called the greatest church in Christendom, this part of the Vatican resonates so intensely with Laurence's Word that demons avoid it even when corporeal, fearing the Light of Heaven (p. 51). The basilica was founded by Emperor Constantine in 319 A.D., on the presumed site of the Apostle Peter's grave. The current structure was a 120-year project completed in the 16th century. Michelangelo, Bramante, Raphael, Bernini, Perruzi, Sangallo the Younger, Giacomo della Porta and Domenico Fontana all had a hand in the construction of this magnificent church. Beneath it lies the Vatican Necropolis, a network of tombs where St. Peter's remains were supposedly found. The Seneschal is Jahdiel, a Cherub General of the Sword, who is in charge of *all* angelic activity in the Vatican.

Unusual Tether:
Okayama Prison, Japan

Most Tethers of the Sword spring from a metaphorical manifestation of the Word, but in a few places, Laurence's Word is embodied in a more literal fashion. Japan's almost religious adoration of the sword has created several such Tethers, but Okayama Prison, in southern Honshu, is Laurence's favorite. During World War II, the prison produced many fine swords for the Japanese Army, thanks to the work of its warden, Nagamitsu Emura. Emura taught the prisoners the art of swordsmithing, and many inmates emerged from Okayama Prison with their souls as refined as the blades

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they had forged. Emura left the prison but continued to make swords after the war. Taro, the Malakite Seneschal, continues to promote discipline and appreciation of the Sword as a path to enlightenment, while also promoting the worth of the Emura blades.

Generic Tether: The Church of Our Lady of Perpetual Grace

If every Catholic church was a divine Tether, Heaven would be well on its way to winning the War. However, only a tiny percentage of holy places (of any religion) ever achieve this distinction.

This small community chapel looks like any other, but it is one of Laurence's successful *planned* Tethers. The Archangel, through his minions in the local Diocese, has seen to it that only the finest clergy are sent here. He has minimized celestial activity in the area, and made sure there are always Soldiers of God and sometimes Saints on hand to aid the congregation in matters both spiritual and temporal. Through this direct supervision, Laurence has made the church *extremely* effective in ministering to the surrounding community. After years of existing in a state of perfect grace, it did indeed become a Tether, much to Laurence's delight. However, attempts to repeat the experiment elsewhere have failed. Laurence is currently studying whether this is simply due to the inherent unpredictability of Tethers, or whether there is actually something special about Our Lady of Perpetual Grace.

Other Tethers

Angkor Wat, the largest religious structure on Earth (and some say Laurence would never have allowed it to fall into its current state of disrepair if it were Christian rather than Hindu); the Chapel of St. Joseph of Arimathea, in The National Cathedral in Washington, D.C. (**Night Music,** p. 12); the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem; the Hagia Sophia in Istanbul; Masamune's forge in Kamakura, Japan; and Treaty Oak in Austin, Texas (**Night Music,** p. 98).

MARC

Tether Policy

Marc's always said Tethers are good for business, being both expressions of his Word and places for angels to meet, share information and assist each other, trading good will for good will. He's always willing to acquire new Tethers, and has a department of his Servitors devoted to analyzing new sites and potential locations. His usual approach, when a potential site is discovered, is to send a team of Servitors into the area to promote Trade and increase the likelihood of a Tether forming. By the nature of his Word, Marc's Tethers are found among centers of human population – although not always – and more than one may exist in a major city.

Older Tethers are largely left to manage themselves, but are visited every few months by an independent auditing team to ensure that they are functioning and do not require any assistance. They are expected to be "breaking even," and to submit regular reports on tangible and intangible assets. Seneschals of new Tethers are usually former deputy Seneschals, and are frequently assigned an assistant who has served in other Tethers. Together, they can get the place running on standard organizational lines and pool their knowledge to deal with potential problems.

Major Tether: The London Stock Exchange

The origins of the London Stock Exchange go back to a coffee house known as "Jonathan's." It was off Change Lane in 17th century London, where an association of bankers, brokers and trading houses met to do business. As the level of their trading and their finances expanded, the potential for a Tether of Trade increased. It finally manifested when the brokers opened their own subscription room in Threadneedle Street and, in 1773, voted to name the building the Stock Exchange.

Since then, the Stock Exchange – a large, classical, incredibly busy building situated conveniently near the

In reference to your letter of the third September, we have assigned two interns to you, and they are expected to arrive on the fourteenth. Dossiers are included with this letter. Tahnaz in particular should be able to help you with your computer system. The sealed envelope contains the location of the closest Freedom Tether to you; destroy after reading, and be careful about any dealings with those there. The Wolfrunners cycle gang, known to be agents of Vapula, often fence their thefts through it, so if you need to pressure them, that is one possibility.

Yours faithfully,

Elias

Elias
London Stock Exchange
em/ahd

Bank of England – has only expanded. It constantly deals with all sorts of trading, from pork bellies to gold bars, from cocoabean futures to syndicates for excavating Spanish galleons. The Mercurian Seneschal, Elias, with a reputation for being entirely unfazeable, has had a Role somewhere on the staff since the days of the coffee house. Junior Servitors of Trade are frequently rotated on and off the staff to get experience at working at a major Tether.

Unusual Tether: The Barataria Moneychangers

In 1807, there was a thriving colony at Barataria Bay, a small bay near New Orleans. It was a colony of pirates and those who traded with them, unofficially controlled by the privateer Jean Lafitte. One of the most necessary businesses there was the local moneychanger, who dealt in vast amounts of currency, and who was (partly due to nature, partly because of his dangerous clientele) entirely incorruptible. The nature of the place eventually formed a link to Trade, and the Seneschal – an Elohite named Mizriel – worked as a clerk there. When the colony was burned, the business – and the Tether – moved down the coast to New Orleans, where the small, but effective, Tether still functions.

Generic Tether: Jim's Fine Metalwork

Some traders still travel, and have taken with enthusiasm to such institutions as Rennaisance Faires and open-air revivals, selling handmade goods to those who appreciate them. ("It would have been a fair price then and it's a fair price now!") One such trader is Jim Southall, who does excellent business in handmade jewelry, particularly his trademark silver brooches. At one gathering he managed to sell every piece of metalwork in his van, and then spent the rest of the day taking orders. His honesty and acumen have made it possible for his van to become a Tether of Trade, wherever it goes. The Seneschal, Exaudis, is a Kyriotate who spends his time in Jim's dogs (spaniels) while traveling, and in passing humans while at fairs.

Other Tethers

Other famous Tethers of Marc include the SEC building in Washington, D.C.; the still-standing offices of the Hanseatic League in Hamburg, Germany; the bullion vault beneath the New York Federal Reserve branch on Manhattan that contains 10,000 tons of gold bars on deposit from many of the world's governments; the FedEx hub at Memphis; and the headquarters of the Templars in Jerusalem (who originated banking).

MICHAEL

Tether Policy

Michael claims his Tethers strategically, and based on many factors – but he shows an observable bias toward Tethers far from those he already controls. In Michael's mind, every warrior dedicated to protecting a Tether is one less warrior striking directly at Hell; at the same time, his angels may need a Tether's support anywhere in the world. Therefore, he strives to maximize his area of influence with as few Tethers as possible.

New wild Tethers arise frequently from powerful human conflicts, but flit around between *at least* Baal and Michael, and often visit the Domains of Laurence, Belial, Saminga, Malphas and Lilith, as well. This makes it difficult for Michael to capture them – but all the others are equally inconvenienced.

Major Tether: Kocabas Cay

Ancient and still powerful, the Kocabas Cay Tether in Turkey (near the Sea of Marmara) was created by the first major victory of Alexander the Great. By the Granicus River, Alexander decisively defeated the Persian forces arrayed against him and opened the way into western and southern Asia Minor. In the same action, he created a wild Tether of violence, strategy and military legend. Three days later, Michael claimed the Tether for his own. Twenty-three centuries later, the battle of Granicus is still remembered – and the flow of Essence to the Archangel of War continues.

Corporeally, the Tether is nothing more than a stretch of river (now called the Kocabas Cay) and the ancient battlefield beside it. A few scattered stone buildings have been constructed to protect and shelter the Seneschal and staff; otherwise, the area is undeveloped. It would be difficult to destroy the physical Tether or its bond to War, but not impossible. Baal makes occasional attempts to sever this particular battlefield from the legend of Alexander the Great, hoping to claim it for himself.

Unusual Tether: The Burning Grounds

The Burning Grounds Tether in Orleans, France, was created when 13 "Manichaean" heretics were burned there in 1022. It was not their heresy that appealed to Heaven, or the burning; rather, it was the courage with which they faced their end. Understanding that they were doomed to die, these heretics chose a different battleground – their spirit and their dignity. Long past the point when most humans would have been incoherent with the pain, 12 of the heretics were as still as stone. The 13th was singing. In the spirit of War, they neither retreated nor surrendered, and Michael took the unexpected Tether for his own.

The city has changed since then, and a hotel has been built where the heretics burned. The wood of the stakes, preserved by the angels of War, hangs in honor in the back room. The burning in Orleans led to many others, and several Princes would gleefully take the Tether for themselves – but while Michael's angels staunchly defend it, this will never happen.

Generic Tether: The Museum of Modern Heroes

The Museum of Modern Heroes was built to help remember the ordinary humans who have accomplished extraordinary things. Exhibits honor people like Henry Carpenter, who went back into a burning building to save his neighbor's children; Jacqueline Georges, who suffered a stroke during a hunger strike and never recovered; Father Martin Duncan, who brought an end to gang warfare within his parish; and the innumerable police officers, firefighters and military personnel who have shown valor above and beyond the call of duty. A private wing in the back, established by the Seneschal 15 years after the Museum's creation, remembers the most glorious of Michael's Servitors who have fallen in the war.

Michael claimed the Museum even as the walls were raised, and appointed a Cherub, Pelatiah, to be its Seneschal. Pelatiah does not regret settling down; he sat-

isfies his love for War by coaxing stories out of angelic visitors and inventing elaborate defensive plans. So far, he hasn't needed them – demons are correctly nervous around something that might be *personally* precious to the Archangel of War. The back wing, at least, probably qualifies.

Other Tethers

Other famous Tethers of Michael include the Cabinet War Rooms, in London (***The Final Trumpet,*** p. 22); Death Valley (***Fall of the Malakim,*** p. 78); the home of the deceased Huo Yuanjia, a determined martial arts champion, in Xiaonanhe, Jinghai County, China; Goliad State National Park, Texas, birthplace of General Zaragoza, who marshaled Mexico against France in the 19th century; and the beach at Normandy (***In Nomine,*** p. 59).

NOVALIS

Tether Policy

Novalis' Word covers both nature and human behavior; she has elemental Tethers, growing in wild abandon wherever plants do, and human-formed Tethers where people have gathered in peace and harmony. Nowadays, she puts more emphasis on the latter; flowers will grow on their own, but people need all the love they can get. Her Servitors work hard to plant and nurture seeds that might bloom as Tethers of Flowers.

Major Tether: Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, California

This 1,017-acre park is one of the largest manmade parks in the world, stretching 3 1/4 miles from the Pacific Ocean to the Haight Ashbury district. It has been a major Tether to Flowers ever since the "Summer of Love" in 1967, when she and her protégé – Zadkiel, Cherub Archangel of Protection – helped secure the Host's dominion over San Francisco. Today, Novalis' Tether still covers most of the park, though it waxes and wanes with the mood of the times (and entirely avoids Belial's Tether, p. 95). During "Flower Power" revivals and outdoor concerts, the Tether expands, while it contracts in times of malaise and despair.

Originally, all of what is now Golden Gate Park was sand dunes. Today it is lush, rolling greenery filled with lakes, horseback trails, sports fields, museums and, of course, hundreds of flower gardens. The Seneschal of Golden Gate Park is an Ofanite Master of Peace named Hallaren, who has resided in the park since it was first landscaped in the 1870s. He is usually seen wandering around in the guise of an aging but unflappable hippie.

Unusual Tether: The Grotto of Flowers, Amazon Jungle, Brazil

Deep in the Amazon jungle, Novalis has a large, hidden grotto harboring *thousands* of species of plants never seen by human eyes. This Tether formed spontaneously, millennia ago, but lately Novalis has been developing it, assigning Servitors to bring endangered plants from elsewhere in the Amazon to be transplanted here. She hopes that in this way, even if humanity's relentless destruction of the rain forests can't be halted, she'll at least be able to preserve as many species of plants as possible.

The Seneschal of the Grotto is a Kyriotate Master of Peace who uses no human name. In the sub-sentient concepts of plants (and in the celestial tongue), it might be called "Unfolding New Leaves to God's Warmth."

Hallaren here, Lady –

Four demons tried sneaking through without saying hi; had to let Zaddie's people have three of 'em. Got hopes for #4, though – she's just lying on the grass going Wow at the flowers!
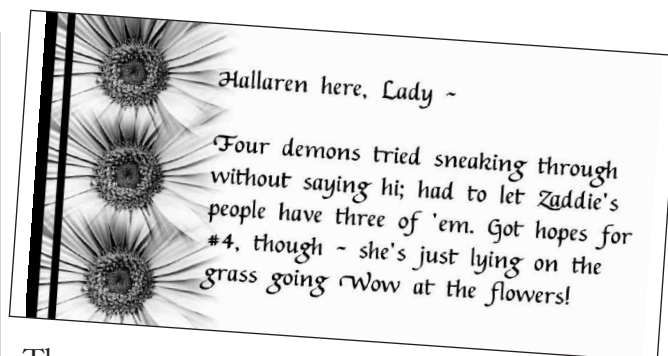
The Grotto is guarded by several local rainforest tribes, who have maintained peaceful relations for years thanks to its presence. They regard it as a sacred spot and allow no visitors, posting guards (some of whom are Soldiers) around the Tether.

Generic Tether: The Flower Lot

No one knows how long this abandoned lot in the middle of the city has been vacant. If you search carefully through the profusion of weeds and wildflowers, you can find old brick foundations, indicating where a building once stood. There is undoubtedly a story behind the creation of this Tether, but you'd have to ask Novalis. Some old-timers in the neighborhood remember playing in the lot as kids, and now their children play there. The wind seems to bring the seeds of dozens of improbable species here, where they take root and produce blossoms and occasionally berries and other edible things for neighborhood children to pick and take home. Some people say the lot should be trimmed so it won't be one big hiding place, but despite the worries, no drug dealers, child molesters, wild dogs or anything else dangerous have ever been seen there. No child has ever cut his feet on shards of broken glass, and nothing thorny or poisonous ever seems to grow here.

The Seneschal of the Flower Lot is Telabib, a Malakite. Novalis assigned him here to teach him patience and humility, and so he could provide an example to other Malakim of how evil doesn't have to be expunged with bloodshed . . . it can be rooted out patiently, one discarded bottle at a time.

Other Tethers

The Farm (***Heaven and Hell,*** p. 75), a mysterious agricultural zone believed to be somewhere in Nebraska; Hippie Hollow (***Night Music,*** p. 95), a public park in Austin, Texas; Hydari Mansion in Calcutta, India, where Mahatma Gandhi's fast caused the "Miracle of Calcutta"; the site of the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, now more a Tether of concept than place; the Queens Botanical Garden in Flushing, New York; Sequoia National Park, California; and the Woodstock site in Bethel, New York.

Yves

Tether Policy

Yves accepts that Tethers form in accordance with the hidden patterns of the Symphony, and does not attempt to cultivate a human atmosphere to encourage them. His Servitors, by their nature, tend collections of knowledge, and they often find themselves in areas that have developed the potential to become Tethers, but rarely because they were *assigned* there. On occasion, his Servitors find themselves given tasks that seem minor, but result in them being near the sites of potential Tethers to Yves – or to other Superiors. Yves does not comment on this.

Servitors are often assigned to assist Seneschals on a permanent basis, and are not moved to another post unless circumstances require it. Destiny Soldiers, on the other hand, are often sent between Tethers to provide assistance and experience to Seneschals.

Yves does not visit his Tethers on a regular basis, but shows up at odd moments, wandering in with a book tucked under one arm. If a Tether's link to his Cathedral shows signs of weakening, he will have a quiet word with the Seneschal – and then leave the Seneschal to settle the matter, rather than take any action himself.

The Library of Yves in Heaven is connected to *every* repository of knowledge in the Symphony (**In Nomine**, p. 139); these are not proper Tethers, but merely occasional – often unpredictable – links.

Major Tether: The Bodleian Library

The Bodleian Library is the main research library of the University of Oxford, and its great collections are used by scholars from around the world. The first university library building was started in 1320; the present library is named after the scholar and diplomat Sir Thomas Bodley (1545-1613), who re-endowed the library in 1602. The buildings include Duke Humfrey's Library above the Divinity School, the Old Schools quadrangle with its Great Gate and Tower, and the Radcliffe Camera, Britain's first circular library, built by James Gibbs in 1737-49. The Radcliffe Camera contains the nexus of the Tether, though the Seneschal and his staff patrol throughout the entire library. The Bodleian Library today has 29 reading rooms – with 2,457 reader places – in 10 buildings in central Oxford. The library is entitled to a free copy of every book, periodical and newspaper published in Britain, and acquires over 300,000 items (including foreign purchases) each year. Its 6.33 million volumes occupy 101 miles of shelving.

The library has a strong influence on the destinies of many students who study there, and became a Tether shortly after it was founded in 1320. The Seraph Seneschal, Besodaiah, has a habit of personally walking every corridor of the library daily. He has the Seraph of Lightning attunement as a gift from Jean, and knows where every book in the entire library *should* be.

Unusual Tether: Unemployment Office, Edinburgh

This state-operated Unemployment Office in Scotland managed a run of highly successful job placements in the 1950s, despite being underbudgeted and understaffed. The destinies which many of the office's candidates reached caused the place to become a potential Tether. Sophereth, an Elohite who followed a human into the place by accident, discovered its potential and became the Seneschal after Yves stabilized it. Sophereth takes great care not to personally influence the unemployed who come to the office, devoting her efforts to keeping the place running smoothly and caring for the human staff who created and maintain it.

Generic Tether: Richardson Street Public Library

This public library has been in the city for several decades now – possibly a century or more, if anybody could be bothered to remember. It serves the neighborhood reliably, providing fiction to support hopes and dreams, and non-fiction for more practical purposes. The small section devoted to job application processes and careers has been very useful to young people in the last couple of decades. Somehow, the library always seems to have precisely the right books on hand when something needs checking. The Seneschal, Hiddekel, is a Malakite who spends his evenings – when the library is theoretically shut – on his *own* version of Neighborhood Watch.

Other Tethers

Famous Tethers of Yves include the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C.; the Bibliotheque Nationale in Paris; the clearing near Lake Tanganyika in East Africa where Stanley and Livingstone met; the Topkapi Museum in Constantinople; and the churchyard at Rouen in France where Joan of Arc was burned at the stake.

ANDREALPHUS

Tether Policy

Andrealphus is not a Prince who seeks out Tether sites and promotes them as such. He is, however, a Prince who promotes thriving centers of Lust, and expects his Servitors to do the same. If these *should* result in a Tether, he'll be glad to reward the Servitor who manages to take credit for it. He is particularly fond of "baptizing" a new Tether with an enthusiastic celebration of his Word. Tethers of Lust may occur anywhere, from thriving cities to isolated locations in the countryside – anywhere that humans have gone. The Word of Lust seems to attract many weak Tethers, with a few notable strong ones; Lust is everywhere, but rarely *concentrated*.

Older Tethers are left to themselves, with the Seneschals only receiving particular attention from Andrealphus if he has reason to check on them. (Should they not be in fit condition to serve his purposes, he administers discipline personally.) Newer Tethers are frequently thronged with very junior Servitors who attempt to get a temporary assignment there to prove their worth and attract the attention of their seniors.

Major Tether: La Coste

La Coste, the Castle of the Marquis de Sade, is located about 25 miles east of Avignon, in the south of France. High on a hill, though little more than a ruin today, it dominates the surrounding villages. The regional tourist board has done nothing to make the place attractive to visitors, but it receives a small – yet regular – queue of visitors every year.

Although very few of the Marquis' reputed orgies and bacchanals actually took place at the castle, popular belief took the word "sadism" into the language, inspired by the Marquis de Sade's writing, and accepted that the vilest of perversions occurred in the now-ruined chateau. Fueled by this, and by "pilgrimages" of admirers of the Marquis' works, the potential for a Tether eventually formed at La Coste after the Marquis' death. This was capitalized on by Shahazi, a visiting Balseraph of Lust. She still remains on the premises as an "official caretaker," and embroiders the stories of the Marquis' deeds to all who visit, strengthening its hold on the popular imagination.

Since the days of the Marquis, La Coste is largely ruined above-ground. However, Shahazi has seen to it that substantial facilities have been laid on underground, of a nature to meet anybody's fantasies about the Marquis de Sade. The site has become a regular tourist spot for traveling Servitors of Lust, and for a large number of

POMPEII

Villa of the Mysteries

1. Temple of Jupiter
2. Temple of Apollo
3. Temple of Venus

4. Theaters
5. Gladiators' Barracks
6. Doric Temple

7. House of Giulia Felix
8. Great Palaestra
9. Amphitheater

Herculanean Gate

Vesuvian Gate

Capuan Gate

Nolan Gate

Unexcavated

Sarno Gate

Unexcavated

Marina Gate

Unexcavated

Stabian Gate

Nucerian Gate
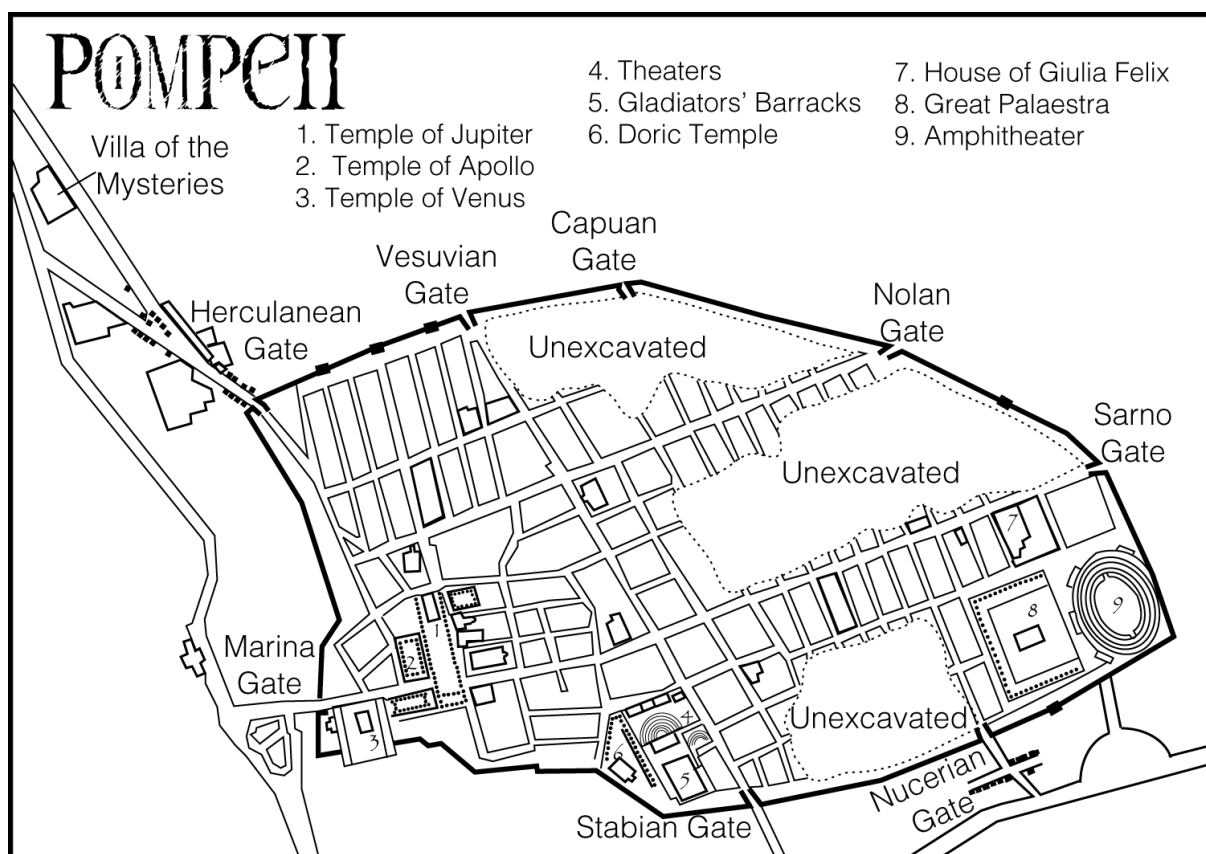
humans who have read the Marquis' books. It is conveniently remote in the countryside, and sufficient carnality has taken place there by now to make it a major Tether.

Unusual Tether: The Pompeii Mosaics

The mosaics of ancient Pompeii, in Italy, were justly famed for their carnality, and were created with enough sincere lust for their subjects to form a Tether to Andrealphus. A Djinn named Mabonius discovered this, and was able to call his master to stabilize the new link. Unfortunately, the lava that covered Pompeii shortly afterward destroyed all humans who might have given the Tether power, and put Mabonius into a very long Trauma. The recent archaeological investigations, however, have drawn attention to the mosaics, and Mabonius is out of Trauma – and vastly out of touch with the modern world. Andrealphus has not yet noticed that the Tether is functioning again, if very weak, and Mabonius is paranoid enough of *everything* to keep out of people's way. He currently occupies himself with restoring the mosaics and trying to get an understanding of modern times from archaeologists and tourists. The Tether is very weak, but still linked to an outdated and forgotten terminus in Shal-Mari.

Generic Tether: Esseintes

Esseintes is an extremely discreet brothel that lies below a large city office block, reached via a particular elevator and a set of changing passwords. It has been providing its services to the rich and titled since the 1950s, and became a Tether in the 1960s during a particularly large-scale orgy. The Habbalite Seneschal, Berothai, serves as madam of the brothel. The Tether itself is of average power, and has a large amount of influence among the businessmen and officials to whom it caters. It is kept hygienically clean, scrubbed and polished, with a businesslike reception and guards to reassure its customers.

Other Tethers

Other famous Tethers of Andrealphus include "Pico Plaza" in LA (**Fall of the Malakim,** p. 74); Purple Studios, a pornographic film studio in California; the Hall of Dispossessed Favorites, a dwelling for out-of-favor concubines in the Forbidden City in Beijing; and a small island off the coast of Haiti, famous for the orgiastic rites celebrated there.
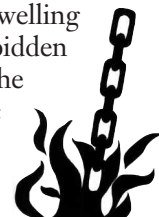
ASMODEUS

Tether Policy

Asmodeus is always interested in establishing Tethers, realizing the value of secure bases in the private – very private – work of the Game, as well as their strategic value to the War and to his Word. No Game-Tether is allowed to lapse into slackness or disrepute. Upon his fortnightly visit to the Seneschal, Asmodeus will check the condition of the Tether and its ties to his Principality, and the Seneschal had best be able to explain any discrepancies.

Servitors of Asmodeus often find themselves in places associated with spying and the playing of games – in other words, where Tethers may form. They are expected to contact Asmodeus instantly upon discovering potential Tethers, *unless it would jeopardize their mission*, in which case they are to use their best judgment as to priorities. (This is often a lose-lose situation.)

Asmodeus himself sometimes keeps his Tethers secret from the War around them, either rarely using them for transport or capitalizing on a Quiet Tether (p. 17), instead using them as bases from which to watch for signs of treason. Other Princes do not appreciate this behavior.

Major Tether: The Agora of Athens

The Agora of Athens, a set of public buildings – temples and council areas – was the center of Athens even in 3000 B.C., when it was no more than a residential area. By 600 B.C., it was the center for political discussion and council debate, and a Tether to Marc. Slowly through the fifth century B.C., it fell to Asmodeus.

The Sophists arose around 500 B.C.: trained teachers and debaters who were the first wise men in Greece to actually *sell* their learning. They wandered Greece, gave lectures, took pupils and entered into disputations. The most popular career at the time was politics, so the Sophists concentrated on teaching rhetoric. The aim of the young politicians they trained was to persuade the multitude – the search for truth was unimportant. Therefore, the Sophists undertook to provide a stock of arguments on *any* subject, or to prove *any* position; they boasted of their ability to make bad seem good or prove that black was white.

Such beliefs and skills became stock-in-trade for politicians – especially those who argued in the Agora, as Athens was one of the political centers of Greece. Marc's Tether was slowly polluted by the very humans who had formed it. Asmodeus accepted the Tether eagerly, assigning one of his Balseraphs, Theodoros, as the Seneschal. Theodoros still survives (despite numerous attacks by Trade Servitors with a personal grudge), and the Tether is still powerful, sustained by its place in history and visited by people from around the world.

Unusual Tether: The Riddle Valley

In a small valley near a now-ruined castle, a feudal lord used to hold local court, having the power of life and death over his serfs. If one of them was condemned to death (for some crime such as poaching, insolence or disobedience) he would offer them the chance to riddle for their head. If they won the contest of riddles, they would be allowed to live. If they lost, their death would be even worse than he had already decreed. This behavior created the potential for a Tether to the Game, and the Tether still exists, though the local town now only exhibits the ruined castle as a minor tourist attraction. A Habbalite named Keiiah is Seneschal to the now-weak Tether, and works in the local post office, watching traffic passing through the town.

Generic Tether: The Watching House

A spy agency has owned this house for over 300 years now, in the heart of another country, and for all that time, through wars and alliances, it has served as a hiding-place and spying post. The atmosphere of patient waiting and absolute scrutiny has seeped into the walls, and the guns and files stored in hidden rooms are clean and free of dust. Seneschal of this house is Rezon, a Shedite who moves regularly between the house's occupants, using its Prince's attunement so that it need not corrupt them. Servitors of Asmodeus can take cover at this minor Tether, and Rezon will arrange matters so the human inhabitants assist them, believing them to be fellow agents.

```
 Your report on the Djinn Tebah is noted and
filed. Be alert for use of the nearby Lust Tether
by Servitors of Flowers; it is suspected that there
may be a covert linkage. Photographs of three known
Flowers-vessels are included. If this should have
any results, I would be glad to support your appli-
cation for extra assistance at your Tether. Also
note that there are three Servitors of Janus cur-
rently visiting Tethers of the Game and masquerad-
ing as a Triad of Judgement -- names unknown, being
researched. Should they turn up at yours, capture
is preferable to killing.

Under the Will of the Prince of the Game,
Rezon, the Safe House
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Other Tethers

Asmodeus also claims St. Sebastian's School for Boys, which once was Creation's (**Heaven and Hell,** p. 24); the KGB building in Moscow; the CIA headquarters in Langley, Virginia (adjacent to Washington, D.C.); Danvers, Massachusetts, site of the Salem Witch Trials; a room in the Borgia courts in Italy; and Traitor's Gate outside the Tower of London, where the heads of traitors were set on spikes.

БΛΛL

Tether Policy

Baal engages in surprisingly little planning for his Tethers. He makes very efficient use of the ones he gets, but he considers Tethers to be a secondary resource in the War. Usually, his Tethers arise as a result of a successful operation, and by then his Servitors are ready to move on to another theater. He has turned a few into highly effective hotspots that advance his Word by maintaining strife for generations, but most are simply treated as supply lines and bases.

Though Baal has not claimed every Tether to organized battle, the ones he has are often quite powerful.

Major Tether: My Lai, Vietnam

On March 16, 1968, a U.S. Army company entered the small village of My Lai. Supposedly looking for Viet Cong, they raped the women, herded villagers into ditches, machine-gunned everyone (slaughtering several hundred) and then razed the village. Following the massacre, they engaged in a cover-up campaign in which the Army was complicit for many years. My Lai became synonymous with the horrors of the Vietnam War and American atrocities. It's not even close to being Baal's largest or most important Tether in Asia, but for the past 30 years it's been one of his most famous.

Now, however, its status as a Tether is threatened. More and more American vets are returning to Vietnam to confront their ghosts, and ex-Viet Cong soldiers are meeting their former enemies and shaking hands. Worse, Quakers from America and peace activists in Vietnam have joined together to build the My Lai Peace Park. Baal, previously indifferent to this Tether, is taking it personally. The Seneschal, a Djinn Knight named Seled, faces an extremely unpleasant fate if he fails to halt what appears to be an incursion by Novalis.

Unusual Tether:
Abel's Grave, the Middle East

There is a tale, told by heretical celestials. They say that after the Eden experiment, the outcome of which satisfied neither God nor Lucifer, the Lightbringer continued to watch the two experimental subjects after they exited the Garden. He watched their descendants also, and when the first son struck down the second, that was the first act of War. Convinced that humans were unworthy, Lucifer declared his rebellion (and thus emulated mankind).

Baal has a Tether somewhere in the Middle East (maybe Iraq, maybe Iran, some say as far north as Anatolia) which he says is his first. Its only guardian is a Seneschal (some say it is Ophis himself) whose sole job is to keep it hidden and ward off mortals and celestials alike. Only Baal comes here, and what he uses the Tether for is anyone's guess.

Generic Tether: The Block

Once there were shops and houses along this street. Now the storefronts are all boarded up, the windows are shattered, and the houses are inhabited only by rats and desperate squatters. Whoever actually owns these properties has written them off; no one ventures here unless they want to get caught in a crossfire. The Block is a no-man's land between the territories of rival gangs. Feuds begin and end, alliances form and fall apart, but this unfortunate block is always caught in the middle. It is a perpetual battleground, as none of the surrounding gangs can hold onto it, and none of them are willing to let anyone else claim it. The Shedite Seneschal, Cherith, spends time among all the local gangs, making sure that peace never threatens his Tether. Malphas has instructed his Servitors in the area not to hinder Cherith, since he does as much to further Malphas' Word as Baal's.

Other Tethers

Andersonville Prison Camp, in Georgia (*Final Trumpet*, p. 32); the Bloody Angle, in the Virginia wilderness, site of one of the bloodiest and most pointless battles in the American Civil War; the ruins of Carthage, utterly destroyed by the vengeful Romans; Malmedy, Belgium, where SS troops slaughtered American POWs during the Battle of the Bulge; Nanking (also called Nanjing), China; Sand Creek, Colorado, site of an Indian village massacred in 1864; Sea Cave Cove, California (*Fall of the Malakim*, p. 76); Srebrenica, in Bosnia-Herzogovina, site of the worst massacres in the Bosnian war; the Shatt-al-Arab, a body of water on the Iran-Iraq border; Stalingrad (now called Volgograd), Russia; and Verdun, France.

Beleth

Tether Policy

Beleth values Tethers greatly. Unlike Blandine, she prefers to cover broad areas rather than focus on individual dreamers. Tethers let her weave a skein of terror over an entire community; one powerful Tether can spawn generations of nightmares with little or no effort by her Servitors. As a result, spotting a likely Tether to Nightmares is a high priority for her Servitors. Being the first to report one to Beleth (or better, help foster one) is usually worth at least a Distinction.

Major Tether: The Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Museum, Japan

Hiroshima was the first city to fall victim to an atomic bomb; Belial christened a Tether to Fire there (p. 95). But Beleth made the second bomb serve her own purposes. The second blast branded psychological scars so deeply into the Japanese psyche, it created a special category of nightmares that has sustained her Servitors ever since. Much of Japanese history since World War II has been shaped by the bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Thousands of survivors shared their nightmares with the rest of the world. Fear of nuclear war is a motivator for peace, true, but Beleth doesn't care about that. What she cares about is that millions of people dream of having their skin melt from their bones and seeing their families reduced to radioactive ash.

The Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Museum was built to commemorate the destruction of Nagasaki, and to prevent such an event from recurring. It also helps keep images of atomic horror fresh in visitors' minds. The Seneschal, a Balseraph Captain named Tahath, reports to the Demon of Atomic Fears (a Duke whose own Word has been shrinking lately).

Unusual Tether: The Horror Story

Have you heard about the young couple who ran out of gas while driving down a deserted country road at night? You've probably heard several endings to that

story. You might also have heard about the hairy-armed hitchhiker, the killer in the back seat, the choking Doberman and various grisly roommate fatalities.

They're all true.

The Seneschal of this very unusual transient Tether (see p. 12) is a Calabite Baron who calls himself "Hook." The Tether moves wherever conditions are right to recreate a horrifying urban legend. Scared couples stranded in the boonies, teenagers telling ghost stories around a campfire and coeds whose roommates are out of town are all likely beacons. Hook travels with his Tether, and takes great delight in keeping his legends alive . . . while making sure he leaves no concrete evidence behind.

Generic Tether: The Alley

This is an alley leading from a residential neighborhood to a main street, half a block away. It's an enormously convenient shortcut, since otherwise you have to walk about six blocks to get to the stores or the local school. It's always lined with trash cans, dumpsters and empty boxes. Trees hanging over from the other side of the fences always cast shadows along its length. The alley has been here since the city's early days. The area has built up around it, but it became a Tether to Nightmares decades ago, when a serial rapist struck here a dozen times in as many months, wrapping the entire neighborhood in fear.

The alley has become a traditional place for teenage gangsters to hang out. There are murders here, junkies have been found O.D.'d among the rubbish, and it has the highest incidence of rape of anyplace in the city. Kids dare each other to take a shortcut through the alley. People coming home late at night peer into the darkness and estimate how many seconds it will take them to emerge out the other end. Hul, the Djinn Seneschal, lets *most* people traverse the alley unscathed, singling out an occasional victim just when people have started to forget the last one . . .

Other Tethers

Auschwitz, Poland (a Forked (p. 16) Tether, shared with Saminga; Auschwitz is the name that generates the most horror and fuels the most Holocaust nightmares); Culley's Gap, West Virginia (*The Marches,* p. 30); Lockerbie, Scotland, site of the crash of Pan Am flight 103, which heightened fears of both terrorism and air disasters; the Winchester Mystery House in San Jose, California, a monument to one woman's fear and superstition (the Tether is weak nowadays, as the house has become a kitschy tourist attraction).

BELIAL

Tether Policy

Belial has many Tethers at any given time . . . but most are transient, or worse, die quickly. Fires burn all over the world, eating land and lives – but once the fire's out, people bury the dead and rebuild, plants regrow and the Tether fades. In order for a wild Tether to endure long enough to ensure capture, a conflagration has to leave lasting scars, either on the landscape or humanity. Belial doesn't have the attention span to devote to Tether support, so most flare up and die unnoticed. He'll usually reward a Servitor who calls him to a Fire Tether that has lasting value, though, and Belial is rather lax about assigning Seneschals. Whoever manages to spot the Tether first may wind up an attuned Seneschal, if they want the position.

Major Tether:
East Kalimantan, Borneo

Forest fires sometimes ignite infernal Tethers – especially huge ones that displace thousands of people, stain the entire region with smog, and consume 5 million hectares of tropical rainforest full of endangered animal species. Such was the fire, one of the century's largest, that started in Borneo in 1982.

What's kept this Tether alive, when most such Tethers die after a few months, is that it's become a recurring Feature in Indonesia. Every few years there is a major fire season, and following the El Niño-exacerbated drought of 1997, a particularly bad year has kept fires burning, largely unopposed, in the province of East Kalimantan. Some of the fires are started by underground coal veins that have been burning since 1982, but most are started by farmers or plantations clearing land.

Sethur, the attuned Seneschal, has done his Shedite part to keep the fires going, hiding in those coal veins when there's nothing else burning in Indonesia. The Tether moves around the region, touching down wherever the heat is most intense.

Unusual Tether:
The Oven of Neisse

This is a large stone oven which is both Tether and artifact, constructed in the city of Neisse, in Silesia (now Poland). In the 17th century, a huge number of accused witches, almost all of them women and children, were thrown into this oven to be burned alive. Over 2,000 died in a nine-year period, fueling a Tether to Sheol.

The Seneschal is Baaraiah, a Habbalite Knight who delighted in witch-burnings. She was so entranced by the oven, she begged Belial to not only make her its Seneschal, but to bind her into the oven itself. He granted her wish, and she became a living artifact (***Liber Reliquarum,*** p. 105).

When the Seneschal transports herself (with the Celestial Song of Motion), the Tether moves with her – she *is* the Tether! The Tether is weak now, but the Seneschal is still alive. She haunts remote areas of Europe, looking for rural, superstitious communities – the kind of people who still believe in witches. She longs to savor the sweet taste of burning flesh again . . .

Generic Tether: Bill's Grocery

This tiny corner mart sells all kinds of things, being a pawn shop as well as a grocery store. "Aunt Jeannie," the proprietor, has been a neighborhood fixture for years; she bought the place after the original owner, Bill, lost his business and his family in a tragic fire. Jeannie is a kindly old woman who's always willing to extend people credit when they've fallen on hard times. The neighborhood kids love her because she always has a stash of fireworks for sale. And the local underworld knows she's a fixer for arsonists.

In fact, Jeannie is a Lilim Knight of Belial, who introduced Bill to the arsonist he hired to burn down the store with his wife and children inside. Afterward, Bill moved on to start a new life elsewhere with a buxom younger woman. Jeannie lucked out when the fire wound up creating a Tether. She called Belial, and he attuned her to it.

Other Tethers

The Atomic Dome in Hiroshima, Japan (***The Marches,*** p. 42); a smaller Tether in Nagasaki (much weaker than Beleth's – see p. 93); an arson-prone housing complex in the South Bronx; the site of the Library of Alexandria; the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp in Germany; Dresden, Germany, practically razed to the ground in December of 1945, killing over 40,000; a monument commemorating victims of the Great Earthquake in Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, weak and surrounded by a Tether of Flowers (see p. 87); and Peshtigo, Wisconsin, where the deadliest fire in U.S. history burned the same night as the Great Chicago Fire.

HAAGENTI

Tether Policy

The Tethers of Haagenti are places where the urge to consume as much as possible, as rapidly as possible, has become overpowering. Like Lust, Gluttony is widespread, though more concentrated in the developed world where humans *can* indulge themselves, and it is easier to find large masses of gluttons, and therefore slightly more powerful Tethers. With his Servitors tracking down potential sites, the majority of Haagenti's Tethers are stabilized by a quick personal inspection. Haagenti will take all the Tethers he can get, but it's even sweeter if he can snack while on the job.

Major Tether: Kincade Meats, Inc.

Redemption, Texas, is a one-horse town whose horse has long since left the city limits. It's out in the rugged and barren West Texas hill country, where cattle outnumber humans by a large ratio. Redemption's largest employer is an outfit on the banks of Crow Creek, called Kincade Meats, Incorporated. A sign that reads "Kincade Meats: Too Much of a Good Thing Is Never Enough," sits in front of this charnel house, where the killing continues in three eight-hour shifts a day.

Joshua Kincade, infernally known as Berzak, Djinn of Gluttony, bought the slaughterhouse in 1965. It had just become a Tether from the sheer number of animals killed there, far beyond the local town's ability to consume, or even ship to markets without spoiling. There was a time when Crow Creek was potable. Now it runs red and thick with the offal, blood and rotten excess flesh from the hundreds of cattle and hogs his company kills and packs every day. There have been complaints, in the past – mostly from outsiders – about the stench, but the townspeople are glad to see local industry so productive.

Mr. Kincade, as he's called in town, is a ruddy-faced, heavyset man, and he runs his meat-packing operation and his 6,000-head ranch with an iron fist of control. It also doesn't hurt that the local sheriff is his thoroughly corrupt brother-in-law. The factory and its products have never been inspected by the USDA, the State Board of Agriculture, the EPA or any other regulatory body. Kincade is popular for his "lobbying" efforts with each level of government.

A major staging point for Haagenti's operations, demons in service to Gluttony are given roles as line employees, executives or administrative staff according to the needs of the project. However, all of the workers at Kincade's factory are encouraged to enjoy their work to the utmost.

Unusual Tether: Everything 99 Cents!

It sits in an unassuming strip mall and it's a bargain shopper's dream, with aisles full of cheap plastic plates, glasses, refrigerator magnets and imported toys. The cheery clerk is Debra, known to her regular customers as Debby, and is, naturally, the Impudite Seneschal. The Everything 99 Cents store moved in after "Big Al's Pet Emporium" finally folded, amid allegations that it sold surplus stock to exotic restaurants. (They had, which is what caused the Tether to show up in the first place.)

The new owners of the store couldn't be happier; year after year, month after month, this store consistently exceeds the sales quotas and volume records for their nationwide chain. Convenient and inconspicuous for Gluttony operatives, Everything 99 Cents has garnered a reputation as a good place to lay low if the action in town gets too hot.

Generic Tether: Thirsty GulchSaloon

The Thirsty Gulch Saloon has a reputation for attracting drunks. No one is sure why they seem to congregate there; it has an unwholesome aura that seems to pervade every nook and cranny, along with the old, tacky, pseudo-Western decor. If someone asks the bright and cheery bartender why, he'll just shrug enigmatically and smile, drawling, "If you buy a beer, I'll tell you the story." And most folks do, because the bartender is Moriak, a Habbalite of Haagenti. He keeps them thirsty while he relates the story of the five young men who got into a drinking contest and how the winner walked off with a cute waitress. (To the emergency room, where he later died of alcohol poisoning, but that's the deserved fate of anyone too weak to hold his booze.) Moriak also has a talent for convincing troubled patrons to drown those troubles, over and over again, and they're often troubled, knowing they're not good enough to get cute waitresses, or anything else of value.

Other Tethers

Haagenti lays claim to a bit of infernal trivia by controlling the smallest Tether on Earth: a single tiny room in Tokyo (*In Nomine,* p. 59), approximately four feet square. Also noteworthy is the Cathedral in the city of Chiapa, Spain, where women were so addicted to chocolate, they drank it during high Mass (and the bishop who tried to ban this later died, possibly of poison in his chocolate); the caves in Scotland where the Sawney Bean family of cannibals lived and bred; and Imelda Marcos' closet in her mansion in the Philippines, famed for the huge number of shoes it once contained.

KOBAL

Tether Policy

Kobal encourages his Servitors to prize, influence and work with humans (for without humans, who would be the butts of the jokes?). In various Roles, Servitors promote careers of promising comedy troupes or budding comedic publications, hoping to goad possible Tethers into reality. In small theaters over Laundromats or large publications with a biting editorial section, Kobal's Servitors are out there in the world, encouraging humans to mock others. They don't scorn other potential Tethers they happen to find, either, and the strongest often pop up unexpectedly – such as those caused by particularly stupid military actions.

Major Tether: Phil's T-Shirt Shack, Roswell, New Mexico

The small town is flooded with the seekers of the Truth from all over the country, all debating hotly if it was an alien spacecraft or a weather balloon that crashed 50 years ago. Convention halls have sprouted among the storefronts like weeds. Erected as shrines to the believers are the International UFO Museum, the Alien Village and regular reenactments of the crash. The faithful come in droves, searching for answers – or at least another rubber extraterrestrial to buy.

In the center of this is Philemon-call-him-Phil, proprietor of Phil's T-Shirt Shack, the only vendor of *angelic* paraphernalia for miles. As the tourists come in, Phil assures them that what happened over Roswell that night in 1947 wasn't alien contact – it was angels coming from Heaven. Then he sells another T-shirt. Locals say Phil has been around as long as people can remember, and he might have been in Roswell the night the Incident happened. But Phil, an Impudite, isn't saying. He just smiles.

(Even *he* isn't sure what caused the Tether, though – he just knows Kobal snatched him out of Los Angeles in a hurry, dropped him at the locus and attuned him to it, giggling madly. Later, Lucifer came by to grant Phil the Word. Phil doesn't ask questions . . .)

Phil isn't one to just sit on a phenomenon when he could be out promoting his Tether. From time to time, another visitor to Roswell sees another flying disc, mysterious bright lights or angels on gossamer wings descending from the sky outside of town. Those who survive and tell the story only make the legend of aliens – or angels – that much stronger.

FOUR THOUSAND BROWN PLASTIC FLAMINGOS. The last batch sold in three hours! Even the Cherub bought one!

Unusual Tether: Florence, Oregon

*It was a big whale. It was a smelly whale. And most important, it was a **dead** whale.*

The 8-ton, 45-foot whale had been dead for a while, lying on the beach off the interstate just south of Florence. On November 20, 1970, the Highway Department was tasked with cleaning up the mess. Officials were consulted, the Navy was consulted and a decision was made – blow up the whale with half a ton of dynamite. Logically, the whale would disintegrate into manageable chunks to be eaten by seagulls or washed out to sea.

This was a major event for Florence; not only did most of the population come to watch, but so did the local television media. Naturally, it didn't go well. After the explosion, cheers suddenly became screams. Pieces of dead whale were sent soaring – but not into the ocean. Rotting blubber rained into the crowd. One chunk flew half a mile to destroy an onlooker's car. And the seagulls which were to consume the whale chunks . . . were nowhere to be seen.

Today, the story has been rescued from disappearing into the annals of urban legends by the Net and by word of mouth. Felix, the thin Djinn Seneschal, walks up and down the beach, obsessing over the seagulls, selling tourists his shirts with prints from the original video. And with every shirt, people remember the story and laugh at the Highway Department.

Generic Tether: Main Street Comedy Showcase

Comedy clubs are a staple of larger towns, particularly those with a university or other locations where amateur actors may congregate, and they are prized if they should become Tethers to Dark Humor. Such Tethers are often manned by a mid-level Balseraph or Impudite to manage the actors, the advertisements, the bookings and the investors. Hidden from direct view, these Tethers do not make an effort to disturb the establishment. Most have a troupe of actors attached to the Tether to ensure it can always open its doors to the public.

The Main Street Comedy Showcase became a Tether when a student kept the packed house in stitches for an entire hour, recounting incidents from his affair with one of his professors – who was present. Inside, there is a bar, a dozen round tables and a small stage. The entertainment varies wildly from exceptionally, knee-slapping funny to vapid, but, under the Impudite Seneschal's watchful eye, all focuses on biting, vicious commentary of the local area and current events.

Other Tethers

Kobal also claims the closed William Henry Harrison High School, now a hang-out for Goth wannabes (and the demon with that Word; *The Final Trumpet,* p. 42), as well as William Henry Harrison's grave (the ninth U.S. President caught pneumonia during his hours-long inaugural address in a storm, and died one month later); the Stanford University football stadium, ever since a player trampled the arrayed band in the endzone like bowling pins, sending several to the hospital; the site of Custer's Last Stand; and the final campsite of Robert Falcon Scott's doomed Antarctic expedition.

Kronos

Tether Policy

Kronos goes his way in the *certain* knowledge that all things proceed to their fates, and the Symphony will therefore provide – in due time – whatever Tether-sites he might require. If his Servitors perform their functions and make Tethers more likely, this is good. If no Tether is formed despite their work, this is regrettable, but accepted. Should a Servitor discover the potential for a Tether, this is merely more proof that the Symphony is Fated, and Kronos will claim the Tether with quiet satisfaction.

MURRAY

The checks and balances of Kronos' Tethers are as reliable as clockwork. Regular reports are sent to the Archives, where they may be read, or may be misfiled for a thousand years. Seneschals have near-absolute authority within their Tethers, so long as they provide an acceptable report to Kronos when he inspects their work. Kronos' visits are unpredictable and quiet affairs, often occurring before unexpected trouble arrives at the Tether. Young demons try to get places at the more famous Tethers, hoping to attract attention through the quality of their work; this often results in the young demons becoming cannon-fodder. Kronos merely observes this natural process as others work out their own fates.

Major Tether: Canton Customs House

By the 1830s, Great Britain was importing *tons* of opium every year into China, much of it through the port of Canton. Despite official proclamations from the Emperor, and eventually laws that made opium illegal (in 1836), the trade continued. Much of the opium passed through the Customs House, with Chinese officials bribed to look the other way. Eventually a Chinese official, Lin Tse-hsü, was placed in charge of the situation and managed to shut down the traffic in opium entirely. War broke out when Chinese junks attempted to turn back English merchant vessels in November of 1839, and the English sent warships in June of 1840. In 1842 the Chinese were forced to agree to an ignominious peace under the Treaty of Nanking, and (among other conditions) to permit the opium trade. A second Opium War followed shortly afterward, with further humiliating terms placed on the Chinese, and irretrievable cracks were hammered into the Chinese empire.

The Customs House, as one of the main source-points for the trade in opium, became a potential Tether to Fate. Fleurity, at this time only the Word-bound Demon of Drugs, gained greatly in strength through the drugs trade and became a minor Prince shortly afterward, but could not compete with Kronos, who claimed the Tether. The building still stands, and is still an example of the Fate that came to many throughout China from the opium that passed through it. The Seneschal is a Habbalite, Derbe by name, who still enjoys leading mortals into the fates that they *deserve* through their weakness.

Unusual Tether: The Lynching Tree

Somewhere in Texas, the remains of a tree stand atop an old hill. During the period of expansion through the Wild West, lynching was a frequent practice – but some-

times the mob got it wrong. On one occasion, a local town killed an innocent man they believed to have been waylaying travelers, then buried the body and denied having heard of him when he was later found to be innocent. The knowledge festered in the minds of all who had taken part – the entire male population of the town. Each man, in his own way, turned to corruption and reached some darkfate, often bringing his family down with him. The Tether is weak these days, but is still tended by Tilon, the Balseraph Seneschal, who keeps a roadside stall nearby and does her best to corrupt passing drivers.
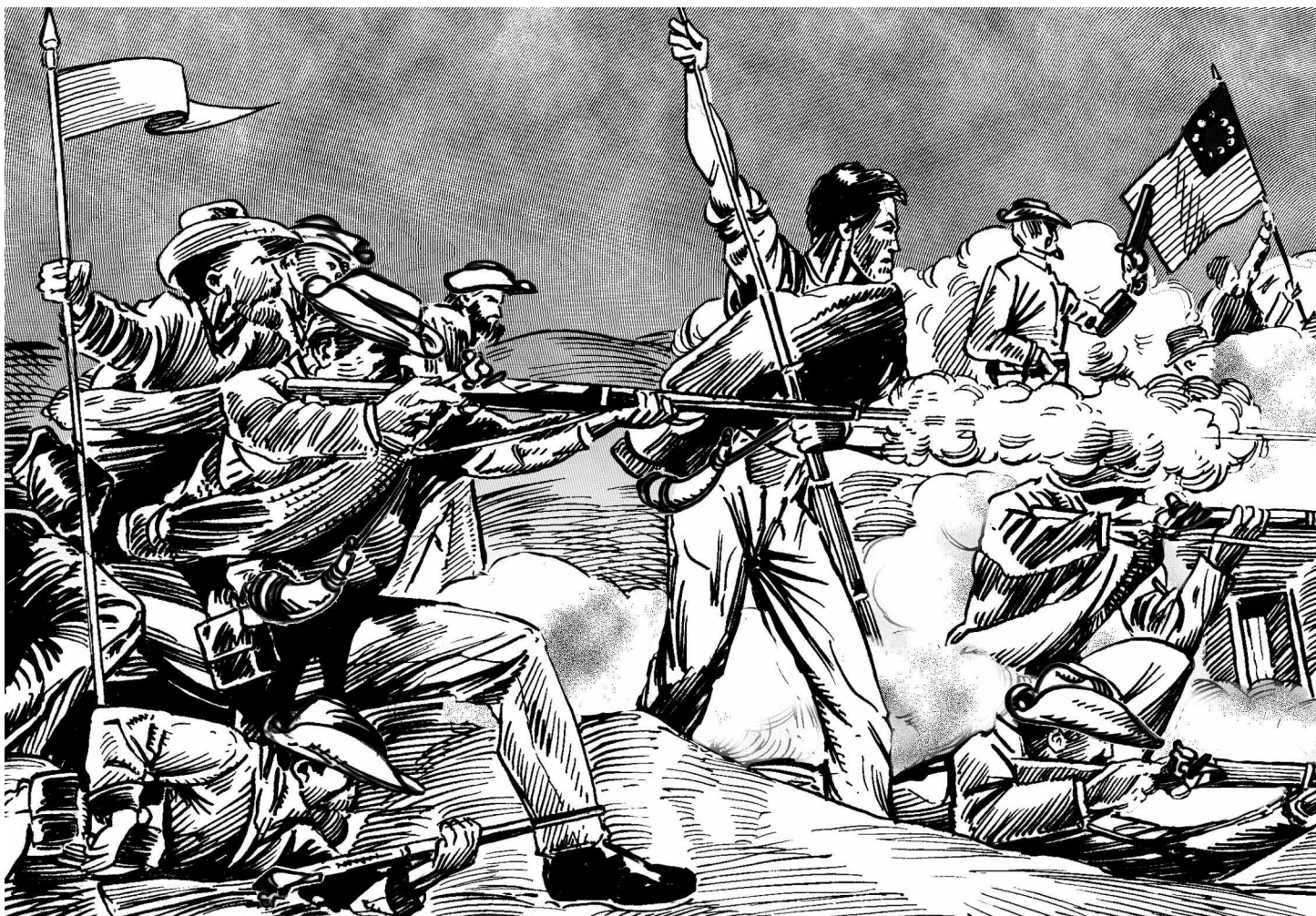
Generic Tether: The Medical Records

At the bottom of the big hospital lies its Medical Records section – confused, disorganized and bundled into tatty brown paper folders with the patient labels coming loose. Although new organizers (every couple of years) attempt to get the system in order, it never *quite* functions as well as it should. Several patient fatalities have resulted from the lack of accurate and timely records, together with the ruin of the careers of the doctors involved. The Seneschal is a Djinn named Mibzar, who has a Role as a minor clerk, and lurks in the corners of the department, ensuring that all stays confused.

Other Tethers

Famous Tethers of Kronos include the Rubicon, outside Rome, which was crossed by Julius Caesar in open declaration of his intentions to take control of Rome – some celestials believe that this sealed Caesar's fate, forming the Tether, but others say it was the fate of the Roman Empire that was triggered; the Brocken in Germany, believed site of many witches' sabbats; the 17th-century convent at Loudun in France where 17 Catholic nuns claimed demonic possession, and caused widespread witch-hunts and persecution of the Huguenots; and the secret files of the KGB and Iranian SAVAK.
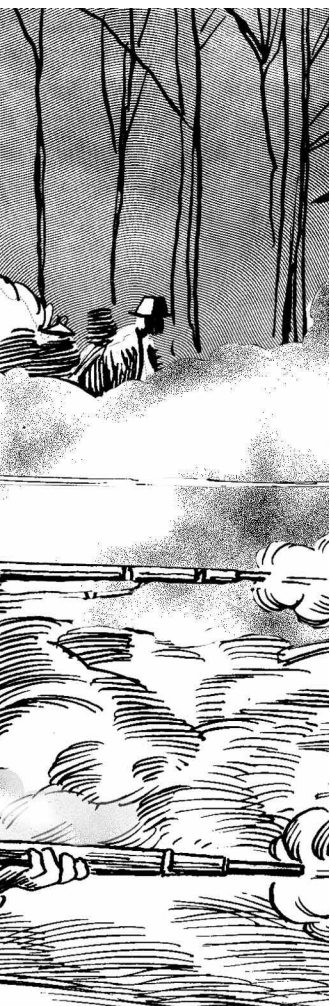
LILITH

Tether Policy

Lilith takes her Tethers where she finds them. Calling her to a previously unknown Freedom Tether is one of the few ways to get a Geas removed almost instantly – but that's not something to depend on. As Lilith has no true Domain in Hell, the end-points of wild Tethers to Freedom will appear wherever her influence has been strong. Often, they pop up somewhere within the Guildhall, but some have led to obscure parts of Stygia or other Principalities. One Lilim even claimed a wild Tether deposited her before a silver throne in a bitterly cold cavern that glittered with ice – or perhaps Geas-gems? – on every surface.

Lilith never has Word-bound Seneschals, and even attuned Seneschals are rare. Most caretakers of a Freedom Tether are exactly that – and all are free to leave or re-negotiate when their contracts are up. When a Tether's surroundings make the connection to Freedom ironical, in Lilith's opinion, she withdraws her Forces from it, either letting it fade away, or selling it to another Prince, such as Malphas. (Perhaps because of the high turnover, Freedom Tethers show up frequently during revolutions. Easy come, easy go.)

Major Tether: Concord Green, Massachusetts, USA

The first two battles of the American Revolution were fought at Lexington and Concord, in April of 1775. The colonials withdrew from the Lexington encounter, but the British retreated from Concord, without the military stores they had set out to take. This was the first colonial victory, and their defiance of the government forces formed a Tether. Historical re-creations of the events there have kept this link to Freedom open, even though most other Tethers pertaining to the American Revolution have become surrounded with government and discarded. Concord Green's attuned Seneschal, Jetheth, is one of the few primarily male Lilim, though he has a large collection of vessels of all genders and species. He participates enthusiastically in all the historical reenactments around his Tether – sometimes as a horse named Jet.

Unusual Tether: Statue of Zumbi, Serra da Barriga, Brazil

Three centuries ago the Quilombo dos Palmares – a community of nearly 30,000 runaway slaves – followed the rebel Zumbi, and threatened the core of Portugal's institution of slavery. Zumbi, a genius at guerrilla warfare, was believed by many demons to be a Soldier of Freedom, dedicated to liberating all the slaves in the region. The white slave-owners feared and hated him. However, the rebels were eventually defeated by the establishment, and their villages were razed. In 1695, Zumbi was killed, and Lilith abandoned the Tethers his campaign had formed.

But somehow, despite 300 years, the story of Zumbi remained alive. To many people in Brazil, he became a *symbol* of freedom, all excesses forgotten or glossed over. Rio de Janeiro observed the tricentennial of his death as a holiday. And at the broken statue of the rebel leader, in the hills above Serra da Barriga, a Tether has been discovered. Its current caretaker is Hirah, a quietly fanatical Daughter. She hopes to become an attuned Seneschal to an even bigger Tether in Brazil – one that will form when the blacks finally claim their rights from the whites in power. (And in *her* opinion, the bloodier the change, the better.)

KWIK NOTE

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5/17/99

MOTHER THERE'S BEEN ANOTHER
INCIDENT STOP REQUESTING
MILITARY AGENTS STOP GAME OR
THE WAR PREFERRED STOP I'LL PAY
STOP


– DELILAH
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Generic Tether: Maple Street Shelter

This small house for battered women provides counseling, assistance and shelter to those who seek it out. Two years ago, an abusive husband followed his wife there, and tried to first cajole, and then force her into returning to him. The Tether formed as she refused, fatally wounding him with his own gun, which she had stolen before she left him. Now, it's cared for by a succession of Lilim and humans, and generally kept *out* of the War, as Lilith believes it's more useful promoting her Word than as a safehouse for demons. (Demons are not denied sanctuary – usually – but the price of passage goes up with the amount of trouble brought to the Tether.)

Other Tethers

Some other active links to Freedom include the remains of the Berlin Wall (***Fall of the Malakim,*** p. 23); the statue of Armed Freedom on the Capitol Building roof, in Washington, D.C.; and one of the buildings in California's "Silicon Valley," where early networking technologies (a particularly anarchistic type of data exchange) were developed, though few know *which* company. With the breakup of the Soviet Union and the Eastern Bloc, there are undoubtedly new Freedom Tethers forming – for which some Free Lilim are already searching.

MALPHAS

Tether Policy

Malphas seeks new Tethers out eagerly; every Tether is a new base from which to foment a new Faction and support another group. Fortunately for the Prince of Factions, his Servitors frequently help to cause potential Tethers just by going about their regular duties, enflaming humans' mistrust of one another. He does not attempt to force Tethers in particular geographical locations – if there are no groups there to make his Servitors necessary, then the location is unimportant to him. Any Servitor who discovers a potential Tether receives Malphas' gratitude. The demon is placed on a short list of candidates to become the Seneschal, and is informed who else is on the list.

Tethers are inspected regularly, by a group Malphas appoints personally to the job. These Servitors have their own bootlickers, secretaries and so on – it is said that to have them visiting is worse than an attack by Michaelites. Malphas listens to their reports with great interest, then
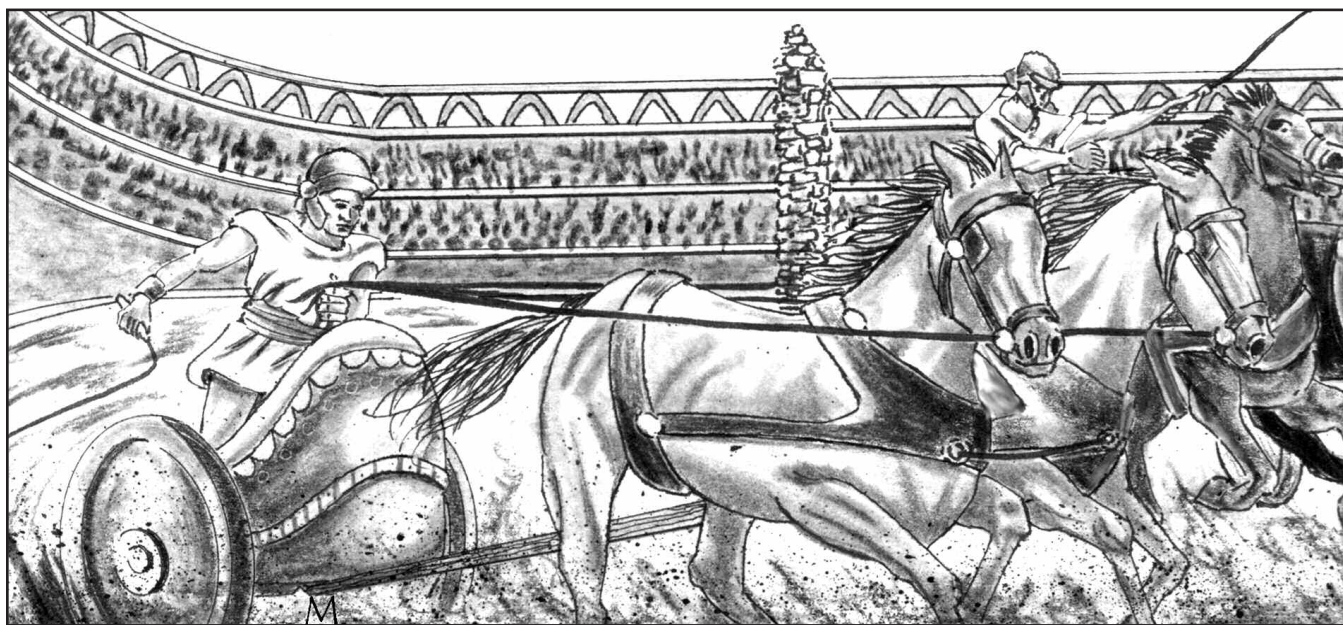
(usually) disregards them. His own visits to Tethers are unexpected, and he is always friendly and charming as he reviews his Servitors' work. Seneschals are allowed to appoint their own staff from any demons or lesser spirits willing to work for them; this results in large groups that are rapidly pruned of stupider members. Seneschals are also expected to cultivate good relations with any other infernal Tethers nearby – or angelic ones, if feasible. However, they should always make sure that the other Tethers in the area are not on terms with *each other*.

Major Tether: The Hippodrome, Byzantium

Construction on the Hippodrome (also called the Circus) in Byzantium was started in 203 A.D., by the Roman emperor Septimius, to distract the populace after he had sacked and razed the city. It was finally opened in 330 A.D., on the same day that the City itself was inaugurated. One of the centers of popular life, it was a rectangular stone and marble structure with 40 rows of seats that overlooked the arena floor, capable of seating thousands of people. The spectators would cheer as chariots raced round the *spina* (the central backbone of the racetrack); the races were brutal and devoid of sportsmanship.

The audiences were organized into two groups, the Blues and the Greens. The Blues (the wealthy and orthodox) occupied the northern seats, while the Greens (the lower class and heretics) occupied the south. These two groups polarized the city, and the Hippodrome became a focus area for riots and mob disagreements. People would spend all day there, cheering on their chosen teams, and then riot afterward in the streets, depending on whether their choices won or lost. The arena was also used for shows, public executions and imperial coronations; St. John Chrystostom dubbed the place the "Satanodrome," a haven for vice.

The Hippodrome was claimed as a Tether by Malphas, and still stands today, though Byzantium is now named Istanbul. The Seneschal is a Calabite named Lucian, who regrets the old lost days of citywide riots; he does his best to keep the spirit of the Tether going by encouraging mob and partisan violence nearby.

Unusual Tether: Temple Mount

When Solomon first built his great Temple in Jerusalem, the foundation stone became a Tether to Gabriel, as it was believed to be divinely inspired. This Tether survived the destruction of the Temple, its rebuilding and its destruction 500 years later to the day; the Moslems built the Dome of the Rock over the foundation stone, and it endured. However, in 1099 A.D. the Crusaders stormed Jerusalem, putting every living being within the walls to the sword, and Belial took the opportunity to have his Servitors assault the Seneschal and Tether. Gabriel's Tether finally fell, and the hatred of the Crusaders raised a Tether to Malphas in its place – which grew beyond the old one's borders to encompass the whole Temple Mount. That Tether still exists, kept even when the population dwindled, fanned anew by the factionalism in the Holy Land and guarded by a Habbalite Seneschal named Lehiah. Its presence in such a sacred place is deeply resented by the Archangels, Gabriel in particular.

Generic Tether: The Apartments

This floor of a large apartment building is a constant mass of feuding. Practically all the families and couples living here have grudges against each other, ranging from *How They Borrowed Our Wok And Never Gave It Back* through *You Heard What They Said About Our Liz* all the way to *You Can't Trust That Scum, They're All Murdering Hooligans.* The Seneschal of the Tether is a Shedite named Oromedon, who regularly moves among the tenants to keep the place in a proper state of hatred.

Other Tethers

Famous Tethers of Malphas include the Starlight Fields Retreat (**The Final Trumpet,** p. 52); a coal factory in the Ruhr, which kept changing hands between the French and German partisans in the Second World War; Grant Park *and* City Hall, in Chicago (**The Final Trumpet,** p. 91); The Castle of Senigallia, Magione, Romana, where Cesar Borgia murdered men conspiring against him while pretending to call a truce; and Bosworth Field in England, site of the decisive battle between the houses of York and Lancaster in the Wars of the Roses.

Bob —
Just a real quick note of congratulations! Your ratings have never been higher! Keep shooting for the stars, baby.
— N
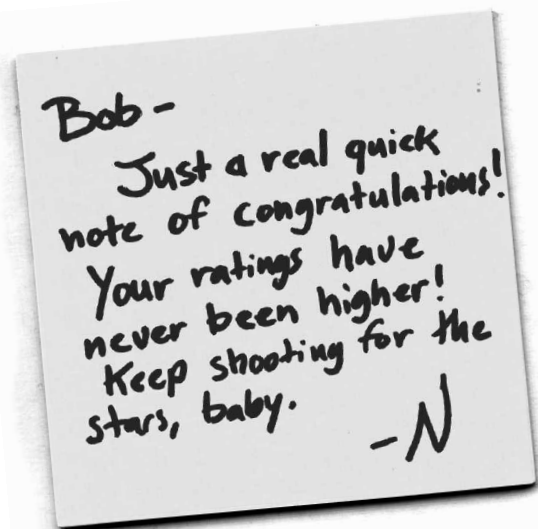
NYBBAS

Tether Policy

The Demon Prince of Media likes glamour, glitz and fluff. Still, even the consummate showman knows that a strong, well-maintained infrastructure is necessary to keep the illusion of reality from crumbling into fairy dust in front of his audience. Therefore, Tethers to the Media aren't necessarily as flashy as Nybbas might prefer. To be sure, he's got his share of blinking neon lights and starlet bombshell Seneschals . . . but he also controls newspaper printing presses, computer data centers that serve tabloid trash across the Internet and even a paparazzi photo lab. Whether spontaneous media eruption, or attempts at manipulated choice, Nybbas' minions keep a watch for promising sites that promote their Superior's Word.

Like Lust and Gluttony, the Media is everywhere these days, but hype has been overdone to the point where it's an ever-escalating battle to make *any* impression on the masses. Nybbas had amazing growth in Tethers during the first part of the 20th century, but new ones are much rarer now. Surprisingly, the Net is not always conducive to his Word.

Major Tether: WCKD, Charlotte, NC

WCKD used to be a small independent television station on the outskirts of Charlotte, North Carolina. The television station has a sordid history of bizarre on-air behavior and near-miss FCC license revocation hearings. Everything changed for the better when Neville Snyder, an idly wealthy Australian with a penchant for buying small, struggling stations, acquired the facilities and broadcast license in the early '90s.

Now part of the Snyder media empire, WCKD has become the flagship station of Synder's brainchild: OWL Network. Flush with the resources of its new owner, WCKD now sports a 24-hour satellite uplink and has a rapidly growing cable audience across North America.

The OWL Network's top-rated program is a nightly live call-in program with the charismatic and charming host, Charlie Daggett. Unfortunately, Daggett has a problem: Goraz, Shedite Seneschal of WCKD.

Charlie Daggett was an extremely ethical broadcast journalist, with impeccable standards and, more important, *good taste.* Now, after being possessed for four weeks, no question is out of bounds for Daggett, no line of investigation is too tawdry. He has suddenly acquired an ingratiating personality that would make an over-the-top game show host wince.

Despite all of this, his show resonates with the public. It has acquired an almost cult-like status. In places where it cannot be seen over the air, devoted fans of the show tape the nightly broadcast and trade copies amongst one another, especially over the Internet. Guests keep coming, too, thanks to the great ratings. Still, it's only a matter of time until Daggett gets canned for one of his ever-lengthening rants. Once Goraz pushes him too far, it will be time to create yet another hyperfamous shooting star journalist.

Unusual Tether:
The Instant Informer Hub

A small office in one of the many industrial parks strewn throughout Silicon Valley houses the Instant Informer Hub, where once Jacob Richards slanted the news to entertain his audience. The number of visitors to his web site attracted advertisers, who didn't care whether his reports were twisted or not, and a small Tether was formed. Now Jerion, Balseraph and attuned Seneschal, sits in the webmaster's chair, working quietly as a "multimedia content specialist." With 20 different televisions tuned to different news channels from around the globe, as well as a fully peered T3 Internet connection at his fingertips (upgraded as technology permits), Jerion listens for breaking news stories, and subtly distorts them. This virtually ensures that whatever he posts on his immensely popular web site, The Instant Informer, starts life as a falsehood to his vast audience on the World Wide Web. Jean's Servitors have not yet discovered this site, in the vast sea of similar ones, but Jerion is convinced they'll pose no threat.

Generic Tether: Blink-O Copy Shop

This store is known for its extremely speedy and prompt service. Open 24-hours a day, it offers a complete gamut of photocopying, Internet, video and photo duplication services. Managed with a deft, uncompromising hand by Thurizod, the Djinn Seneschal, the store churns out orders for its customers that *usually* resemble what came in the door. However, Thurizod has occasionally found it quite useful to unobtrusively alter text, substitute a word here or twist a sentence there, just enough to provide a different meaning than the one its author intended. Because the Tether is so efficient, professional and reasonably priced, Servitors of Nybbas are able to get subversive ideas across to a number of important businesses, civic and academic groups.

The Copy Shop became a Tether in its early days, when one of its "graveyard shift" clerks decided to augment his income a little. He offered reduced rates to some of his friends, who churned out both a badly written "subversive underground bulletin" and illegal copies of Cliff Notes and other items of use to students. Unfortunately, even their copyright violations included errors, often blatant ones.

Other Tethers

Other Tethers of the Media include the White House press-room, in Washington, D.C.; Enfer Fleur, in Los Angeles (**Fall of the Malakim,** p. 70); the site for the final fight scene of the Bruce Lee film, *Enter the Dragon*, in Hong Kong; and the government-run Film City at Goregaon, Bombay.

SAMINGA

Tether Policy

Early in his career, Saminga actively sought Tethers. Now, believing himself secure and his power firmly established, he worries less about expansion, but still eagerly harvests any new Tethers that form, and expects his Servitors to notify him immediately if they discover one. And Tethers to Abaddon are plentiful. Saminga, however, believes that *every* scene of mass carnage should become a Tether to Death, and blames a conspiracy of his fellow Princes for preventing this from happening. Saminga is outraged that the Turkish slaughter of the Armenians, early in this century, did not produce a single Tether to Death, nor did the 1994 genocide in Rwanda. The Holocaust gave him several Tethers, but he expected more. After thousands of years, he still fails to grasp the inherent ineffability of Tethers. The fact is that one particularly horrific death is as likely to open a gate to Hell as a thousand people dying in an earthquake.

Major Tether: Union Carbide Plant, Bhopal, India

Saminga is particularly proud of this Tether, because he won it after a months-long battle with Vapula. The Prince of Death and the Prince of Technology vied long and hard to claim this site. A toxic gas leak at a Union Carbide pesticide plant (caused by an employee's sabotage) killed over 6,000 people in 1984 – the worst industrial accident in history. Saminga's Servitors prevailed in their efforts to secure the new infernal Tether, probably motivated by the gruesome fate that would have awaited them had they failed. Saminga believes he's constantly being cheated out of Tethers that are rightfully his, so he cherishes this one. With death, disfigurement and birth defects still an active legacy of the Bhopal disaster, Captain Azmaveth, the Balseraph Seneschal, has so far proven immune to Vapula's attempts to subvert him.

Unusual Tether: Saint Domingue, Haiti

Saminga has known how to make undead since before he became a Prince. The western part of Haiti is one of the few places where mortals have learned to duplicate the trick without celestial tutelage. When a few sorcerous *bokors* discovered how to create *real* zombis, not just the poor drug-enslaved souls that were their original prototypes, it opened a chasm to Saminga's realm . . . and the Prince of Death stepped through, and was happy to teach his new converts even more tricks.

For a while, Saminga had dreams of converting the entire population of Haiti to zombis, and making it his personal domain on Earth. Both the Archangels and his fellow Princes made it clear he wouldn't be allowed to go that far. A powerful Tether remains, though, and the Baron-Seneschal Ahimoth is one of the most powerful occult figures in the Caribbean.

Generic Tether: The Cemetery Basements

It takes more than a cemetery full of corpses to create a Tether to Death. It takes more than a cemetery full of improperly buried corpses. A cemetery full of improperly buried corpses, subsequently filled in and made into a subsidized housing plot, on which shoddy tenements with poor foundations are built . . . *that* can create a Tether to Death. Especially when the tenement basements flood, and bring rotting body parts floating to the surface to be discovered by children, followed by an outbreak of cholera and other diseases, allowed to spread

because the tenants are mostly poor immigrants and no one really cares much what happens to them.

Eventually, the public heath problem was brought to the city's attention, and the housing complex's basements were given a new layer of concrete. The problem was buried, literally and in the minds of everyone except the residents. Bashemath, Balseraph Knight and attuned Seneschal, helps maintain the cover-up; he serves as custodian of both the projects and the Tether, and profits by offering various dark services to local demons.

Other Tethers

The Hill Country Catacombs in Texas (*Night Music,* p. 93); the site of Jeffrey Dahmer's apartment building in Milwaukee (*In Nomine,* p. 59); the killing fields of Cambodia; the La Brea Tar Pits in Los Angeles (*Fall of the Malakim,* p. 73); "Old Sparky," Florida's 75 year-old electric chair; the Prison Ship Martyr's Monument in Fort Greene Park, Brooklyn; Storytime Land, in Georgia (*Night Music,* p. 20); a certain remote castle in Transylvania; several concentration camps in Poland (though fewer than he claims), as well as a forked Tether at Auschwitz, shared grudgingly with Beleth; Vorkuta, one of the cruelest of Stalin's gulags, known for its "twelve months of winter"; Dachau, in Germany; and an obscure mass grave in the Biafran jungle.

VALEFOR

Tether Policy

Valefor pays little attention to potential Tethers, preferring to save his energy for defending the ones he has, and keeping them as secret as possible – they make great escape routes. He enjoys discovering that he has a new Tether, but his real interest lies in stealing Tethers from other Superiors. This incredibly difficult and haphazard task is one of the most daring thefts a Servitor of Valefor can perpetrate, because a Servitor himself cannot steal a Tether. *Without* using resonance or Songs, he must convince humans to do some deed that powerfully promotes the Word of Theft, and do it within another Superior's Tether. Consecrating a new Tether within an existing one destroys the previous Tether, "stealing" the site. Valefor will lavish a successful thief with rewards. Unfortunately for ambitious Servitors, this trick has only worked twice. Ever.

Major Tether: The Train

The Jesse James gang did not commit the first train robbery, but they did commit some of the most famous train robberies of the Old West. Their first attempt tar-

geted the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad, on July 21, 1873. As the train came through Adair, Iowa, the engine ran over a rail that the James gang had loosened and the train derailed. The engineer, John Rafferty, was killed when the engine rolled over him. The total haul from the robbery is disputed, but said to be between $2,000-$6,000. Although this theft was not as flamboyant as some of their later escapades, it was the starting point for many other train robberies, and a part of the mystique and legend surrounding the James' career. The train engine was never moved from the spot, and eventually it was consecrated as a Tether to Valefor. The engine is there to this day, buried and resembling a small hill.

The Seneschal is an Impudite who goes by the name of Jim. His Role as a hobo first brought him to the site of the Tether, and he continues to return to the spot regularly, although the Tether has very little power. Jim is not very ambitious, so he doesn't mind that the Tether is often overlooked. Neither does Valefor.

Unusual Tether: The Regis Diamond

It came out of the Earth in South Africa, fully formed, beautiful and bursting with light, and ever since then, the Regis Diamond has been being stolen. The mine worker who dug it up stole it from the mine owners. He tried to fence it, but the fence killed him in a dispute over price and took the diamond from his dead hand. It changed owners three more times before it was finally cut. Then the thieving really began. It has been in museums, rich households, back-alley hideouts, and has been buried and dug up numerous times. No matter where it goes, the diamond is always discovered and stolen again – but as long as it is on display, the immediate area around it is a Tether to Stygia. It has no Seneschal, yet, but this Intermittent (p. 18) Tether is one of Valefor's favorite toys.
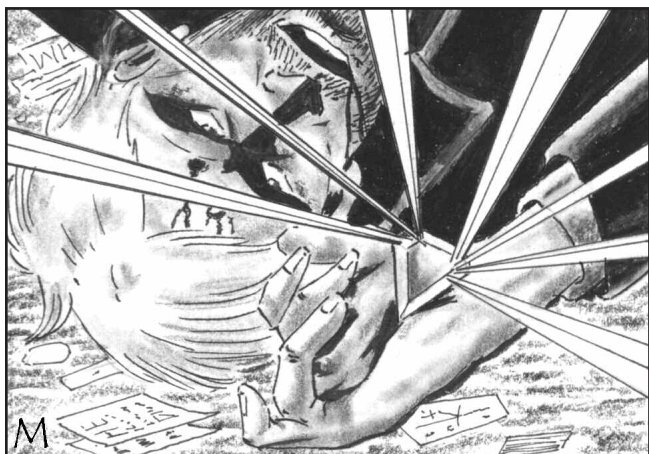
Generic Tether: The Princess Josephine

The *Princess Josephine* is a riverboat casino that caters to slumming yuppies and middle-aged tourists. It's open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The casino only gained a Seneschal when Mahal, Habbalite Knight of Theft, stumbled across it and claimed it for himself. As "Bob Risotti," blackjack dealer, Mahal has supported the Tether's founding principle of robbing the customers blind, while convincing them that they enjoy it. This Tether also uses its round-the-clock hours to steal people from their jobs and families.

Other Tethers

The British Museum, regarded as a clearing house of art by Theft-Servitors along with the Hermitage and the room with the Mona Lisa in the Louvre (far too close to Dominic's Tether (p.75) for the cloudy Shedite Seneschal's liking); the jade-rich (and cinnabar-covered) Mayan tomb of Copán's Red Lady, expertly robbed in February 1997; the Cabrini Green housing project in Chicago, where the residents are robbed every day, both literally and spiritually; the Tent of Illusions (*The Marches,* p. 117), which can steal dreams and hopes from the humans who enter; at least one each of the Swiss and Cayman banks – Valefor keeps the exact locations secret; the headquarters of the United States Internal Revenue Service, in Washington, D.C.; and the Amber Room, whose current whereabouts are unknown (*Heaven and Hell*, p. 108).

VAPULA

Tether Policy

Technology's Tethers often have accelerated life-cycles, so Vapula directs his demons to pursue new sites vigorously, at the expense of neglecting old or dying Tethers. He rewards discovery of Tethers in exotic climates, strategic locations (*e.g.*, near Lightning strongholds) or which possess unusual Features. Technology demons aggressively claim new Essence supplies for their master, even if the Tether is marginal. Hoping to get lucky, they also haunt areas connected to unethical experimentation, rampant (mis)use of technology or where mortals have, without prompting, sold their souls to the machine.

Vapula inspects and secures new Tethers promptly, though some have been allowed to remain wild or tied into explosive feedback circuits in order to collect observations. Seneschals are tacitly encouraged to offer refuge to dissonant celestials of all allegiances, in order to maintain a supply of experimental subjects.

As yet, attempts to force the creation of new Tethers with industrial incidents have been unsuccessful – which does not dissuade the Great Experimenter from continuing to support them.

Major Tether: Oil Slicks

Amongst Vapula's loyal servants there are those who claim their Master's Word has the power to blot out the sun. Some boast that they will rebuild humanity in His image. Some simply whisper that Technology could replace God. Among all these, one voice stands out. One monomaniac Shedite claims to be able to quell the raging furies of the ocean, with some authority. He is Treyf, the Demon Seneschal of Oil Slicks.

He proudly remembers the Amoco slick of 1978, caused when a supertanker lost its cargo off the coast of Brittany. A spill in Iran's Nowruz offshore oilfield which was aggravated by Iraqi airstrikes in 1983. The *Exxon Valdez* disaster of 1989 when a supertanker ran ashore in Alaska. The Sea of Japan oilspill in 1997, caused when a Russian oil-tanker broke in two.

109

CASTELLA MUNDI

MURRAY
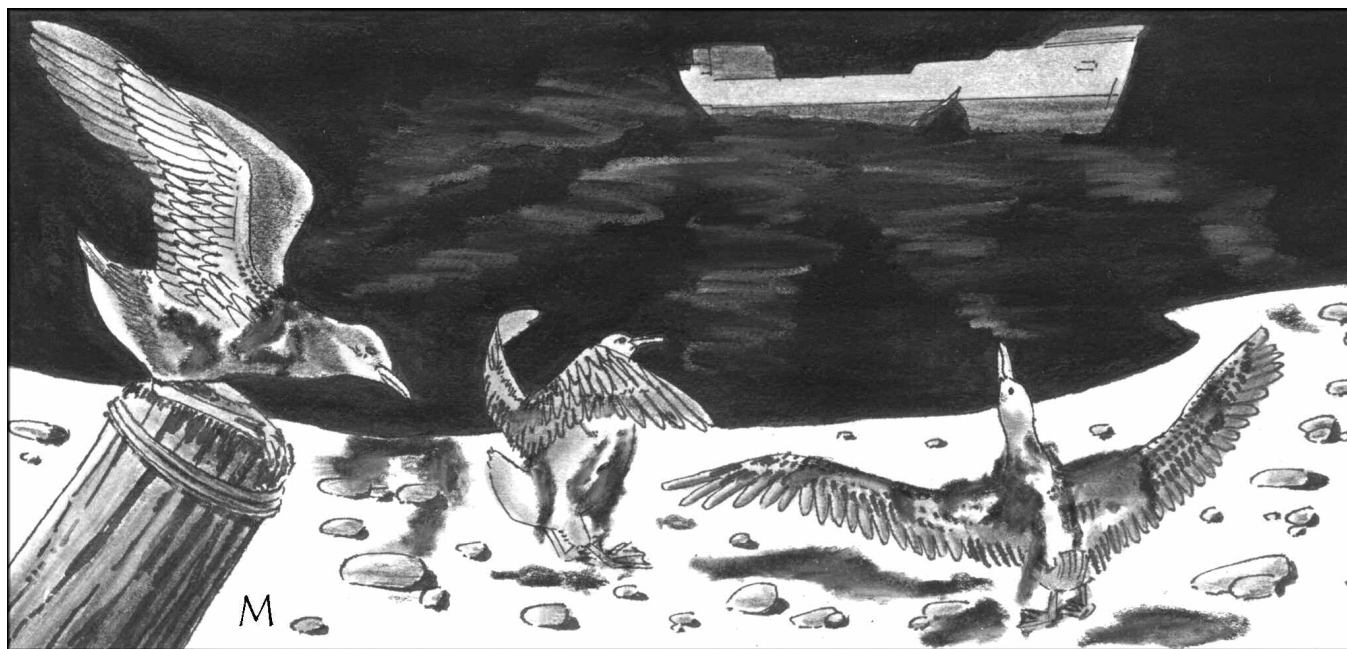
All these slicks, and lesser efforts, embodied a Transient (p. 12) Tether under Treyf's watchful eye. (Oil slicks last up to a few months; evaporation claims much of the oil.) He dreams of a day in which all the oceans of the world will be perfectly smooth, beautifully calm and hidden under a thin black layer of oil.

Unusual Tether: Grimshaw's Mill

Grimshaw's Mill, near Manchester, was an icon of the industrial revolution, a huge building populated with Cartwright's new power loom, automating an operation that had been done by hand and skill for centuries. The slam with which the factory doors first opened sent echoes through to Tartarus. The recently ennobled Prince turned up in a Phaeton to meet briefly with the owner, before claiming the Tether and retiring to copy the layout in his own factories. A year later, in March of 1791, the Mill was stormed by angry proto-Luddites and burned to the ground.

Though forgotten and reduced to a handful of Forces, the Djinn Seneschal refused to desert its beautiful machines, and during an attack by angels of Stone, the Mill was reduced to a Sapient Tether (p. 15). The burned-out shell still stands on a lonely hill, desolate and distraught. Its crumbling walls ache with shame at being separated from the implacable march of industry, and the hollow windows sometimes provide a glimpse directly into Hell.

Generic Tether: The Chop Shop

Sunlight sparkles on the plated-glass of the showroom window. Inside are fantasy cars and chromed motorbikes, sleekly contoured to invite the eye's caress. Imaginations are spurred to visions of speed, power and the freedom of the open road. Mortals have paused to worship at this altar of modern technology since the showroom opened, oblivious to the unholy techniques used behind closed doors to retune engines and add very exclusive fittings.

The garage became a minor Tether after the original owner had an accident involving the over-enthusiastic insertion of a Rolls-Royce engine into a Volkswagen Beetle. The next "owner" was a Balseraph, who hasn't made the same mistake. As well as beguiling mortals and making a modest profit on sales of used cars, the Tether acts as a chop shop. It will also soup up motors for demonic speed-freaks, in return for small acts of industrial espionage and theft. Rumors of a vampiric Harley are greatly exaggerated.

Other Tethers

Ypres (first use of chemical weapons on a battlefield); the Three Gorges Dam, China, which will displace 1.5 million people when completed, destroy archaeological sites and increase the likelihood of pollution; and the NSA headquarters at Fort Meade, near Washington, D.C.. Vapula's newest Tether is MediLabs, in Austin, Texas (**Night Music,** p. 112), which was recently revealed to him.

NOTRE DAME DE PARIS

A stunning example of Gothic architecture, lovingly detailed over centuries by Europe's finest builders and craftsmen, the Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris is one of the largest, and certainly the strongest, divine Tether in the corporeal realm.

Long before the city came to be called Paris, people settled along the banks of the Seine River. When threatened by barbarian attackers, the city leaders moved their most important buildings, institutions and people – themselves, mostly – to the Ile de la Cité, an easily defended island in the Seine. On that island, the site of Notre Dame had been a place of worship since before the time of Christ. When the Roman Emperor Constantine declared that Christianity would be "tolerated" in 313 A.D., it didn't take long for the locals to build a Christian chancery on the site. It was both a center for worship and the home of the Bishop of Paris, one of the more influential positions of the early Church.

The buildings and grounds continued to be expanded, remodeled and improved over the centuries. When Maurice de Sully became Bishop of Paris in the mid-12th century, he started design and construction of the magnificent cathedral seen today – though he knew it would not be completed until well after his death. Pope Alexander III himself laid the foundation stone in 1163, and the high altar was consecrated in 1189. Construction was completed in 1250.

It was the consecration of the high altar that triggered Notre Dame's potential as a Tether. Laurence, long a champion of Christianity, first claimed the Tether for himself, but Yves convinced him that Notre Dame had a higher destiny than to serve any one Archangel.

As centuries of worship piled up, both of the human achievement of the cathedral and the God that achievement was designed to glorify, the Tether continued to grow in power. The last time a demonic attempt to harm Notre Dame came close to succeeding was during the French Revolution. Minions of Malphas and Lilith (the two most interested and involved in the uprising) managed to convince a mob to attack – but only minor damage was done. A major renovation started in 1845 under the direction of architect Eugène Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc. The result is the famous tourist attraction known today.

The cathedral is now owned and maintained by the French government, though Roman Catholic church services are still held there regularly. The many chapels (see floor plan, p. 112) are used for small services, private meetings with church officials and other functions.
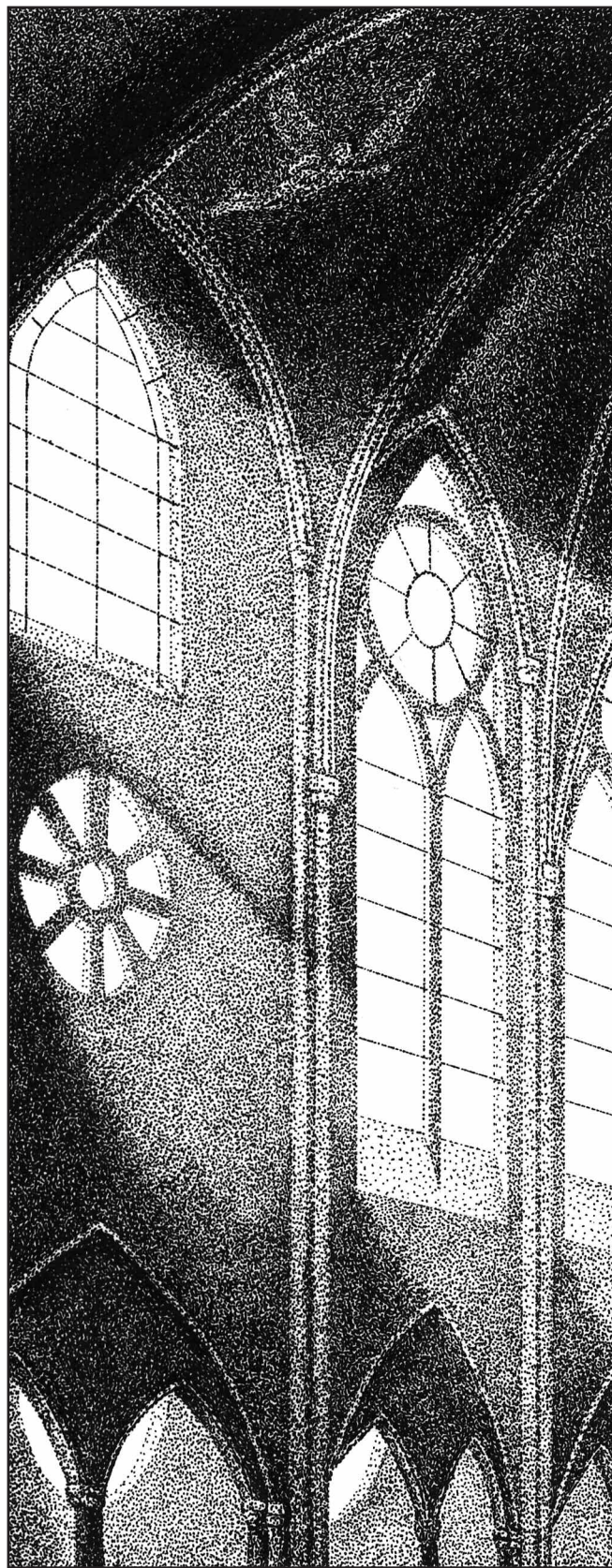
NOTRE DAME FLOOR PLAN AND ARCHITECTURAL DETAIL

Apse

Choir

Ambulatories

Sanctuary

East Nave

North Transept

South Transept

West Nave

0'   50'   100'
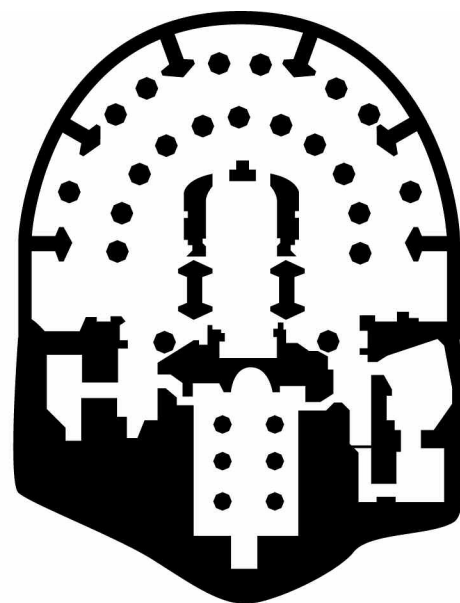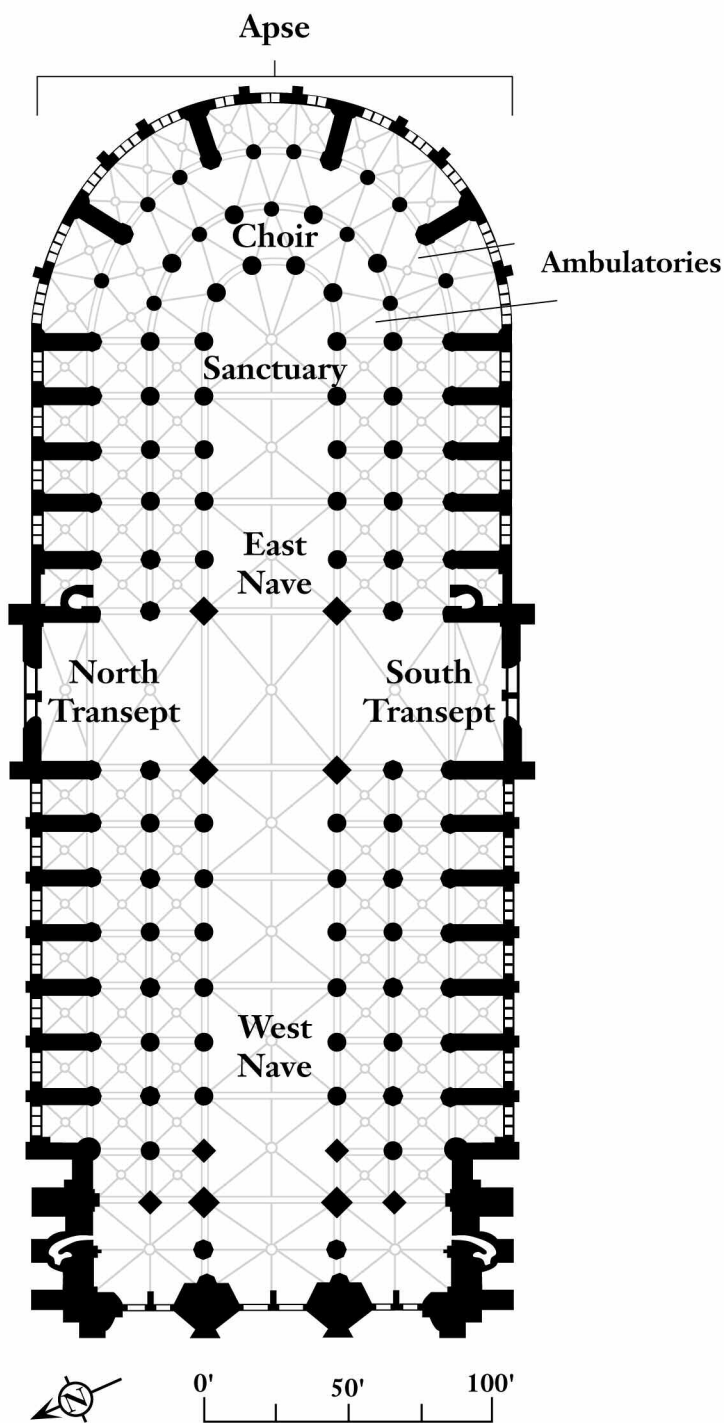
Forgotten Crypt (Corporeal Headquarters of the Archangels)
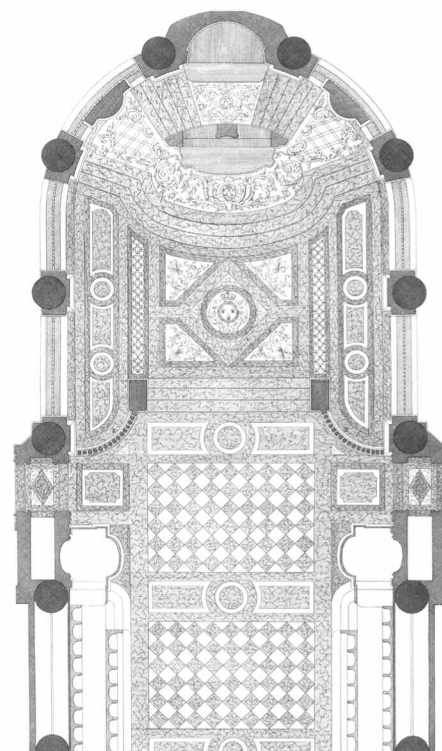
Marble flooring plan of the Sanctuary and part of the Choir

For angels, of course, Notre Dame has an even greater meaning. The cathedral is a Tether for *all* Heaven; all the Archangels currently in Heaven have invested Forces within it, and it debouches directly into the antechamber of the floor of the Seraphim Council. (Using it frivolously, especially when the Council is meeting, is a good way to manifest underfoot of Archangels . . .) All invocation attempts toward any Archangel get an automatic +1 when performed at Notre Dame. Angels lose *two* points of dissonance for every week spent working there.

Many demons are convinced that the Light of Heaven is so strong within this Tether, whose locus extends to the outer walls, that corporeal vessels would not protect them. None – not even one of the Princes – have tested this for centuries. Whether that is a valid fear or not, the highly skilled Tether staff are numerous, and the additional defenders who could be called upon include Council members and Archangels – in large numbers.

Hidden beneath the choir of the massive cathedral (see floor plan, p. 112), and conveniently forgotten by humanity, is the corporeal headquarters of the Archangels. This place, which seems to be lit through stained-glass windows, is used for the most important votes, the decisions which could change the world. It is only fitting that such matters be decided upon Earth, with the Council clothed in heavy flesh, that they might better understand the mortals who would be affected by their decisions. According to prophecy, the fifth of the seven signs that herald Armageddon is "In Unity, War Is Embraced" – and that Unity would occur within these echoing underground vaults.

The Word-bound Seneschal of Notre Dame is an angel befitting the power and majesty of the Tether: an 18-Force Seraph named Jehuel. Originally a Servitor of Destiny, Jehuel now reports directly to the Seraphim Council. Due to his skill at defending the site, his talents of diplomacy and because Notre Dame is a Tether for *all* angels, Jehuel has been granted a valuable boon – a distinction, attunement or Rite – by every Archangel alive today. Jehuel is one of the most powerful, formidable angels on the planet, short of an Archangel. He would be one of the greatest forces in the War – if he ever left Notre Dame, which he doesn't. Jehuel has no Role, and is content to spend most of his time in celestial form. When he does don a vessel, he can easily pass as a tourist, caretaker or even clergyman, depending on his mood and what he needs to do.

Jehuel goes by another name in infernal circles – they call him "Quasimodo," after the lead character in *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* by Victor Hugo. That book (and the movies that have been made from it, including at least two animated versions), with a corrupt clergyman as its central villain, is the closest thing to damage the demons have been able to do to Notre Dame or its reputation in 200 years, and the insult is so slight that most angels just laugh it off. When in a particularly arch mood, Jehuel will take the corporeal form of a hunchback, just to see who gets the joke.

> Madame -
>
> I am pleased to hear you are still well. Unfortunately, my business affairs require me to remain here for what may be a considerable time yet. I will, of course, be able to escort you to the Momus Ball at Carnival. Until then, I remain,
>
> Your affectionate admirer
>
> *L.*

THE HOUSE OF THE MORNING STAR

The Legend

The Devil used to own a mansion in New Orleans. According to an old local legend, the house at 1319 Saint Charles Avenue was built by Satan himself. The Prince of Darkness lived there with his mistress, a woman named Madeleine Frenau. He gave her jewels and fancy dresses, and invisible spirits did all the housework.

The story relates that Madeleine was unfaithful to the Devil, a most unwise thing to do. She took a handsome young lover who didn't know the identity of the master of the house. But eventually the Devil found out about the affair and took a ghastly revenge. He carried the unfortunate lovers to the roof and devoured them, leaving only their empty skins to drift away on the breeze.

The old legend is a fixture of "ghost tours" and guidebooks to the city. Some versions are more elaborate than others, but they all tell essentially the same tale. Naturally, nobody actually believes it – it's just a ghost story to amuse the tourists.

Today the 1300 block of St. Charles Avenue is occupied by shops and restaurants, and the hotel numbered 1319 is nothing but a red herring. Careful investigation will turn up no sign of an Infernal Tether, or any demonic activity at all. Apparently, if there ever was a Tether to Lucifer at that address, it has long since faded.

The Secret History

Actually, the old story is substantially true. Lucifer did once own a home at that address. He was very fond of strolling down St. Charles Avenue to watch the slave auctions at the St. Charles Hotel. Unfortunately, despite Lucifer's best efforts, the story began to circulate that the house belonged to the Devil. Worse, Saminga (who loved to visit New Orleans during the yellow fever epidemics) became a frequent caller.

Eventually Lucifer had enough. One night in 1840, the entire house was jacked up and moved to a new location on Broad Street. At the time, the site was farmland and swamp, and Lucifer could have his privacy. Since the house itself was the Infernal Tether, rather than the lot on which it was built, the Tether moved with the building. A later house on the St. Charles site took on all the "Devil's Mansion" mystique, until it was demolished in 1930.

The gruesome story of the unfaithful mistress and her lover is another bit of misinformation. Lucifer did have a mistress, but she never betrayed him – and that is the reason for all his secrecy.

Learning the Truth

Finding out the truth about the Devil's Mansion is difficult. Over the years, Lucifer's minions have done their best to muddle and destroy any information about the house. But Lucifer couldn't be as thorough as he might wish – the very act of hiding his trail would attract attention, both from the Host and from the eternally ambitious lords of Hell.

The city records from the 19th century have been fairly well preserved. The older files are now on microfilm in the Historic New Orleans Collection archive. The archive is open to all researchers (by appointment), and it requires an Intelligence roll at -2 to locate the permit to move the house, dated 1840. Copies also exist in Yves' Library in Heaven, and in the archives of Kronos.

The Guardians

Though Lucifer no longer lives there, the Devil's Mansion is not undefended. The Seneschal of the house is Rimalo, a powerful Habbalite, formerly in the service

of Belial. About a hundred years ago Rimalo completely failed an assignment, and then completely bungled the cover-up of his failure. Only the timely arrival of a well-dressed and polite stranger saved him from annihilation at the hands of an enraged Prince. Lucifer offered Rimalo his protection and put him to work guarding the house. Rimalo is an extremely devoted servant, because he knows that the instant he fails in his duty, he's toast (literally).

Unlike all other Seneschals, Rimalo is not actually permitted to enter his Tether. He can stay on the grounds or hang around the neighborhood, but Lucifer has commanded that no one – *no one* – is ever to enter the building. To help him in his duties, Rimalo has recruited a small gang of human followers: a bunch of disaffected local teens who claim to be "Satanists." Rimalo has taught them some meaningless rituals and impresses them with displays of "magic." The kids are fond of making gruesome and sadistic "sacrifices to Satan," and dabble in more mundane crimes as well. They all carry guns, and in a battle they fight with suicidal bravery.

Lucifer's edict means the Tether doesn't operate in quite the usual way. It is a Tether to the Lower Hells, with all the usual effects of an Infernal Tether. But attempts to invoke a Prince in the Tether are extremely dangerous. Invoking Lucifer in the house is automatically successful – and the invokers may be destroyed unless they can explain very quickly and very convincingly why they are there. (And the house will probably be moved yet again, if they are permitted to leave.) Invoking another Prince is resolved normally, but if the Prince does appear, Lucifer will also show up, quietly enraged that his secret has been blown.

The House Today

The Devil's Mansion has declined quite a bit from its glory days on the most fashionable street in the city. Today it is a near ruin, covered with vines and boarded up. The surrounding neighborhood is mostly decaying industrial buildings, and the parish prison is a short distance away.

But within the bolted shutters and locked doors is a different world. Everything is clean and intact, unchanged since the 1840s. Invisible servants keep everything in perfect order, and see to all the needs of the sole resident.

Madeleine Frenau still lives in the mansion Lucifer built for her. She is 195 years old, and looks it, but still dresses in the style of a gay coquette from the 1820s. She doesn't seem to realize how much time has passed – all her conversation is about "current events" of the 1830s. Madeleine has no supernatural abilities at all, and is ter-

ribly feeble. If asked about the master of the house, she will say only that Monsieur L. has stepped out for the day but will doubtless return.

Madeleine Frenau is the whole reason for the Tether's existence. She loved the Prince of the Fallen, and she loves him still. The Tether stays open not because Lucifer once stayed in the house, but because a mortal there loves him.

Lucifer has never met another being who loved him completely and unselfishly. He finds Madeleine puzzling and maybe even a bit frightening. She stirs up uncomfortable memories of the days before the Fall. And yet he doesn't want to let her die or come to harm. It's a conundrum. Until he understands Madeleine, Lucifer wants to keep her absolutely hidden.

ETHEREAL TETHERS

DEAD TETHER

Amon-Ré, Karkak, Thebes, Egypt

During the Nineteenth Dynasty, traditional worship blossomed in the Nile Valley, and the Gods of Egypt wielded enormous power. They manipulated newfound wealth to establish a multitude of Tethers across the Red and Black land: the Osireion at Abydos, the towering temples of Abu Simbel carved into the cliffside and the sprawling Ramesseum mortuary temple at Luxor, among others. The hypostyle hall of the Great Temple of Amon-Ré was completed under Ramesses II.

Not only did the Great Temple contain the sacred effigy of the God Amon himself in the Holy of Holies, the Tether locus embedded deep within the bowels of the building, it contained the sacred Barque on which he traveled. Tended by an army of priests, these objects were considered too sacred for most humans to approach.

The Ramessids maintained worship in the Temple through the decline and downward spiral into the Egyptian decadence. When the belief in the power of the Pharaohs and the God Amon-Ré began to falter, the upkeep of the Temple followed suit and the priests were disbanded. As it fell into disuse, the Tether began to die. Wars, conquest and a slow change in religious beliefs caused the Gods to become forgotten.

Now, the Temple is covered by the desert sands, its walls pillaged for good brick to be used in houses in the surrounding neighborhoods. Anything worth keeping has been looted; the Barque and the God himself are a distant memory, and so is the Tether.
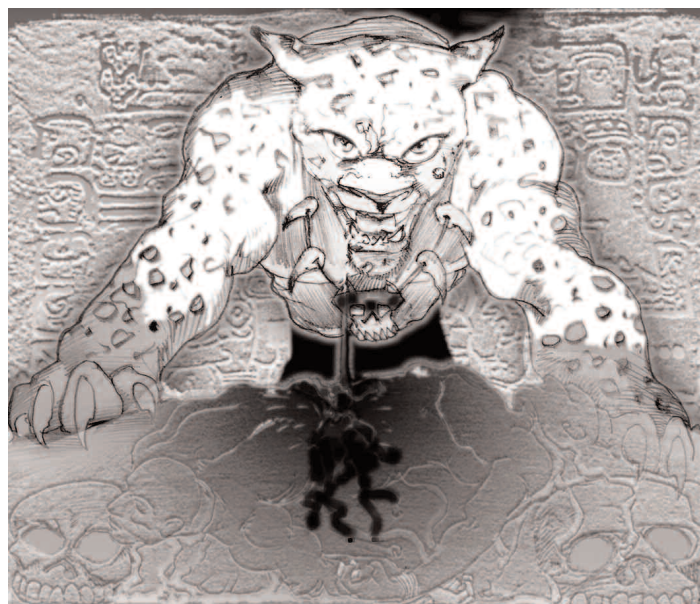
DYING TETHER

Ah Kinchil, the Dark Jaguar, Palenque, Mexico

Palenque towers over the rain forest of Southern Central Mexico, a complex of three temples and a sprawling palace structure. Of the three temples, the Temple of the Sun alone still holds the dying Tether among the fresco work and funerary tombs. The walls of the temple are covered in grotesque reliefs of prisoners being sacrificed to the Jaguar, Ah Kinchil, mixed in with stucco work of Lords conversing with Gods. There is a small sanctuary, decorated with a mask of the Jaguar God, which serves as the locus. The purpose of the city is almost forgotten; none come to worship in the temples anymore. The city is a hollowed out relic, a throwback to a different time.

The local Indian population has not entirely discarded their religion. Though they practice the rituals with a new blend of Christian symbols, they fear the old Gods. The Indians know the dualistic nature of Ah Kinchil, who is at the same time the benevolent Sun God who gave life, and the Jaguar who lives in the Underworld Palace of Xibalba and demands warm blood. They still whisper dark tales of the jaguar who prowls the jungle, insane with the changes wrought by the conquerors.

There is a human caretaker who furtively visits Palenque and sacrifices animals, but he has no heir. The Tether is dying, and the Dark Jaguar becomes more a shadow every year, while Beleth's Servitors offer assistance – and subjugation.

SMALL TETHER

The Aesir

In a small lodge in Reyjavik, Iceland, Berglind Mangusdóttir – an older woman with a Ph.D. in Germanic/Icelandic History – still tells the old sagas in the original language, and works on translating new finds. She keeps an enormous collection of old Viking artifacts, one or two of which are minor ethereal Relics. She still speaks the old tongue, she still remembers the old *eddas* and she teaches the young who comes to see her, speaking the words around a large fire.

She is often visited by a raven of Odin, and tells it the news and events that she culls from newspapers and the Internet. In this way, she keeps some of the knowledge alive – and the Tether. She also teaches her son the rituals and rites, so that he may continue the tradition after her death.

ADVENTURE SEEDS

Ruth stood in the harsh, fluorescent glare of the hallway, listening to her uncle dispose of her for good.

As usual, Uncle Richard spoke as if she wasn't there. "We are concerned that Ruth get proper care, you understand. She's had problems ever since she was a small child, and her parents' death has exacerbated her condition. Dealing with the huge responsibility of their estate is beyond her capacity. She tried to bar me from taking over her financial concerns, but it's all for her own good."

"I see," said the doctor. He looked like Dr. Mengele and smelled like antiseptic. He gave her a brief but penetrating glance. "So you think her condition is worsening?"

Uncle nodded gravely. "Oh yes. My wife and I are afraid for her."

Afraid **of** me, you mean, Ruth thought silently. Any protests would just make her uncle seem more plausible, and he was already far too plausible.

"I fear she will have to be hospitalized for quite some time," he continued. "Of course the price is no object. Anything to help my brother's little girl."

"You have a very commendible attitude, Mr. Hannemann. When I have done my preliminary tests, I should be able to confirm her need for a lengthy course of treatment."

He nodded to a burly orderly, who took her arm and dragged her toward the massive metal door which led to the patient rooms. She followed meekly until she heard the sharp click of the lock, but then the hopelessness of her situation overwhelmed her and she struggled frantically to get away.

"Huh," grunted the orderly, "just like a dog at the vet." He smacked her and she crumpled to the floor; her ears ringing from the force of the blow.

"You'll calm down after the doc hits you with some of his pills. Now get in your room." He shoved her through a door into a cramped, windowless space with a chair and a cot. The antiseptic couldn't overcome the sour smell of fear that pervaded her cell.

Ruth sobbed, rubbing her aching jaw, and then jumped as she realized someone was in the room with her. The interloper was a plain looking woman in a hospital gown. She had friendly eyes, and when she touched Ruth's cheek, the sting faded.

"Is this hell?" asked Ruth fearfully.

The woman smiled grimly. "No, but it's a short trip from here."

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While there are many obvious plots surrounding the creation, maintenance and destruction of Tethers (see *Tethers as a GM Tool*, p. 68), sometimes more exotic (or even silly) things happen to, in or around Tethers.

ASYLUM

"On the general subject of madness, incidentally, someone – I forget who – came up with a useful easy definition for clinical paranoia. You can think that every single person in the world is out to get you and not be paranoid. If you think that even one table lamp, or piece of Stilton cheese, is out to get you, then you are."

– Dave Stone

The setting is a public hospital that contains a pair of large, affluent psychiatric wings. Like many big hospitals, this one was built over several decades, with buildings sprouting up helter-skelter as the community and hospital needs expanded.

The Tethers are separated by long, stark white hallways and twisting passages full of mislabeled doors. It is almost a 15-minute walk, if one does not take the elevators, between the two – and with the differences in the buildings, it is like walking into a different world.

The left wing holds a Tether to Blandine. The Psychology Department was originally built in the 1920s, when the practice of Freudian psychology was part of the popular culture and the administrative board of the hospital wanted to keep with the times. The building was dedicated to the service of the community and

psychological research, working with children, marriage counseling and the city at large. The Tether to Dreams was born in the small, comfortable, brick building as the department's research promoted hope and a promising outlook on life.

The Tether is centered on the Counseling Department, which is responsible for child psychology, marriage counseling, depression cases, and basic neurotic and affective disorders. People come in very upset and leave feeling much better, hopeful, with their lives looking up. The Mercurian Seneschal, Helem, is a prominent psychologist who eschews pharmaceuticals in favor of counseling.

The right wing houses a Tether to Beleth. Over the years, as members of the administrative board came and went, the board's attitudes toward psychology changed – and so did the research it funded. By the time of World War II, medicine had turned away from the applications of Freudian or Jungian psychological practices, and toward the use of drugs and medical equipment to treat difficult cases. During the 1950s, the hospital built a state-of-the-art complex as an annex to the older buildings, including a new, exciting and well-funded psychiatric unit. But in the economic dog-days of the 1960s and 1970s, research funding waned for "non-essential" units. The psychiatric unit ran low on money, and fell into the hands of those who would put it to more esoteric use. Drug testing, outlandish procedures and abominable conditions flourished in the stark white halls. Before Helem became aware how bad the conditions were, Beleth's Servitors had moved in.

The Tether to Nightmares (known as "the Ninth Floor" to mundane staff) treats psychotic cases, extreme mood disorders and extreme affective disorders. The area is riddled with rooms with padded walls, endless empty white corridors lit with fluorescent lights and cells padlocked shut. Inmates are deprived of food and water, used for experimentation and abused by the orderlies. The Seneschal, Keturah, is a prominent psychiatrist, in a position to prescribe drugs in abundance, and an Impudite who just loves little humans to play with.

CONFLICT

The two Seneschals cannot destroy each other's Tether violently, through bombs or similar techniques, because they would risk taking out their own Tethers. And since each Seneschal is a prominent, Role/6 doctor, neither can just disappear without drawing serious attention. However, the obvious rivalry between the two Seneschals, normal in psychology circles, is good cover for more subtle ploys.

The Hospital Grounds

Grounds-Keeping

Staff Parking

Maintenance

Staff Parking

Food Preparation

Administration Building

Food Preparation

West Wing (Blandine Tether)

East Wing (Beleth Tether)

Public/Visitor Parking

Main Road

West Wing (Blandine)

East Wing (Beleth)

Typical Floor Plan for the Upper Storys of Each Wing

Children's Play Area

Counseling Room

Patient

Storage

Patient

Janitorial

Patient

Group Therapy/ Common Room

Patient

Patient

Patient

Patient

Patient

Patient

Patient

Patient

Counseling Room

Observation Room

Padded Cells

Common Room

1 Elevator
2 Stairwell
3 Reception/Nursing
4 Waiting Room
5 Security/Orderlies
6 Visiting Area

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THE PLOT

The Chief of the Psychology Department is retiring. He's going to pick one of the two Seneschals to be the next Chief. The one chosen will be in position to legally shut down the other's Tether, permanently, and convert the hospital to his way of operation, growing his own Tether's size. Obviously, they need to discredit each other.

One trick is to find ways to discredit (or destroy) the opposing Seneschal's research. Bust into the psycho ward and feed all the subjects happy pills. Have your friendly Malakite track down the Djinn orderlies, kill them and hide the bodies in closets. Break into the counseling center and possess people with Shedim of Nightmares. That sort of thing.

Remember, a hospital never closes. It is very easy to get PCs in or out, and get them jobs as candystripers, dietitians or orderlies.

At the same time, everyone is very keyed up and frantic, because there is an accreditation board walking through the hospital, doing an audit. (Audits typically happen once a year, performed by the U.S. Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations.) Everyone is on their best behavior because if the audit goes poorly, funds could be cut, people could lose their jobs and the hospital could even be shut down – weakening *both* Tethers. So everyone is trying to look good, while making the other side look bad enough to get just *them* closed down.

SIDE PLOTS:

Some additional complications may crop up, if the local celestials are unimaginative.

✠ The Nightmares Tether is conducting experiments on its interred patients. The Vapulans have created a drug that makes people very cheerful (good for passing inspection) and lowers blood pressure. When it wears off, it makes the victim very paranoid of authority – the government, religion, the army, their parents, etc. It is extremely addictive. If found "safe" for humans, it will be processed at a major Vapulan stronghold, then given out to people who need prescription happy-pills – mostly those in high-stress jobs: doctors, lawyers, businessmen . . .

✠ In the basement is the morgue. More than one Prince is interested in using this hospital, especially if Nightmares eliminates that annoying angelic Tether. Occasionally some of the unclaimed corpses become the walking dead, as the doctor on night duty is really a Soldier of Death.

✠ Keturah has hired a Lilim of Lust and her buddy, an Impudite of the Media. She'll seduce the old Chief of the Department, the opposing Seneschal or both, while her Media friend takes pictures. If they can catch the Chief of Department, they blackmail him to get the Impudite of Nightmares voted as the next Chief, lest the pictures be published. If the Lilim can seduce the other Seneschal, they just publish the photos, humiliating him. It's also possible they might simply try to *fake* some pornographic images, but if that's discovered, it could backfire.

Or, if the PCs are demonic, Helem talks one of his more outrageous Creationer friends into doing this same thing, with the aid of a Kyriotate of Lightning! She would concentrate on the Impudite – perhaps by posing as a patient and subtly encouraging him to abuse his authority – but if a little creative blackmail would work on the old Chief . . .

For true confusion, *both* Seneschals have called in blackmail teams; the first team was spotted making a play for the old Chief, and the second is attempting to get their girl into his bed first.

✠ The accreditation group includes a Balseraph of the Game – and a Kyriotate of Judgment who is spying on him. The Gamester has a Role as a minor, but vital, flunky. The Kyriotate is hopping bodies frequently during the audit. (If combined with the plot above, recall that the Game is hostile to Lust, and Judgment is hostile to Creation.)

OUTCOME

After some predetermined time, probably mere days, the Hospital's Board and the old Chief will vote on the next Chief. Whoever wins will be able to get rid of the other Tether – or at least try to . . .

There, but for the Grace of God . . .

From: Lystra
To: Paltiel
Re: Thrifty Glen Retirement Home.
I've identified the new wild Tether site as the TGRH (above). I recommend further study. Just or monstrous, a political agenda like the arsonist's inspires imagination and memory. This Tether should survive a good long time. The building seems roomy, defensible, sturdy and properly located to annoy our enemies. The fire caused little structural damage; I anticipate an easy repair.

From: Paltiel
To: Talmai
Re: Thrifty Glen Retirement Home.
Here's your chance, kid. Assemble a team, do an initial survey, see if it's worth our Superior's time.
But be careful. I hear there's a leak.

Jack Cook set the Thrifty Glen Retirement Home on fire because "the old people weren't very nice." His cause, intended to punish (perceived) cruelty, created a potential Tether to Fire – either side. The building designers chose a central location and a capable architect, and the structure could be an ideal Tether. The fire even left it pretty much intact.

But the TGRH has one *major* drawback that a casual survey might miss. The cockroaches are organized.

Blame one of Jordi's powerful Kyriotates, Outcast and more than a little deranged, who moved in back when the building was erected in 1963. It's been breeding within its hosts, too, and now, thousands of ever-so-slightly unusual bugs infest the building – and so does the Kyriotate, its fractured mind completely given over to the concerns of the roaches.

The elderly inhabitants of the retirement home propitiated the bugs with sacrifices of food. (An article in a gossip magazine claimed that this occasionally included household pets.) The residents are gone now, however, and Jack Cook burned Roachhome. The PCs' Superiors suspect that this makes the bugs unhappy.

Thrifty Glen Retirement Home, Floorplan of Residential Story
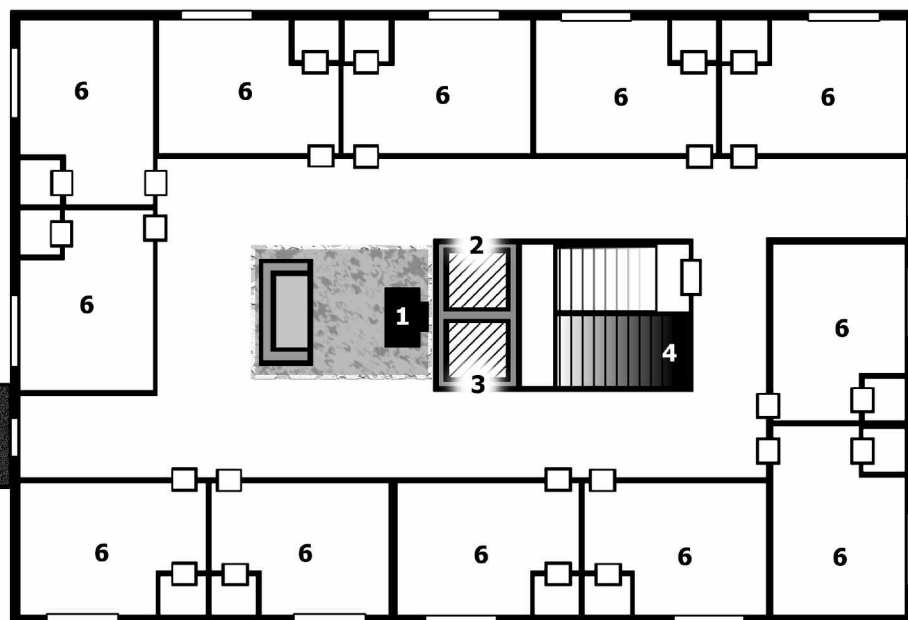
1 Open TV Room
2 North Elevator
3 South Elevator
4 Stairwell
5 Fire Escape
6 Private Room

Detail of Room and Furnishings
1 Toilet, Sink, Bathtub
2 "Kitchenette" Mini-Stove and Refrigerator Unit
3 Bed
4 Closet
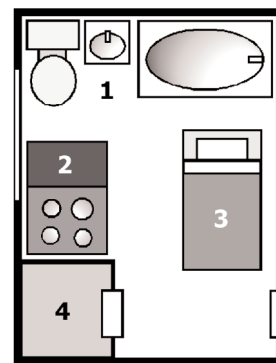
Their Superiors assign them a simple mission. The enemy knows that there's a leak regarding the Tether. If nobody fights the establishment of the Tether, the enemy might become suspicious. In fact, if the enemy surveys the building too carefully, the bugs might give the whole affair away. So the characters must put all possible visible effort into destroying the enemy survey team and the building itself – *and* they (the PCs) have to make sure that they (the PCs) *fail*. Hopefully this will persuade the enemy to stabilize the Tether quickly.

The Superiors also lack one piece of the puzzle. The enemy team appears to be thoroughly inexperienced. Their sheer, first-time-on-Earth incompetence may turn a difficult and dangerous mission into a safe but impossible one. *(In truth, the enemy **also** discovered the Outcast's presence and leaked their "interest" deliberately. They have instructed their team to pretend to be preparing the Tether for stabilization – while suckering the other side into claiming it first and pouring more energy into dealing with the insane Domination than the location is worth. With both teams bent on the same goal – "No, **you** take it!" – matters will become complex.)*

- ✠ *Combat:* Hitting the broad side of a barn – even with *Smite* or the Calabite resonance – challenges the enemy's competence to the limit. As for hitting *them*, the enemy might well jump *into* the line of fire while trying to dodge it. When hit, they stay conscious, but usually fall down and crawl around pathetically, whimpering. The Malakim or Calabim among them pray or curse instead, but still punctuate their remarks with "ow!" and "aagh."
- ✠ *Subtlety:* If the PCs paint a big sign on themselves saying, "We are here subtly interfering with the survey," the enemy might notice that something is up. If it's possible for the enemy to miss something, they will.
- ✠ *Resonances:* Useful resonance attempts by the enemy always fail. Annoying resonance attempts might succeed, using normal resolution.
- ✠ *Defensive Planning:* The first time the PCs withdraw to regroup, if they ever do, their enemies establish a defensive perimeter. They might set up a piece of string attached to a number of pots and pans, or just some police tape. As their leader puts it, loudly, "No sane celestial crosses police tape."
- ✠ *The Kyriotate:* If the PCs and the enemy spend too long inside the building, the bugs make their move. Seemingly unlike the enemy, the bugs understand Earth and concerted action. They combine their mass to knock things over. They know how to ruin weaponry, circuitry and (if they are really angry) clothing and cars. They can drag tiny things along. Thus, if they get mad, dressers fall through the fire-weakened ceilings on their opponents. Armies of roaches wash across the floor, leaving oddly tangled shoelaces behind them. If they get *really* mad, bug minions will pour into noses and mouths, choking the celestials present. The Kyriotate will turn off the remaining lights at the circuit-breakers, whatever else it tries.

For thematic reasons, the Kyriotate should assault the PCs only if they have separated themselves from the enemy. That way, the characters can still hope to succeed in their mission. Of course, events in the game may require a different approach.
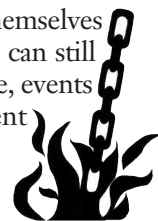
The Tether of Light

The dawn light stroked across the ground, angling between the maple trees to fall in thin pale streaks. Two men watched a particular beam of light trace its way across the earth and roots.

"I remember," said the thinner of the two men, propping himself against a tree trunk, his worn clothing frayed at cuffs and knees. "I still don't understand the shift of mind that lets them forget, that . . ."

The other man, blond, unclothed, lying on the ground with his chin propped in his hands, grunted something.

The first man bit back words, and let his chin fall on his chest. "Yes. I know. I say that every time."

"If it helps," the other man muttered, his voice a distant shudder of earth.

"I loved the Light," the first man said, watching the delicate sunbeam. "He was the Light, and I loved him. Then, when he changed . . ."

"We both changed as well." The blond man completed the sentence, letting the well-worn words fall into place.

"If he returned, he would know of this place." The thinner man shifted his shoulders, his words half plea, half statement. "If he returned, I would know it too."

The blond man grunted again, and the muscles shifted on his back as he turned his head to follow the sunbeam's angle. Above them, the sky had begun to pale with the coming light, and the shadows that wrapped the trees were receding.

"I still love him," the thin man said quietly, as the sunlight brushed across an undistinguished patch of earth, and the nature of the Tether was once again affirmed. "I can wait."

Shenir, Malakite of Light

Shenir is one of the few Servitors of Light who still exists. Rarer yet, he is a Servitor of Light who chose to take up arms to defend the will of God, and became a Malakite in that instant. Rarest of all, he still survives, and protects a Tether to the original Light that was once Lucifer's word.

In a remote spot of the Laurentian Shield area of northern Quebec, there lies the oldest spot of solid ground on Earth. It is the *first place* that sunlight struck the earth when the primordial atmosphere first became transparent to visible light, about 4 billion years ago. This primal expression of the Word of Light formed Lucifer's oldest Tether on Earth, which still exists today; although no human being acknowledges it, the Symphony – and Shenir – remember.

The site of the Tether itself is long lost to men and angels alike. Only the Archangel David recalls where it lies, and occasionally visits Shenir. If the Tether were discovered by the forces of Hell, it would become an instant target, and a major nexus in the War. It is a reminder of Lucifer's old nature and proof that Light was not entirely lost. If angels were to learn of its nature, they would be sworn to secrecy by their respective Superiors – or have their memories carefully altered.

Shenir tends his Tether in solitude, hoping for the day when Lucifer may repent and return to hold the Word of Light once again. He is an *extremely* old Malakite, and while his Tether is a weak one, he has enough Songs and attunements to be able to deal with most enemies short of powerful Word-bound. His oaths include, "never lie" and "preserve the Tether from defilement." Demons coming into the vicinity are lured well away from the Tether, then quietly disposed of; ignorant angels or humans are misdirected elsewhere. If other angels should encounter him and realize his celestial nature (something he tries to avoid) he gives the impression of being a Servitor of Stone or Creation. ("David knows I'm here.") He will also inform David of any important incursions, or of any angels who might suspect the Tether. While he understands the necessity of secrecy, at times he longs for someone to simply *talk* to.

Potential Seeds

✠ Lost Reliever

A reliever in an animal vessel, on some task for its master, was trying to travel through the woods . . . and got lost. Shenir came across it on patrol, realized its nature and carried it to a spot that it recognized. While Shenir did not give his identity or reason for being in the woods, he enjoyed a long conversation with his captive audience. The reliever is likely to mention this incident in passing, and has the impression that its rescuer was "a Servitor of Eli . . . or Novalis . . . or I suppose it might have been David, he didn't say." If any angels investigate the area, Shenir will lay false trails to the nearest convenient inhabited spot, and mislead the angels in the hopes they will give up and assume he has left the area. Intelligent investigation *might* lead to a meeting with him, but he will still work on encouraging them to consider him unremarkable.

✠ Mining Project

Though isolated, Shenir tries to stay informed about local activities that might affect him. He has discovered that a mining project is going to extend into the woods in the rough direction of the Tether. While it is still a good way off, it might be extended in the future and eventually come near the Tether. Deciding to stop this project at its source, he delivers mysterious notes to any convenient angels, suggesting that they investigate any illegalities in connection with it. If necessary, he is capable of killing or causing accidents in order to halt the project. (While there may be actual demonic or criminal involvement with the project, this becomes more morally ambiguous if the miners are simply ordinary people working for their living.)

Demonic characters may be called in to deal with mysterious accidents in connection with a strip-mining project Haagenti has some interests in.

✠ Inspiration

A plane crash has deposited some person the angels need to retrieve in the middle of the forest – and very close to the Tether of Light. This person reached the Tether before Shenir could divert him, and was somehow *touched* by its nature. He is now a firm believer in the Word of Light and the cause of Heaven. Shenir cannot harm someone who is so obviously in sympathy with the Tether. He is now trying to find a way to get the human safely out of the forest – and preferably unable to find his way back. Fortunately, angels are about to be wandering in . . . Unfortunately, demons may be following them.

NOTHING EVER HAPPENS HERE

The Dreaming Ground is a very old Tether, created one terrible winter, millennia ago. A primitive human tribe, after a long struggle with the elements, decided that scraping out their livelihood was unreasonably difficult. Instead, they lay down on the snow and waited for the elements to kill them. The elements complied.

Ephah, a Servitor of Sloth with unusual motivation, decided that the Tether this event had birthed should be stabilized. Somehow, he carved off several of his Prince's Forces to do this with, and assigned himself the authority of a Seneschal. Having obtained his sinecure, he felt justified in giving himself a few thousand years of rest. Twenty years later, he was confirmed and Word-bound by the Lightbringer, guaranteeing his position. Three thousand, eight hundred and twelve years later, nothing has happened.

Well, *one* thing has happened.

Hell had forgotten about Ephah and the Dreaming Ground. Heaven had never learned of its existence. Celestials of both sides have passed through the lower locus for generations, unaware and undisturbed. Indeed, two major Word-bound celestials fought there, just a few days back, neither of them realizing where they were. Then the eye of Greater Powers fell upon them in an Intervention, and a surge of lassitude and Sloth overcame them in an instant. They remain there, trapped – it's too much bother to leave.

The Tether is more powerful than it has *ever* been. Humans, animals and celestials who enter its area of influence have a hard time even staying awake; rescuing the trapped celestials is nearly impossible. There is also some concern that the Tether may die in a way that sucks the celestial Forces of the captives with it.

The best hope for the Word-bound celestials trapped inside is for something to happen nearby that resonates strongly with their Words. The resulting surge of energy might give them the strength to escape before the Tether dissolves. They might, of course, survive that dissolution naturally – but the chances for that aren't good.

Servitors might be asked to free one Word-bound, keep the other side from freeing their Word-bound, or just hasten the Tether's end. This can be played many ways, depending on the PCs and the trapped celestials; two example Word-bound are provided below.

If the group decides to explore the Tether's influence directly, they will have a harder and harder time keeping focus. The GM should play up the effects of the Tether on their minds and the danger inherent in the situation.

(Highlight, perhaps, how comfortable the grass looks, how futile action is and how pretty it is when a bird gives up on flying and falls from the sky.) If the PCs refuse to leave, there is still hope for them. Events that reaffirm their Choir/Band nature or their Superior's Word might help them stay alert. Danger with a sharp enough edge could do the same. In the worst case, bring in agents of the other side with relevant tools – for example, custom-built Discord Bracelets (*Liber Reliquarum*, p. 56) that inflict hyperactivity. Although Superiors have identified a good way to rescue the trapped celestials, the GM should be open to new and innovative solutions.

Galilee, Angel of Automobiles, Cherub of Lightning

Galilee's first priority is improving automotive safety technology. Angelic NPCs trying to free him might arrange an automobile or antique automobile show near the Tether.

Cilicia, Demon of Wagons, Balseraph of Technology

Ever since humanity came up with people-movers, Cilicia has been there to make sure people get run over by them. Arranging terrible car crashes might free her – if they are close enough to the Dreaming Ground. Of course, that's exactly the area Heaven is watching!

PLAGUE PIT
INTRODUCTION

When the Black Death swept England, in 1350, the death toll was horrendous in major towns, such as London. Many bodies were thrown into mass graves, which later became London's public parks, as nobody was willing to erect housing on them. Few know or would care to know, these days, what lies beneath the grass of Hyde Park, Green Park and others.

One of the mass graves beneath Hyde Park became a Tether to Makatiel, the Prince of Disease, and had a Seneschal appointed to guard it. Unfortunately, Makatiel himself was destroyed the following year, as the result of a combined operation by Dominic and Asmodeus (*Heaven & Hell*, p. 8). Enziroth, the Seneschal of the Hyde Park Tether, considered the situation and decided to hide.

Recently it was decided to excavate of one of the plague graves for research. There will be full television coverage, articles in the newspapers, books discussing the history of the period, sensationalist horror novels about plague viruses breaking free to ravage London and all the accompanying publicity. Servitors of Death and Nightmares have discovered the near-dormant Tether to Makatiel, and both feel that they could use such a Tether far better . . .

REVIEWING THE SITUATION

The four main factions currently positioned around the Tether are: *Enziroth*, the Djinn Seneschal; *Puteoli*, Calabite of Saminga, in charge of the local Servitors of Death; *Shammah*, Balseraph of Beleth, in charge of the local Servitors of Nightmare; and *Ithran*, Ofanite of Yves, working with the excavation team, who will be calling for backup as soon as he realizes the extent of his problems.

Shammah and Puteoli both wish to secure the Tether for their own Princes. Shammah's original intention was to negotiate with Enziroth (and betray him later, if necessary), but Puteoli's more direct approach is simply to kill Enziroth celestially, causing the Tether to go wild.

The Tether, without a Seneschal to stabilize it, and with its Superior long destroyed, will begin to cycle among appropriate Principalities upon Enziroth's death. It will pass through the Domains of Nightmares, Death, Fate, and the tattered remnants of Makatiel's old Principality of Disease (located somewhere in the no-soul's-land between Perdition and Tartarus) where it was anchored.

At this point, Servitors of Death and Nightmares are likely to be fighting for the chance to call *their* Prince to

stabilize the Tether, at a point when the Tether opens to their Prince's realm. Unfortunately, this will require some brave demon going to the other end to investigate, and hoping that he can inform his Superior before the Tether shifts end-point again.

Meanwhile, Ithran will not be idle. Realizing that he has the potential for a Tether to Hell on his hands, Ithran will attempt to neutralize it by emphasizing the site's *historical* aspects, and the rebuilding that came after the Black Death. Cold hard fact, scientific evidence and documentaries about the culture and life of that period will be the order of the day. He will call for aid – from either other Servitors of Yves, or other local angels – to help him push his point of view and quell the demons.

SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

The archaeological investigations begin quietly enough – if one can term the thronging camera crews and reporters quiet. By the end of the first day, the demons investigating the area as a possible Tether have realized that it already *is* a Tether, and that the Seneschal is nearby and still alive. They send requests to their superiors for backup in the matter. Ithran also realizes that the area is a Tether of Disease, but does not know of the presence of the demons of Death and Nightmares.

On the second day, Shammah and Puteoli both arrive, each with a couple of demons or Soldiers for backup, and start trying to locate the Seneschal. Shammah also, more subtly, starts to pervert the excavation toward sensationalism and horror, stressing the dreadful nature of the plague and the mass deaths. At this point, Ithran notices the sudden demonic influx into the site. He sends an urgent message requesting any available backup, both to deal with the demons and to restore the original archaeological perspective of the excavation.

Enziroth himself, though receiving a sudden burst of strength from the temporary interest in his Tether, still wants to stay out of everybody's way. Unfortunately, everyone is looking for him, and at some point during the second night they catch up with him. Shammah's intention is to negotiate with him, and hopefully to bring him into Beleth's service, but Puteoli intends to kill him, and then call Saminga to stabilize the Tether.

It is likely that Enziroth will be killed, as he is comparatively weak and has stayed out of combat for several centuries now. When this happens, the site becomes a free-for-all between the Servitors of Death and Nightmares, any other demons who are involved, and Ithran and any angels helping him. There is at least one television crew around, of course, not to mention all the reporters with their cameras and portable phones – and this is in the *center* of London. It will not be long before the police arrive

in response to any reported trouble! While Ithran will want to minimize disturbance and harm to bystanders, the demons have few such compunctions. The Servitors of Beleth will even consider truly gruesome displays, in order to strengthen the Tether's possible links to Nightmare.

Come the morning of the third day, Ithran (if still alive) will be engaging in frantic damage limitation. He will attempt to explain strange events on the previous night as possibly due to the release of hallucinogenic gases from the mass grave, and try to return the investigation to its previous scholarly tone. If Shammah or Puteoli managed to stabilize the Tether, one of them will now be the new attuned Seneschal, and will be working on strengthening their hold on the area and their Prince's Word.

ROLL CALL

Enziroth, Seneschal of the Plague Pit, Djinn Knight of Makatiel: Role/6 as a vagrant, rusty diplomatic skills and a desire to be *left alone* – he's not happy. He has several Attunements that most celestials have not encountered, including his Seneschal's Attunement.

Djinn of Disease: Makatiel's Stalkers were able to cause their attuned to be unaffected by diseases, while still highly infectious.

Knight of Plagues: Makatiel's Knights could choose to inflict or cure diseases with a touch.

Seneschal of the Plague Pit: though his special Rite is gone with Makatiel, Enziroth is still able to know, instinctively, where every corpse from his grave is located, even if they are excavated.

Shammah, Balseraph of Beleth: Up-and-coming youngster, very intelligent and prefers discretion. Currently using the Role of "Sharon Allbright," reporter, to gain access to the site at odd hours.

Puteoli, Calabite Knight of Saminga: Excessively brutal, murderous and obvious. Using the alias of "Phil Thomas," one of the unskilled labor at the site, and guarding the grave's remains lest anyone try to destroy them.

Ithran, Ofanite Vassal of Destiny: Role as "Ian Simpson," in Professor Markensen's team. Trying desperately to mitigate the damage and educate the public.

Professor James Markensen: Coffee-addicted head of the archaeological team, interested in making everything interestingly academic – which does not fit with Shammah's plans of terror.

Ms. Venetia Jones: TV producer for the documentary; she wants *ratings*, whether it's academic or sensational – supernatural happenings will attract her attention. (Her original name, for Seraphim of Destiny, was Vicky.)

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