IN NOMINE SEPRERORS WAR & HONOR

STEVE JACKSON GAMES

There was war in Heaven; Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, And prevailed not.



AND READY YOURSELF FOR BATTLE.

HCET

Seraphim and Malakim, aggressive and authoritarian . . . War, Stone, Judgment, and the Sword. The four Archangels of the "War Faction" are covered in depth in this book. Within these pages is all the material a Game Master needs to understand their goals and psychology, as well as everything a player needs to feel what it's like to be one of their Servitors – not just powers and dissonance, but also the experience of working for these Superiors, what the subculture of the Word expects from its members, and how to deal with your Archangel's organization.

Superiors 1: War and Honor includes:

- The New attunements, Distinctions, and Rites for each Archangel.
- Thistory, secrets, myths, and legends told by each Superior's own angels; rumors, slander and libel told about them by others.
- The jobs performed by their Servitors what *does* an angel of Stone do all day?
- The Gangs, Orders, triads and other groups an angel can belong to in service to his Lord.
- Capsule summaries of the Archangels' relations with Superiors in both Heaven and Hell, with detailed briefs for the most important or controversial interactions.
- [†] Variant versions of each Superior for alternative campaigns.
- TEarthly organizations, humans in service, ethereal contacts and connections, and many other "hooks" for campaigns of any scope and power level.
- Adventure seeds . . . celestial battles for War and Honor.



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







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STEVE JACKSON



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ABOUT IN NOMINE

Steve Jackson Games is committed to full support of the In Nomine system. Our address is SJ Games, Box 18957, Austin, TX 78760. Please include a selfaddressed, stamped envelope (SASE) any time you write us! Resources now available include:

Pyramid (www.sjgames.com/pyramid). Our online magazine includes new rules and articles for In Nomine. It also covers all the hobby's top games -AD&D, Traveller, World of Darkness, Call of Cthulhu, Shadowrun and many more - and other SJ Games releases like GURPS, INWO, Car Wars, Toon, Ogre Miniatures and more. And Pyramid subscribers also have access to playtest files online, to see (and comment on) new books before they're released.

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Errata. Everyone makes mistakes, including us - but we do our best to fix our errors. Up-to-date errata sheets for all In Nomine releases, including this book, are always available from SJ Games; be sure to include an SASE with your request. Or download them from the Web - see below.

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INFRODUCTION

WAR AND HONOR

"G'Quan wrote, 'There is a greater darkness than the one we fight. It is the darkness of the soul that has lost its way.' The war we fight is not against powers and principalities. It is against chaos . . . and despair. Greater than the death of flesh is the death of hope. The death of dreams. Against this peril we can never surrender."

- G'Kar; Babylon 5

The primary defining feature of the universe of *In Nomine* is the War.

No matter which Superior a celestial serves, no matter which side, what Word, what place – be it Heaven, Hell, the Marches, or Earth – it all boils down to that great celestial conflict.

With several notable exceptions, all the Archangels are active in the War, but four in particular stand out. Some angels refer to them as Heaven's warchiefs. Others quietly whisper imprecations about the "Warmongers" and the "Hyenas." Most of Heaven simply calls them the "Militant Faction," when they need to refer to them collectively at all.

They and their angels form the front line in the War.



NEW AND IMPROVED

"If honor be your clothing, the suit will last a lifetime; but if clothing be your honor; it will soon be worn threadbare." – William Arnot

The following pages contain the most complete information currently available on the four primary "War Faction" Archangels – War, Stone, Judgment, and the Sword – and their Servitors. Data on these Superiors has been assembled from its appearances in

prior sourcebooks and combined with new (and *newly-revealed*) material to produce the definitive canon for each. The result is sweeping coverage of what it is like to serve each Superior, from game mechanics to Servitor subculture. And while there are new Servitor Attunements here, more importantly there is in-depth exploration of the community, attitudes, and perspective of each Archangel's Servitors – raw material for exceptional roleplaying.

The reader will notice that a number of Choir Attunements are now labeled "Restricted." These are Attunements that can *not* be bought by members of other Choirs. This is a necessary clarification: Because some Choir Attunements are elaborations or specializations of a Choir's resonance, or address some lack or advantage possessed by that Choir, they would be meaningless applied to an angel of a different Choir. Examples would be the attunement possessed by Michael's Kyriotates, and most Bright Lilim attunements.

WHAT DID YOU DO IN THE WAR, DADDY?

"I do not believe it useful to generalize opinions, to teach admirations. It is for each man to procure himself the emotions he needs, and the morality which suits him." – Remy De Gourmont

The devotee of In Nomine will find more than enough detail on Michael, Lawrence, Dominic, and David in Superiors 1. But don't forget – the contents of this book were not written just to be read, but to be explored in play. What rumors about your Superior – and others – do you believe, and more importantly, which do you reject? Do you share your Archangel's grudges and prejudices? Do you embrace the darker sides of your Superior's nature, or seek to transcend them in service to his brighter aspects? These questions and others can serve as springboards, not only for character development, but for entire adventures and campaigns. And don't overlook the adventure seeds, some of which are designed to put player characters through a mental and emotional wringer in order to make them confront themselves and their very natures.

INTRODUCTION



David helped to build the world. He and his angels created the first human shelters, and his disciples taught the arts of pottery, metal-working, and building construction. After becoming a Malakite during the Fall, he helped people find new and better ways to beat one another into bloody smears.

Since David and his followers helped mold early humanity, he feels a responsibility to finish the job. His angels strengthen people by forcing them to endure terrible labors. David believes that humanity needs such strengthening to survive the times ahead.

His Servitors encourage people to join together in strength for mutual loyalty and protection, even to the point of forming street gangs and militias. They proudly count some skinheads among their followers. Stone angels tend to organize into communities and gangs *themselves*, creating a network of loyalties outside the framework of their official duties.

Some angels consider David's Servitors brutal and cruel. His Servitors themselves wonder if they are brutal *enough*. They dread the thought of failing humanity, or their Bright Lord, by allowing human weakness to endure. David's Servitors do not doubt their master's wisdom, and do not tolerate anyone else questioning David's orders. Their loyalty to him is legendary even in Heaven.

David's human vessel has a commanding presence, with steel-gray eyes set in a strong face. He retains the same general appearance whenever he wears human form, although minor details like race and size may vary. He rarely wears clothes. He also manifests as a mound of rock ... which can, at need, take on a roughly humanoid shape, speaking through the grinding and scraping of the stones.

Stone angels strive to exemplify personal strength, courage, loyalty, and patience. Like many martial artists, they specialize in reactive strength, allowing their enemies to take the offensive but crushing them utterly once they do so. Although inexorable, forceful, and bloodyminded, they do not forget their philosophy, their honor, or their faith.

DISSONANCE

AVID

David's angels don't start fights; they *win* fights. They don't shoot their enemies; they defeat them hand-to-hand, where each blow can come from the heart. Using a ranged weapon, or starting a fight, goes against their strict ethos and earns them dissonance.

CHOIR ATTUNEMENTS

David's Word governs minerals, such as stone, metals, gems, and sand – even the altered, developed forms of such minerals, like glass and asphalt. His angels' powers cannot reach through organic and artificial substances like plastic, paper, or even grasscovered dirt.

Seraphim

David's Seraphim taught humans the art of mining, and in general how to live off the land. They can detect the presence and quality of all minerals within 1 yard of their vessels for every Corporeal Force they possess. Combined with a successful Chemistry roll, this allows

them to detect complex compounds such as gunpowder.

Cherubim

David's Cherubim enjoy hard labor, like blacksmithing or factory work. They like both good things and bad things to come to them, rather than the other way around, and aren't above helping matters along. They can create a pseudo-magnetic field that can pull into their hands any object made mostly from minerals, as long as it is within (Corporeal Forces) yards. An object's holder can resist with a Strength roll, at a penalty equal to the Cherub's Celestial Forces.



Ofanim

The Earth parts for David's Ofanim, allowing them to move slowly through any sort of mineral matter. They can take with them worn or carried items up to (Corporeal Forces) × 10 pounds in weight. Each foot of progress takes one round through soft earth, two through stone or brick, and three through glass or metal. The passage closes seamlessly behind the angel. The angel's connection to the Earth allows him to retain a sense of up and down.

If the angel encounters a layer of non-mineral substance while moving through minerals (most interior walls have paper, wood, or paint somewhere inside them) the angel must tear through it to continue.

Elobim

Most of David's Elohim work as mentors, teachers, and philosophical masters. They teach humans inner peace, the martial arts, and the ways of Stone.

David's Elohim have a connection to the planet as a whole. They have an absolute sense of direction, and they always know exactly where they are and what time it is. Organic and artificial substances block this power, but only if a thick layer completely surrounds the angel. This attunement works only in the corporeal world and in Heaven.

Malakim

Once a day, a Malakite serving David can plant his feet on solid ground and become indestructible and almost immovable. His senses still work, but he can do nothing except answer mental communication if it is received and revert to normal with a Will roll.

David's Malakim train humans and sometimes other angels in self-defense. Unlike his Elohim, they prefer short-term assignments, whipping their students into shape and moving on.

Kyriotates

Kyriotates serving David can create their own vessels, but only of stone. These vessels cost the usual 3 points per level, but move at half speed, strike with +2 Power with bare hands or claws, ignore weather and any temperature that would not affect a statue, and have a natural Protection of 5.

When the Kyriotate manifests this vessel, it must allocate an appropriate number of Forces to it – five to a humanoid stone vessel, one to a stone seagull, and so forth. Demanifesting the vessel frees up these Forces.

Angels do not suffer dissonance or Trauma when a stone vessel is damaged or destroyed.

Mercurians

David's Mercurians help humanity build safe shelters, structures, and homes. They can instantly recognize a building's date of construction and the materials mix used to build it.

BRIGHT LILIM (restricted)

David does not necessarily have a special attunement for Bright Lilim Servitors. In fact, he may not have any such Servitors. If he does create such an attunement, it works as follows.

A Daughter serving David knows the best way to shape stone and minerals (especially gemstones) for a given purpose. If she geases someone to an act of loyalty, her Corporeal Forces are an additional penalty to the subject's Will roll.

These angels have a feeling for buildings constructed from minerals, a sense that grows stronger as the angels move through them. This gives them something like a blueprint in their heads, omitting non-mineral elements (like people) but revealing any secret doors and hidden compartments. It shows the quickest way through any maze of corridors.

SERVITOR ATTUNEMENTS

Armor

This attunement allows the user to expend Essence to surround himself with a hard layer of mineral armor. Each point of Essence spent raises the user's Protection by 1, up to a maximum of 6. At 1 Essence, the armor is baked clay, at 2 it is sheet copper, and so on up through crystal, granite, iron, and finally gemstone. The armor forms outside the user's clothes and covers any possessions he is carrying. While protected, the user can move and fight, but cannot speak. The armor lasts for a number of minutes equal to the user's Corporeal Forces.

Kyriotates with this attunement can use this power in stone vessels, and its higher levels (granite, iron, and gemstone) actually transform a Kyriotate's vessel into the appropriate element. *In Nomine* Protection ratings coming from different sources are cumulative, so a

Kyriotate in a stone vessel can spend 6 Essence on Armor, sing a level 2 Song of Corporeal Form, and receive a total Protection of 13.



DAVII



Brotherhood

David's Servitors with the Brotherhood attunement can pool their ability to withstand damage in corporeal combat. All hits inflicted on Servitors using this attunement count against the total Body hits of the group. As long as the combined Body hit total exceeds the number of Servitors in the group, every member remains conscious. Consequently, those using Brotherhood can fight side by side until they all fall together. All participants must have this attunement, and must be physically touching when they invoke the attunement. (They can separate afterward.) Invoking Brotherhood costs 1 Essence from each participant, and the effect lasts a number of minutes equal to the group's combined Corporeal Forces.

Unless enemies kill the entire group, every participant survives this attunement's use. When it wears off, divide the total damage taken as evenly as possible among the participants, leaving each at least 1 Body hit away from death.

Cold Touch

For 6 Essence, and with a successful Will roll, the angel can touch a foe and turn him to unbreakable stone, conscious but unable to move or speak. Celestial victims may resist with their Strength plus their Corporeal Forces; others must resist on Strength alone.

After (10 plus the angel's Corporeal Forces) minutes, the victim repeats the above resistance roll and, on success, recovers. If he fails, he makes this roll again after the same amount of time, until eventually he succeeds.

Deep Gaze

Fueled with 1 Essence, this lets the user see through (Corporeal Forces) yards of stone or earthy material. This ability remains active for (Celestial Forces) × 10 minutes.

Geomancy

This attunement gives its possessor the ability to perceive patterns of energy generated by rock formations. Most students of geomancy refer to these patterns as ley lines, and those who can perceive them can put the ley lines' energy to use. With a successful Perception roll, made within an hour of dawn, the attunement's holder can discern the most advantageous place to stand at dawn. This causes him to regenerate 2 Essence at sunrise instead of the usual single Essence. If the Perception roll's check digit is an unmodified 6, then he regenerates 3 Essence! A Servitor must make a new Perception roll every time he invokes this attunement, since factors like solar flares and subtle shifts in the planet's magnetic field make it unlikely that the same exact spot will serve as a ley line nexus more than once.

Inevitability

The enemies of Stone do not easily escape the consequences of their actions. Whenever an angel with this power pursues an opponent, he can spend 5 Essence to invoke Inevitability. Until the angel breaks off pursuit, slows deliberately below a brisk walk, or catches his enemy, the enemy can only move at half speed, in or out of a vehicle. Also divide the check digit of his Running, Driving, Swimming, and similar rolls by 2. Cars fail to perform, the enemy stumbles, trips, or flounders, and the angel's footsteps grow inevitably closer. Victims liken the experience to being a teenager in a horror movie.

Rock Hard

By spending at least 2 Essence, this attunement's owner can harden a limb, multiplying the check digit of any fighting attack with that limb by the amount of Essence spent. Multiple separate expenditures, in the same round or separate rounds, harden multiple limbs. This effect lasts for a number of rounds equal to the user's Corporeal Forces.

DISTINCTIONS

Vassal of Stone

The physical vessel or host bodies of the angel cannot be harmed by earth or stone.

Friend of the Subterranean World

The Friend automatically detects the presence of underground cavities (rivers, springs, cellars, caves, etc.) within (Corporeal Forces) × 100 yards.

Master of the Granite Hand

In unarmed combat, multiply the check digit of any successful Fighting roll by the angel's Corporeal Forces. This bonus is not cumulative with the bonus from Rock Hard.

SPECIAL DISTINCTIONS

Members of organizations, associations, fraternities, teams, and gangs of Stone Servitors can earn high rank within those groups. These "Distinctions" give no unusual powers or official authority, but other angels of Stone often honor their holders. Thus, the Champion of the Dog Tooth Spars (an Eastern Seaboard angel gang) cannot order other Servitors around, but they will acknowledge his combat prowess.

Master of . . .

David has a number of separate but equal Master distinctions. Most represent an improved or variant form of a Choir or Servitor attunement. A Master of Earthly Armor can invoke Armor at will, substituting (Corporeal Forces) for Essence spent. A Master of Geomancy regenerates (Corporeal Forces) Essence every morning, if standing at an appropriate nexus. All told, David offers several dozen Master ranks, and an angel can possess several Master Distinctions. David's secretive internal police, the Masters of Celestial Integrity, can detect dissonance in Malakim with a successful Perception Roll. Only Malakim receive this Distinction. David has not given out the Servitor Attunement version of this Distinction since before the Grigori became Outcasts.



Silent Angel

The world beneath the Earth's surface and the Catacombs of Heaven accumulate secrets like dryer lint - arcane and mundane mysteries migrate into the dark and hidden places almost automatically. David knows the answers to many enigmas and controls many undisclosed resources, despite his distaste for intrigue and deception. Servitors who know a few of these secrets (such as the nature of the Unbounded Aven, p. 23) take an oath of silence on the matter and receive this Distinction. This allows them to add their Celestial Forces to all rolls to resist powers that would force them to reveal their secret. GMs may give this bonus to other rolls necessary to protect the angel's oath, such as a Perception roll to notice someone following the angel to a hidden place on Earth. David invests time and energy into this Distinction. It partially "fuzzes" Perceptionbased attempts to ferret out the Silent Angel's secret. Usually, the celestial probing with an attunement or resonance learns the broad edges of the truth and can tell that the Archangel of Stone shielded the information personally.

David does not give this Distinction out to protect tactical secrets, but rather to guard the sanctity of the mysteries of Stone. It derives from his Word and not his efforts in the War. David's Silent angels do not outrank other angels, but do merit respect.

D A VID

SECRET SONGS

David will sometimes reward his servitors with one of the secret Songs he knows: Battle (*Liber Canticorum*, p. 63), Numinous Corpus: Rock (*Liber Canticorum*, p. 72), or Stone (*Liber Canticorum*, p. 76).

RELATIONS

While it's no secret that David thinks he should command Heaven's armies, he and his Servitors are ultimately loyal to Michael and the rest of the military faction. He has privately instructed his Servitors to aid Gabriel as well, but not to waste too much energy helping the other Archangels. His angels must walk a fine line when dealing with David's "Associates." David's honor demands that his angels heed an associate's request for help, but that's no excuse if the angel fails a mission because of it.

Allied: Gabriel, Michael (Janus and Laurence are allied to David)

Associated: Jean, Jordi, Laurence (Michael is associated with David)

Hostile: Marc (Blandine and Novalis are hostile to David)

BASIC RITES

Spend four hours resting in a mine or a cave.

 \bigstar Spend one hour praying undisturbed in a church made of stone.

EXPANDED RITES

David, like other Superiors, sometimes gives his Servitors special Rites as rewards or to encourage specific behavior. Possible Rites include:

♥ Inspire an enemy's self-destruction or redemption.

★ Restore a traumatized child's self-respect and inner strength.

♥ Break a demon's hold on a community.

✤ Kill a demon of Malphas, in vessel or soul. (+2 Essence)

♥ Substantially improve local con-

struction practices. (+3 Essence)

➡ Inspire the construction of a large monument, built of stone or brick, to commemorate those who



died struggling for a worthy cause (+1 Essence for every day construction continues and the angel actively helps the project).

➡ Build, by hand, a one-room stone house large enough to sleep two people comfortably (+3 Essence; an extra +2 if the angel has it consecrated as a place of worship).

* Encourage a human to endure a terrible labor, and see him succeed without celestial interference. The labor must be something the human didn't believe himself capable of doing, with the goal of broadening his horizons and boosting his self-esteem (+5 Essence).

CHANCE OF INVOCATION: 3

INVOCATION MODIFIERS

- +1 A small, smooth stone
- +2 A stone statue of a male figure
- +3 A marble statue of a male figure
- +4 A gathering of 50 warriors (be they commandos or gang members) without guns
- +5 A stone carving more than 1,500 years old
- +6 A rock used to kill a demon

COMMON MALAKITE OATHS

★ To scourge the weakness from my soul by punishing my lapses from virtue;

✤ To permit no slight upon the David's name or the Word of Stone;

★ To build a community from the angels I work with, and limit the acrimony within it;

✤ To struggle weekly, and daily if possible, to make whole communities which might otherwise die;

✤ To hunt the demons of Malphas and roust them from their lairs;

♥ To guard my comrades' lives and souls before my own;

 \bigstar To teach humans to loathe those who reject God;

♥ To bear material loss without flinching, never becoming attached to possessions or status;

✤ To use no weapons.

EARTHQUAKES AND VOLCANOES

Just how much destructive power *does* an earthquake have?

A magnitude 6 earthquake releases energy roughly equivalent to that of "Little Boy," the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima. Each additional point on the Richter scale multiplies the energy released by 30 or so. The magnitude 8.7 earthquake that struck Lisbon in 1755 released more than 10,000 times as much energy as "Little Boy."

David would need to spend an enormous amount of Essence to create a magnitude 8+ earthquake. He might not even have the strength. However, most celestials think he *does* have enough power – and that even the fury of the Lisbon earthquake pales compared to the leashed anger in his heart. Smart Superiors, even those whose strength surpasses David's, avoid pushing the Archangel of Stone too far. A volcanic eruption, less impressive in the short term, can continue for months on end. An eruption releases as much as 14.7 cubic kilometers of lava, burning somewhere around 2140 degrees Fahrenheit. Ash clouds can explode away from the volcano at speeds up to 360 miles per hour. Volcanoes can wipe away human cities. A volcano killed Akrotiri, a Minoan city on the island Thera that some scholars identify with Atlantis. Many humans believe that rocks from certain volcanic eruptions carry a curse.

David would need Gabriel's help to force a volcanic eruption. However, every few millennia, the Earth remembers the Archangel who helped to create it, and responds on its own to the desires of his heart.

Boom.

SFAPER OF CONFINENTS

"Fire is the test of gold; adversity, of strong men." – De Providentia

NAMES, APPEARANCE, AND MANNER

David uses many names. Usually, they mean something related to his celestial name or his Word. Other times, he simply likes their sound or their derivation. In the West, he often uses the names Carrick, Daniel, David, Mason, and Peter. In India, he favors the names Akshay and Bhudev. In the past, he used Lonato on the American continent. In Africa, he has ninety-nine names, including Foluke, Manu, Yorkoo, and Zuberi. In Japan, he uses Ishi.

As far as anyone knows, David has only one human shape. Rumor has it that Eli carved a vessel for him near the beginning of time, and it pleased David so much that he swore to use it as his human form until it failed him. It never has. This legend implies that even David's "human" vessel is, in fact, made of stone, albeit shaped so perfectly as to appear totally human. He usually adapts his appearance to his location if he bothers looking human at all. If he does not adapt, his human shape has African features and coloration. Humanity started there, after all.

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David speaks slowly, in a low, rumbling voice. He moves slowly as well, though often with a hint of suppressed violence. He listens patiently to his Servitors, and allows even the most presumptuous arguments – until he makes his final decision. After that, he tolerates no debate.

David's Word, in the corporeal realm, is almost omnipresent. His power, accordingly, can reach almost anywhere. When he visits a place or a person, he rarely approaches from a particular direction. His presence simply builds until he *arrives*. Demons often think of him as the archetypal bogeyman whose footsteps grow louder and louder wherever one chooses to run.

THE WORD OF STONE

David governs the mineral substance of the Earth. This includes ore, gems, simple alloys, dirt, sand, clay, and (of course) stone. He controls the crust and mantle of the Earth. Stone bears the ultimate responsibility for the uses humans and celestials put the planet's buried treasures to. Angels of Stone roust out the demons and monsters who lair in caves and fissures, oppose Vapula's attempts to create "earthquake machines" or tap the energy of continental drift, and help Heaven locate mineral wealth when needed.

Stone metaphorically represents strength and fortitude. Angels of Stone tend to specialize in passive, reactive strength. However, David's Word also includes the destructive power of avalanches, earthquakes, and even volcanoes.

D A V I

Lend me the stone strength of the past and I will lend you the wings of the future, for I have them. – Robinson Jeffers

Near the beginning of time, God gave David the task of cooling the Earth and testing its strength. David shaped the molten product of his comrades' labors into a solid world. Later, David taught humans how to build and craft. He still considers himself the Archangel governing construction. Craftsmen and architects work in his name. David himself practices the craft of mountain design, slowly improving the aesthetic value of the peaks.

David claims the concept of "community" under his Word. He likens communities to buildings. The structure of a community gives it strength that its individual components do not possess. David, as the first architect, therefore watches over cultures, subcultures, governments, secret societies, crime rings, religious hierarchies, clubs, gangs, and treaties between nations. He shares authority over most specific organization types with other Archangels. David tests, shapes, and even creates every kind of community – he is a social engineer par excellence.

David once shared many of these areas of influence with the Grigori. As things stand, however, there are no Grigori in Heaven to contest his claims.

HISTORY

I) A V I D

In the beginning, Lucifer, Michael, Baal, Uriel, and Gabriel created the basic substance of the Earth. Then David finished the job, shaping the Earth's crust and mantle. (Stone considers Eli's work on life and detailed surface topography an entirely different project.) David's angels remain intensely proud of their creator's participation in this great work.

At first, David built alone. Once he completed the basic structure, he crafted angels to help him in his labor. When the Earth was ready, David withdrew from the world, meditating on his Word and watching geology zoom along, for a very long time.

After humans showed up, God asked David to teach them the uses of stone. David helped humans figure out stone tools, cave shelters, and construction. He showed them how to make weapons and instructed them in the discipline of sin'an, the first martial art. With Novalis,

David taught humanity about agriculture. His strictly defined mission overrode the general prohibition against interfering with humanity.

Then came the Fall, a shattering surprise to David. It roused his heart to anger for the first time in his long existence. The fire of the War changed the soft-spoken Cherub, alloying him from iron to steel. He became a Malakite.

David's enemies within the Host say that, in his anger, he even slew "passive conspirators," who stood on the sidelines while the angels warred. After the battle, David cast six of his angels eternally out of Heaven for failing to take arms against the enemies of God. Then, fearing his own anger, David swore that he would never strike the first blow – that only those actively fighting God or His agents would die at his hands.

After the Fall, David took a sterner line with humanity. Realizing the power of corruption, he decided that if he had to hurt humans to teach them integrity and strength, he would do so. He did not abandon compassionate, helpful methods for making humans stronger – but he started challenging them with terrible ordeals as well. If a weak human failed an ordeal and died, then humanity as a whole grew stronger. If a human succeeded, then *he* grew stronger.

The demons returned, and God crafted the Grigori. David loved the Grigori well, and sorrowed when they went astray. Because of his love and his sorrow, he took responsibility for hunting them and their monstrous children down. Afterward, his Servitors took over much of the Grigori's work.

Empires rose. Empires fell.

Uriel initiated a crusade to destroy all the creatures of legend. This presented David with a dilemma. David wanted humanity to take responsibility for its own dreams. In fact, he considered this a key step in human development. However, he agreed with Uriel that the ethereals did not belong on Earth, and Uriel was his blood brother. Eventually, David gave Purity his grudging support.

When God called Uriel into the upper realms, ending the Crusade, it surprised David. Uriel, one of David's earliest comrades and the first Malakite, was a key part of David's world. David's heart grew more troubled when God appointed Laurence as commander of Heaven's armies. From David's perspective, Laurence was barely *finished*, much less experienced. Surely David, as the oldest remaining Malakite, deserved that command?

Still, David did not question God. The Almighty presumably had good reason for appointing Laurence. The Archangel of Stone resolved to simply weather Laurence's naiveté, helping as best as he could. As Lucifer's minions became more adept at corrupting and subverting the ruling classes among humanity, David turned his attention to the common folk, the base of the human pyramid. He directed his angels to encourage humans to band together to defend their rights and fight for a better world.

The Archangel of Stone has had a hard time adjusting to the rapid transformation of human society over the past several centuries. He longs for the days when hard muscles and stone walls measured strength, instead of industrial output and currency reserves. The rich nations of the modern world have gone soft and decadent. Although the "works" of modern society grow greater and greater, part of David looks forward to the coming of the barbarians who will hammer it into shape.

LEGENDS AND HOLY MYSTERIES

David's angels tell many strange stories about their Archangel. Some stories they consider holy. Others just provide fodder for their

sense of myth and mystery. In most cases, David could authoritatively verify or deny the myth, but his angels do not want that – shared legends and secrets help build their solidarity.

For example, they say that "David," the fourth angelic name given by Yves, is also the thirty-eighth name *period.* Only 37 *concepts* predate David. His angels therefore consider the number 38 a sacred and powerful symbol of their Superior. Some suggest that to bind a corporeal stone into their service they need only sing its celestial name to it 38 times. Of course, this requires becoming a Vassal of War – a difficult task for an angel of Stone – to do properly.

Apocryphal Stories

Flint and Coral: David disapproved greatly of the first Stone Servitor to experience Discord, and removed it painfully. He took a knife of flint and a knife of coral. With one, he stripped away the Servitor's madness, and with the other he stripped away the deformity. The shreds fell to Earth and wild dogs fed upon them. It's wise to sew flint and coral into a dog's collar – this protects it from any madness or disease it might have inherited from those wild dogs.

The Nephallite Circle: During the hunt for the Grigori and Nephallim, David encountered a group of Nephallim engaged in revelry. The centerpiece of the

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festivities was a cannibalistic feast, with dead human children roasting on a fire. David turned these Nephallim into stones as they danced around their dinner, forming one of the world's stone circles.

True Stories

Antaeos: David shaped the tectonic plates using his great hammer Antaeos. He set it down in Libya's Jabal Akhdar mountain range after finishing the plates. Over the millennia since, it accumulated enough sediment to become a mountain itself. Angels of Stone sometimes make pilgrimages to Antaeos, and a handful of Cherubim keep watch over the area to make sure no Prince attempts to steal the implement that shaped the world.

The Still Ones: In the early days of the universe, after David finished the Earth but before humanity, some of David's angels joined him in his meditations. Sadly, most of these angels lacked David's infinite capacity for patience. Most asked for new duties within a century. The few who managed even a million years of pure contemplation forgot how to think and act entirely, crystallizing into celestial statues. David did not wake them immediately, since they had chosen their own lot and he had no urgent need for them. Hundreds of statues litter the Catacombs, so these crystallized angels could be anywhere.

D A V I

Gog and Magog: During David's purge of the Grigori, several ancient cultures assumed that a personage of such force must belong to the Nephallim himself. They named David "Gog," the Nephallite giant with power over stone. David kept this name for some time, as homage to the Outcast Grigori.

One of David's Kyriotates, impressed by the story of this name, took the matching name Magog. David had many great Servitors in ancient times, but Magog soon outstripped all of them in grace and power. He earned the Word of Fortitude. As time went by, David delegated more and more of the task of testing and strengthening humanity to Magog.

Stand your ground . . . If they mean to have a war let it begin here! – John Parker, to his Minute Men at Lexington

The Domination served David with great zeal, knowing as David did that the generations of suffering his work caused were for the best. For a long time, he felt a great and terrible compassion for those he tested and tormented; then he felt a distant and glacial love for them; then he felt an iron dedication to his duty. Finally, Magog felt nothing but contempt and a diabolical joy in manipulation. Instead of helping humans defend themselves, he encouraged them to strike first, to crush potential foes, and to wage aggressive war.

David allowed this to continue for some time, hoping that Magog would come to his senses. Instead, in the ninth century B.C., Magog incited the Assyrian King Ashur-Nars-Pal II into excessive feats of cruelty. These included mass executions, mass deportations, scourgings, and impalements. So terrible and unprecedented (at the time) was the malice of these acts that Ashur's name became a word in the language of Hell and the Assyrian gods turned their faces from their people.

Finally, David confronted Magog, but the Angel of Fortitude did not repent. Instead, he ranted a long prophecy or (more likely) lunatic boast that David would join him in darkness at the end of days. "Gog" would earn that name a second time by becoming more evil than any Nephallite, and together they would sweep God's followers from the Earth. Immediately afterward, Magog Fell.

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Lucifer crowned Magog the Prince of Cruelty, but David made Magog's reign a short one. With Khalid, Angel of Faith, and a band of Stone's mightiest warriors, David tracked Magog to his fortress beneath the Sahara sands and fought him there. At the end, David triumphed, sealing Magog and all his followers in a tomb of impenetrable stone. The sands rose and covered the tomb. Magog was lost to the ken of human, demon, and angel alike. Lucifer, unable or unwilling to find Magog's prison, allowed his new Prince to languish and directed his attention elsewhere.

The Great Terrors of the Marches: David took careful steps to make sure that even after the Purity Crusade, humanity would eventually have reason to develop strength and independence in the Marches. He disassembled several great terrors that stalked the waking world, recording their physical structure in written form and trapping their spiritual essence in the ley lines. This will allow him to recreate them someday.

Few of David's angels know this story. All of them have taken a vow of silence on the matter, receiving the appropriate Distinction. They do reflect on it in each others' company, however.

PERSONALITY AND OUTLOOK

As one of the original Malakim, David has no patience for exceptions and accepts no violation of his honor. To him, integrity plays a vital role in the Symphony's function. The demands of his personal code represent the living voice of God. He never breaks the spirit of his given word or reneges on a bargain. He still has the dogged persistence of a Cherub and the eternal patience that comes from watching a planet form. He kept much of his old Cherubic protectiveness, although he gives his loyalty to larger things than individual humans and angels. He guards the human race, the purity of the Earth, the sanctity of Heaven, and the concepts of family and society. If a few humans must die to achieve this end, he does not find arranging their deaths difficult. If a legion of angels must die, he will sacrifice them without shirking, calmly and heartlessly, without hiding his intentions from them or from Heaven. More, he will expect them to cooperate with every bit as much calm.

It would do David an injustice to describe his conviction as "absolute" or "as solid as the Earth." David's confidence in the purity of his reason, his beliefs, and his causes transcends such human measures. No matter how violently fanatic, no matter how piously selfless, no human ever born possessed David's unconditional and unwavering loyalty to what he believes he must do. Aware of the ineffability of God and the limits on Archangelic knowledge, David usually reserves some measure of judgment on any given issue. When he makes a final decision, however, it would not matter if every angel and Archangel in all Heaven turned against him. It would not matter if his oldest friends swore to him that he had gone astray. He would defy them all and serve God as he saw fit. Only his faith and his honor limit the cold rage he cherishes against his enemies. Only his loyalty to the Lord exceeds his devotion to his friends.

David hates making snap judgments, and can spend days or weeks making up his mind. This can cause problems when a crisis demands quick action. The tactics of Technology, in particular, which usually require philosophical as well as military solutions, can send Stone forces into a holding pattern for days on end. David considers himself partially responsible for Nybbas' rise, having hesitated in taking action against the television set. By the time he arranged for "community pressure" against the demonic invention, the world had already accepted the television into its homes; there was no turning back. He keeps trying, of course.

David represents the slowest elemental force, but Stone *is* an elemental force. No angel is going to come along and change the way he's done things for millions of years. His affect shows as much passion as a rock's; sometimes, only the personal prices he will pay without thinking twice demonstrate that he has emotions at all. Angels find it difficult to impress him, either positively or negatively, because he has seen almost everything happen before. In his calm, David sometimes takes steps that seem cruel to others. For example, if one of his angels blunders, he may withhold aid and allow his Servitor to succeed or fail on his own. If the Servitor dies, then David knows what characteristics to avoid when creating future Servitors. If the Servitor lives, that Servitor grows stronger. He loves his angels terribly, but that's *why* he does things this way.

An angel who expects constant direction from above will not do well in David's service. Angels of Stone,



It will have blood, they say; blood will have blood: Stones have been known to move . . . – Shakespeare

caught between their enormous devotion to David and his limited response to even the greatest deeds, often go to glorious or terrible extremes trying to win the respect of their Lord.

David accepts that the world often works on a "two steps forward, one step backward" basis. He has seen his proudest works crumble into dust on many occasions. As long as he can salvage *something* from a project, he considers it worthwhile. Empires rise and empires fall, but each learns at least a little bit from what he taught the one before. David does not claim history or historians under his Word, but he does offer many his patronage.

Even in the company of other Archangels, David seems unnaturally patient. He prefers to act as the continental plates do: unhurriedly, almost invisibly, but with an inevitable force that nothing in God's creation can oppose. If Janus, for example, wished to cleanse Baltimore of demons, he would strike with the speed and terror of a divine wind. Stone, on the other hand, has killed just a few more Baltimorean demons than Hell can afford to replace every few decades for over 150 years. David has limits to both his power and his knowledge, and occasionally fails to accomplish one of his goals, but this does not reassure his enemies; he *never* gives up the fight. It may take a million years, but he will bring Gabriel and Eli back into the graces of Heaven, revenge himself on Lucifer for the Fall, cut Marc down to size, and show Malphas what it is like to be a faction of a billion shredded pieces of slimy flesh.

Compared to Michael, David seems inert, a creature of reaction rather than action. Compared to Jean, his thoughts move slowly. This does not, however, represent lost potential. David moves with calm deliberation because he chose this attitude as his approach to life. He defends one of the oldest Words against incursions across the world theater. As a Malakite, he dedicates a great deal of time and effort to erasing the demonic plague. His list of duties and accomplishments hints at dynamism appropriate to an Archangel. His endless, continuous, and thousand-faced service to Heaven escapes most observers' notice only because most observers move at a faster pace.

D A V I

DAVID'S OATHS

David's honor governs his entire approach to existence. In becoming a Malakite, he dedicated himself to ignoring the personal cost of his actions. He gave up his ability to take the easy road to a problem's solution. His oaths capture this attitude, but he considers obedience to one's oaths a preliminary, rudimentary stage of honor. David abides by his sworn word, just as a human must breathe. His integrity extends as far beyond that point as life

extends beyond breathing. "Never abandon faith, even in the lowest of the Fallen, until I have no choice."

After the Fall, David studied the bodies of those he'd killed. He realized that he would find it easy to despair in his fellow angels. He thought how easily he could come to distrust every one of his peers and Servitors, knowing their potential to turn against God. He took a hard look at the nature of faith.

True faith in God's plan, he concluded, had nothing to do with weighing the odds that some Servitor had turned. It had nothing to do with measuring the chance that he could return a rebel to grace. It required that he believe in even the most despicable Luciferian pawn – believe until the point when no hope remained. Then a little bit longer.

David, old and experienced even then, put his oath in practical terms. The phrasing makes no mention of hope, only of need. The spirit of the oath nevertheless remains with him.

"Strike only to defend my charges or to respond to an opponent's violence."

David knows that sometimes his perception of evil is mistaken. As a Malakite Archangel, he has one of the keenest senses of evil in all creation – but when deciding who to kill, that fallible perception *isn't good enough*. David accepts civilian casualties but will not bear the risk that he might *target* an innocent. That would put him squarely on the slippery slope towards self-righteous monsterhood. David only takes action against his enemies when he has a more specific reason than enmity. David's Servitors' dis-

sonance condition stems in part from this oath.

"Never suffer an evil to live when it is my choice."

David genuinely believes that his passive, slow approach to the War offers the greatest opportunity to defeat Hell. His philosophy is that Hell must destroy itself by casting itself against the rocky shore of Heaven. Heaven must act as the agent through which the demons' rejection of God destroys them, not as a bunch of crusading celestials. David does not need to take the offensive. Going out and randomly killing demons would not serve Heaven. This oath requires David to act, instead, when a demon crosses the line - when it initiates the use of force. Then, even if the demon once served him, David must destroy it with no regrets.

"Never surrender or allow myself to be captured by the armies of Lucifer."

David made this promise on the battlefield of the first war. It has never crossed his mind since. Nothing ever gave him a reason to surrender or offered a real threat of capture.

"Permit yourself no cowardice. Use no coward's weapons."

This oath refers to cowardice in decision-making. (Cowardice in battle would not occur to David.) It requires, for example, that David take necessary action regardless of its cost in angelic or human life. David would take the courageous course without this oath, but it eliminates temptation and thus saves time.

"Coward's weapons" include all ranged weapons, including thrown weapons but not including Songs. David considers them *morally* cowardly in that they separate the wielder from the consequences of his action – in rough terms, the user does not feel the impact.

Priorities

David serves his Word. That means he supports communities, protects his subterranean domain, teaches humans craft and construction, and strives to make humanity as tough and strong as Stone. David also fights hard in the War, although he rarely takes the offensive.

Some question David's support of dubious and violent subcultures. David himself feels no doubt. He believes firmly that any human who has faith that his fellows will support him will display ethics and honor, if not always morality. David supports criminal associations as well as honest ones because, while gangs and the like might not have a "nice" code, most have *a* code. They have *some* kind of integrity. David considers that very important. As long as he can tolerate a group's existence at all, he feels a human is better off as a part of it than he would be alone.

David's activities in the mineral world operate, appropriately, on the geological time scale. He began several development projects in the Proterozoic Era that are only now approaching completion, and a recent "very exciting" inspiration regarding crystal formations will probably take him at least 220 million years to test.



Views on the War

David reasons about the War as follows. By opposing God, the demons have embarked on a supremely selfdestructive course. Eventually, each one must commit himself all the way to that course or change his mind and redeem. As soon as he commits himself all the way, he dooms himself to annihilation. It might take a few billion years for some of them to make up their minds. Similarly, it might take a few billion years for some of those that commit to self-destruction to die. In time, though, every last one will redeem or perish.

David's goal in the War is to speed up the "inevitable annihilation" of those who take the invisible but irrevo-

cable step of full commitment to the rebellion. A demon destroyed by Stone, given David's approach to the world, almost certainly made this commitment. David suspects that no Demon Prince, including Lucifer, will ever turn his back on Hell, but he does not *know* this; therefore, he does not preemptively attack even Hell's royalty.

POLITICS

David cherishes old friends and old enmities. Gabriel is his oldest friend, and he gives her all the support he can. The reverse is not always true, because David's expression of compassion often resembles cruelty. David's ties to Michael are also somewhat one-sided; the community-minded David goes farther for their friendship than the fiercely independent Archangel of War. The other two members of Heaven's warrior faction, Laurence and Janus, actively court David's support, and the five of them generally vote together on Heaven's councils.

Jean and Jordi are occasional allies. David approves of each of them personally, but their Words have brought them into conflict in the past.

David's enemies are a mixed lot. Blandine opposes him, along with the rest of the war party, but isn't actively hostile. Novalis hates him as much as Novalis can hate anyone. She saw his transformation into a Malakite as a betrayal of all he stood for, and she loathes his stern attitude toward humans. David remembers Novalis as a friend from the old days, but considers her priorities irrelevant and vaguely insane. David actively dislikes Marc. The Archangel of Trade embodies everything David wants to grind out of humanity, and the fact that their factions oppose one another doesn't help.

Archangel Opinions

This is how the other Archangels view David (and how he views them).

Blandine: He is brave and strong, but there is so much more to life than strength and bravery. His dreams are as dull and barren as any stone. (*I fear that the pain of Beleth's loss sometimes clouds her perceptions. Her hostility toward me has not yet exhausted my patience. After all, some trials take years to work through, and some take eons.*)

Dominic: David is loyal. Very loyal. My task would be simple if all the Host were like him. Still, he should take care that others do not misuse his loyalty and betray his trust. (Dominic gets his job done. We've got to be strong and pure if we're going to win this fight, and he weeds out the weak and treacherous. I've heard some of the others griping about the way his servants are always snooping around. Tough. Better Dominic's agents than Lucifer's.)

I) A V I

DAVID AND MARC

Marc, like any angel with a Word, tries to make his Word serve God. David understands that greed and exploitation are Mammon's specialties, not Marc's. He understands that Trade seeks to increase the prosperity of the world. He has enough of the Cherub left in him to approve. He *likes* modern dental care. He *dislikes* disease-infested holes and starving children. David does not seek a happy, painless world full of indolence and wealth, but the idea does not horrify him.

David does not forget, however, that the modern economy is built on numbers on paper and in machines. It bothers him that these numbers don't always correspond to anything specific. It disturbs him that speculation and subjectivity play such a major role in shuffling these numbers around. Ultimately, in his mind, the economy is built on fast-talk and lies.

Lies don't necessarily belong to Lucifer — but Lucifer is the very best liar in all the world. David thinks that Marc is playing right into Lucifer's hands by making humanity dependent on speculation and numbers. Lucifer can manipulate a stock market a lot easier than he can play with hard currency or a barter economy. Worse, David thinks that Marc is playing into Lucifer's hands *out of pride* — pride in the flash and dazzle of Trade's way.

Eli: He's as much a builder as a fighter. People forget that – he forgets that himself, sometimes. (One by one, my old companions go away. On the surface, Eli's abandonment of Heaven demonstrates every quality I condemn. Unlike Dominic, however, I trust that there is more to the story.)

Gabriel: Some things are eternal, and David is one of them. I envy him his devotion to duty and am grateful for his friendship, but at times he is too hard and cold. Stone is very strong, but ultimately it must be broken down and put through the fire to be of any use. (*She is what we will all someday become. Pure, primal, unfettered, just as fire should be. She is the unstoppable force to my immovable object, yet we are more alike than different. I hear her roar echoing deep in the earth; how long can her rage be denied?*)

Janus: We're not exactly best friends, but David is reliable. I want him on my side. (Working with him can be difficult, yes. Communicating with him can be difficult at times, especially when he treats a second like a millennium. But my feelings do not matter. We need him. He directs Heaven's efforts in directions I would not think to.)

Jean: He is a valuable colleague and a valiant warrior. My only complaint is that he lives too much in the past. David still thinks in terms of eons, but the battles we fight today are waged in nanoseconds. (Modern technology hurts humanity more than it helps. I accept that someone must watch over its development, however, and Jean is the best angel for the job.)

Jordi: David has seen and understands. The weak die, the fit survive, and nothing lasts. Why get upset over the latest crisis the humans have managed to inflict on themselves? The planet will not mourn their passing long. (I understand Jordi's stance on the humans more than most. Jordi's insects practiced building, craftsmanship and community long before I taught humanity these things. I value the human spirit, but our work could go on without them.)

Laurence: David's courage and steadfastness are unequaled, and he is an asset to our cause. Of course, there is more to waging war than brute strength. (Steadfast. Determined. Focused. It's fair to say that I approve of the youth, and we've worked well together. Laurence has an edge on his soul that puts his sword to shame. – Of course, there is more to waging war than dreaming up flashy stratagems. I could do better as commander of Heaven's hosts, and he knows it.)

Marc: His views are outmoded and simplistic. I can't understand him, and I'm afraid he can't understand me either. (Marc believes I don't understand his work. He's wrong. It's a series of compromises and fictions. Speculation. Money without backing. Lies. Greed. It's playing into Lucifer's hands.)

Michael: Among the few I consider worthy of the title of Archangel, David stands unique. He and his angels are brave and strong, and never pick a fight themselves. I can't think of anyone I'd rather have at my side in a fight than David. (My oldest comrade-in-arms. He believes that he can fight alone, perhaps even defeat the whole of Hell alone, but this does not alter his capabilities. He knows what he's doing in battle, and he understands that this is a War we have to win by any means necessary. My Servitors aid his.)

Novalis: David has lost so much, and the tragedy is that he thinks he is better for it. (Once upon a time, her ideals made sense. Some time in the distant future, they may well make sense again. In the mean time, I advise my Servitors to ignore her angels' twittering.)

Yves: The noble agents of Stone serve God's plan – and they will continue to do so as long as they stay true to themselves. But a stone can sometimes be shattered by a single blow. (We don't work the same way, but I trust him as I trust myself. I respect him. How can you do anything **but** respect him? Only Michael seems bitter towards Yves. Michael's reasons do not convince me.)



Princely Opinions

Of course, the Princes have their own views.

Andrealphus: Sadism, masochism, leather culture, big burly vessels – I have the greatest respect for Stone and its ideals. I also appreciate the confidence David and his Servitors have in the ultimate rightness of the world and their actions; it makes manipulating them child's play. (Lust's Servitors fold like paper dolls in a fight, and strong humans can ignore all Andrealphus' temptations. However; Lust can inflict enormous damage if it gets to a weak human before we do.)

Asmodeus: David does not play games. This makes him, ultimately, a pawn. Heaven's hierarchy manipulates him, uses him like a slave – a strong back and a strong arm to support even their most ill-advised military schemes. He does not acknowledge this; they do not acknowledge this; but the pattern is clear. (Asmodeus spins Gordian knots of intrigue, well beyond my ability to unravel. I do not bother unraveling them. My hands can tear the strongest knot.)

Baal: A worthy opponent, although not really flexible enough to compare to Michael or myself. (*I have some* respect for Baal. He has chosen to redefine his concept of God until it no longer resembles reality. This is a terrible crime, but less terrible than his peers' **rejection** of God.)

Beleth: One day, his absolute convictions will destroy him. When he accepts the truth of his personal nightmare – that the world has no clear moral compass, that God is not purely good, and that his own harsh actions are therefore gray – it will torture him every moment thereafter for the rest of his existence. (I consider her pathetic. Her gaudy displays of malice impress no one. Her Word gives her absolute power over something unimportant. Demon Princes who fixate on ghosts and shadows aren't worth my time.)

Belial: Stone doesn't burn, but it blows up real well. (All the fire in the world won't destroy the things I care about: stone and the human soul. Belial thinks physical destruction matters in the War. That makes him an insignificant buffoon.)

Haagenti: Nothing like a good terrible ordeal to get your appetite going. (A corrupting, weakening influence on humanity. I hope to have the opportunity to kill him myself.)

Kobal: "We've secretly replaced David with a Habbalite painted black. Let's see if anyone notices." My Servitors like to help his Servitors overestimate a human's endurance. A Stony gets this *priceless* expression on his face when he realizes he's pushed a human over the edge into ruin or damnation. (A prancing jackanape. He claims a sophisticated sense of humor, but the truth is that he laughs like a hyena. It's a meaningless, animal, predatory noise. All it means is that he's hungry for more suffering.)

Kronos: David does not have the moral strength to intervene forcefully when he must. He opposes my work ineffectively at best. (*Kronos gloats over luring humans to their fates. It reminds me of a human boasting about his last one-night stand. It's spiritually meaningless and sordid. In the end, the will of God will prevail, and the concept of fate will become as obsolete as the Word.)*

D A V I

RESERVESSION

Lilith: Old as stone, slow as stone, thick as stone. He refuses to believe that I have any honor whatsoever. So I never, ever try to start a fight with him. (Lilith offers "the easy way out." Unfortunately, there's no such thing. That means she couldn't give you a good deal if she wanted to. She always cheats you. It's what she does. It's what her Word means. She's a demon and must be destroyed.)

Malphas: Ultimately, his existence is unacceptable. His Word makes him and his angels dangerously unable to comprehend the truth of how the world functions. (*I* own a sword, in part, because killing Malphas bare-handed would be nauseating. His work directly opposes my own. Destroying him is my first priority in the War.)

Nybbas: Makeup! Get some pants on this angel! No, seriously, if Malakim started Falling, I'd make this guy an offer he couldn't refuse; can you *imagine* the ratings he'd get as an anchorman? Solid, respectable, worldly, deep voice, broad shoulders . . . I have it on high authority he looks smashing in a suit. (*The Word of the Media incorporates older infernal ideas like slander; libel and hate speech. This gives it power. I sometimes doubt, however; that he still* **controls** the Earthly media. It seems to be growing out of control, lashing out at infernal and divine causes both.)

Don't hit first. Don't. Hit. First. DON'T HIT FIRST. Repeat this mantra and you might survive an encounter with Stone. – Rob Morrison, Soldier of Hell

Saminga: Stones do not interest me. Unless you throw them at people. I like that. (Much as he disgusts me, I devote little effort to thwarting him. If he lost power; Lucifer would replace him with a more intelligent Prince. The pool of less intelligent demons being so small.)

Valefor: David can be distressingly unmaterialistic for the guy who shaped most of the material. Doesn't he get it? The side with the most stuff wins. (*Valefor is shallow but smart enough to be dangerous. He can't handle it when someone refuses to be impressed by him, though. Heaven can use that against him.*)

Vapula: A petty, self-absorbed fool with rocks between his ears. (*Take everything I dislike in Jean, multiply it by a thousand, and give it an ugly makeover. You get Vapula. He isn't even a credible opponent – more like a natural force gone out of control.*)

AVID

Humans and Others

Ethereals: Never negotiate with an angel of Stone. Either he hates you as an abomination against his God or he doesn't. You're not going to change his mind. As for David himself, shun him. Fear him. The blood of some of the best of us is on his hands. (*They invade the humans' Earth. They seek to violate the natural order of things. I show them the error of their ways when an opportunity appears.*)

Humanity: I love them. I do not compromise with them. I do not give them "leeway" and "room to grow." I teach them the strength they need to reach Heaven, and I do not accept failure.

Soldiers of God: These humans, with limited minds, limited bodies and limited perception of God's will, nevertheless discover faith and self-sacrifice as real as ours. They are one of the wonders of the world.

Soldiers of Hell: Some we can salvage. Some have chosen their Fate. I do not choose to weep for them.

VARIATIONS ON A THEME

Lighter versions of David are possible.

David the Patron

David focuses on the "Community" aspect of his Word, sponsoring only organizations with the highest moral fiber but backing them with the full power of Stone. His Servitors operate at every political, corporate, and religious level, trying to align world communities with the divine plan. Many humans associated with the right causes have a vague idea how to get in touch with David in his identity as "the Calculus" – a mysterious figure who smoothes over life's difficulties for those who have given to the community. In person, David's a nice guy, with a lot of the Cherub still in him; calm, cheerful, and certain that the war will end well as long as Heaven defends its interests solidly.

David the Buffoon

According to Lilith, he's "old as stone, slow as stone, thick as stone." She's dead right.

Thoughts just don't percolate well through the granite of David's brain. Called into a crucial situation, he misses the most obvious details. His orders reflect the simple mindset of a child. Of course, no one dares point out that the emperor has no clothes – David gets irritated when reminded of his limits.



STONE'S WORLD

David's Word is reflected in those places that are uniquely his.

Wonders of the Catacombs

Servitors of David have a private domain all their own, under the surface of Heaven: the Catacombs. This warren of hollowed-out chambers, tunnels, alcoves, and natural cave features holds many secrets. Not many of David's angels know any given secret, and only David knows them all.

In basic structure, the center of the Catacombs resembles a sprawling underground palace. This fades slowly into a raw, unshaped cave network as one moves outward or downward. Beyond these caves lies only the bedrock of Heaven and the occasional elemental Tether. Such Tethers connect to the deep reaches of the mortal Earth.

Heaven's light shines only dimly in the Catacombs. In many places, "sight" becomes impossible, leaving only "awareness" of the walls and people who surround the viewer. Although these sections of the Catacombs lack visual beauty (unless one brings a light), they remain Heavenly. The lack of visual distraction strengthens an angel or soul's perception of the radiance of God's love.

In the most eccentric reaches of the Catacombs, "flight" becomes impossible. Angels must use caving equipment and techniques to traverse the maze of tunnels and caves.

The Inhabitants

Certain angels, the "Catacomb-dwellers," spend their entire existence (give or take a few days) underground. If David knows at an angel's creation that the angel will join these ranks, he adapts the angel to that environment. David creates him with softer colors, longer appendages, larger eyes, and greater flexibility than the celestial norm. The angel's variation falls within his Choir's basic parameters, so the adaptation is only obvious when many such angels gather.

Other creatures with subterranean adaptations live within the Catacombs. In the far places, where few outsiders go, strange insects crawl upon the walls, blind fish swim in hidden streams, and impossible grotesqueries scurry in the dark.

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DAVID'S TETHERS

David's Word encompasses the entire planet, and has done so for the planet's entire existence. Naturally, he has a great many Tethers. His most important Tethers formed underground or in stone buildings, in places that symbolize human unity, perseverance, and resistance to oppression or attack. Powerful Tethers include the Catacombs of Rome, the deepest tunnel in the Rock of Gibraltar, one tower in the Great Wall of China, the Israeli fortress Masada, and the coal mine in Pennsylvania where the first miners' union formed.

The places inside the Earth where important geological processes first took place also represent important Tethers. Some, hollowed out and connected in one way or another to the Earth's surface, play an active part in David's military strategy. Natural processes have buried

Some of these are the souls of cave-dwelling creatures. Tunnels, normally off-limits to angels but not animal souls, connect the caves of the Savannah to those of the Catacombs. A few leftover prototypes from the days when David helped Eli design subterranean life also live in these caves.

Other inhabitants are oddly-shaped relievers performing various maintenance duties. The many-jointed insect one finds on a wall of quartz or gemstone might be the Servitor who polishes it. A pale darting fish might guide the flow of ley lines above the water.

David sometimes punishes an angel by trapping him in a strange and alien shape. For the duration of his sentence, the angel lurks at the far edges of the Catacombs in pain, discomfort, and shame. It is never pleasant; only by proving his endurance can the angel redeem himself in David's eyes.

Some of the Catacombs' strangest creatures are transformed angels. The rest, the true oddities, David created himself for some specific purpose.

Sites and Artifacts

D a v i d

Alcove of the Table: David created this curiosity not far from his audience chambers, and hence most angels of Stone know of its existence. It began as a simple table, in an alcove, made from thick gray stone. David conceived a purpose for it after Lucifer's rebellion. Now, whenever one of David's Servitors Falls, David compresses the shards of their Heart in his fist. This reduces the shards to tiny needles, covered with his fingers' blood. David then hammers them into the table point-first. When the

others under layers of rock or the expanse of the sea. The Seneschals assigned to these Tethers have died, calcified, or become frail vestiges of their old selves. The Tethers themselves function only on occasion. An angel who stumbles on an inactive Tether and works to restore it can win David's gratitude – and David remembers his friends.

David does little to encourage Tether formation; his efforts go toward maintaining those he has. He fortifies even the least of his Tethers heavily.

Some of David's Tethers are detailed in the *Liber Castellorum*, pp. 74-75. These include the Independent Citizen's Militia Headquarters, Brother Abdullah's Kung Fu Studio, and the major Tether Uluru (also known as Ayers Rock) in Australia.

last shard goes in, the tops of the multicolored needles will form a mosaic. Above the table, gold veins in the black marble wall spell out, "Our Failure."

Cave of the Freedom of Reflection: Razor-edged stalactites and stalagmites fill this cave. God or David intended it that way. Angels who find their perspective clouded with prejudices and assumptions enter this cave and worm their way from one entrance to another. Each long cut flays away one of their assumptions as well as some of their skin. This never causes more pain than necessary, and never inflicts soul hits; the Catacombs are, after all, in Heaven. An angel who takes a long meander through the Cave often emerges as refreshed and unbiased as a newborn reliever. At the GM's option, he can make a new Intelligence roll to resolve some problem that he failed to solve with such a roll before. The Cave of the Freedom of Reflection has its dangers. Every now and again, an angel begins to question the idea that they should leave the Cave, and then that they are an angel, and so forth, until another Servitor of Stone goes in after them and drags them out.

The Cave Where Wind Walks Through Stone: This cave, set high in a mountain at the edge of the Groves, opens both into the Catacombs and onto the open sky of Heaven. A constant wind howls through this cave, pouring in through the cave entrance and out through a blowhole. Servitors of Stone and the Wind use this cave to meet.

Cryptic Isopods: These great crustaceans dwell in darkness in a region of the Catacombs not far from the central places. Each can fill a tunnel from top to bottom with

their bulk. Their habitations could hold a legion of angels. Nevertheless, angels often overlook them, missing them entirely in the darkness; this gives rise to their name. David sometimes gives an angel armor made from an Isopod's cast-off shell. An onlooker must make a Perception roll to notice the armor's existence, even if it covers the angel's full body.

David created the Cryptic Isopods himself as a living extension to the nature of the Catacombs.

David's Chessboard: This Zen garden, of uncertain dimension, helps David keep track of all the moves in the War and all the pieces therein. Tiny multicolored stones represent the various players in the War and a handful of large geodes stand in for Superiors. Many Catacombdweller Kyriotates understand just enough about the Chessboard's arrangement to move the stones in a small section of the board as news comes in. David sometimes meets Servitors in this garden.

The Lace Coral Meander: In this isolated spot, a society called "The Necessary Order of

Worthy Angels of Stone" initiates its new recruits. For about seven thousand years, the society's inductees have fed their blood to the delicate coral structures of this underground river bend. For the last several millennia, the oncepink coral has given off a brilliant incarnadine radiance, and angels belonging to this Order often keep a small piece of it on their person or next to their Heart. Someone who swallows a piece of this coral regenerates 1 Essence, but woe to the individual committing such sacrilege. The Order takes even a single such use amiss.

The Obsidian Knife: David and Uriel used this knife, one stadium in length, to become blood brothers. It now rests,

unused, at the bottom of a chasm. Enchanters and reliccrafters working for Stone often find it worthwhile to descend into that chasm and scrape off a few flakes of dried blood – with David's permission, of course.

The Unbounded Aven: This blind shaft, rising through Heaven's bedrock, extends upward from the ceiling of a large meeting place in the central Catacombs. Most angels do not know, having never asked, that it has exactly the length its name implies. No matter how high one flies or climbs into the Aven, one never reaches the surface. A few miles above where one would expect to find the Groves, clusters of great albino bats cling to the shaft's sides. They whisper "prophecies of the present," describing things transpiring on the Earth at that very moment.

WONDERS UNDER THE WORLD

Angels may find these wonders in the subterranean reaches of the corporeal world.

Sites and Artifacts

The Cave of Transformation: David punished two Gluttonous Servitors once by confining them in the forms of a snake and a hound. When they asked how to redeem themselves, he told them that they must enter this cave, found in Korea, and dwell there for 100 days without sunlight, eating nothing but a bundle of mugwort and a handful of garlic. The hound fled the cave after 38 days, and suffered for many years after. The snake bore the ordeal with patience. It emerged, in a human vessel once more, with its Discord purified away. The Korean ethereal Hwan-ung later used a dream of this cave to transform a bear into a woman.



The Descent of Feoras: Beyond an elemental Tether lies a cave system with only one exit: this fissure, miles deep, with a lazy flow of molten rock at its bottom. Angels who want to know – or, more likely, verify – the true wish of their heart cast themselves into this fissure. After the first moment of contact, the angel wakes up sprawled in the Groves with the true wish of his heart vivid in his mind. Despite the molten terror at the Descent's base, the angel's vessel usually survives – but when the angel next manifests it, it will be caked in a thin layer of volcanic rock. A good hospital or healer can break the bond that seals the cooled rock onto the vessel's skin. (It is neither healthy nor painless, and it provides no protection.)

D A V I

SAMPLE TETHER: THE IMPACT TETHER

For a long time, even Heaven did not understand why the "impact Tether" – a transient elemental Tether that appeared for several hours at the site of certain meteoric impacts – belonged to Stone. Human research surprised its Seneschal with the truth: this Tether is formed by shock metamorphism, an irreversible transformation that minerals experience when exposed to extremely high pressures and temperatures. The shock wave produced by impact, nuclear devices, powerful explosions, and (in microcosm) controlled scientific experiments creates this effects and attracts this Tether.

The First Gemstones: David built all gemstones from the models provided by the First Among Diamonds, the First Among Emeralds, and so forth: enormous, pure, unflawed, and beautiful gemstones that can exist either on Earth or in Heaven. He prefers to keep them on Earth, "rather than hoarding the beauty that rightfully belongs there." Many of his Servitors have taken a turn guarding the shrine or collection where one such stone resides. The First Stone of Amber; however, never leaves Heaven. As his older angels tell those newly born to Stone, "It seems to have an insect within it, as with many Earthly amber stones. It does not. The creature trapped inside is a terrible mistake from the early days of the world. When David chose amber as its prison, he changed the nature of that stone; this is why amber resin traps insects in the corporeal world."



Transcended Angels: Certain ancient angels of Stone chose long ago chose to become one with the rock. Reasoning that a few million years bonding with the world could only improve their efficiency, David granted them rock strata "vessels," making them an integral part of the underworld. Ofanim of Stone regularly visit the Transcended, drawing on their wisdom and keeping them mentally alert.

SCRVAN7S OF THE LIVINS STONE

People surprise you. Sometimes, even **you** surprise you. No matter how much you study someone's history, no matter how attentively you listen to her words, no matter whether she postures like a hero or wears meekness like a cloak . . .

You never know how someone will turn out until you test her.

Life boils down to a series of ordeals. In surviving an ordeal, however you do so, you demonstrate certain qualities – such as cowardice, if you run, or courage, if you fight.

In one sense, the traits that "come out in the wash" are the only ones you ever had. Until you achieve it, you never really had a destiny. Unless you find it, you never really had a fate.

In another sense, the tests you face change you. By making you show your strength, a test makes you strong. After such an ordeal, **knowing** that you are strong, you show your strength in everything you do.

David's angels do their best to find just the right tests to help people grow. An encounter with Stone can transform you – past, present, and future – into someone stronger. Even if you are of the Host, which means that Stone doesn't have the authority to test you very hard, God probably has a tribulation in mind for you.

Stone also tests people for virtue. People who fail the test usually die. You may think that it's a **bad** test of moral character if the target has that kind of incentive to pass, but Stone believes that opposing God is just one more way to kill yourself, like shooting yourself or drinking poison. It's an action-reaction thing – if you attack God, an invincible entity, the reaction burts you in equal proportion. Think of it as ramming a boulder with your bead.

An angel of Stone, as God's agent, tries to manifest this process. She gives the Infernal Horde a simple test. It can attack her; attack God, commit evil, and commit suicide – one simple action with four names. Alternately, it can refuse, and while that refusal lasts, it's **deluded**, not evil.

After all, which is the demon: the Balseraph watching TV in his apartment, or the human panderer beating his "property" with a cane? Maybe, if you're Laurence, you think it's the Balseraph, but Stone'll kill the human every time.

Sometimes, angels of Stone kill demons and humans who don't first prove their evil. Angels have a right to kill the wretched, and Stone likes to bash heads. However, such a conflict has all the high moral character of eating a cheese sandwich. It's a good idea, but not an amazingly noble one.

Throwing the first punch sometimes serves Heaven, but most of the time, serving Heaven's **ideals** is more important. That's why Stone tries to throw the second one, instead. – Khaila, Cherub of Stone

David does not order his angels into a rigid hierarchy. He trusts them, and does not want to hinder their effectiveness with an enormous list of procedures and chains of command. He does provide them with a structured organization, but it operates more as a "society of equals" than a corporation or military. Short-term missions and long-term projects each have two sets of angels assigned to them. One set, sometimes consisting of a single angel, shares the responsibility and authority. The other, larger set has no authority over the mission and only one responsibility: David requires them to give requests for help a fair hearing. Since they will have projects of their own, they can always say "no." Only in rare cases does one angel of Stone have specific authority over another, although David expects angels with Distinctions and Words to receive due respect and deference. Situations where one angel can command another include large military actions, training missions where an older angel supervises a younger one, and affairs involving David's Masters of Celestial Integrity - who may always demand assistance from other Servitors of Stone.

Angels of Stone, bound to the Word that governs community, impose additional structure on themselves. For example, most mission and project teams choose a final authority for situations where debate could turn deadly. If someone disobeys that final authority and it *does* turn deadly, David can easily determine where the error lay. Similarly, for convenience, angels often divide up the responsibility and authority in non-critical areas. More importantly, angels of Stone affiliate themselves into associations, societies, and gangs outside of their immediate assignment. In heavily populated areas, these societies may gather together on Earth; otherwise, they meet in Heaven. A few such societies are described below, but this is only a partial list; dozens of notable organizations exist.

CHOIRS

David builds his angels from Forces naturally attuned to Stone. Just as humans vary a great deal within the basic nature of the species, David's angels have many forms and personalities – but all of them, regardless of their Choirs, manifest some aspect of David's Word. His angels, including those with no plans to claim a Word, usually feel a particular identification with a given mineral or community concept.

Most of David's Choirs, as befits his harsh purpose, have their darker side. Angels of Stone have a job to do that requires a hard heart. Their vices (brutality, blind obedience, and willingness to support unpleasant organizations) seem demonic. It is their *virtues* that make them angels. All of them have a consuming love for God and,

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WORD-BOUND SERVITORS

The Angels of Cities, Perseverance, Resistance, and Unity serve David, as well as others metaphorically connected to community and strength. He also controls the Angels of such crafts as Architecture and Gemcutting.

ultimately, a deep, selfless, and self-sacrificing benevolence. Moreover, each Choir usually expresses one general facet of David's nature, and of his own virtue. The Seraphim embody David's absolute commitment to his ideals. The Cherubim represent his loyalty, strength and patience. The Ofanim manifest the inexorable nature of his motion. David's Elohim embrace his philosophy. His Malakim direct the power of earthquakes and the sharp edges of flaked stone against the unjust. His Kyriotates, of course, are living icons of fellowship and unity. His Mercurians put a human face on the love of Mother Earth and the warm shelter of caves and homes. Bright Lilim who choose to serve Stone mirror David's "tough love" – rarely giving humans what they *want*, but often answering their *needs*.

Players should not consider anything in the Choir descriptions below binding on their character conceptions. These descriptions cover most angels of Stone, but not all.



Seraphim

Seraphim of Stone must look David's organization, and their own actions, straight in the eye. They know very well that they belong to a violent, fanatical, somewhat xenophobic organization which uses barbarous methods to accomplish its angelic ends. They also know that their work on Earth, the endless series of "terrible trials" they inflict, *hurts* people. Seraphim cannot hide from these truths. Every Seraph in David's service must figure out a way to deal with them.

Most Seraphim of Stone buy all the way into the party line. God has specifically sanctioned their terrifying loyalty to David, their brutal behavior toward the humans in their charge, their tendency to work outside Laurence's system, and even the violence and fanaticism of the worst organizations David supports. If God objected, after all, he could correct the Archangel.

David's Seraphim, more than his other angels, put their faith in the mystique of gangs, organizations, and solidarity. As members of the Most Holy, they almost never join or mimic human associations. They have fraternities of their own. Some common "symbols" of a Stone Seraph wishing to display his loyalty to a group or to Stone in general include: tar spread on the ridges above his celestial form's eyes; long shards of obsidian projecting from the sides of his wings; scales sharpened in a precise pattern and then treated to glimmer like quartz; and discolored notches on the side of the head or wings corresponding to the number of demons that angel has killed. Some angels call this display undignified and vulgar. To these Seraphim, however, such symbols of membership *represent* dignity, much as human nobles turn ridiculous regalia into a status symbol.

Some Seraphim of Stone take the opposite approach. To them, David represents the peace and untarnished honesty of stone and rock. They do not like to sully themselves with human interaction, preferring to work in the Catacombs and the deep places inside the Earth. Even when they work with mortals, they still think in terms of geological time, which makes damaging a few human lives almost meaningless. With such a long view, these angels have great trouble focusing on events right under their noses, and demons tend to take advantage of them.

Stone Seraphim manage the expansion of the Catacombs in Heaven, directing the angels who extend the tunnels and reshape the caverns. A few great Seraphim, known as "conduits," extend the Catacombs without assistance; they simply slide through the bedrock of Heaven leaving tunnels, caverns, fissures, and subterranean wonders behind them. One such conduit, in a humble vessel, became the "Shamir Worm." Solomon, forbidden to use iron in building his temple, used this miraculous creature to hew stone blocks.

Cherubim

Cherubim of Stone cherish the ultimate goal of making themselves obsolete. "Protect someone for a day and he'll live for a day," they say. "Teach him personal strength and he'll live for a lifetime." Their resonance serves as the ultimate weapon in Stone's arsenal. When a Stone team with a Cherub on it pushes someone to the breaking point, the team knows *exactly* when to stop. Guardians in David's service think of most of their Choir as "clucking mother hens" and most of David's other angels as "loose cannons" – but they themselves know precisely where to draw the line. Of course, like everyone else, they make mistakes, and they spend a great deal of time at Tethers working off their dissonance as Tether security.

Stone's Guardians usually possess inhuman patience – not in David's league, but nevertheless remarkable. Some of David's Cherubim with his Kyriotate attunement have watched key sites in the bodies of stone lions and gargoyles for centuries, stirring only rarely to stretch their legs or scare off graffiti artists. Pursuit and investigation waste energy. If they wait long enough – in the right place, of course – whatever they want will eventually come to them. Their Choir attunement only reinforces this attitude.

Most of David's artisans belong to this Choir. Although Cherubim of Stone have an affinity for hard labor, and happily perform arduous and repetitive tasks if David asks it of them, many have a very fine touch. They carve statues, craft Damascene swords, and shape gemstones. The legendary sculptor Zuriel belongs to this Choir; others in Heaven whisper that he can transform a block of granite into a heart-wrenching expression of faith given just five minutes and a journeyman's tools.

Cherubim of Stone know very well that their "natural" role is passive defense. They invest deeply in the idea of Stone as a solid bulwark, a wall that stands up to anything Hell throws at it. Life is all about control and who blinks first. That doesn't mean that they have to stand helplessly by their attuned while the enemy loads their AK-47s and preps a TOW missile for launch. It means that they need to draw the enemy into playing things their way – to throwing wild punches at the Cherub rather than chucking grenades at the things the Cherub cares about. Many of Stone's Cherubim receive intensive training as agents provocateur. They protect things by going out and becoming the focus for a threat's attention. The Platonic ideal of a Stone Cherub (rarely achieved in reality) never even needs to fight back; he sets things up so that the enemy shoots itself in the foot trying to hit him.

David's Cherubim have a natural affinity for magnetic forces, and those with an intellectual bent tend to enjoy both electromagnetic theory and strange experiments therewith. Those without an intellectual bent can move magnets around on a refrigerator for hours. Their attunement does not generate a true magnetic field, but the pseudo-magnetism it creates is a close spiritual cousin.

Ofanim

David makes his Ofanim from fire, motion, and the cold passive strength of stone. They do not find reconciling these disparate elements of their nature easy, and the conflict usually makes David's Wheels odd sorts. Think of them as celestial marathon runners and living battering rams – motion that lacks some of the Ofanite freneticism but makes up for it with a far greater force. Only stone itself *could* stand in their way for long. Thanks to David's special blessing on this Choir, it does exactly the opposite.

On Earth, most of David's Ofanim match the Stone angel stereotype to a T. David calls on his Ofanim for the rough jobs, for rumbles and break-ins and situations that need baseball bats, chains, and motorcycles. These Wheels teach humans that not even "the Man" or "the enemy" can stop them. David has enough of a tactical eye to realize that his Ofanim make excellent infiltrators, rescue teams, and (of course) getaway drivers. Some of his Ofanim receive such employment, and special angels – e.g., the PCs – have experience in many areas. David does not use his Wheels for this kind of thing regularly, however, because he does not *think* in terms of infiltrations, rescues, and getaways.

David's Ofanim have unfettered access to the underground world, an advantage that many of them treasure. Spelunkers and cavers extraordinaire, they can make their way to any of the secret places inside the Earth. They can use David's underground elemental Tethers, mine for gems and gold in veins humanity never discovered, and visit Transcended angels.

Ofanim of Stone work well with David's Cherubim. Both Choirs will track an enemy, willingly, without rest or pause, to the ends of the Earth.

Elobim

The classic Elohite of David comes into the world already an "old master." He has a peaceful countenance, a deep connection with the world, wisdom, and a willingness to get his points across to a student – whatever it takes.

Peace comes easily to these Elohim, because the natures of Stone and Powers intersect at tranquility. Since the wish to live out the principles of Stone is not a "selfish desire," David's Elohim can approach situations with even

cal eye es, without break video game on the video game on the video game on the when recruiting y Elohim who de tice the mental de strive for inner strive rations, without the "couring to happen. S theory with the ice the Symphony *pe* gives the Sympho objectively and ne David's Elohim tice. David gives the

more patience and reserve than others of their Choir can. That is, when another Elohite might run out of time when searching for the optimal solution to a problem – because immediate action could be necessary – a Power of Stone can consider the problem a little longer. Sometimes, this means that they fumble an emergency, but the rest of the time it means that they have contributed to the principles of their Bright Lord's Word. For an Elohite, each extra minute of spiritual license for contemplation makes their life that much easier.

Elohim of Stone often involve themselves with the martial arts. The study comes naturally to them, and not just because Stone likes to fight unarmed. Their constant awareness of space and time does not give them perfect timing or the ability to quickly estimate distances and vectors in their heads – but it makes it much easier to *learn* perfect timing and quick estimation of 3-D motion. Experienced Elohim of Stone usually have very high Agility and Precision, and the best can jog across a busy twelve-lane highway, missing multiple cars by mere inches, without breaking a sweat. Such masters can win any video game on their first try, which can come in handy when recruiting young students.

Elohim who don't study physical techniques still practice the mental discipline and philosophy of Stone. They strive for inner strength. In the Stone philosophy, an angel without the "courage of his convictions" is a disaster waiting to happen. Stone's Elohim usually supplement this theory with the idea that integrity does not exist as part of the Symphony *per se*, but rather as the spiritual force that gives the Symphony life and makes it worthwhile. It's objectively and not locally good.

David's Elohim take human students as a regular practice. David gives them the heavy burden of raising the next generation of warriors, philosophical leaders, scholars, and thugs. Each role has its place in a well-organized society. Even non-martial Elohim teach. While walloping a human acolyte comes in handy during that acolyte's education, some discreet manipulation and a superior mind can humble a student almost as effectively. Those of David's Elohim who receive other assignments still try to uplift humans when they can. Elohim of Stone rarely train angels, since they prefer long-term learning-focused relationships and most Earth operatives can't dedicate that kind of time to study.

Stone's Elohim often learn how to nurture the creatures of the subterranean world, keeping small "cave gardens" full of interesting insects and fungi rarely seen on the surface. Caring for these gardens, and studying them, helps them master the techniques of meditation.

When interacting with other angels of Stone, David's Elohim try to provide the stability, calm, and good sense many of their brethren lack.

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Malakim

David's Malakim usually have the presence of mountains and the rough look of a stone spearhead. They rarely bother with refinement, although they might pick some up after Heaven kills and skins the last demon and hangs its head from a tree in the Groves. In the meantime, they remind anyone who criticizes their somewhat direct and brutal methods, there is a war on.

All of David's angels help put humanity through the wringer, but the harshest trials inflicted on humanity barely compare to what these angels regularly put themselves through. They can only make sure that they have the strength to destroy Hell by testing themselves to the brink of destruction. Most Stone Malakim look askance at a Virtue who doesn't have the courage to do so. Saner than the Habbalah, they refuse to make a production of it, and neither vessel nor celestial has more in the way of scarification than you see every day on the L.A. streets. Still, more than one Malakite has methodically crushed the bones of his vessel's leg to powder when David chose not to punish him for a sin that distressed him, and then healed the leg again with a Song.

Even the brighter Malakim, who consider serious selfmortification "childish," have the echo of that kind of determination in their eyes. Unless they deliberately tone their presence down, they scare people. David displays a marked tendency to give his Malakim tall and broad vessels with sharp features; this enhances their demeanor's impact. Old Malakim advise young Virtues to move purposefully. Even in an Armani suit, a Malakite of Stone loitering in a "good neighborhood" can earn himself a bout of police questioning. He does not look like he belongs.

The average Virtue of Stone has a longer fuse than most Malakim, but seems positively short-tempered compared to David's angels of other Choirs. David's Malakim identify with natural disasters, and cultivate their inner berserkers. Once an enemy goes too far – once David's dissonance condition and the hope that the enemy will see the light no longer apply – they like to see evil, smite evil, and finally see no evil, all in a short burst of speed and fury. They have excellent self-control, but they enjoy occasions where they don't need to use it. Stone has old elemental associations with bloodshed; a rock was the first of all weapons, after all.

David often sends angels whose unarmed technique needs "polishing" to old and nasty Malakim of Stone. This experience can harrow even a Virtue, making the training sequences in a martial arts movie look both realistic and gentle in comparison. It also produces a rapid improvement in skill.

Most Malakim of Stone prefer unarmed combat. Those who do not usually learn the art of making stone weapons.

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FROZEN MALAKIM

If something removes the solid ground from beneath a Stone Malakite's feet when his attunement is in effect, he falls directly toward the Earth below. *Straight* down is the only direction he can go. Therefore, if a huge bomb goes off next to him, he ends up exactly beneath his former position, at the bottom of a crater, still frozen and invulnerable.

Technically, a steel blade belongs to Stone every bit as much as a boulder does, but the atavistic spiritual simplicity of a stone knife appeals to David's Virtues. It strengthens their connection to their Word in the way that a technological artifact cannot. A Virtue with a stone knife can also breeze right through metal detectors.

Fear and violence can often unite a community or teach a human courage. David's Malakim take responsibility for jobs requiring these tools. Malakim run the coldestblooded gangs under Stone's watch, at the very edge of David's tolerance for human cruelty. Using these groups as weapons, they encourage outsiders to band together and face the common threat. This is demanding work. The gang members' souls and the outsiders' well-being are always in jeopardy. Malakim with less ambition take work as fire-and-brimstone preachers, doomsayers, and hawkers of paranoia. Stone's Virtues also spend much of their time in battle and in the daily business of strengthening humanity by ordeal and example.

Kyriotates

Kyriotates of Stone, on average, care more about *community* than any other angels. As Dominations, creatures whose resonance co-opts human and animal bodies into impromptu associations based around the Hive's own mind and soul, they idealize unity and harmony. As Servitors of Stone, they believe that humans (and angels) need to work together to survive. They labor, almost reflexively, to weld people together however they can. The mineral nature of Stone seems almost irrelevant to them. The archetypal image of a Kyriotate, among angels of Stone, is the young and eager kid pressing community activism pamphlets on passers-by. Like most archetypes, it's about as realistic as Nybbas' sworn statements, but it does contain a seed of truth.

Stone's Dominations tend to give their friendship readily, but their friendship has a price tag on it. Although they support their friends implicitly, most also *insist* that their KERKEN KENEN

allies observe the little rules that keep society and fellowship alive. At their darkest, Stone's Kyriotates are like gang leaders who'll unblinkingly kill a loved brother for fraternizing with the enemy. At their most glorious, they go to the wall and beyond for those they care about. Sometimes, they take both attitudes at once, allowing an ally-turnedenemy to take them down rather than either forgiving a betrayal or hurting a friend.

David's Kyriotates typically think of themselves as the support networks that help keep the community alive. Their natural resonance allows them to keep lines of communication open. When danger threatens, most can manifest a stone vessel – the ideal defender. They can even take such vessels into combat without any chance of dissonance. If a Kyriotate has great corporeal strength, his stone vessel is a deadly weapon. If not, it makes an excellent living shield.

Many other Dominations serving Stone consider themselves the champions of the underdog. Like the average Servitor of David, they believe that society breaks as easily as its weakest link does. Unlike the average Servitor, they see the *loss* of a weak element of society as a link breaking. Most of Stone's angels would happily see fringe elements of society disappear if they cannot survive on their own. *These* angels dedicate themselves to making the downtrodden and marginalized subcultures as strong as mainstream society and militant organizations. They strengthen such groups through "trials," but also advocate for and assist them.

In Heaven, a number of David's Kyriotates serve as tacticians and synthesists. They drift quietly through the Catacombs, patrolling their assigned sector. Angels who have important reports that nevertheless do not merit David's personal attention hand off the information to these Dominations, who share it with one another at the perimeters of their patrols. When a handful of these "minor" incidents shapes into a definite and disturbing pattern, one of these synthesists brings it to David's attention. The rest of the data awaits their regular debriefing. Many Dominations on Earth duty have spent time as a synthesist, although David removes sensitive information from their minds before reassigning them.

In recent years, several Kyriotates of Stone developed a formal style of choral music ("pure coda") that has become increasingly popular among the Dominations. Two major groups, containing ten to twenty Kyriotates each, give performances. These performances, in a cavern by the developed Catacombs or sometimes in the Groves proper, take a mind capable of heavy multitasking to appreciate properly; angels of other Choirs variously describe it as "cacophony" or "actively damaging to the psyche." David permits this frivolity, mindful of the importance of morale.

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Mercurians

No one ever does anything alone. Even the most personal victories - triumph over addiction, the discovery of faith, weathering a crisis of ethics – require the positive examples and love of others. Establishing a business or raising a child takes help a lot more obvious than that. Someone has to stand behind everyone who *might* make it in this world, or they *won't* make it. Someone has to give each person the help they *need* . . . and then, ideally, stand back. The Mercurians of Stone do many things: they help people build safely, they whip the weak into shape, and they assemble snazzy wardrobes. Most of all, though, they become that aforementioned "someone" as often as they can. They give people the encouragement and tools necessary for them to face their life's problems head-on. If necessary, the Mercurian gives them an outright shove. They leave behind them a trail of powerful, enabled people – and a matching trail of ruined lives. Some humans lack the will to overcome the central conflict in their life. Failure leaves their existence in shambles. David's Mercurians hate it when that happens, but that's the breaks. They can't solve a human's problems for him.



Humanity knows that forces like this move among them. A thousand legends contain sages, power sources, and occultists who for one reason or another cannot be with the hero at the moment of final crisis. Usually, the help they provided turns out to be just enough, but, then, that makes good myth. In the modern day, these Mercurians limit their blatant use of power, and their dissembling tends to be more suave, but their basic approach hasn't changed.

D A V I

SKINHEADS AND MILITIAS?

A large contingent of skinheads (called "boneheads" by their detractors within the movement) believes in "racial purity" or "White Power." Several other groups within the skinheads, most prominently SkinHeads Against Racial Prejudice (SHARP), specifically oppose racism and bigotry. Angels of Stone approve of the skinheads for reasons unrelated to either of these goals. Historically and in many modern incarnations, the skinhead movement represents human pride in hard work, unity, and physical pursuits.

Racism in angels almost invariably originates in dissonance and Discord. When you work daily with flying snakes and rings of fire, differences in skin color seem unimportant. Angels of Stone who support the skinheads, therefore, never do so *because* of the boneheads' racist tendencies. In many cases, however, angels of Stone support skinhead groups *despite* the presence of racism or violent personalities. These angels try to maximize the strength and unity these groups draw from their anger. Not even David's angels think of this support as "virtuous," but it does promote the Word of Stone.

The word "militia" can refer to a xenophobic military cult or a quiet, sensible organization which seeks an armed populace and the preservation of human liberty. Angels of Stone can distinguish between these two kinds of militias and render moral judgment. In *practice*, as with the division between sharpheads and boneheads, David's angels consider this distinction irrelevant. Militias promote strength and service to the community. Sanity is strictly optional.

Stone supports groups with other biases, such as radical religious groups and militant anti-Caucasian organizations. It even smiles upon a few non-violent nonprejudiced associations, like the Religious Society of Friends. Stone approves of any subculture which steels humans to survive hardship and maintain their faith. Its other qualities are almost irrelevant.

David's Intercessionists did their normal job on a global scale once, taking over the primary duties of the Grigori to help develop humanity into a technological civilization – and then stepping back to watch what the humans did with their toys. They haven't entirely forgotten this early role, and still bring a bit of metaphorical fire to the humans now and again. Their architectural techniques, shared almost freely, remain top-notch, although the most basic principle ("minimize the role of greed in the construction industry") has proven difficult to convey. On an instinctive level, they identify with structures; if they had dreamscapes, soaring buildings would fill those dreams. More importantly, they have trouble resisting the urge to shelter someone who flees to them – to provide safety and warmth to those in extremis.

David's Mercurians serve David more faithfully than any other Choir does. Each must trust the correctness of David's way absolutely, hanging on to their conviction that the humans they help outweigh those they hurt. For a Mercurian with the right mindset, David's work is the supreme expression of their own Choir's nature. Most Intercessionists serving other Superiors, however, find the risks these Mercurians must take somewhat nauseating.

Mercurians of Stone have an affinity for subways; the swift, orderly travel through precisely constructed tunnels appeals to them. Many find humans in need of Stone-style "intercession" there. The motto of Stone's Mercurians is "By their works you shall know them." Looking back their works – at a virtually endless history of strengthening humans and humanity – makes them damned proud.

The Redeemed

David does not discriminate against the redeemed. The "yo-yos" who Fell and then returned have suffered enough already, in his estimation. As for redeemed Hellborn, he holds them in high esteem. Each has weathered and triumphed over a truly horrific test of moral strength, willpower, and critical perception. His angels sometimes treat a once-demonic comrade with cruelty and prejudice, but they don't let anyone *else* do so. Ever.

Humans

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Humans have served David for a very long time, beginning with those who raised sacred stones without his prompting in the early days of civilization. Long before Christ, the Celts of the British Isles learned the secrets of the ley lines and the Chinese developed the art of geomancy. The greatest students of the power of the Earth became David's first Soldiers.

David's human servants helped design the great monuments of the ancient world. The builders integrated deep geomantic and spiritual secrets into these designs, mysteries occasionally unraveled by an archaeologist or architect of a later era. The greatest of the human builders return regularly as Saints, helping to train new generations of structural engineers.

A handful of secret societies in the modern world know the same secrets of Stone that the ancients did. Some grew up on their own. David started several others just after the Purity Crusade, arranging their rites of initiation so that only a "pure" (lucid) dreamer could rise to the highest levels. In this manner, he provided a second hedge against humanity losing control over its dreams.

Angels of Stone build little military societies among the mortals with a fair regularity. Not many of them know they serve Heaven, but they know that the angels who lead them are "good people" – based on what the group's mindset considers "good." Since so many of the groups angels of Stone sponsor or create have a violent edge, Stone has an endless supply of human troops.

Full Soldiers of Stone are tough; all of them have at least 2 Corporeal Forces, and many have 3 or even 4. Combatants and counter-infiltrators, they study up on the Songs of Form, Shields, and Thunder. For the most part, they are rough-edged team players with leadership potential, including bikers, cops, soldiers, fanatics, gang bangers, and martial artists in their numbers. Engineers, architects, and sociologists all serve David, but they don't get Songs or help awakening a latent Force unless they can wade into the action when necessary. (It may seem that a warrior architect is wasting both talents, but David can't imagine anyone better suited to design a Tether.)

David's Saints tend to be pure leadership material. They seek out loners and encourage them to find groups, and, more importantly, they find groups in need of purpose and give it to them. In this manner, a single Saint can create an entire community of soldiers, without displaying any of the inhuman traits that so often give angels away.

JOBS

Celestial Jobs

David uses the Catacombs as a training ground for his angels. Most of his angels who spend significant time in Heaven spend it studying martial and military arts, as well as various Stone-related crafts. A number of angels concern themselves with maintenance of the Catacombs. Some provide support services or help organize the War effort. Many sects of Stone angels perform various bonding rituals in Heaven, from oaths of blood brotherhood to exchanging war stories. David encourages inter-Servitor loyalty, and therefore leaves time for such pursuits.

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GEOMANCERS

Mortal geomancy does not begin to approach the efficiency of the Geomancy attunement. A student of the Earth can use a Knowledge (Geomancy) roll to locate a "good" site for a house, for a meeting hall, or to receive the noon rush of Essence. Normally, however, the benefit he receives is intangible – skilled geomancers seem to succeed better than most in every aspect of life, but gain no extra Essence or roll bonuses. Geomancers are much more likely than average to have a mastered skill (see *Corporeal Player's Guide*, p. 25), Charisma, and/or high Status, but pay for them normally.

A Divine Intervention on a geomancy roll sometimes awakens a latent 6th Force in humans who possess one. The sudden, brilliant insight into the functioning of the entire Earth unlocks the potential in the geomancer's soul and gives them awareness of the Symphony. It also attracts David's personal attention.

Non-geomancers with properly located and arranged houses and workplaces receive a portion of the skill's benefits. On average, they have one more level of Status or Charisma than their skills and appearance would otherwise earn them. A good geomancer can collect enormous fees and acquire great influence just by plying his trade for others' benefit.

The Order of the Emerald Bull

The Order of the Emerald Bull, in Canada, made a glorious geomantic discovery about 150 years ago. Recall that David trapped the vital spirit of several great ethereal terrors in the ley line network. The brothers of this human Order have learned how to tap the energy of the great terror Ghranavijñana, giving them a vast supply of Essence. Unfortunately, a small risk exists that this could free Ghranavijñana, either into the Marches or into an Emerald Brother's mind.

Ethereal Jobs

David permits a few of his Servitors to work in the Marches, gathering tactical information from human dreams. They must show aptitude as well as inclination, and must gain Blandine's approval on their own. (David is perfectly willing to provoke a conflict with Blandine, but not with so little to gain.)

Corporeal Jobs

David's angels perform most of their work in the corporeal world. This includes pursuit of the War, strengthening humanity, and building communities.

SERVITORS

Life Under Stone

Whether they like their *work* or not, angels of Stone uniformly love serving Stone. Their fellow angels don't *let* them despair, or fail, or falter, and they never feel alone. They must always be strong, but they have the strength of legions to draw upon. They do not cry, but they know that a single word of sorrow gets them all the silent compassion they could ever need. Stone angels give each other some of the toughest love in the world, but it's still always love, and a deep love too – they're angels. That's how they work.

Rewards and Punishments

David does not offer his Servitors more kindness than he shows humanity. His punishments take the form of great and terrible trials, designed to increase his Servitors' strength. Some of his legendary punishments include twisting an Ofanite's sense of time so that the next day occupied a subjective millennium, without speeding up the Ofanite's motion; sealing a Mercurian away from the solid world, so that she could touch nothing but the air; and, of course, making the Malakite Maximilian the toy of the Los Angeles demons (see *Fall of the Malakim*, pp. 60-63.)

David does, of course, give lesser punishments for lesser offenses – or for Servitors of whom he has low expectations. He favors Discord as a tool of punishment. If an angel's crime does not quite merit an alteration to his essential being, David uses communal discipline – for example, a corporeal flogging line, with one to twenty strokes from each angel present, or a hunt in which Malakim pursue the victim through the Catacombs.

David ignores trivial infractions. Lecturing a Servitor or replacing a Mercurian's Lexus with a Geo is beneath his dignity.

David is generous with rewards when a Servitor solidly earns them. Besides attunements, Rites, and other such

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gifts, he sometimes gathers a large collection of his angels simply so that he may describe a Servitor's victory in their presence.

Dealing with Outsiders

Stone makes no secret of its feelings. If a "Trog" dislikes someone, he won't hide it.

Angels of Trade feel the full force of Stone's contempt. Intelligent Trogs argue that Marc has allowed a terrible perversion of his Word – humans are becoming ever more focused on increasing their fortunes rather than increasing the world's wealth. Dumb Trogs stereotype Traders as sniveling weaklings. Both types of Stone angel find the whole organization of Trade fatally shallow.

Most angels of Flowers loathe Stone, but Stone does not necessarily return the hostility. Although David's Servitors respond fiercely to *challenges*, insults and the cold shoulder pretty much wash off them. As for Flowers' peaceful nature, Stone doesn't find the desire for peace *weak* – just *foolish*. Angels of Novalis aren't afraid of getting hurt or seeing blood, after all; they just have a "misguided" philosophical objection to violence.

Angels of Dreams and angels of Stone have little reason to interact. When they do, they usually have the same purpose – strengthening somebody through the medium of their dreams, or destroying the influence of Nightmares. Tension usually runs high, given that angels of Dreams can offer a meaningful challenge – but things rarely come to blows until after the mission reaches a satisfactory conclusion.

Angels of Stone have no great love for Judgment, feeling that they should answer only to David. However, because David himself approves of Dominic's work, his angels usually cooperate with the Inquisition. They almost never try to hide their own mistakes, but sometimes close ranks to protect others serving Stone.

In most other cases, Stone angels treat the rest of Heaven as a dubious ally, and vice versa. Outsider angels may not be *like* Stone, but they are definitely on the same side. Even angels of Fire and War do not get more *respect* from Stone, until they earn it – they simply have the right to ask for more help, because of David's word of honor and his instructions to his angels.

Changing Superiors

Asking to leave David's service can get an angel in a great deal of trouble. In most cases, it means that the angel is weak or rejects the company of his peers, and those things do not make David happy. However, on rare occasions, after a few weeks of deliberation – during which time the angel probably becomes a pariah among his fel-

SAMPLE SERVITORS

SALEM, ANGEL OF CITIES

Mercurian Master of Geomancy

Corporeal Forces - 4Strength 8Agility 8Ethereal Forces - 6Intelligence 12Precision 12Celestial Forces - 5Will 10Perception 10Vessels: Human/2 (Charisma +2), Statue/6Role: Architect/5, Status 5

Skills: Artistry/2, Climbing/3, Computer Operation/1, Driving/1, Fighting/3, Knowledge/6 (Architecture), Knowledge/6 (Cities), Knowledge/4 (Engineering), Knowledge/4 (Teaching), Savoir-Faire/2, Swimming/6

Songs: Harmony (Ethereal/3), Motion (Corporeal/2, Ethereal/1, Celestial/2), Projection (Corporeal/2)

Attunements: Kyriotate of Stone, Mercurian of Stone, Ofanite of Stone

Special Rites: Stand for an hour at the exact geographical center of a city with more than a million inhabitants (+1); attend a civic festival that attracts more than ten thousand people (+2); persuade a city government to begin a construction project which will improve the lives of citizens (+3).

Salem is an old and powerful angel of David, holding an important Word. She has helped humans build safe and prosperous communities for five thousand years. For centuries she went from success to success, gaining in power and rank. In recent decades, however, a concerted offensive by the diabolicals has weakened Salem's position. Hell has encouraged humans to turn their cities into grim, polluted war zones. Salem fights back gamely, but has forgotten much about combat since the days when cities went to war.

Salem chiefly concerns herself with the physical and social aspects of cities. She tries to improve the way cities are designed and built, hoping that a better urban environment will remove some of society's ills.

In her human Role, "Alexandria Salem," Salem works as an architect, city planner, and consultant for municipalities across the globe. Alexandria has a gift for solving problems and for persuading bickering factions to cooperate in making their cities more livable. In combat, Salem switches to the mighty stone vessel her Kyriotate attunement allowed her to create. Salem serves David as a negotiator and emissary to other Superiors. She is one of the few celestials on good terms with both David and Marc. Though loyal to her master, Salem makes no secret of her ambition to someday be an Archangel herself.

Player characters can encounter Salem in any large city on Earth. Angels working toward a big city's peace and safety will find Salem a willing ally. She may also act as a patron. To demons, Salem is a powerful but overworked enemy – she won't back down from a confrontation, but she doesn't have time to chase down every demon she gets wind of.

As described above, Salem is a powerful Word-bound Servitor, not to be trifled with.

Continued on next page . . .

lows – David has granted such requests. In one case, he even allowed a Seraph to move into *Novalis*' service, determining correctly that even making the request took enormous courage and that the Seraph genuinely wanted a tighter bond with the community of Flowers.

David typically removes the Integrity attunement, his Rites, and any Distinctions higher than Vassal and Silent Angel from transferred angels. Angels cannot easily turn his other attunements against his purposes, no matter how their motivations change; most of David's gifts help fight in the War or bind Servitors to the Word of Stone.

Creationers in Service to Stone

Many craft angels moved from Creation to Stone's service when Eli went on sabbatical. These angels, charged (like David's own craft angels) with teaching humans their

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arts, have at best probationary status. A few angels of Creation entered Stone's service because of personal martial leanings or because Eli felt they needed a strong sense of "belonging" to survive his absence. *These* soon become full-fledged "brothers" in the community of Stone.

Associations, Societies, and Gangs

As mentioned earlier, angels of Stone often affiliate into groups based on commonality of spirit, regardless of how diverse their assignments may be. These groups do not take precedence over an angel's devotion to David – far from it! – but angels of Stone often put sect loyalty above everything *else*. This section describes a few of these groups.

The Caver Brotherbood

This collection of angels of Stone sponsors human spelunkers, feeling strongly that experience in the subterranean world leads a human to God and Stone. Many are avid cavers themselves, regularly exploring those regions of the Catacombs which only a skilled spelunker can access. This brotherhood has a secondary, more militant focus: they support David's efforts to wipe out those demons and stranger things which try to lair inside the Earth. David also calls upon his most skilled cavers when angels must make a foray into some particularly alien environment – a demonic Tether kept in perpetual darkness, the twisty sewers beneath a major city, and so forth.

Contiguous Karsts

The Contiguous Karsts define themselves by the power of their fists, individually and as a group. Each alone is a formidable warrior, but they stand together when they can. They swear terrifying vows of loyalty to one another and to the sect, and many give their sense of identity wholly over to the gang. All wear jade jewelry, the token of the



group. Some use "Karst" or "Jade" as their name, ignoring their true celestial designation. A few engage in serious self-mutilation, replacing five fingernails or even an vessel's eye with jade stone. The Karsts are heavy believers in free will and the existence of angelic destinies.

The Granite Madams

These angels normally identify with the female gender, despite their sexless nature. As fierce a bunch of viragos as you'd ever care to meet, they work to undermine the social stereotype of "weak femininity," believing that it encourages strong women to fail. Some take high-profile positions in industry, the criminal justice system, or the scientific world; others prefer to shatter stereotypes completely by demonstrating athletic and intellectual prowess in such Roles as "fashion model" or "elementary school teacher."

SAMPLE SERVITORS (CONTINUED)

JOSHIRO

Kyriotate Servitor of Stone

Corporeal Forces - 2 Strength 3 Agility 5 Ethereal Forces - 4 Intelligence 9 Precision 7 Celestial Forces - 3 Will 7 Perception 5 Vessels: Stone Cobra/1, Grecian Nude/1, Marble Woodsman/2

Skills: Climbing/1, Computer Operation/1, Detect Lies/1, Dodge/2, Driving/1, Fast-Talk/1, Fighting/2, Knowledge/4 (Sociology), Knowledge/2 (Statistics), Knowledge/2 (Psychology), Medicine/1, Savoir-Faire/1

Songs: Attraction (Celestial/1), Healing (Ethereal/2), Tongues (Ethereal/1, Celestial/1) Attunements: Kyriotate of Stone

Joshiro belongs to Stone's "Research and Development Department." This unofficial association, defined by a secret handshake and not a budget, includes most of the angels David occasionally pulls from their real jobs to consult on the *theory* of community and society. Joshiro personally played a major role in the development of the American Libertarian Party, various non-profit foundations advocating sensible use of mineral resources, and a number of college fraternities and sororities. He's an expert at rationally, mathematically structuring and analyzing communities and communal activities.

Joshiro's an egghead by anyone's standards, and that's doubly true among the Servitors of Stone. His rougher-edged kin tolerate him, though, for his cheerful demeanor, the variety of support services he offers, and his great love for the Tin Woodsman of *The Wizard of Oz*. The Tin Woodsman, after Henry Littlefield's 1964 analysis of the Oz books, became identified with factory workers in many minds, and for a few years became a popular symbol of lowbrow Stone gangs. It's rarely used as such in the modern day, but is still remembered.
MODES OF ADDRESS

David's Servitors usually call him "Architect," "Lord Crafter," or simply "Lord." Some less common alternatives include "Bright Lord," "Mountain King," "Mason," and simply "Stone." A Servitor would only address David by name in an extremely emotional moment – a one-word plea that David not destroy him, or forgive him before doing so, perhaps.

Among themselves, the polite form of address is "brother" or "sister." (In Heaven, they use a single celestial word combining the ambiguity of "sibling" with the familiarity of the terms above.) Relievers are "little brother/sister" until they prove themselves and "brother/sister" afterward.

When addressing "outsider" angels, Stone Servitors prefer casual, unrefined language, although many can speak with formality and eloquence when the situation

The Necessary Order of Worthy Angels of Stone

According to the founding myth of this order, the Symphony can never die or succumb to its fate while even 50 creatures remember the sacred poetry of Ahmad Hosein, hold to courage in their hearts, and put their faith in God's love. Angels of the Necessary Order, therefore, strive to do all these things, thereby saving the entire universe from evil.

In practical terms, the Necessary Order attracts angels interested in myth and ceremony. Most members have a taste for poetry, since they must memorize vast reams of it, but some simply suffer through this requirement.

The Snakeskin Gang

The Snakeskin Gang has no deep purpose; all it has is a handful of traditions, practices, and a lot of prestige. In order to join, an angel of Stone must skin at least three Balseraphs, preferably alive; the skins then become fringes on a black cloak worn in celestial form. New members must also win the approval of three established members, which requires an able body, mind, and soul. Snakeskin Gang members often gather together for meals, philosophical discussions, or storytelling sessions, but formal meetings of the group always focus on new, interesting, and messy ways to kill demons. Stone may react more often than it acts, but Snakeskin Gang bangers like to react *viciously*.

A few angels of War belong to this gang.

demands. Angels of Stone even refer to Seraphim with extreme informality now and again ("Hey, snakey!") – the Seraph's reaction helps them figure out just how stuffy the Most Holy truthseer really is.

Stone angels usually greet others with a nod or a wave. The formal "farewell" is "Until later," from one party, and "Stay strong" from the other. The first part reminds them of the ties of community; the second reminds them of the purpose of Stone.

In addition to standard terms (e.g., "angels of Stone"), other angels call Servitors of Stone "Davidians," "Delvers," and "Trogs." In terms of respect, these roughly correspond to "brave soldiers," "troops," and "grunts" – which is not to say that a Stone Angel will take offense at even the last term.

The Trogloxenes

Trogloxenes cultivate a taste for the finer things in corporeal life. While more than willing to suffer hardship and deprivation, they see no reason not to enjoy a fancy Japanese meal or a showing of impressionist artworks on occasion. They indulge as a form of worship, reminding themselves at every moment, "How wonderful a world God made, that has these things in it."

Groups of Trogloxenes gather together now and again to enjoy a particularly interesting experience together. This usually discomfits most humans present, given the Trogs' somewhat brutish demeanor.

The Unyielding

Certain of David's older Servitors, offended by God's choice of Laurence as Uriel's successor and perceiving Laurence as faintly disdainful of their direct methods, showed less tolerance for the situation than their maker. These angels, the "Unyielding," have attempted to form the nucleus of a group of angels "willing to apply strength when Laurence will not."

David's honor would require action if Unyielding angels disobeyed him or defiled his association with Laurence. Accordingly, many have asked Janus and David for permission to go into service with the Wind until the situation resolves itself. This relieves David of his responsibility for their acts without permanently separating them from Stone.

These angels sometimes call themselves the "Diamantine Brotherhood."



The world is ruled by order. Without law, all is cacophony and madness. DOMINIC



Dominic and his Servants have been charged with maintaining order by rooting out corruption in the Symphony, even among angels. Especially among angels.

Dominic moves slowly under his heavy black robes, countless eyes peering from his celestial head. In the corporeal realm, he manifests just as frequently as a man (Dominic) as he does as a woman (Dominique).

Known as the most tyrannical of Archangels, he heads the Divine Inquisition. His servants root out dissent within the Host and deal with troublemakers, such as severely Discordant angels and Outcasts. They've even been known to help Servitors of Asmodeus track down demonic Renegades. Dominic won't acknowledge this, but his servants' cold silence on the subject tells the whole story.

The Divine Inquisition is organized in triads – groups of three angels (see p. 59). Judgment is by a majority vote of the triad. If the guilty party is of higher rank or stature than the angels assigned to the case (or if one of a triad dies and the vote is deadlocked) a more powerful triad must be called in to add their votes and help carry out the sentence.

Only his most-favored Servitors, such as the player characters, operate autonomously, and Dominic reserves them for missions which require the utmost discretion.

DISSONANCE

While the Servitors of Judgment condemn with heavy hands and an Old Testament "eye for an eye" philosophy, it's dissonant for them to inflict a punishment greater than the crime, or to stand by while the innocent are punished unfairly.

It's also dissonant for them to overlook what *they* feel to be heresy in an angel: they must inform Judgment (often after denouncing the heretic to his face).

CHOIR ATTUNEMENTS

Seraphim

The most perceptive of their Choir, these angels seek out corruption both internal and external. Their Celestial Forces add to Perception when they make resonance rolls for Truth. Angels who fail to answer their questions (almost the only way to hide information from them) may be detained for investigation.

(restricted)

Cherubim

(restricted)

Sturdy guards and trackers, the Guardians of Judgment disturb other Cherubim, for when attuned to the subject of an investigation, they take no dissonance if that subject is harmed – even if the Cherub

himself does the harm! Still, their nature is to protect: they do not *like* to see the target damaged, and are not willing to hand him over to anyone but Judgment.

Ofanim

The Wheels of Judgment hear Discord like a wailing scream. Within their Celestial Forces in feet, they know exactly what Discord a celestial has, and how much. They learn the sounds of different Discords individually. While they know all common ones, an unusual (or GM-created) one is identified vaguely – "A bagpipe skirl akin to Murderous," "A grating whine of self-pain," etc.

Elobim

When a person feels guilt – justified or not – Dominic's Powers can see the guilty feelings dripping across the person's face like bloody sweat. They can tell mild traces from overwhelming remorse. They are also aware that the appearance of a triad can provoke unjustified amounts of guilt, and are the least likely Dominicans to pre-judge.

Malakim

The Virtues of Dominic hear dissonance, when within (their Celestial Forces) feet, knowing how many notes the subject bears. If they discover another Malakite with more than one note of dissonance, they must report it to an Archangel as soon as possible. Though not *as* quick to judge as Ofanim, they are intolerant of dissonance. It sets their teeth on edge.

Kyriotates

OMINIC

(restricted)

If a Domination of Judgment is within a host who is truly *bad* (Game Master's decision; human disadvantages resembling Murderous or Needs for causing others pain are likely indicators) or the stolen vessel of a celestial with Discord, they take no dissonance for leaving the host in worse shape than they found it. Indeed, if they discover their host committed crimes, the *best* place to leave him is in prison, holding a signed confession. However, Kyriotates don't *instinctively* know if a human host is that bad, though they can discover this by other means.

Mercurians (restricted)

The natural resonance of Dominic's Intercessionists provides the subject's most deviant behavior (in the eyes of Judgment) and how long ago he committed it, as well as the usual information (*In Nomine*, p. 103). Also, these Mercurians take no dissonance for harming the guilty, as long as the punishment fits the crime.

SERVITOR ATTUNEMENTS

Incarnate Law

The angel has an innate knowledge of which rules have been agreed upon by a place's human inhabitants – even if they are unwritten.

Heavenly Judgment

The angel may ask higher powers – whisper not the name – to make an immediate trial, for a modest 7 Essence. The accused must be within eyesight, and suspected of no less a crime than murder.

If the accused is guilty, a luminous sword instantly appears in the angel's hand. "Let Justice be done," a voice booms from nowhere – and the sword flies to the attack, striking the victim once a round for 7 hits. It will also damage someone in celestial form (causing Soul hits). This attack lasts until the guilty party or the angel of Judgment is corporeally (or celestially) dead, the target flees to another plane, or the invoker wills the judgment to end.

Divine Mediation

A Divine Mediator can end a dispute by listening to the Symphony to tell which disputant is in the wrong, and by how much. The Mediator must make a roll against his Will, minus the sum of the Ethereal Forces of all disputants if they are not cooperating; if the result is zero or less, he automatically fails. (Essence can be spent to improve the roll normally.) If the roll is successful, the disputants are geased to abide by the Mediator's decision. The level of the Geas can be no greater than the check digit of the successful roll.

Advocate

For 1 Essence, Judgment's Advocates can attune themselves to someone by making a Perception roll while touching the subject. Once attuned, an Advocate can tell whether any statement made *about* the subject is true, by making a Perception roll. The subject need not be present once the Advocate is attuned. An Advocate can be attuned to (his Ethereal Forces) individuals. De-attuning requires only a moment's concentration.

DISTINCTIONS

Vassal of Conscience

The angel may imbue his gaze with such severe reproach that those with the weakest wills – Will of 2 or less – confess to their crimes immediately.

Friend of Judgment

As above, but Wills of 3 or 4 also confess!

Master of Law

The Master automatically detects any crime – as Incarnate Law would define crime – committed within (10 × his Celestial Forces) yards.

SPECIAL DISTINCTIONS

Outside the hierarchy above are two other mutually exclusive Distinctions, which can be awarded to anyone of any rank. Each acts as a "half-step" increase in rank; they outrank someone with no Distinctions at all, but a Vassal outranks them, a Vassal Inquisitor outranks a plain Vassal, and so on. Inquisitors and Warders are theoretically equal,

BRIGHT LILIM (RESTRICTED)

Dominic does not try to recruit Lilim to his service, and with his devotion to rules, few (if any) are of a mindset to volunteer. However, such a Daughter would find weaknesses in others, knowing if a resonancedetected Need was strong enough to lead the subject into crimes, dissonance, or worse.

but most Inquisitors are Seraphim, the Most Holy Choir, so in practice, Inquisitors outrank Warders.

Inquisitor

Inquisitors have sweeping powers to seek out heretical angels. An Inquisitor can probe the memories of a person, seeking evidence of past misdeeds either of the subject or of others. The Inquisitor must touch the subject, spend 1 Essence, and make a Perception roll. On a success, the number of scenes revealed and their clarity is determined by the check digit; the subject's own thoughts are never uncovered. The subject may negate this ability by making a Will roll of his own. If he succeeds – or the Perception roll failed – the Inquisitor cannot try again for (appropriate check digit) hours.

Seraph, Elohite, Malakite, and Mercurian Inquisitors can make resonance rolls (only) on subjects *within* the memory, with a -1 to the check digit (*In Nomine*, p. 57; they get no bonus for touching, as they are resonating upon a "recording," *not* the subject of Inquisition). Revealed memories of interactions with a shielding Superior (*Game Master's Guide*, p. 99) will always be fuzzy at best.



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COMMON MALAKITE OATHS

While not all Malakim of Judgment use the same oaths, there are some common ones:

✤ Break no just law, knowingly.

⊯ Fight evil with laws whenever possible, not vigilantism.

✤ Give a demon a chance to seek redemption before slaying it.

★ Investigate for, and purge, the Game's influence from any mortal lawyer or judge I meet.

✤ Let no angel sin in my presence.

★ Never question my Archangel.

★ Seek out criminals and turn them over to appropriate authorities. (Usually with a "every day/ week/month" time period.)

★ Seek out and defend the falsely accused. (Usually with a "every day/week/month" time period.)

Warder

Warders are charged with holding prisoners, whether angels accused of crimes or captive demons. Warders can use their Will to compel any being to remain where he is, so long as the Warder can see or hear the target and is no further away than his total Forces in feet. Several Warders can combine Wills. Add the Wills of all Warders concentrating on the subject, and subtract the target's Will. The Game Master rolls against the

total; if the subject's Will is greater, the Warders have failed. (Essence may be spent normally to improve the chances.) If the roll is successful, the subject's feet are rooted to the spot, and he cannot leave by any means; neither can he use Songs or expend Essence *unless* he is attacked. The effect lasts as long as the Warder(s) is within range. Warders are free to act normally after the initial round of concentration.



RELATIONS

OMINIC

Dominic remains uncommitted to any divine faction, though he (along with Laurence) supports Catholicism for humans, and listens to Yves. His current distrust of Eli often places him with the more warlike Archangels by default. Other Archangels, especially Michael, think Dominic narrow-minded; but, over-zealousness aside, he and his servants do get their jobs done.

His current priority is to try (and sentence) Eli, who Dominic feels is mad and dangerous. Few of Eli's scattered angels serve Dominic, nor does he seek their aid. Dominic also looks with a jaundiced eye on Gabriel (also insane, but protected by Yves for some reason), Janus (theft should be wrong, especially for an angel) and Novalis (too airy and informal for her rank).

Allied: Yves (Laurence is Allied to Dominic) Associated: No one

Hostile: Eli (Gabriel and Michael are Hostile to Dominic)

BASIC RITES

✤ Spend two hours defending an innocent in court.✤ Help deliver a guilty mortal to corporeal justice.

✓ Slay the vessel of a demon or Fallen angel. (+3
Essence)

EXPANDED RITES

♥ Resolve a dispute fairly and impartially.

✤ Serve as a referee at a sporting event.

 \blacksquare Spend four hours on patrol with police.

★ Serve four hours on a jury.

Assist for four hours in drafting a fair and just new law.

 \blacksquare Prevent someone from committing a crime.

♥ Convince a wrongdoer to voluntarily confess and accept punishment. (+2 Essence)

♥ Discover an injustice being done and correct it. (+3 Essence)

CHANCE OF INVOCATION: NONE

Dominic cannot be summoned, but appears to each of his Servitors approximately once a week to check on their progress. Even Servitors in Heaven are visited briefly, or summoned to his presence.

SECRET SONGS

Dominic can grant Binding (*Liber Canticorum*, p. 64), and Retribution (*Liber Canticorum*, p. 76).

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"The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether."

– Psalms 19:9

Archangel of Judgment and chief of the Celestial Inquisition, Dominic is a power to be reckoned with. Disliked and feared by many, he is tireless in his efforts to weed out any signs of corruption or imperfection among the Host. He is among the highest of the Seraphim, but he cloaks his shining form in dark robes that add to his sinister air.

SERAPH ARCHANGELS AND THE TRUTH

As for normal Seraphim, Dominic's ability to sense the Truth fades as the Truth approaches the actions or motives of another Superior, or as the Truth involves matters beyond the speaker's possible knowledge. A Seraph cannot accost someone on the street, demand to know where Quaiel the Outcast is, and expect to get any useful Truth. Nor can he ask a captive Lilim what her Mother's intentions were when geasing the Daughter to a task – he can potentially discover the Truth of Lilith's exact instructions, all perceived body-language, and details of appearance, but her mind and motivations are guarded by her power.

And if asking those questions, even Dominic would get nothing more. (However, he *could* read more Truth from another Superior's *direct* words or writing than any Servitor could expect to!)

HISTORY

Dominic gained his Word long before the Fall. For thousands of years, the Angel of Judgment was in charge of helping his fellow celestials know right from wrong. It was an easy job, and if any angel judged wrongly, all Dominic had to do was point out the mistake. For what member of the Host would wish to do anything but right?

Then Dominic's world was shattered. The Angel of Judgment noticed that the Archangel Lucifer was acting

strangely. In several instances he appeared to have knowingly chosen to do the wrong thing. It took Dominic time to question an Archangel's judgment, but finally he decided to send his most trusted servitor – a Cherub named Asmodeus – to observe the Lightbringer, and inform Lucifer of his aberrant behavior. Asmodeus reported that Lucifer was aware of his unusual choices, and the reason for them would be revealed soon. Asmodeus spoke truth: Lucifer's rebellion began a few days later.

A full third of the Host went over to the enemy, including many of Dominic's oldest and closest friends. Asmodeus himself had turned traitor, seduced by Lucifer's promises. As the rebellion began, Dominic was approached by the Lightbringer, who tempted him with promises of Power and authority. As Prince of Judgment, Dominic would sit in a place of honor, assigning punishments to the deserving humans and those who disobeyed the new order. For a moment, Dominic wavered. But then his Word flared up within him, and the mere Wordbound angel told the shining Archangel, "No!"

Dominic became an Archangel himself soon after the Fall, and ever since, he has striven mightily to keep Heaven free of corruption, and to foil the plans of Lucifer on Earth. The new Archangel of Judgment organized his Servitors into an Inquisition to root out any angels who might yet succumb to temptation.

PERSONALITY AND OUTLOOK

Dominic has felt temptation himself, and he knows how seductive Lucifer's promises can be. If even the Angel of Judgment could waver, nobody's loyalty can be absolutely certain. All of his relations with fellow celestials are colored by Dominic's lack of faith in others.

Since emotional ties are a potential vulnerability, Dominic is distant. He cannot allow himself the luxury of friends or lovers, because that might impair the correctness of his judgment. A loved one could betray him, so he has none. He still loves in the general sense – his Servitors, all angels, God, and the Symphony – but refuses to invest too much emotion in any one being.

He abhors gray areas and subjective opinions. As the Seraph Archangel of Judgment, it is his nature to categorize things neatly as Good or Evil, Right or Wrong, True or False. To Dominic, nothing else is possible. Where others see shades of gray, he sees only black and white. Since the world is so simple and clear-cut to Dominic, he is gravely upset when others disagree with him. It is not in him to "agree to disagree" or to grasp the concept of "multiple points of view." There are only two sides to every question: the right side (Dominic's) and the wrong side. Even other Seraphim can seem hopelessly muddled to Dominic, much as humans seem to the Seraphim.

COLLABORATION WITH THE FALLEN

Everyone in Heaven knows about it – next to Eli and Novalis' latest parties, it's the most common subject of gossip among the Host. Dominic and his Servitors are stubbornly silent on the topic, which only fuels more speculation. Whisper it, now: *Dominic's angels cooperate with demons!*

It's true. Though it only happens rarely, under special circumstances, angels of Judgment have teamed up with Servitors of the Game.

Needless to say, the circumstances must be serious. An ordinary Outcast or Renegade isn't enough; Dominic's agents handle those perfectly well by themselves. Events which threaten Heaven and Hell alike, however – a rogue Superior, the Grigori, organized groups of Outcasts and Renegades, or perhaps some plot among the old pagan deities – *those* are important enough.

The first overt, large-scale collaboration between Dominic and Asmodeus involved Makatiel, the Habbalite Prince of Disease, who tried to exterminate humanity by unleashing the Black Death. Agents of Judgment and the Game joined forces, uncovering the corporeal sanctuary of the elusive and insane Prince. While Asmodeus' demons blocked the way to Hell, Dominic's forces managed to destroy the rogue Prince.

Cooperation of this sort is always a delicate balancing act; both sides are alert for treachery, and both have multiple levels of hidden agendas. Even during the hunt for Makatiel, the demons neglected to mention the Prince of Disease had created plagues capable of infecting *vessels*. Fortunately, a hint from Yves and the perceptiveness of Dominican Seraphim provided enough forewarning to avoid a celestial epidemic.

When face-to-face negotiations are needed, Dominic and Asmodeus generally meet in the Far Marches, where they cannot be observed by either Blandine or Beleth. More often they communicate via agents on Earth.

Because Dominic distrusts nearly everyone, he paradoxically has an easier time dealing with outright enemies than with allies. An ally might secretly be (or become) a traitor, but with an obvious enemy, you know where you stand. Therefore, Dominic has maintained a tenuous line of communication with Hell.

Dominic hates to have anyone free of supervision. His Servitors are organized into a complex hierarchy, with checks and cross-checks built into the system so that treason cannot be concealed. Angels – or humans – who operate alone are always vulnerable to temptation, so Dominic has few solo agents. His servants work in teams of three so that they can monitor each other. Often, team members are picked at random to make sure that they aren't biased toward their current com-

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panions in some way. Even so, the Archangel checks up on his minions regularly, with unannounced visits roughly every week.

VIEWS ON GOD

To Dominic, God is *his* check and balance – as has been demonstrated before, when Michael was tried. (God's pardoning of Michael hurt, of course, but these things happen. Dominic himself has occasionally reversed his Servitors' decisions.) Obedience to the Lord is so ingrained into him that he can hardly verbalize the Truth of it anymore. God's absence from the lower Heavens also serves as a role model for his own "distant love" and authority.

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I will be as harsh as truth and as uncompromising as justice. On this subject I do not wish to think, or speak, or write, with moderation. No! No! Tell a man whose house is on fire to give a moderate alarm; tell him to moderately rescue his wife from the hands of the ravisher; tell the mother to gradually extricate her babe from the fire into which it has fallen; but urge me not to use moderation. – William Lloyd Garrison

PRIORITIES

In the conduct of the War, Dominic handles defense, internal security, and counterintelligence. Other Archangels may carry the fight to the enemy; the Divine Inquisition roots out signs of infiltration and subversion within the Host.

Dominic is most concerned with making sure all angels are obedient and free of corruption. His secondary priority is to detect and foil diabolical plots on Earth. Finally, Dominic and his servants work to promote the Word of Judgment.

THE WORD OF JUDGMENT

Judgment is what allows all beings to choose between Good and Evil. With the coming of the War, Dominic had to expand the scope of his Word. Now he not only judges good and evil, he actively hunts the wicked and punishes them. Further, he is tasked with counterintelligence.

But the basic nature of judgment remains dear to Dominic's heart. When not tracking down the Fallen, his minions help humans refine and develop their own sense of right and wrong. In this aspect he is the patron of judges and police on Earth, and all who fight for justice. It's unsurprising he's overworked.

Another aspect of Dominic's Word is the resolution of disputes. That was his original function – teaching others how to resolve their differences peacefully. A few of Dominic's older Servitors have Words of their own based on this, and still do their best to teach humans how to judge which side of a dispute is correct.

Dominic is far more concerned with *justice* than with *law*. He and his Servitors respect human laws only insofar as the laws actually promote justice. Rules which are just and fair should be obeyed, but unjust ones can and should be ignored. By the same token, Dominic hates for those who serve him to take refuge in legalisms or other tactics better suited to the Game. That is why Dominic's Tethers are in courtrooms and not law firms or legislatures.

It should be remembered (though few outside of Judgment do) that Dominic's Word involves protecting the innocent as much as punishing the guilty. For the Archangel of Judgment, a wrongful conviction is as bad

as letting the guilty go free – worse, in fact, for the guilty can be punished later, but it is impossible to unpunish the innocent.

This means that Dominic's Servitors had better get it right the first time.



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PHILOSOPHY OF THE WAR

The War is an insult to God, and an insult to Dominic personally. And yet, though he speaks of a final trial for the demons after God's will has been reasserted, it is more habit than faith. Partly, this is because he focuses on the here-and-now, not wishing to weaken himself with fantasies of a world without Fallen angels. And partly, he has lost track of what his true function *is*. Without his duties as internal security, fighting against the seductive whispers of the other side . . . what would he *do*?

BENEATH THE CLOAK

Dominic's darkest secret, to him, is that he knows himself fallible. Despite himself, he has grieved and wished to spare angels he sentenced. Despite himself, he has favored some of his Servitors in the past, and it is rare for them to live up to his standards forever. Even the most perfect have been soul-killed, abandoning him in that way. He has shielded himself so constantly, lest any Servitor discover his biases and weaknesses, that his cloak has become a relic (*Liber Reliquarum*, p. 93). His need for perfect loyalty is so great that if he ever permitted a Lilim to read it, she might drown within his eyes.

By comparison, his alliances with the Game are a small matter, done out of necessity. It is God's will that the War be kept secret from humanity, and Dominic will do *whatever* is necessary to follow the Lord's instructions. He does not tell those who would not understand, for it would only hinder his purpose. The Game spreads rumors that Judgment is in constant collaboration, but he cannot correct them – the actual truth is shocking enough.

Successes and Failures

While Michael was pardoned (though not found innocent), and many blame Dominic for putting the final crack in Gabriel's sanity, the Archangel of Judgment's greatest trials do not always end in failure. It's sometimes forgotten that Dominic pronounced sentence upon the *entire Choir* of the Grigori – and God let it stand.

GOALS

Dominic's greatest goal is to keep any other angel from Falling, even if he has to kill them first.

Hard on the heels of that, he wants to remove demonic influence – by definition, unjust – from human society, by strengthening religious morals and ethics. He is not fond of the concept of "separation of church and state," since it implies that religion and justice are separate, but he does not try very hard to reverse such separations when they arise naturally. Still, he would rather humans follow the principles of the Church, even when there are flaws, than strike out on their own and become ensnared by demonic selfishness. This does mean that he disapproves of divorce, adultery, killing of any other human (with the exception of Hellsworn), and any other violations of "thou shalt not."



POLITICS

The Archangel of Judgment can't avoid involvement in the power struggles of Heaven, especially since his investigations inevitably take on a political tinge. In fact, he is at the center of some of Heaven's bitterest disputes.

Michael

OMINIC

Michael's grudge against Dominic is best known. Michael's warrior ethic of individual glory sounded ominously similar to Lucifer's words before the Fall, and he feared weaker beings might be vulnerable if they followed Michael's example.

Naturally, Michael was offended by these accusations, and his indignation turned to rage when Dominic convened a formal trial and found Michael guilty of the sin of Pride. But Dominic's ruling was overturned by God

Himself, and Michael retained his position as the greatest of the Archangels. Dominic accepted the Divine verdict and has shown no special animosity toward Michael or his Servitors, despite the grudge War bears.

Eli

The Archangel of Creation is a more straightforward case. By abandoning his duties as an Archangel, Eli is a rebel whether he's joined Lucifer or not. Dominic wants to bring Eli in for a full trial and settle the issue once and for all. That other Archangels – including Yves, of all people – are protecting Eli makes Dominic quite uneasy, for he cannot see how Eli's innocence could be proven. He does not wish to make another judgment which God overrules, but he *cannot* ignore Eli's irresponsibility.

Gabriel

Dominic's feelings about Gabriel are mixed, and that also disturbs him greatly. They were once closely associated, as Gabriel's punishing the cruel dovetailed with Dominic's role as judge. But her ideas of justice gradually diverged from his; Gabriel protested some of the harsher acts committed in the name of law and order, while he condemned haphazard punishments which focused on only one aspect of wrongdoing.

The final break was over Islam. Dominic, among others on the Seraphim Council, opposed the creation of new religions. During the Council debates, Gabriel lost patience and – before a decision was reached – dictated the Qu'ran to the Prophet Muhammed. Further, upon comparison of Yves' copy of the Qu'ran to the one Muhammed wrote, discrepancies were found. It was unclear if Gabriel

had done this deliberately for selfish reasons, unconsciously as part of her (his, then) prophetic nature, or if Muhammed had inserted them. However, this was enough; Dominic accused Gabriel of heresy and began the trial. But the Archangel of Fire refused to be judged and stormed angrily out of Heaven.

Yves did his best to calm the waters and exerted all his influence on Dominic to have the charges revoked. But Gabriel refused to return and became increasingly unstable as the years passed. Dominic now believes Gabriel's madness makes her too dangerous to wander loose, and has repeatedly urged that she be confined for her own safety – if not that of her Servitors or the Earth itself. But he makes no effort to bring her into custody personally. For now, Dominic will wait. Someday, Gabriel's insanity will cause a major disaster, and then the other Archangels will *have* to see the Truth.

Janus

Janus and Dominic have never seen eye to eye. The anarchic, rebellious nature of the Archangel of the Wind seems to embody everything that Dominic fights against. More of Janus' Servitors have been hauled in for judging than of any other Archangel – including Eli – and many have been convicted and sentenced (though rarely to destruction; vessel-stripping is more common). Dominic has been gathering evidence on Janus for centuries, but so far hasn't found proof of anything to justify a trial. He's been severely frustrated by his inability to place any agents among Janus' followers.

The Others

He isn't hostile toward all the other Superiors, of course. Yves is the closest thing Dominic has to a friend, and the Archangel of Destiny is one of the very few who can persuade Dominic to change his mind. Dominic and Laurence often work together to foil diabolical plots and are both staunch patrons of Christianity; they sometimes grant attunements to each other's Servitors. Dominic also works well with David, as the Archangel of Stone's unshakable loyalty is soothing.

Relations between Dominic and Jean are cordial, if distant. The two even share a Servitor – the Elohite Angel of Logic answers to both masters. But some of Jean's favored innovations have been tremendously annoying to Dominic. New technologies change the rules of society and make it possible for humans to come up with new ways to do wrong. Similarly, Dominic and Marc both understand the importance of fairness and following the rules, but Marc's insistence on complete economic freedom sounds dangerously anarchic to Dominic.

Novalis, Jordi, and Blandine all lie beyond the scope of Dominic's activities, and he has little to do with them. Their Words are outside the realm of law and justice, and of the three, only Novalis is frequently seen in Heavenly society. Novalis and Dominic often clash in Council – she delights in teasing Dominic for his serious attitude, while he mutters that she behaves more like a newfledged angel than one of the leaders of the Host.

Archangel Opinions

This is how the other Archangels view Dominic (and how he views them).

Blandine: Dominic amuses me. He's spun his political webs for so long that he has become like a fat little spider waiting for flies, instead of a shining angel of Heaven. (Innocence and guilt bubble up in the surface of the dream-scapes; I make regular visits to the Marches. Blandine serves her station with skill and dedicated concern. Her judgment is sharp, and her methods effective.)

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David: Dominic gets his job done. We've got to be strong and pure if we're going to win this fight, and he weeds out the weak and treacherous. I've heard some of the others griping about the way his servants are always snooping around. Tough. Better Dominic's agents than Lucifer's. (*David is loyal. Very loyal. My task would be simple if all the Host were like him. Still, he should take care that others do not misuse his loyalty and betray his trust.*)

Eli: So many eyes, how can he be so blind? Such shining wings, why doesn't he fly? Such a beautiful voice, why doesn't he sing? Poor Dominic. (He walked away from Heaven, drowned himself in humanity even as the Watchers did. There will be a judging. If I am wrong, the Lord will correct me and pardon Eli.)

Gabriel: He calls me mad. He would bind all with chains of laws until Heaven is frozen crystal. If any fire burns within him, it is an icy flame which gives no light. Better to be mad than cold and sane, a blind worm crawling in the dark. (*Apostate, whispering secrets and heresy, utterly insane. Her spark spirals into the cold of Hell – and when it does, Judgment shall renew the Holy Flame of wrath and punishment.*)

Janus: He's too rigid, too static – thinks justice is another word for punishment. You can't compel anyone to be good; they have to *choose* it. (*He has always been one to bend and break the rules, good along with bad. Perhaps Wind cannot be caged, but some* **funneling**...)

Jean: Any system needs a feedback mechanism to prevent it from going out of control. Dominic is our regulator. (Jean is logical and diligent. It is refreshing to hear his unbiased assessments in Council.)

Jordi: Everyone takes Dominic so seriously. All the little paper laws, all the solemn words – they're just a game for humans. The true law is written in the genes, and all living things are under sentence of death from the moment they're born. (*Our paths rarely cross.* Nature's raw justice is his, not mine.)

Laurence: Dominic has a thankless task and performs it well. None of us likes to think we're less than perfect or that someone we trust might become a traitor. Dominic knows the enemy can come with an army – or as a whisper in the night. It's his job to hear the whispers. (The Malakite of the Sword is valuable, wellsuited. Incorruptible as only his kind can be, he moves with purpose to bring order and purity to the humans, with his favored Church. His sword is still touched by the designs of Uriel, and I approve.)

Marc: He's strict but fair, and never contradicts himself. You always know exactly where you stand with Dominic. I like that. He gets a little paranoid, but with his job, who wouldn't? We don't always see



DOMINIC

eye to eye, but I'm glad to know Dominic's on the job. (I am often concerned for Trade's Servitors, as they immerse themselves in the corporeal world – but it is the nature of the Word to do so. More troubling are the rumors of his association with Lilith. I think Marc does not know how closely I watch.)

Michael: Dominic's no warrior. Some of us battle in iron and blood against Lucifer and his brood, but Dominic just skulks around the Council Spires, whispering soft accusations. Anything that doesn't fit his rules is automatically a sign of Hell's influence. He should look under his own robes once in a while and see the corruption hidden there. (*That he dislikes me is irrelevant. His trial is past and done, by God's command; he has his part to play and Word to support, as do I. I find no particular fault with his Servitors, and save my time for clearer dangers. If his personal passions cloud his judgment, that is his error, not mine.*)

Novalis: He's become obsessed with listening for tiny notes of discord in the Symphony and no longer

appreciates the music itself. He needs to take a break, get a better perspective on things, maybe unwind a little. He's been looking at evil so long he's forgotten what good looks like. (I wish she took something, **anything**, seriously. If she had her way, all work would be done by whim, in the middle of a party – and evil would run wild.)

Yves: Dominic is a paradox. His nature is to trust, but he must be suspicious. He is an idealist who must be cynical. He seeks perfection by finding corruption. The conflicts take a higher toll on him than he knows. In him are the makings of tragedy. (*His kindness is often remarked upon. His unfailing sense of order and justice is less often spoken of. He is my most valued ally, and perhaps the first and last hope for everything.*)

Princely Opinions

Of course, the Princes have their own views. Most equate him to a Heavenly version of Asmodeus, if only subconsciously, with a few refinements.

Andrealphus: It's all sublimation. He wears that cloak and hunts all that "treason" to hide his own burning and shame. I've enjoyed it in his Servitors, and I'm sure he's the same. (Love ... Fell. Fell, into a parody of what he was. Now he spreads the lie that there is nothing beyond one's own flesh.) **Asmodeus:** Once my mentor, now my opposite number. I can use him, and have. He tries to use me, and thinks he has. It is a most . . . satisfying . . . play. (Once, he was my confidant, always at my side. Now he is everything I hate, arbitrary and corrupt. The only remnants left of the Cherub are his dedication to rules. It . . . can be sufficient.)

Baal: Skulking, spying annoyance. He'll join us one day, if he can't admit we're *better* than Heaven. (*Though I and my Servitors must be primarily concerned with angels, I will not deny my satisfaction that one incautious word to a Seraph of Judgment may lay bare a plan of the War.*)

Beleth: He's full of fear, you know. I can tell, I can smell it. Foolish creature, fearing so for the minds and souls of others. (*The brightest pair in Heaven, sundered. If even Cherubim may be divided, how can any believe that angelic caring should be personal, not abstract?*)

Belial: Bah, cold bastard, all rules, no fire, but that cloak of his'd make good kindling. And his servitors light up nicely enough when you catch them! (*The Prince of Fire must be brought to trial, for his part in the Fall. For his part in Gabriel's madness.*)

Haagenti: Mmmm, Archangel. With napkin. (Brutish pawn of Dark Humor, Hellborn mockery of a Prince. His trial will be short – but he will have it.)

Kobal: You know, it's funny. Who's up there with secrets and plots and suspicions? A Seraph. What happens to Seraphim who keep secrets and start fibbing about their plots? (*He was trusted by God, trusted with a task no Archangel was given. And now, it is lost. And he is lost.*)

Kronos: He fights against his fate. He should have gone with Lucifer in the beginning. It would have been easier for him. (*Deluded Liar*, attempting to pervert Destiny's brightness. I know not how his creatures touch the Symphony and are not consumed, but those questions will wait until the final inquiry.)

Lilith: Rules, rules, rules – bah. I know he's got a special place in his dungeons for me. He can't accept that I was never within his jurisdiction to begin with. (*She is evil and must be destroyed! Her seductions and Geases have lured angels to Trip and Fall. She is* **dangerous.**)

Malphas: Something under pressure – cracks, fractures, splits. He's under pressure, and he puts Heaven under pressure to conform. In containing the angels, he forces them in every other direction. (*He stands alone*, *horribly alone, and his Word grows with every misguided disagreement. I am not sure the other Archangels realize how they feed his Word.*)

Nybbas: Oh, baby, talk about lousy ratings! At least the Game televises its executions, but Judgment? Man, nobody wants to watch a bunch of cloaked

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THE ENEMY'S SERVANTS

Dominic views Hellsworn with disdain and sadness, for they have joined with Lucifer and will pay a far greater price than they expect. Undead anger him, for they have sold their souls away utterly and will escape judgment. A repentant undead is worse – for his sacrifice cannot be rewarded, ever.

Seraphim play talking heads. (*He is more insidious in his contamination of humanity than many others – and he is all the more dangerous.*)

Saminga: Judgment can have the humans while they live. Once they're dead, they belong to me. (*I anticipate a very short trial; he is more mad than Gabriel, and – even more than most demons – it would be a kindness to disperse his Forces.*)

Valefor: Cops and robbers, cops and robbers. What's Robin Hood without the Sheriff? And they've got so much dignity to steal, too! (*The similarities between his Servitors and those of the Wind are vastly disturbing. The implications are troubling.*)

Vapula: What does Judgment have to do with progress? He's just as insane as the rest of those who deny me my rightful recognition. (*Vapula has no judgment to speak of: His intelligence is unquestionable, but without the ability to judge what is worthwhile and what is not* ... At least his whims keep him from being more of a threat than he already is.)

Other Views

Ethereals: He was one of Uriel's backers – was our persecution and murder just? Even now, he associates with Uriel's heir. (*They are the spawn of human dreams and nightmares, but they would become leeches on the vitality of their creators. The injustice is allowing them to grow fat off of human energies.)*

Humanity: Humans have great potential. This is True. They have ideals of justice. Still, if they stray, there is no dissonance or Discord – a criminal human gives little warning.

Soldiers: While Soldiers of God are often young and less experienced than a well-trained angel, they are not to be put aside. Their judgment can be acute.

Sorcerers: Dupes who must be judged according to their deeds.



Dominic's Tethers

Dominic's Tethers are usually either churches or courtrooms. The Temple in London is one; so are the Palais de Justice in Paris, the World Court building in The Hague, and the Nuremberg Tribunal chamber.

In the United States, nearly all of Dominic's Tethers are courthouses, from the Supreme Court building in Washington down to Judge Roy Bean's saloon courtroom in west Texas. Servitors should remember that by no means are all courthouses actually Tethers. Most are just buildings, and a few are even Tethers of Asmodeus!

The Supreme Court building is Dominic's most important American Tether, and he is protective of it. The Court's Seneschal is Etecius, an 18-Force Seraph, who is supported by an angel or two and a small band of Soldiers of God, most of them serving in various law-enforcement agencies in Washington.

Some of his other Tethers are detailed in the *Liber Castellorum*, pp. 75-76.

THE CELESTIAL TRIBUNAL

Dominic's Cathedral, known as the Celestial Tribunal, is attached to the Council Spires. It is a labyrinthine complex of offices and chambers, its floors polished by uncountable footsteps, its arching marble hallways full of busy angels hurrying about their master's business. Dominic's Chancery fills the basement with records of judicial decisions and court proceedings both on Earth and in Heaven.

The Tribunal is where Dominic's Servitors conduct trials and hearings to ensure proper conduct by the other angels of the Host. The Celestial Inquisition has its Inquiry Rooms in the basements, where Warders and Inquisitors search the souls of the accused for the Truth, and where the guilty are punished.

At the center is Dominic's own courtroom, where the Archangel of Judgment sits as the chief judge of Heaven. There are thousands of subordinate judges with authority over specific kinds of cases. Dominic himself hears the most important ones: trials of Archangels or disputes between them, or cases which are politically sensitive. Only God can overrule Dominic, and He has not done so for centuries.

FOLK TALES OF JUDGMENT

OMINIC

Even among Judgment, there are rumors, told to young relievers by older Servitors. They can't be told as

Truth, not in the Heavenly tongue, but each one rings with the concept: "I don't know if this is True, but it might be . . ." Among other Servitors, there are darker stories, of course.

Dominic almost never deigns to comment on these tales, whether they're to his benefit or slanderous.

Vainglory

It's said that before Dominic summoned Michael for trial, he went to the elder Seraph to speak of his concerns and ask for answers (as Asmodeus had gone to Lucifer in his time). For Dominic was young, and had looked upon the Archangel of War as a role model when he first joined the Seraphim Council.

"Your Servitors take trophies," Dominic said. "They lead by personal prestige, and the most admired are the ones who fight alone. But is it not True that to be truly alone is to be cut off from the Symphony, and to take trophies is to elevate the act of battle above the defense of God? Do they not encourage humans to worship their own prowess above God?"

Some say that Michael laughed in the younger Archangel's face, while others say the old Warrior flew into a rage that any would question him. But the story tells that his next cold words were, "You do not understand War. I was there at the beginning, and we spoke with God in ways you cannot understand. Don't question me, for I know that my way is right."

Dominic felt the elder Seraph's truth, but could not sense Truth – for ineffability hung about Michael's words like a cloak. Quietly, the Archangel of Judgment said, "That is nigh unto what Lucifer said to Asmodeus, and to me." And then he returned to the Seraphim Council and announced the trial.

(Naturally, the Michaelites have a different version.)

The Lovers

It is said that once there were two Cherubim of Judgment who cared for each other as deeply as Blandine and Beleth did before the Fall. Though this pair hardly did more than brush their wingtips together as they passed in the hallways, they seemed almost inseparable. They discussed law together, or trials, or (on those rare occasions when they had a free moment at the same time) the elegant and holy beauty of the slant of sunbeams on the Tribunal's ivory walls. Their Hearts shone together on their desk, and some angels teased that one day the Hearts would flow to fit together even more tightly.

Since they were both Cherubim, and since they loved each other greatly, they were never assigned to the same triads, but they accepted this. (Indeed, they knew their



bias, and would have been uneasy if ordered to work together.)

One day, however, when one lover was on Earth and the other in Heaven, the celestial Cherub howled and descended, without permission. When others went to see where he had gone, they saw his companion's Heart was shattered.

What exactly happened is not important to the story. But one had Fallen, and the shock nearly drove the other insane. When the capture triad found him, he went meekly, weeping and repeating that his lover could not have left him.

There was a trial, of course. If one has need to know, the transcripts are still in General Records. The charges were desertion of his post, willful blindness to the truth, and bias – with the mitigating circumstances of his attunement, it was serious, but could well have been argued to be an isolated instance.

Yet the Cherub balked, refusing to cooperate. He demanded to speak to the Most Just, and within a week, our Archangel came and gave sentence. Though the Cherub's Heart was left whole, not cracked as an Outcast's, Lord Dominic sentenced him to exile on Earth, forbidding him to return until he had made penance.

It took over a year, but one day – the Cherub's Heart shattered.

A week after that, a Djinn of Fate came to a Judgment Tether. She told the triad that she was the Fallen Cherub, and when her lover had found her, he had been unable to carry out the sentence. So she had killed him, and now she had returned, to re-enter Heaven.

When Lord Dominic arrived, he asked the Djinn, "You seek redemption?"

She replied, "I seek the Light of Heaven, Most Just."

He said, "Indeed." Then he took her up into Heaven, wrapped within his cloak. And she never came out again, for the Light of Heaven had burned her all away for her sins. All the Most Just said about it, ever after, was, "She knew."

It's said the shards of their Hearts are in a box in General Records.

NUREMBERG TETHER

When the Nuremberg Tribunal convened in 1945, few realized that it would become as powerful a legal precedent as it did, let along as powerful a precedent of *justice*. It – and the other Tribunals which quickly followed it – established that crimes against humanity could be tried by any country who had possession of the criminal. It established that instigators of a "war of aggression" could be tried, as well as violations of the laws or customs of war. It established that "just following orders" was no defense for such crimes, though it could mitigate them. It established that, should a defendant's organization be declared criminal, any other members could be brought to trial for belonging to such an organization.

There were also articles to ensure that the defendants received a fair trial, including clearly spelling out the accusations against a defendant, providing translations if necessary, defend himself or have counsel do so, and have witnesses cross-examined.

Likewise, the tribunal was required to try the cases in an "expeditious" way – delays were to be avoided, and irrelevancies ruthlessly quashed.

Despite the far-reaching implications of these trials, and their documentation in papers and radio, few realized *how* important they would be at the time – apparently including Asmodeus, for when the first tremors of a new Tether appeared, no Gamesters were in place to thwart it. Those few who attempted to investigate were dealt with quickly and without fuss by Judgment Virtues. By 1950, the speciallydesigned courtroom was Tethered to the Celestial Tribunal and guarded out of proportion to its initial size.

The Seneschal of the Nuremberg Tribunal chamber is a Mercurian, Zedekiah, who has recently retired his old Role. While a new one is prepared, for him to later assume with a look-alike vessel, he alternates between the vessel of a bird and staying at the upper locus of the Tether.

When justice is done, it is a joy to the righteous, but dismay to evildoers.

- Proverbs 12:15

VARIATIONS ON A THEME

It's simple to turn Dominic into a cartoon cop, wandering around with a "kick me" sign on the back of his cloak and impotently waggling fingers at rowdier angels, or a dark Torquemada, concerned more with rules than rightness.

Another variation is his *rightness* – a Dominic who must sometimes guess is a different creature from one who has been handed *all* the laws of God and executes them like a force of nature.

Dominique's default gender may also make a difference. She still strives for blind justice and wields Heavenly Judgment, but she may seem more merciful, and the more salaciously-minded will wonder what *other* alliances she's made with Asmodeus . . .

The most striking change – bar making him a closet Balseraph – is in how Dominic took the Fall. If he ever made his peace with himself, finding Truth that he had done his best, he might be able to trust again. A Dominic who did not hide his doubts, grief, and pain, yet did his job anyway, might garner more support than he currently believes. Or he could be quite right, thinking that to show his true feelings would weaken faith in his Judgment.



WALKING IN JUDSMENT: SERVITORS OF JOMINIC

DOMINICANS, JUDGES, JUDGMENTERS

"You shall appoint judges and officers . . . and they shall judge the people with righteous judgment." – Deuteronomy 16:18

Dominic's organization is the most bureaucratic in Heaven. Rules and procedures are clearly established and everything must go through proper channels. Angels report to superiors and so on, up to the Archangel of Judgment himself. Dominic's angels have no need to invoke him for ordinary matters – they send their reports up the hierarchy, or wait to make them in person.

There is a use for all Choirs. Seraphim are investigators – nearly all those with the Inquisitor Distinction are of the Most Holy. Cherubim are often Warders. Many Elohim serve under Dominic as judges, and he always keeps a staff of wise Elohite advisors nearby. Ofanim seldom have patience for long investigations, but serve instead as warriors and scouts (or spies). Malakim are Dominic's executioners, and he prizes them greatly for their incorruptibility. Kyriotates are undercover agents; because of their mutable nature, Dominic monitors them closely. Mercurians are often advocates or mediators, protecting the innocent and resolving disputes rather than punishing evildoers.

Starting characters in the service of Dominic usually have an immediate superior who gives them assignments. Angels in the field generally report to 12-Force supervisors, often Vassals of Conscience. Some of these supervisory angels have a specific geographic territory, usually with about a million human inhabitants. Others – often those working toward a Word – supervise minions associated with a particular subject or activity.

Dominic himself checks in with all his angels on a weekly basis, as a way of monitoring the loyalty of his Servitors. He takes a dim view of angels who complain about their supervisors – Dominic deals very severely with insubordination, unless there's proof of wrongdoing or Dominic hears the Truth of it in their suspicions.

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Those who serve Judgment see order in the world, rules and patterns of justice. Disrupting those into chaos and

WORD-BOUND SERVITORS

Some of the Words held by Dominic's Servitors include Swift Justice, Police, Mediation, Mercy, Restitution, Equal Truth, and Investigations. Seraphiel, the Seraph Angel of the Inquisition, is the highest-ranking Judge in Dominic's service, and believed to be stricter than his Lord.

The *most* impressive Dominican Word-bound are Daniel and Hutriel, the two Angels of Final Justice, who stand at the portals of Hell to make sure only the truly damned enter. In sheer power, those two – a Malakite and a Cherub – are nearly Superior status themselves, as several diabolicals have learned to their very brief sorrow. Obviously, two such potent Servitors right at the gates of the enemy camp must be perfectly loyal. Dominic contacts them twice a week.

injustice is unthinkable, and seeing it done is deeply disturbing. They are especially distressed by claims that their rules of conduct are inflexible and therefore unjust – without formal codes, Judges say, how could there be fairness? One person would be punished in one way at one time, while another, some other time, would get an entirely different sentence. Without rules, there would be only whim, and never true justice. Because of this orderly outlook, members of each Choir tend to defer to the opinions of those from the higher Choirs – Seraphim are leaders, Cherubim are lieutenants, Elohim are advisors, etc. The hierarchies of command change if one angel has expertise that an "out-ranking" Choir-member lacks, but that "higher" angel can veto decisions from the lower. (This is not done blindly; any angel who overrules an expert and is *wrong* will be censured by Dominic!) Likewise, if a higher Choir-member – even a Seraph – is behaving irrationally, others of lower Choirs won't allow him to influence their actions. Even a human Soldier can accuse a Dominican Seraph, or even attempt to take him into custody, if that Seraph has lied.

Besides their investigative work, his angels have other jobs.

(These are **typical** descriptions of the jobs and focus of these Choirs; they are not absolutes, and many exceptions exist.)

Seraphim

The Most Holy are leaders and managers, supervising others' work. They're rarely corporeal fighters, and focus on Perception (primarily) and their Ethereal Forces (secondarily). Those with Earthly duty often have some small ability with firearms, so they are not useless in combat. Most angels with the Inquisitor Distinction (p. 39) are Seraphim.

Judgment's Seraphim are known for being strident – not only don't they overlook heresy, they become shrilly pedantic about exposing it. Some break out of this stereotype, but many young ones fit it with annoying consistency.

HUMANS AND JUDGMENT

The Archangel of Judgment has an extensive network of human servants. Dominic prefers that his mortals serve as part of an organization, subject to monitoring and orders. His favorite group is the Roman Catholic Church, which has a well-defined hierarchy and many codified rules for proper behavior. Dominic, along with Laurence, still dreams of the day when the Church encompasses all the truly faithful.

The Purifiers are an organization of Soldiers of God within the Church (*Corporeal Player's Guide*, p. 110); Dominic frequently makes use of them in corporeal operations. Earlier, such organizations within the Church included the Garduna, the Holy Vehm, and the Knights Templar.

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Solitary Soldiers are often placed within investigative agencies – there are at least a half-dozen throughout the United States, for instance, who provide cover for triads without true Roles and will vouch for certain names as employees if necessary. They are commonly watched over and helped by at least one angel and a reliever or two.

Blessed Humans

Compatible souls are employed in Dominic's Cathedral, and may hold positions of high responsibility. His Saints, he personally monitors, contacting them with a variant Song of Tongues. After all, they can't lie to *him*.

"FORGIVE ME, MOST HOLY, FOR I HAVE SINNED . . .

One of the early roles for those angels who worked with the Angel of Judgment was that of *confessor*. When someone had done something he felt was wrong, he could go to a servant of Judgment and speak of his sin or accident, receiving a penance to clear his soul of guilt enough to accept forgiveness. The actions discussed were held in confidence, of course, for why would the confessor wish to announce the shame of another?

Even after Dominic's ascension to Archangel, the confessors were still visited, and looked to for guidance when an angel was confused. (Currently, triads still dispense advice at the ends of visits, whether the subject asks or not.) However, some confessions included heresy, and the confessors spoke of *their* confusion to their Archangel. In a few cases, a trial followed.

The requirements for the old job of confessor, established long before the Fall, are still taught among young angels of Judgment, but are rarely used. Many Judges have all but forgotten their old lessons.

The Formulas of Confession

Upon the confessor's request for confession and absolution, the Dominican is to say, "In the love of Heaven, tell me what troubles you."

No matter what they then hear, they must remain calm, and only ask gentle questions to get at the root of the confusion and distress. When the confession is done, the Dominican may offer advice or suggest penance. The ritual words are, "My God be my guide, it is my judgment that . . ." And the phrase, "You have recognized and corrected your error, and are forgiven," is one which is permissible, if it is true.

MODES OF ADDRESS

Servitors of Judgment are very respectful to Archangel; besides their the usual or "Lord Dominic/Lady "Archangel" Dominique," they also call him "Most Just" (or "the Most Just," when not speaking to him). They use the gendered terms (Lord or Lady) as appropriate to their master's current corporeal form, or in accordance with how they view Dominic. This is usually the same gender as the one they identify with, or the one the Archangel uses most often when paying a weekly visit.

Among themselves, the polite mode of address is the secondary Choir name: Most Holy, Guardian, Wheel, etc. The exception is the Mercurian title, which is "Intercessionist." A reliever is called "Helper." They use these terms to other angels when being formal, which, sadly, is often taken as cold aloofness by non-Dominicans.

Traditional "farewells" for Judges are "Go in justice," and "May thy works be even." Malakim are also fond of "Be righteous."

OMINIC

Cherubim

Guardians are used for guards, naturally, and lieutenants. Those on triad-duty are strong in either Corporeal or Celestial Forces (with Will favored slightly), and often prefer Precision to Intelligence – they leave the thinking to the Seraphim, and the tactics to Elohim, Ofanim, and Malakim – but some Cherubim *are* tacticians, with many Ethereal Forces. Most Warders (p. 40) are Cherubim.

To track people, the Guardians sometimes attune to a *sturdy* object and find some way to plant it on the target until they can get a true attunement to the subject of investigation. However, since objects are *not* subjects of investigation, a Cherub must protect them!

Ofanim

Pilots, drivers, and fighters, the Wheels are the Choir most often used to get triads where they need to go, and spot the Discordant along the way. They concentrate on Agility, Precision, and Perception, with a slight weighting toward Corporeal Forces in general, but many have some tactical training as well.

Next to Seraphim, Ofanim are the most likely to speak their minds – especially where it concerns Discord.

Elobim

Even more ruthless than most Powers, Dominican Elohim concentrate their Forces in the Ethereal and

Celestial, favoring Perception and Intelligence. They are cold tacticians, spies, and interrogators, able to determine the exact edge of their natures and the Word they serve, and calmly stop *just* short of dissonant behavior.

The Powers are also advisors to the Seraphim – when a Seraph wants the best way to handle someone, he listens to his Elohite. Elohim agree that their most used handsign is "Softly, Most Holy," to calm overwrought Seraphim (usually so subjects will take lectures seriously instead of assuming the Seraph is over-reacting).

Malakim

The Virtues are fighters first and tacticians second. The tightest-wound of Judgment, they find the earliest signs of corruption and purge them – by report or by the sword. They concentrate on Corporeal Forces first, Ethereal second, and favor their Will over Perception (for celestial combat) – their resonance is helpful, but their Choir Attunement is more so.

Kyriotates

Spies and deep-cover agents, the Dominations prefer Celestial Forces (especially for Will) to all other aspects of their beings. They are rarely corporeal fighters, so Corporeal Forces are neglected.

Mercurians

The Intercessionists are best at dealing with humans, though their Choir Attunement both forces them to see the worst in humanity and allows them to punish it. They favor Ethereal and Celestial Forces, and many are decent tacticians or spies. They, too, have been known to try to calm more rabid angels during inquisitions.

THE REDEEMED

Dominic has redeemed his share of demons, and once they have proven themselves (a strict process where the ex-demon will need to show his love for the Word more than devotion to the Archangel), they are treated just like any other Servitor of Judgment. They go on triads, they may become solo operatives, they get visited every week, etc. The only concession to their former status is that they are rarely assigned to a "Game-triad" - that small elite of Dominicans who are authorized to deal with Servitors of Asmodeus when necessary (p. 61). This is less for fear of re-corruption than because Gamesters are prone to consider the redeemed under their jurisdiction. New vessels and assumed names are used if a redeemed has some skill or knowledge that makes him necessary for a mission involving the Game.

DUTIES OF JUDGEMENT

Celestial Jobs

In the Celestial Tribunal, Judgment's Servitors are almost constantly busy. Newly-created angels or young relievers are studying and assisting in the collection and filing of reports. Older angels track the

progress of roving triads (p. 60) or arrange trials, while keeping an eye on all their fellows. The most experienced Judges sit upon trials, determining guilt and innocence.



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BEING DOMINICAN

Duty is always and ever foremost, a safety net of checks and balances to preserve justice and good judgment. When it comes to matters of heresy, you give no slack, and expect none from your fellows or your Archangel. Better a stern correction now than the pain of dissonance or poor judgment later. Your Archangel is distant, but *always there*. When you need guidance, you need only wait a week, and you will have it. Be reassured: you would be mercifully slain before being allowed to Fall. Other angels do not understand you; grow accustomed to that pain,

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for they need your watchful eyes more than they know. Take comfort knowing that if you die in your work, another will step into your place and complete the task, but never let this assurance make you lazy. Judgment must be upheld – keep Judgment business as private as possible, especially when it's messy (time for exposés in the trial), and always comport yourself with appropriate dignity.

And never be without a notebook and pencil, to take notes upon the heretical.

CHANGING SUPERIORS

Sometimes a Servitor of Judgment is no longer able to serve effectively. Either something proved his judgment is faulty – in which case the trade is made as Dominic desires, often as a punishment – or the angel simply decided he'd rather serve elsewhere. Dominic is most likely to place a Servitor with Yves or Laurence, in that order.

If the traded angel has hopes of returning, or Dominic believes he'll change his mind, the angel is first placed in service to the other Archangel, with all the usual attunements and dissonance conditions of Judgment, rather than moving the angel's Heart immediately. After a while (which may be decades; a short time to ancient Archangels), the transfer will be made official; Dominic and the new Superior decide which attunements or Distinctions will carry over. Heavenly Judgment, the Cherub attunement, and the Inquisitor and Warder Distinctions are all routinely withdrawn from a traded angel, as are Rites, while Incarnate Law is commonly kept. Those traded to Laurence will likely retain other Distinctions, while those given to Yves often do not. Because of the long-term, personalityshaping effects of Choir Attunements, Dominic prefers not to risk the angel's effectiveness and stability by removing them (except Cherubim, where it becomes useless), unless the other Archangel requests this, the angel does, or the angel now serves someone Dominic doesn't trust with his attunements.

Needless to say, some trades are more likely than others: Dominic will have a personal, private interview with anyone who wants to join Eli, and the motives of those seeking service with Novalis or Janus will also be questioned. Likewise, seeking service with Michael or Gabriel gets a short inquiry; Dominic may not be politically hostile to these Archangels, but doesn't approve of giving them his angels.

If the trade is granted (trades to Eli never are, and Eli is not around to receive the gift anyway), Dominic will deliver the Servitor with no attunements, save perhaps Incarnate Law.

Ethereal Jobs

In the Marches, triads poke into the dreamscapes of Soldiers (when they can find them) or other humans who are aware of the War. Since one of their lesserknown duties is counterintelligence, they are always alert for dreams indicating the mortal knows more than the average human – this may be a case of needless revelation of celestials on Earth, or a sign of a Hellsworn. Since dreams that a megalomaniac considers "pleasant" will show up on Blandine's side, the Judges can get surprisingly lucky. (They could also encounter dreamscapes of operatives of the Game who are under the influence of the Humanity attunement (*In Nomine*, p. 161), though they may not understand what they've found.)

Corporeal Jobs

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Besides triad-duty, angels of Dominic are assigned to other corporeal tasks. Solo and duo agents (p. 62) are often found in areas where they can aid in Role-creation or maintenance (and they keep notes, especially when they discover a demonic Role), or places where celestials will *have* to go eventually – such as hospitals. They also keep an eye out for agents of Hell, for their counterintelligence duties. All Choirs may show up with lawyer or judge Roles; police and private investigators are also common, and the various Choirs have more specific typical duties and assignments.

Seraphim are placed in areas where they can read records and spot truths with their Judgment-enhanced resonance – preferably without having to interact much with polite human society. Hospital administration and licensing agencies (driver's license, gun license, etc.) are common posts.

Cherubim are tasked to watch areas or people, with corresponding Roles in law enforcement or private security. (This may mean that a building or object *is* a "subject of investigation" for their Choir Attunement's purposes; Dominic is always very clear when this is the case.) They are also found supporting other Dominicans, such as the Most Holy.

Ofanim travel in Judgment's service. As solo operatives, they spy out the Discordant in an area and report them, targeting potential Outcasts (future or current) and demons for further triad investigation. While "private investigator" is one common Role, many have "traveling salesman" instead.

Elohim are assigned to Roles which require "going native" for long periods – they are less likely to be affected dangerously by such tasks than Mercurians, in

Dominic's mind. They also are used to infiltrate unjust human organizations, especially when demonic or Outcast interference is suspected; where Intercessionists could have trouble harming humans, the Powers have more scope (within their Roles, at least).

Malakim are found with Roles which allow them to destroy evil – lawyers, judges, policemen, and military officers. They are especially fond of Roles which let them carry out sentence upon the dishonorable guilty without fear of Symphonic disturbance, and some are prison wardens.

Kyriotates are spies and clean-up operatives, usually given a particular "beat" to patrol, and expected to discover everything going on in their area. They pay particular attention to illegal activities, and will gleefully use criminal hosts to "sell out" to the corporeal authorities – or when they have to take a human into a dangerous situation. Local crimelords with heavily armed henchmen are beloved tools, and the Dominations will spend time spying upon such people so they can fake their mannerisms. They also enjoy using corrupt cops, who also have access to firearms and corporeal authority, and Hellsworn humans – their favorite hosts when they must confront the minions of Hell. When celestial activities get too revealing, Kyriotates are called in to erase records and ensure witnesses recant.

Mercurians are given tasks which bring them into contact with humans. As secretaries or receptionists, they may also provide insulation for one of the Most Holy. In solitary Roles, they are found as doctors, coun-

CREATIONERS IN SERVICE TO JUDGMENT

Few Servitors of Eli work for Dominic. Those he has are watched closely, both to make sure they do not betray him, and as a "control group" for their fellows. Angels of Creation in service to Judgment have a Cherub attuned to them, and are thoroughly debriefed every week. They are rarely assigned positions of power, but some do go on triad duty, and at least one has been granted the Seraph of Judgment attunement for *outstanding* service. Grudgingly, Dominic has come to accept that sometimes a Servitor of Eli can gain the cooperation and repentance of a wayward Creationer better than his own Judges.

But that doesn't mean he trusts them.

selors, teachers, personable PIs, and deputy sheriffs in smaller towns (where the Mercurian will have a good chance of knowing ahead of time which humans deserve a little violence).

With their ability to spot weak links *before* they break, rather than afterward, any **Bright Lilim** whom Dominic ever acquired would be on constant assignment to roving triads (p. 60), or work closely with Judgment's own internal security, the Monitors (p. 65) – once they'd completed their training, of course.

LAW SCHOOL: TRAINEES

As with all other aspects of life in the Tribunal, training new members is heavily structured. A newcreated angel, interested reliever, or redeemed demon is assigned light jobs with little opportunity for inadvertent betrayal of Judgment's secrets. (Trainees are not told about Game-cooperation, for instance.) Between their jobs as messengers or datafilers, they study intensely, often with fellow trainees of their Choir. Elder angels of Judgment (frequently Elohim) supervise them, like professors – strong master-apprentice relationships are discouraged.

There is an emphasis upon recitation of protocols and precedents, and the ability to reason from them. Students are drilled in Judgment codes (p. 61) as soon as their Hearts reside within the Tribunal. "Hands-on" learning is saved until theoretical lec-

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tures are done. The group is valued above the individual (for there are more safety nets in groups), and young Judges are encouraged to think of themselves as divine cogs in a greater machine.

With time and experience, they are promoted to more important and sensitive "desk-work" (which may include more hints regarding Game-alliances), and then to a celestial triad. Once they have shown their ability and discretion in Heaven, they are sent to a large Tether which has the staff to train new angels in corporeal matters. Remaining rough edges may be smoothed out at smaller Tethers, or the angel may be assigned to a roving triad (p. 60).

Only after proving himself in triad work will an angel be considered for either Game-cooperation or a solo post.

SAMPLE SERVITORS

ZADOK

Seraph Servitor of Judgment

Corporeal Forces - 2Strength 4Agility 4Ethereal Forces - 3Intelligence 5Precision 7Celestial Forces - 4Will 7Perception 9Vessel: Human Female/1Vessel 2

Role: none

Skills: Artistry/1 (Drawing), Computer Operations/2, Detect Lies/1, Dodge/1, Driving/1, Fighting/1, Move Silently/2, Ranged Weapon/2 (Pistol), Savoir-Faire/1, Singing/2, Tactics/2

Songs: Charm (Corporeal/3, Ethereal/5, Celestial/5), Healing (All/1), Tongues (Corporeal/4)

Attunements: Seraph of Judgment

Though she's actually been on roving triad duty for over a decade, Zadok is routinely mistaken for a newly assigned Seraph. If the "Righteous" faction (p. 63) had cards, she'd be carrying one. If someone has dissonance, she wants to know why, why it's not gone, and if the angel prayed at dawn and dusk for God's forgiveness. If someone admits they know of a demon who's not dead, she wants to know why the demon hasn't been reported to the Sword. Heaven help you if you've got Discord, because Zadok certainly won't settle for less than a full inquiry. Even for the Righteous, she's extreme.

Despite this, or because of it, Dominic has arranged for her to have a rounded education – at least, for a Seraph of Judgment. She's able to defend herself with a gun, and in hand-to-hand, at least knows the theory of who to hit. (In celestial combat, she's slightly more intimidating.) Some of her more experienced partners wonder if Dominic is hoping to get enough rough edges worn off her that she can be assigned to deal with the Game, for it's certain that she's Judgment to the core.

She *is* fair, though. She has to be. But her notion of "fair" is one of the strictest in the Celestial Tribunal, and Seraphiel, Angel of the Inquisition, is her role model.

Zadok is a balanced starting character, or a triadleader who can descend upon PCs without warning, and with great disruption.

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Continued on next page . . .

EXPANDED RELATIONS

Because Dominic's views on other Archangels pass down to his Servitors, they often have prickly relations with the servants of other Superiors.

The most strained encounters are with Michael's followers. As Michael has never forgiven Dominic, so have his Servitors picked up bad habits – such as referring to Dominicans as "hyenas" behind their backs and deliberately harassing them when possible. Though Dominic has said that War is no longer to be charged with vainglory and Pride, most Judges have encountered enough hostility from Michaelites to react in kind as much as

their Word will permit. In particular, a War-Servitor is likely to be detained for questioning if he mentions one breath about hyenas, shows guilt, or otherwise behaves in an objectionable manner. When dealing with Servitors of War in larger groups, Dominicans cultivate an upright, unfazeable image, refusing to flinch even if the Warriors decide to have target practice right next to them. (And, if challenged to a duel, Judgmenters have learned to maneuver the contest to legal debate if at all possible - a trick that disgusts War-angels.)



The Gabrielites have similar attitudes about Judgment, blaming Dominic for much of their mistress' psychological trouble. Slightly less likely to try open intimidation than the Michaelites are, Fire-angels still react with hostility, enjoy visiting their own punishments on the cruel, and like letting Dominic's minions know about it. In return, they are considered unstable and prone to overreact. Dissonance and Discord in Gabriel's Servitors is expected, and sometimes greeted with a faintly sneering, "Of course."

Angels of Janus are also frustrating to deal with. If Dominicans have any artifacts issued to them, the Windys will try to filch those items. Catching up with a Wind-Servitor is tricky, since they do not stay put. Ofanim on motorcycles, with a sidecar for the Seraph, have sometimes been used to keep up with Janus' lot. Though many of the Windys have been tried (and some found guilty of various offenses), they don't seem to hold particular grudges toward Judgment, and regard the situation as some kind of game. In Judgment's view, the Servitors of the Wind are unreliable, light-minded and one step away from defecting to Theft.

SAMPLE SERVITORS (CONTINUED)



MIHR, ANGEL OF MERCY Elobite Friend of Judgment

Corporeal Forces - 3Strength 4Agility 8Ethereal Forces - 6Intelligence 12Precision 12Celestial Forces - 6Will 12Perception 12Vessel: Human/3Vessel (Marcon 1)

*Notable** *Skills*: Artistry (Drawing/3, Painting/1), Computer Operation/1, Detect Lies/6, Dodge/1, Driving/1, Emote/4, Knowledge/6 (Law), Lying/1, Savior-Faire/3, Singing/3

*Notable** *Songs*: Attraction (Celestial/4), Dreams (Corporeal/1, Celestial/1), Form (All/2), Harmony (Corporeal/5, Ethereal/6, Celestial/2), Healing (All/3), Shields (All/2), Tongues (All/3), Wings/4

Attunements: Seraph of Judgment, Ofanite of Judgment, Elohite of Judgment, Malakite of Judgment, Incarnate Law, Divine Mediation, Advocate, Friend of Judgment, Angel of Mercy

Special Ability: As an enhancement to her normal resonance, Mihr always knows what just action or words would be required for the subject to choose a merciful course of action, if the situation warrants.

Special Rite: Cause a prosecutor to choose a just, but merciful sentence.

*Mihr is a very old angel, but these are the skills and Songs which she is most known to use; her other skills include many languages, both current and archaic. Her other Songs include ones known only to Judgment; see the Liber Canticorum for details.

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Mihr had only just fledged from a reliever when the Eden Experiment was proposed and set into progress. The Fall itself confused and horrified her, but she was most saddened by what it did to the Angel of Judgment. As Dominic donned his robes and was elevated to the Seraphim Council, Mihr carefully concluded that there would have to be a place for mercy in the bitter aftermath of the Fall – and she set out to ensure this.

It's said, among young relievers who enjoy a good story, that Mihr was granted her Word at the moment when the Flood-waters receded, leaving Noah's ark on dry land. Mihr herself only smiles, and says it's been long enough that she's forgotten, really. Nevertheless, she is one of the oldest angels still in Dominic's service, and one of the most loyal.

She's not in the highest favor, though, despite her many attunements and Distinction. (It would be injustice not to recognize her long, dedicated service, but that doesn't mean Dominic is generous.) Her Word is clearly under Judgment, so she's not traded away, but her actions and arguments often conflict with the harsher sides of her Archangel's Word.

Together with Koriel, the Seraph Angel of Equal Truth, and whichever Cherub has been assigned to keep tabs on them, Mihr frequently participates in what Judgment Servitors call "the appeals triad." When a judgment rendered seems over-harsh to them – and they can take the time from their other duties – they take it upon themselves to investigate and see if there is either an undiscovered injustice, or a more merciful solution that would have better results.

Unsurprisingly, Mihr is an unofficial leader of the "Merciful" group of Judgment (p. 64), who believe in a gentler approach to the problem of keeping angels from "Tripping" or Falling. Of course, as an Elohite, she knows that sometimes, the *only* mercy that can be rendered is the subject's soul-death, before they Fall...

Mihr can be a patron for a group of starting characters, sending them to investigate matters which may be overly harsh. However, as a dispassionate Elohite, she refuses to be biased. Mercy is well and good, but justice is vital.



Naturally, Creationers are the angels most persecuted by Dominicans. Their Archangel is AWOL, they are in service to others but not subject to those others' dissonance conditions, and they continue in their habits of "overindulgence in corporeal pleasures." Servitors of Eli with Roles that keep them in one place sometimes get bimonthly visits from roving triads (p. 60), to monitor their decline (if any), and ask if Eli has shown up recently; those who have had contact with their Archangel are always closely questioned, in the hopes that enough data can be gathered that Eli can be found and arrested. Individual Creationers have their own responses to triads showing up on their doorstep – many of them delight in confessing their corporeal sins in as much gratuitous detail as possible, requiring careful questioning to keep them on track. Others may become hostile, or even violent. There is a small group of Dominicans who advocate much softer approaches when dealing with Servitors of Eli, pointing out that those angels must be confused and hurting, and it does no good to make triads a target for their misdirected emotions, or to drive them further into despair by rubbing their nose in the matter of Eli's dereliction of duty.

The sword of justice has no scabbard. – Joseph de Maistre

As for the other Superiors' followers, mutual reactions are more or less neutral, based on the previous experiences with each other's fellows. Jordi's servants can be frustrating, and Novalis' are obviously incapable of anything serious (and far too likely to try to protect their Creationer friends inappropriately), but Judgment's general view of them is not *hostile*.

Servitors of Laurence are regarded as good subjects, willing to cooperate with a triad's investigations and understanding of a triad's duties. Dominic's angels aren't technically allied with the Laurencians, but they've learned to seek aid from the Sword when they need help. Yves' angels are not "kindred spirits," as those of the Sword are, but they are respected.

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RELATIONSHIPS

Servitors of Judgment are considered the most unfriendly angels in Heaven. They don't go to parties, they don't relax, they won't accept a cup of coffee while on duty (or off), they will turn a friend over to the Divine Inquisition at the least note of dissonance . . . The Cherubim, Kyriotates, and Mercurians are able to do things that would cause others of the Choirs to become dissonant. Dominicans are rumored to collaborate with the Game, though they would put any *other* angel on trial for associating with demons.

It's easy to fear and dislike the "poker-spines," and many Dominicans never bother to explain the great love and concern they feel, as they strive to keep all angels from Falling no matter the cost. If they overlooked heresy in a friend, then that friend might become a demon – a fate worse than soul-death. Likewise, they behave properly at all times so that others will have confidence in their ability to judge fairly. The culture of Judgment (and the nonunderstanding from the rest of Heaven) encourages aloofness and reserve, as well as a tendency to preserve the secrets of Judgment.

However, within the Celestial Tribunal itself, despite Dominic's personal paranoia and concern for the way relationships can distort judgment, his angels do form close friendships among themselves, even ones humans would think of as "intimate," discussing case law or investigative techniques with an enjoyment most living humans reserve

for procreation. Such relationships must never, *ever* cloud the judgment of the participants; those with known personal bias (and they had best report their association to their Archangel promptly) will be asked if their judgment is unimpaired every week, and Dominic will hear the Truth in their replies.

In the corporeal realm, Servitors of Judgment are exposed to more temptation, and more pressured by their Archangel and fellows not to give in

by their Archangel and fellows not to give in. Fellow Servitors of Dominic will report any friendships which seem to be becoming intimate in spirit or body, out of concern that bias might creep in; a Dominican must obey his Archangel above all else, must cherish Judgment instead of anything else, must always place duty ahead of personal desires. If Dominic knows of a relationship and allows it to continue (which he will if he hears the Truth of the angel's ability to cope, with stern warnings of the consequences of poor judgment in the matter), then the angel's associates won't belabor the point further unless he seems to be slipping.

Of course, different angels have different ideas about what constitutes "slipping." There are Dominicans who consider holding hands to be a sign of corruption by corporeal pleasures, and there are some few laid-back Judgmenters (usually highly perceptive Seraphim) who simply ask, "So, is this activity likely to make you dissonant? Is it interfering with your job on Earth? Ah, it's True it's not. Carry on."

Most Servitors of Judgment are not bothered by occasional bouts of "corporeal recreation," either among their fellows or the angels they question, but anyone who seems to be indulging overmuch, in it or any other corporeal pleasure, will be suspect. And "overmuch" can mean "twice in a year" to some.

Cross-Word Relationships

Despite the insular culture of Judgment, some angels find friends who serve other Words. Obviously, associating extensively with angels of Creation, Fire, or the Wind is frowned upon; either the Judgment Servitor is in danger of being corrupted by their lax ways, or there is a risk the other angel may feel pressured by the power a Dominican might hold over him. (To use that power unjustly would be dissonant, of course, but even the appearance of a coerced relationship is inappropriate.) On the other hand, Servitors of Destiny are easiaccepted as friends lv by Dominicans. Laurence's followers are also proper associates, and Davidians, Jeanites, and Traders are acceptable, if sometimes overly biased by their Words.

At all times, as above, an angel of Judgment must be able to perform his functions dispassionately, without allowing his feelings to taint his decisions. This places similar stresses in relationships as being friends with an Elohite; Dominican Elohim are considered the most cold-blooded group in Heaven (with the possible exception of Jordi's Powers).

A severe strain on *intimate* relationships with Judges is the potential for Dominic to show up on his weekly visits: they are never regular enough to *count* on. While the Archangel won't comment on finding his Servitor cuddling with the local librarian of Destiny – provided his Servitor is able to report adequately, without a guilty conscience – it breaks the mood.

Needless to say, over-involvement with demons, *especially* minions of the Game, is *not* wise. Being on friendly terms – or worse, romantic ones – with Infernals is a good way to be questioned ruthlessly by Dominic himself.

COMMON TRIADS

When Dominic sends Servitors to investigate an angel, they go as a triad. This serves many purposes: it allows votes that will not be deadlocked, makes sure that no single traitor can ever let a fellow under investigation go, and ensures that the investigators are not moved by individual emotions.

Triad Cherubim are often attuned to the Seraph, or sometimes to both the other members. This is tradition, both to protect non-combatants (as Seraphim of Judgment often are) and in case one member suddenly becomes the *subject* of an investigation. Such attunements are removed after the current task is com-

pleted, and the Cherub is reassigned; they spend Essence in a safe place, to ensure they can sever the attunement without dissonance.

Many Servitors of Judgment do not have Roles in the corporeal realm – they are rarely assigned to any one location long enough to establish or maintain one. They do, however, have plausible identification, such as driver's licenses and medical benefits cards, and typically can claim to be working for a private investigation agency somewhere in the country -Judgment has access to a half-dozen of these, run by Soldiers of God who will vouch for various angels. This is enough to withstand a *cursory* check by the authorities, but the Symphony is not fooled and disturbance is

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not reduced at all.

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Triads often have useful relics; Holy Pistols, Fiery Swords, talismans, and reliquaries are most common. A few artifacts are more specific to Judgment (see p. 62). Mundane equipment includes cellular phones (sometimes with encryption technology to prevent eavesdropping), firearms (with licenses), and restraints.

The makeup of a triad varies depending on the situation. Certain cases require certain special abilities and equipment.

Celestial

A celestial triad is usually composed of novice Judges, who act like roving triads (below) for Heaven. They check up on redeemed, spy through people's Hearts, harass angels of the Wind, etc. Any group of three angels can be identified as Judgment Servitors by the special harnesses they wear while "on duty." Sometimes an experienced Servitor will be assigned to a celestial triad, either as a vacation, a tutor, or for punishment, depending on the composition of the rest of the triad and the assignments. (If you're in the War-camps, it's punishment. If you're checking up on the Sword, it's a vacation. Either might involve teaching two novices.)

The common composition of a celestial triad is Seraph, Cherub, and a member of another Choir (occasionally even a 7- or 8-Force reliever). Novice triads are expected to get into a certain amount of trouble – such as having their celestial notepads stolen by Wind-Servitors, or being challenged to sparring matches by Michaelites – and how they deal with this will be noted.

The only artifacts a celestial triad is assigned are celestial-only devices which function as notepads and recorders, and the distinctive harness that that both carries their recording crystals and indicates they are on Judgment's business.

Execution

Execution triads, usually composed of a Cherub, Ofanite, and Malakite, are used when a sentence has been pronounced but the subject is too tough for a regular triad. The Cherub is in charge of finding the target and vetoing any overly ambitious plans.

Execution triads are also granted useful artifacts for the duration of their assignment.

Roving

OMINIC

Roving triads are what people think of when they think of triads. The standard composition is Seraph-Cherub-Other. A roving triad is sent to an area with a list of known angels, questions them, finds out if other angels are there (often questioning *them* as well), updates files, and reports back. Elohim and Mercurians are common in roving triads. The Cherub attunes to any potentialproblem angels, and may return as part of a Specific Assignment triad.

Roving triads may be "professionally roving," moving from city to city via Tethers and without Roles, or collected for a specific route from Dominicans who are already assigned to that area and therefore have Roles there – or a combination of both.

Specific Assignment

A triad for a specific assignment is usually the Seraph-Cherub-Other form, sent to question a particular person, due to a report of trouble (from a roving triad, a solitary operative, or some other servant of Heaven). The "Other" member is either Ofanite or Malakite – both for their attunements, and because they are more likely to be combat-capable – or a member of the subject's Choir, on the theory that he might understand the subject better, and the target might cooperate more with a Choir-mate.

LESS COMMON TRIADS

These triad-groups are encountered less frequently, and there are fewer of them.

Celestial Judging

When it comes time to try to judge an angel in Heaven, a special triad is convened. It always includes a Seraph Inquisitor and a Cherub Warder. A Malakite is the most common third, and may be a Warder. The group – especially the Seraph – either reads through the court record of the preliminary questions, or listens while a prosecutor (traditionally the leader of the triad who accuses the angel) makes his case and questions the subject. There is a great deal of formality, custom, and procedure followed during such trials, but they can be summed up by a single statement: when the Judging triad decides that the matter is settled, they proclaim the subject's innocence or guilt, and any punishments.

Judgment roughly follows Napoleonic codes – the accused is presumed guilty until proven innocent. However, false accusation is a sin itself, and with Seraphim of Judgment, proof of innocence is as simple as a true statement.

Capture Triad

At times, someone must be acquired, either as a witness for a trial or as the accused. Outcast and Fallen Dominicans are always hunted for trial, in preference to anything but soul-killing them. Sometimes a witness is an Outcast angel or a demon, who does not particularly want to cooperate with Judgment. A capture triad commonly includes a Cherub to attune to the subject if possible (who counts as a "subject of investi-

gation"), a powerful Kyriotate to possess the target's vessel and release it again within a Tether of Judgment, and an Ofanite to pursue. At least one will also be a Warder.



JUDGMENT CODES

Triad members are swapped around frequently, and have unobtrusive ways to communicate, so they can work as a team with a minimum of "shakedown." They gain this information by virtue of serving Judgment; if the GM wishes, knowledge of each may be bought as Language skills by non-Judgment characters who have found a teacher. (Fallen Dominicans, Outcast ones, Soldiers who learned it from an angel, etc.) Dominic does *not* approve of non-Servitors learning the codes, and the codes are subtly altered over the millennia so that "archaic" ones are noticeable. Some long-term triads have their own, unique, signals in any or all of the following areas.

Singing Codes

Judgment Servitors use the "Humming" ability of Singing skill, and have several codes, much like mortal police. These codes are not very flexible or detailed – "The subject went that way," "Use Thunder," or "I'm in trouble! Help/Leave now."

This is not as fast, clear, or flexible as the Vassal of War Distinction, but can provide more information (for standard situations) than normal Humming – and with less chance of being understood by eavesdroppers. (Also unlike the War Distinction, Judgment Humming codes can be learned by demons.)

Handsigns

These are mostly finger and hand positions, but facial and whole-body movements are also used. It is special-

Game-Cooperation

An angel who works with the Game must be both atypically flexible *and* exceedingly centered and loyal. (*Rarely* is a single Servitor, or even a duo, allowed to cooperate with the Game; it requires a full triad. Any cooperation is at Dominic's specific instructions – theoretically.)

Dominic grooms a small subset of his Servitors for this task. Though it may not be a "distinction," *per se*, it does indicate a great deal of trust in the angel – and Servitors who are part of this sideways-elite may use this as a dubious distinction within Judgment. (They are regarded by their fellows with the same sort of appalled awe as normal Dominicans are by other angels: "How can you *do* that?") ized for such concepts as, "Your turn to ask the questions, Power," or "Most Holy, the subject feels [extreme/moderate/minor] guilt." The handsigns are very detailed for resonance-information, and capable of conveying some basic tactical information as well – "Get to cover!" or

> "Sniper third window up, five over." All the Choirs have their own sign, so that a command can be directed at a member.

> > This is *not* as fast or flexible as the Vassal of the Wind Distinction, nor as secure, since it is a skill which can be learned.

Artistry

Drawing is a common skill among Dominicans who think they might have to leave encoded messages. There are a few basic codes, but most art-messages are clear enough to any other celestial with Artistry skill.

Judgment Shorthand

Beautiful and intricate, this is the illegible scribbling that triads do at nearly every questioning, or immediately after-

ward. It is very compact, conveying 2-3 pages of information in a single page – or less, if the angel is working to write even smaller. Judges feel naked without a notebook and pencil.

Few of them will speak of their training or interactions with the minions of Hell, but they do know much about the habits of demons, betrayal, treachery, and the abilities of those of the Game.

A triad who works with Asmodeus' servants will include a Seraph, a Cherub and frequently an Elohite or Ofanite, depending upon the requirements of the task – Elohim are capable of spotting treachery, but are vulnerable to Habbalah; Ofanim are combat-capable and able to use demonic Discord to their advantage, but impulsive. Malakim are occasionally assigned to such duties, but their nature makes them less suitable.

A triad working with demons will have access to artifacts – but never anything powerful or unique enough that having a Game-Servitor steal it would be overly distressing.

Infiltration

The most common "infiltration" or spy-triad composition is Elohite-Kyriotate-Mercurian, or specifically tailored to gather information quietly in the given situation. Seraphim and Malakim, though also good at acquiring data, are rarely temperamentally suited to such triads; they are used only if necessary.

Infiltration triads may have artifacts, depending on who they're spying upon – it they are around hostile celestials, they won't want anything to betray them.

Local

DOMINIC

A Local triad is assigned to watch over a particular area. The composition is whatever Dominic feels will best be able to guard the area, discover potential problems (such as dissonant or Discordant angels), and deal with matters. They also accept reports from fellow Servitors. Local triads have Roles in the community, and are usually based out of Judgment Tethers or safe-houses.

Duos: One type of Local "triad" is merely a pair of Servitors who are working together, often with Roles that place them as husband and wife. Duos are almost always "long-term" (see below), and both members must be loyal and able to work together effectively. Duos are never sent out for any other type of "triad" duty without the addition of a third member. (There are circumstances where this rule is violated, but they are as rare as the times Dominic takes his cloak off.)

Solitaries: The other type of Local "triad" is a single Servitor who has a Role and is placed in an area to provide information and minor backup for any other Dominicans who pass through his territory. A particularly large city, especially one with a powerful Tether of Judgment, might contain several individual Servitors who only work together when called in to form a triad. Solo agents are carefully monitored by Dominic.

IDENTIFYING JUDGMENT

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Identifying a genuine triad is usually simple: state something to the Seraph and let it tell you the Truth. However, some triads – especially those without a Seraph – are given

small artifacts to help prove their identity without recourse to that resonance.

Lockets of Truth

The most common identifying relics are locket-sized Mirrors of Truth (Liber Reliquarum, p. 66), artifacts which reflect celestial forms for 1 Essence and a roll versus the holder's Celestial Forces + the item's level. A Locket of Truth has the Features of Fragile (any hit will break it; -2), Visible (an obvious artifact; -3), and Tracking (allows owner to be tracked as per Cherubic resonance; -2), applied after the relic has been purchased for its 3 points per level. Most Lockets of Truth are at level 5, and cost 8 points.

The Scale

An even rarer relic – which is never given, but only loaned - is a Scale. This translucent white pendant is covered with intricate, Celticknot-like designs. It is commonly believed to be an actual scale from Dominic's own celestial form! The Archangel assigns it to a single individual (who becomes the only one able to use it) and retrieves it after the mission. When worn against the skin, it grants the wearer a limited version of the Seraph resonance - the wearer makes a Perception roll, just like a Seraph, but the check digit is divided by 2 (round up) before consulting the Seraphim Resonance Table (In Nomine, p. 94). If the holder lies while wearing the Scale, he takes a Body hit of damage for every lie as the Scale angrily burns into his flesh.

Anyone known to possess a Scale is treated like a Master of Law by Judgment Servitors, and respected even after it has been returned; it is a great honor to have held a fragment of the Most Just.

Long-Term

Some triads have worked together as partners well enough, and loyally enough, that Dominic keeps them as a team. They may be in charge of a specific area (Local triads are typically long-term), and are often based out of a Tether – some long-term triads have a Seneschal as a member.

Long-term triads meet up with roving triads regularly, as well as the weekly visit from their Archangel, to make sure their triad-relationship is not tainting their judgment. Again, being trusted in this manner is an unofficial distinction, and if all else is equal, a member of a longterm triad has some influence over those who have only been in roving triads.

Other

Other special-purpose triads are formed at need, of whatever combination of Choirs is necessary, or even containing a human or reliever. Sometimes an angel will be assigned to accompany a triad, as a "trainee" with no voting privileges; he will be expected to use his resonance and attunements to aid as required, though.

One common type of "Other triad" is formed to investigate an *incident* and report back – this might be two Seraphim, with a Cherub or Malakite guard.

Another particular type of "Other" is a solitary Cherub, attuned to a redeemed angel and instructed to trace the exdemon's movements and ensure that he does not become re-entangled in the patterns of Hell. While this Cherub's attuned is a subject of investigation (and the Cherub of Judgment attunement protects from dissonance), allowing the redeemed celestial to be captured by Hell, unwilling and unFallen, will cause dissonance - the punishments Hell will inflict are highly unjust. A solitary Cherub usually has other Dominican Cherubim attuned to him, in the same manner, both for protection in case the Guardian and redeemed are both threatened, and to ensure that the Cherub is monitored – it is rare, but from time to time throughout the centuries a Guardian has developed a dislike of his attuned subject strong enough to spark thoughts of, "They are not truly worthy of Heaven. It would be just to throw them back ... "Judgment does not reveal how many carried out such heresy.

A VISIT FROM JUDGMENT

Dealing with Subjects

Judgmenters are, well . . . judgmental. They are intolerant of the sins of others, and even the most relaxed Dominican thinks that there's something wrong with anyone who's more casual than he is; most angels of Judgment are perplexed by the concepts of "off-duty" or "free time." Sometimes the only thing that prevents them from calling for a mass trial of someone's Servitors is that the other Superior obviously allows the behav-

ior or attitude – and policy like that is for Dominic to bring up with the other Archangel, while his minions only keep careful records of the failings for future trials.

> A triad visiting anyone except a fellow Servitor or an angel of the Sword will probably find something troubling if they stay long enough. Young Dominicans are startled and upset by this - especially if they found something "wrong" in an otherwise sensible-seeming angel of Destiny. Older ones are more concerned about whether this apparent "sin" (such as enjoying human food "overmuch") is really something that could endanger the subject. Roving triads end visits with something resembling a lecture about not becoming too ensnared by corporeality/relationships/politics/etc. Then they take their notes and themselves away and file reports on what they found.

Among angels of Judgment, there are two schools of thought on how to deal with subjects of investigation.

DOMINI

★ The "Righteous" group is primarily composed of those angels who remember the Fall, those created during times when Dominic was most bitter, angels who have not been to Earth yet, most Malakim, and many Seraphim and Ofanim. They have a slight majority among Judgment, and of the opinion that sparing the rod will spoil the angel. They rarely trouble with politeness, are quick to pounce on perceived flaws, and lecture stridently. They deplore the politics that keep their master from bringing in all the lax Servitors of Creation and any others who sympathize with Creation's minions.

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♥ The "Merciful" group - composed of seasoned angels who are too young to remember the Fall and a few ancient ones who remember before the Fall - believes their job is to keep angels from Falling, and the better way to do this is to remind them of the righteous love of Heaven, not its righteous wrath. They try to be polite to subjects, though not always successfully (why would anyone be troubled about being questioned in front of others?). They attempt to restrain their instinctive reactions to apparent sins and investigate instead, seeking to learn (for example) if liking chocolate will lead to service with Gluttony, or if it is Truly a harmless quirk. Some even go so far as to offer an Outcast slated for execution one final chance to repent and agree to imprisonment and retrial.

Both groups bring in approximately the same number of angels for trials (though the stricter Servitors request more warrants for arrests), and in both groups, approximately the same number are found guilty or innocent. The softer group's guilty members are more often sentenced to exile from the corporeal realm than death. There are no statistics on the subsequent Outcasting or Falling of angels after triad visits.

Triads take most of their character from the leader – if the Seraph wants to take a soft approach, the other members will not publicly contradict him, even if they believe in harsher methods (they wait for a private moment). Likewise, a Seraph who rants at subjects will not be silenced unless the rant becomes unjust in the other members' minds – though there may be numerous uses of the "Softly, Most Holy!" gesture.

Self-Policing

Dominicans are held to higher standards than other Servitors, and police each other strictly. They react with even more distaste than usual to the dissonance or Discord of one of their own – in part, perhaps subconsciously, because they feel it is a personal betrayal, much as their Archangel feels every Fall is both betrayal and a personal failure. If their fellow Servitor is not totally lost to reason, he will understand their cold stares and reserve, and confess his sins quickly, asking for aid in getting the problem fixed. The more he denies there is a difficulty, the harsher they become. If one of their own seems likely to become Outcast shortly, and is not behaving reasonably, most Judges feel justified in vessel-killing him – the quickest way to return him to Heaven. In most cases they will be right and take no dissonance from the action. (If they are wrong, then the injustice *will* place them in the same state as their fellow-dissonant, and under investigation.)

For unrepentant Servitors of Judgment, or ones whose crime was egregious, Heavenly trials are public affairs.

This is intended to show that even Judges are not above judgment. Onlookers do not always grasp this – sometimes it seems more like the demonic practice of "making an example of someone." Punishments are not more harsh (that would be unjust), though the accused is likely to have more crimes charged, such as defaming the Word of Judgment.

Between their fellows and their Archangel's weekly visit, it is rare for Dominicans to become dissonant, let alone Discordant, for any length of time. If they do not take care of it (by bolstering their Choir nature, as described in the *Angelic Player's Guide*, or requesting duty in a Tether as soon as possible), then their Archangel will arrive and determine the correct response – someone who is Truly contrite will get assigned to Tether-work, or have the dissonance removed immediately with a soft, biting slap on the wrist. Someone whose explanations are Truly self-serving will be hauled up for public trial.

Despite this, angels of Judgment display the whole range of reactions to dissonance that angels of other Words do, from denial to over-compensation to testing the limits until they discover exactly *where* that dissonance line is – perhaps by crossing it more than once. They *are* more likely to choose the confession route, especially if they *thought* they were obeying all their master's dissonance conditions and discovered they had accidentally done something unjust; also, when one's Seraph Archangel drops by weekly, there is no *point* to doing anything but confessing quickly.

THE MONITORS

Heaven's internal security has its own internal security. The most dedicated and ominous Judges are the elite group of Malakim known as the Monitors. They are charged with making sure the agents of the Inquisition are all entirely loyal and incorruptible. The Monitors keep watch on other Dominicans, acting as the "Internal Affairs Bureau" for Judgment. Many Monitors have cover identities working in other branches of Dominic's organization, while they seek out signs of corruption or infiltration.

Most other Dominicans do not fear the Monitors. They have nothing to hide or be ashamed of, and consider Monitors a safety net.

Any Judge who *wishes* to become Outcast has approximately one week to decide on this action and follow through. Once his Heart is cracked, Dominic can no longer find him to pay the weekly visit – but a capture triad will be dispatched to his last known location. Capture or investigatory triads are also assigned to the area of any Dominican whose Heart shatters. Unless someone Truly saw the angel's soul-death, Dominic will not assume either Fall or true death.

INVESTIGATIVE TACTICS

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A polite "routine check-up" begins with the words, "To my knowledge, there are no charges against you. We are here to gather information on your general state. If you could discuss this?" Within the following discussion, the following questions should be asked and their answers noted: "Are you dissonant? Are you Discordant? Do you anticipate that something might make you dissonant in the future? Are you comfortable in your job? Is there anything that you think we would be interested to know about?" Naturally, any answer that is not typical ("No, no, no, yes, no.") will be questioned for details, such as the cause of dissonance or Discordance.

Servitors of Creation are also asked, "Have you seen Eli lately?"

If there is a specific investigation, the inquiry typically begins with, "You have been accused of the sin of . . ." and goes on from there with "State your innocence, or guilt." Explanations are requested only after the Truth of the flat statements have been determined.

Since Seraphim of Judgment are so perceptive, a triad would rather have their subject talking about *anything*, that a Truth might slip. They will

ask a recalcitrant angel about the weather, or other "harmless" topics, slipping in more pointed questions if he relaxes.

DOMINIC

HERESY

It's sometimes tricky to determine what's heretical, what's sinful, and what's not. A Dominican must take into account the Rites and dissonance conditions of those he judges, and determine when an action is for the greater glory of God, and when it is selfish and wrong. (Or if the angel *thinks* he is behaving rightly, but is in error.) The following are all certain to register on Judgment's radar.



The ultimate sin is, of course, Falling. While the tacit agreements with the Game *tend* to put any demons outside Judgment's jurisdiction (and into the Game's), it is still a Rite for them to slay diabolicals, corporeally or soul-death. A Fallen who does not report to a Prince is especially likely to be "fair game," if for no other reason than his inability to invoke a Superior.

Willful dissonance or non-dissonant disobedience of one's Archangel is also wrong, though any mitigating circumstances will be taken into account by the triad who discovers it or is called in to deal with it.

Anything which starts a new religion (at least, without instructions from Yves) will *not* be looked upon favorably.

The Seven Deadly Sins

Servitors of Judgment are always on the lookout for these, and any of them are grounds for a trial, unless there are highly favorable extenuating circumstances. These sins do not need to have caused dissonance, and triads are perfectly happy to handle overlapping errors by charging the subject with more than one.

Envy is a subtle state, but one which dropped many of the Host into Hell during the Fall. It is said that Lucifer envied humanity's importance in God's eyes . . . An angel who envies others is one who has lost track of priorities – *things* are merely that, and wishing for power is never a good sign.

Gluttony is a Princely Word, and yielding to it directly strengthens Haagenti, even if the angel does not Fall to Gluttony's service. Triads often refer to this (along with Lust) as "over-fondness of corporeal pleasures," and watch for angels who "over-indulge" in food, drink, trading cards, etc.

Greed is akin to Gluttony, but is characterized more by hoarding than consumption. The angel who disregards his duties to gain wealth, art, or other material goods risks being charged with greed. Servitors of the Wind, especially, shouldn't hang onto their prizes too much – bad enough that they steal to shake things up, but if they start stealing because they *want* things . . .

Lust gets a lot of attention from triads, in part because Andrealphus has held the Word so long and effectively. While nearly all the Host believe God would not have given angels the urge to share joy had He minded it happening, Servitors of Dominic are certain it gets out of hand easily. (It was certainly one of the downfalls of the Grigori.) Judges prefer that sexual activities be restricted to the minimum necessary for Roles, and only within the appearance of wedlock – anything else is a bad example to humanity. Failing that (as most Creationers do, with their Rite), it should be *discreet*.

WARRANTS AND ARRESTS

A roving triad (p. 60) may not have the time to bring in every angel who is over the line, especially if their sins do not appear to be leading them to a fast Fall. The standard procedure in such cases is to have the Cherub attune to the subject of investigation and return later, either in the roving triad or in a capture triad.

Once the roving triad has delivered their report, either to Dominic or via a friendly Tether, they request warrants for arrest. Warrants are usually given a cursory check by a Dominican Seneschal or judge within the Celestial Tribunal to see if they are appropriate, especially if the triad has inexperienced members. Sometimes, the warrant is denied, and a more suitable punishment is decreed (such as a reprimand and notification of the subject's Archangel). If it's approved, there is no formal slip of paper to show that the subject is to be taken to Heaven for trial – a triad is given its orders, and fancy papers are a waste of time. The subject of the warrant is expected to cooperate, once identity is proven (usually via a Locket of Truth (p. 62)), though he may request that he be brought to Heaven via a Tether of his Archangel.

If there is only one subject who needs to be brought in, who is not expected to be particularly difficult, then the initial triad usually gets the assignment. If there are several targets (especially ones believed to be in collaboration), a capture triad may be dispatched for each angel to be arrested.

You Have the Right to Answer Questions Truthfully ...

Guilty angels have no rights, save the right not to be punished out of proportion to the crime. Remaining silent is an obstruction of Judgment. Resisting arrest is a more serious obstruction. Attempting to escape is a very serious crime. (There have been cases when all three of these crimes were pardoned due to circumstances, though.)

There are, of course, formal words for arrests. Whether delivered politely or to the face of a restrained, struggling captive, they are, "You are required to come with us for trial, for the sins of . . ." Most Dominicans prefer to say (or repeat) this in the angelic tongue, as soon as it becomes feasible to take celestial form.

Pride is the sin that Michael was tried for, and Dominic found him guilty of it. It is indulgence in selfimportance and willful blindness to the possibility one may be wrong. (Some say Dominic himself edges toward this from time to time.) When an angel becomes overconfident to the detriment of plans and allies, triads come sniffing for Pride.

Sloth is what the lazy and apathetic are charged with. It's also one of the rarest sins found by triads, since Superiors don't want Servitors on Earth who don't do their jobs.

Wrath is the lightest of the seven, so long as it is focused appropriately. Indeed, Malakim could be said to get away with wrath all the time. However, focusing on anger to the extent that it drives away caring is never healthy for angels. Triads are particularly responsive to reports of wrathful Mercurians and Elohim, or of any angel who seems to be risking the secrecy of the War to pursue any troublemaker they find.

Suspicious Behavior

These are all matters which justify an immediate inquiry session with the offending angel. These don't always result

in the subject being hauled up to Heaven, but are certainly time-consuming and frustrating for the one investigated. Fortunately, many Judges think that the process is punishment enough, if there's no real treason to uncover.

This doesn't mean they don't take a certain satisfaction in harassing difficult subjects. It's petty, and they mustn't let it affect their judgment, but humans aren't the only ones to indulge in minor revenge.

Dominicans do not trust someone who refuses to answer their perfectly reasonable questions. If you don't want to talk to a Seraph, you're obviously hiding something. In Heaven, it's *very* hard to hide things – the place is, after all, full of Seraphim, Elohim, Malakim, and Mercurians, all of whom see nothing wrong with using their resonance on their friends and associates. Therefore, the desire to hide things suggests a non-Heavenly attitude, which needs to be investigated.

Being overly hostile toward a Judge is also "suspicious behavior" which triads will happily pounce upon. They're only doing their jobs, trying to protect Heaven from corruption. Obviously, anything that hinders a triad has the potential to aid corruption.



In general, attempting to hinder a Judgment Servitor is considered a sign of potential treason, and they'll want to get to the bottom of the target's motivations. If this means a few hours of questioning, so be it. If it means hauling the subject to a Tether of Judgment, that's fine too.

Allowed Laxness

DOMINIC

If a Seraph hears the Truth in an angel's protestations of innocence, then the angel is innocent. The Symphony is a powerful character witness.

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If an action is dubious, but is a Rite, they can hardly seek to punish a Servitor for behavior his Archangel not only condones, but blesses. While Dominic may raise questions about such activities in Council, those policy decisions are not for the triad on the ground to question. They can, however, document any adverse effects that the performance had, as evidence for Dominic to present to the Council.

And Judgment understands that some behaviors are required to appear to be human. While triads would never eat or drink while on duty, they know that Roles require this – and more, may require that the angel maintain a habit of doing so, even when not strictly necessary for the illusion. Likewise, dating, the appearance of sleep (instead of being on the job 24-7), and time-wasting hobbies are also allowed to slide.

GUILTY

Judgment follows the code of "an eye for an eye." Rehabilitation comes after the penance, and only if the guilty angel shows signs of remorse. Punishment and penance are always designed to fit the crime. Punishment for mistakes is typically lighter than for willful sins, and anyone who truly, sincerely regrets what he did is also more likely to get a penance, rather than a sentence. Likewise, even the lightest sin will be harshly judged if the accused adds "Willful blindness to the effects on others" to his crimes while on trial. Once the accused has been hauled back to Heaven, the situation is automatically more serious than if he'd stayed on Earth

(though there have been times when a case was dismissed).

By far, the most common punishment is the reprimand – it doesn't even require a celestial trial, and can be administered by the triad on the scene. It's used for incidents when the subject may not realize he's gotten out of line.

Next most likely is penance, though that depends upon the angel being willing to admit his actions were wrong. Penance will be something that will have plenty of time for the angel to reflect upon his sin, mixed with enough hard work to allow guilt to be purged and atonement made. It can involved anything from a special mission on Earth, to being placed in service to another Superior (such as Laurence or Dominic!) for a time.

OUTCASTING

Dominic's angels hunt those who have become Outcast through their own actions, generating dissonance and not binding it into Discord quickly enough. They do not hunt those who have been Cast Out by their own Archangel, if he bothered to mention this punishment to Judgment. Such Casting Out is intended to make the angel realize he was behaving in an overly individualistic way, and discover that being alone is actually a horrible, lonely fate. This "little taste of Hell on Earth" is supposed to cause angels to better appreciate Heaven, and be a punishment and learning experience, so Dominicans will not interfere indeed, some Outcasts were *sentenced* to it by Judgment (commonly with a Cherub of Judgment secretly attuned to them).

Dominic would rather destroy a disobedient Servitor than risk that angel's Fall, but there have been rare times when exile was the only just punishment for one of *his* servants. The angel is secretly attuned to by a Cherub of Judgment, and then dropped off in the corporeal realm with instructions to find a Tether when he has realized his errors.

(Of course, in both cases, this does not always have the desired effect. Some angels are so depressed or outraged at their Outcasting that they Fall.)

Punishments never include inflicting dissonance. They may, however, include suitable Discord – usually in conjunction with a penance for someone whose crime was minor, but who is not appropriately contrite. This Discord must be administered by a Superior – and the guilty Servitor's Archangel will not appreciate being notified he is supposed to take time from his busy schedule to do this.

If it's judged that the subject requires a lesson in humility, he could lose attunements, Distinctions or even a few Forces. This is *supposed* to teach him to work with others,

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and not go it alone. Again, Archangels don't welcome a Servitor bearing a note of which punishments he's supposed to receive.

Sometimes, an angel may be Cast Out (see box), exiled from Heaven as the Grigori were. This may have a simple duration or a mission of atonement attached, or not.

An angel who is too dangerous (to himself or others) to allow to remain in the corporeal realm will have his vessel(s) stripped from him, or his Corporeal Forces if he's a Kyriotate. If the subject is bitter or defiant, he'll also get his very own Cherub of Judgment attuned to him, to watch for seditious activity. Such treason may result in indefinite confinement to a cell within the Celestial Tribunal, if not destruction. Dominic does not trust other Archangels' ability to make escape-proof prisons, and is *very* unlikely to release the offender into anyone else's custody.

And, of course, the ultimate punishment is soul-death. Any angel who becomes Outcast through his own actions is at risk for this. He may lessen this risk by throwing himself on the mercy of the court – i.e., by ridding himself of his dissonance and finding an angelic Tether, or *sincerely* begging for help from any triad who catches up with him – but his sentence may yet be death. Any willfully disobedient Dominican is also at risk for this, as corruption within Heaven's internal security is a serious crime. More often, soul-death is the decision reached for those who seem willfully malicious, too insane to comprehend their evils, or otherwise likely to jump from the point where Michael threw Lucifer from Heaven.

Appeals

If a judgment requires an Archangel to administer the sentence – Discord, Force-stripping, vessel-stripping, etc. – the Servitor's Superior is notified via courier, that he may perform the honors himself. Naturally, if he wishes to review the trial, or even bring it up in Council, he will. (If the Archangel is unavailable, the guilty angel must allow another Superior to execute the punishment – or face serious charges of obstructing Judgment.)

For judgments of death, there is a waiting period while the angel's Superior, or the Archangel he is in service to, is notified. After that, if the other Archangel does not contest it, justice is swift. Still, from the moment of the sentence to the day of the execution, there are Seraphim with the Celestial Song of Tongues posted at the major entrances to the Tribunal. If any other angel can Truthfully say "Wait, this sentence is unjust, and I have proof why," they will use their Song to stop the execution until the new data can be examined.



LAURENCE

MALAKITE HRCHANSEL OF THE SWORD

The world is a blade that cuts the unwary. Respect the power that comes with your station. Keep yourself finely honed, and never cease to be vigilant when hunting the Diabolical.
Laurence is a Malakite, honorable to a fault, and the supreme commander of God's army on Earth. He's responsible for training Soldiers and assigning them to angels, coordinating official missions, and keeping track of the Foe.

He hasn't always been an Archangel. His previous Superior – Uriel, Archangel of Purity - overstepped his Word by slaving all of the Earth's remaining creatures of myth (the fairies, the dragons, etc.). Laurence, the finest of all Heaven's demon-hunters, ascended to his current stature when Uriel was recalled to the higher celestial realms, vanishing from the ken of ordinary angels, in the year of our Lord 745.

Since then, Laurence has not only been orchestrating the armies of God, he's also become the patron Archangel of Christianity, actively promoting its growth. In particular, he supports the Pope and would like Catholicism to become the sole religion of humanity. (Dominic is the only major Archangel who vehemently supports him on this.)

Laurence appears most often on Earth as a small, skinny man, with long, black hair. The youngest of all the major Archangels, he's a real phenomenon in a fight, but as a planner he is still too idealistic. He tends to forget that even his own angels aren't perfect, and that the other side fights very, very dirty. When plans go wrong, he invariably calls in Michael, the old warhorse, to sway the course of the battle back to the side of good.

As the angels' primary strategist against the demons, Laurence is in a sticky position. He must keep the peace among Archangels, not threatening anyone's power or position, while at the same time remaining steadfast, not budging an inch when threatened.

His servants never have a spare minute. While other angels only grudgingly drop whatever they're doing to help Servitors of the Sword, Laurence's angels feel that the others are too quick to beg for help – which his servants feel obliged to give, instead of solving their own problems first. Between their honorable idealism and their prowess as Heaven's greatest questers, they have a great deal of potential, if only they can survive long enough to fulfill it.

DISSONANCE

Laurence is more rigid than any Archangel except Dominic himself. He holds his troops in strict regimentation, demanding precision in all things.

Disobeying either the word or the spirit of his orders generates dissonance in an offending angel.

CHOIR ATTUNEMENTS

Laurence's angels are fighters, questers, and demon-hunters, and their attunements reflect this.

Seraphim

The Seraphim of the Sword can tell at a glance whether the foes they engage in battle are ultimately on the side of good or evil. (This is based on their foes' *motives* for fighting . . . the cause they are currently fighting for is immaterial.)

Cherubim

(Restricted)

Cherubim working for Laurence may utilize their natural resonance of attunement not with a touch, but upon anything they can see (including through visual reproductions – see *In Nomine*, p. 57).

Ofanim

In combat or in pursuit (but not when *being* pursued!), Laurence's Ofanim may move an extra $(2 \times \text{Agility})$ yards when in corporeal form, or $(2 \times \text{Perception})$ yards) yards in celestial form, every round. (The benefits of Running skill may be applied normally to this attunement.)

Elohim

(Restricted) an Elohite working for

With his natural resonance, an Elohite working for Laurence can feel the emotions not only of the people presently in his general vicinity, but those from the past as well – a number of hours through the past equal to the angel's Celestial Forces.

Malakim

(Restricted)

LAURENC

Laurence's Malakim are the most honorable fighters in existence (as opposed to Michael's, who win more often). When using their resonance, they may add their Ethereal Forces to the check digit of a successful roll.

BRIGHT LILIM (RESTRICTED)

Lilim of the Sword are used to gather intelligence from the other side. Their Celestial Forces are an additional penalty to any *demon's* attempt to resist their Geases.

Because of their rarity, Laurence tries to have any Lilim who redeem assigned to him. The Seraphim Council usually doesn't grant his wish, and Lawrence then lobbies intensely in order to have the Bright Lilim assigned to an Archangel willing to "loan" her to him. More often than not, though, the Council rules in the best interests of the Lilim, not Laurence.

Kyriotates

(Restricted)

Laurence's Kyriotates are bound into the vessel of a warrior who died an essentially meaningless death before finding his destiny (such as a Marine caught by a land mine while on leave, a policeman shot by fellow officers in a drug raid, etc.).

The individual will seem to survive his wounds. The angel continues the human life as a Role (see *In Nomine*, p. 43) of level equal to his Ethereal Forces. The Role is free, but if its Status would be *greater* than its level, the GM may require the Role to be increased with character points. The body is a vessel/1, but may

be improved normally with character points.

Other hosts may be possessed at the same time, using normal Kyriotate rules, but the angel can't abandon this vessel – even when it's made to "vanish" (like other vessels), 5 of the Kyriotate's Forces are bound into it. However, it generates no dissonance if it's damaged or destroyed, though the angel must buy this attunement again if his vessel is killed.

Mercurians

AURENCE

Laurence's Mercurians, while non-violent, can read an opponent's body language so well that they rarely get hit. They may add their Corporeal Forces to their Dodge skill, or to the roll's check digit (decide before rolling!).





SERVITOR ATTUNEMENTS

The Blade Blessing of Laurence

The angel may give a divine edge to any blade by touching it and spending 3 Essence. It has +5 Power for the next number of combat rounds equal to the angel's Celestial Forces. This Power is *added* to the normal Power of the weapon, even relics (but they must be actual blades; a Fiery Sword doesn't count). Multiple applications of Blade Blessing are *not* cumulative, however.

Hunt

This attunement grants to a Servitor the ability to unerringly track any being he has fought, however great the distance between them. He may keep track of a number of his opponents equal to his Ethereal Forces.

Scabbard

This attunements lets the angel "sheathe" any number of weapons just outside of normal space, concealing them utterly until needed. Drawing a scabbarded weapon (the angel simply pulls it out of thin air) doesn't require a combat round – it may be done instantaneously. Weapons stored with this attunement must be ones that the angel can personally wield – it can't be used to hide field artillery. An M-60 is about the practical limit.

Purity of Purpose

The angel may speak to a group of humans assembled before him, calming them and quieting any distractions in their minds. The listeners will lay aside arguments, unseemly passions, and fears, and their thoughts will focus on the goal or problem that the angel presents. The effect always lasts for as long as the angel speaks to the assembly. Beyond that, it's up to the quality of the speech, and the assembly. A group of decent men and women, addressed eloquently with a serious concern, will stay rallied and focused until the job is *finished*. A group of drunken Marines, shouted at for being rowdy, will shut up long enough to listen, and go back to their revelry when the speech is over.

Holy Fortitude

The angel may invest Essence into a dying vessel (including his own) to stave off physical death for a short time. The vessel must be within sight of the angel so attuned, who must spend 2 Essence *instantly* at the point when death would occur. The victim makes an immediate Will roll to stay alive; effective Will is *tripled* for

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someone who is currently striving toward a sincere and righteous goal. He will stay alive for a number of combat rounds equal to twice the check digit of a successful Will roll, *regardless of injuries sustained during that time*.

Divine Absolution

The angel may absorb the jarring screech of dissonance in others. This is one of the few Purity attunements which Laurence has been able to refine according to his own Word.

Divine Absolution allows one to lay hands on a dissonant angel and remove a point of dissonance. It costs 5 Essence, *and* inflicts 4d6 Soul hits upon the one absorbing the dissonance! Soul damage taken in this manner heals at a rate of 1 hit per hour when the angel is resting in one of Laurence's Tethers. Otherwise, it must heal normally, at a rate of 1 hit per week (the Celestial Song of Healing can also be applied).

Such absolution is not granted lightly. Laurence usually gives the Divine Absolution attunement only to Servitors who have earned a high Distinction. They hear confessions from dissonant angels, and assign a suitable penance. Only an angel who is truly repentant will be given absolution. Needless to say, offering or accepting any kind of reward or payment for a Divine Absolution would be heinous in Laurence's eyes.

DISTINCTIONS

Vassal of the Sword

Laurence's Vassals can remain serious under any circumstances, even demonic provocation (including diabolical resonances and attunements), and can judge the seriousness of others.

Friend of the Lord's Troops

The angel can judge a person's courage (for example, knowing whether his opponent is going to crack or not).

Master of the Armies of God

The angel can state a refusal in so severe a tone as to discourage the other party from reiterating his proposition – it is, in essence, the power to end a conversation by just saying, "NO."

Higher Distinctions

Beyond Master of the Armies of God, Laurence grants higher distinctions only to those who not only have distinguished themselves in his service, but who have taken on responsibilities of leadership.

Before Laurence reorganized his troops into the New Order in the 19th century (p. 90), each Holy Order (p. 91) created its own Distinctions. All promotions had to be approved by Laurence personally, and in practice all ranks between Master and Grand Master were treated as being the same, outside their own Orders. However, the host of Commanders, Grand Commanders, Donats, Lieutenants, Priors, Bailiffs, and other titles was quite confusing.

SECRET SONGS

Laurence knows many secret Songs, and gives them to his most loyal Servitors, usually for fulfilling a quest that leads to a Distinction. Those he is willing to teach include the Songs of Banishing (*Liber Canticorum*, p. 61), Battle (*Liber Canticorum*, p. 63), Blades (*Liber Canticorum*, p. 64), Purity (*Liber Canticorum*, p. 75), and War (*Liber Canticorum*, p. 77-78).

With the New Order, Laurence dispensed with all these, and established three Distinctions above Master: Major, Colonel, and General. All previous title-holders were granted one of these ranks, but permitted to retain their old Distinctions for formal purposes. No new Order-specific Distinctions can be granted. The one



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appropriate New Order rank. This, plus the fact that many of Laurence's veterans still use their old Distinctions, makes sorting out high-ranking angels of the Sword difficult for non-Laurencians.

None of these Distinctions grant any special powers, only more responsibility. The higher in Laurence's hierarchy an angel gets, the less time he will spend on Earth. Laurence's high officers each hold sway over important segments of the active armies of the Host, and most are Word-bound.

Angels of the Sword bear their Distinctions proudly, and expect lesser Servitors to remember and use them. For example, Peliel, the Malakite Angel of Righteous Vengeance and a Colonel in Laurence's army, is known as the Colonel of Righteous Vengeance (but more formally, by his older Distinction of Grand Cross Puissant of the Order of the Eternal Sword).

RELATIONS

Allied: David, Dominic, Jean, Michael Associated: Everyone else, except Eli and Novalis (David and Michael are associated with Laurence) Hostile: Eli, Novalis (Janus is hostile to Laurence)

BASIC RITES

- ♥ Slay an evil creature.
- ♥ Spend a whole night hunting your prey.
- ♥ Spend four hours resting in an armory.

EXPANDED RITES

Laurence sometimes grants these as rewards for completing a mission or quest.

- ♥ Fight a fair and honorable duel.
- ♥ Lead followers to victory over diabolical opponents.
- ⊯ Forge a fine sword, and consecrate it to fighting evil.
- ♥ Baptize a sincere convert into the Church.

CHANCE OF INVOCATION: 4

INVOCATION MODIFIERS

+1 A practice sword

- +2 A book of military precepts
- +3 A high-quality sword
- +4 Ordering a group into battle
- +5 A fine sword engraved with the Lord's Prayer
- +6 A sword blessed by the Pope

LAURENCE IN JEFAIL

For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.

– *Romans* 13:4

HISTORY

He was created long after the Fall, not long before the time of Christ, a gleaming Malakite. He was made for war, and the War was all he knew. From the first day of his existence, he shone like a blade.

Laurence never knew a demon as anything but a foe. He became a demon-hunter, serving Uriel, the Archangel of

COMMON MALAKITE OATHS

Laurence's Malakim are the most honorable in Heaven, and their oaths tend to reflect that. Many adopt one or more of Laurence's oaths (p. 77). Holy Orders of the Sword (p. 91) have their own oaths, which attract many Malakim also. Most of Laurence's Virtues take oaths relating to chivalric ideals or upholding a personal code of honor; here are some of the more common ones.

♥ I will remain chaste.

★ I will not partake of alcohol or drugs (some Malakim go further, regarding corporeal food as an unnecessary distraction for celestials, and swear "I will not eat or drink except as necessary to maintain my Role").

I will not refuse aid to honorable souls in need.

✤ I will never use trickery or treachery to defeat my foes.

✤ I will be respectful to everyone, even my enemies.

♥ I will always act as a model for how I believe others should behave.

♥ I will give away anything I do not need and cannot carry.

✤ I will not draw my sword unless I mean to kill someone.

♥ I will never refuse an honorable duel.

★ I will not allow any insult to God, Heaven, or my Archangel to go unanswered.

Purity. His quests took him to the ends of the Earth, sheathing his blade in thousands of Hell's finest. In the fullness of time, he was recognized as virtuous even among the Virtues, and granted a Word: he became the Angel of the Sword, shortly after converting to Christianity in the 4th century (p. 79).

In 715 A.D., the course of the War was altered forever. Uriel ordered the destruction of the beasts of myth – gryphons, harpies, dragons and the rest. He saw the creatures of fable as a force that Hell too often used – and that it was time to create a new age in the wake of collapsing Rome, in which what was *possible* and what was *not* would be clearly defined. Conceptual purity was the goal; mass bloodshed was the result. Some of the mythic beasts could travel freely from Earth to the Marches, and they too were hunted – a grim and sober exercise in extermination, which forced Blandine to protest to the rest of the Host, and to God Himself... but Uriel's ideals of Purity had already triumphed. The dragons and the gryphons were no more.

Laurence played a key role in this "cleansing," following his orders with deadly drive and focus. The Seraphim Council convened to try Uriel, but couldn't decide whether to punish his followers or reward them. After all, they had only done their master's bidding, and did so excellently.

Ultimately, the decision was taken out of their hands when God made His will known to the Council. Uriel was taken to the higher Heavens, and seen no more among the Archangels. Laurence, faithful servant of Purity and Angel of the Sword, was to become an Archangel and join the Council himself. Once again, he was asked to be a strategist and not a fighter. Laurence became the chief general in the War, charged with forming the Heavenly Host into a new Sword. Among all the angels, only Yves and Dominic seemed unsurprised.

Laurence was shocked, but settled into his new role with eagerness. Moving his center of operations from the Castle of Purity to the Eternal City, he took stock of all the weapons Heaven could bring to bear, from its legions of angels, Saints, Soldiers, and others to more abstract concepts such as organized faith, divine right of rulership, and even commerce. To Laurence, each facet of the War reflected the others; it was a complex game, but with finite principles and pieces involved. Earth was in turmoil at the time, with Rome surviving by sheer inertia, Byzantium on the rise, and conflict in the East. Laurence was quick to settle into patterns that would define his strategies for centuries to come. His approach was methodical and thorough, engaging the enemy on every level. It was this very precision and predictability that would hamper him as a strategist. Fortunately, Michael, David and others were there to help, and still are.

For nearly eight centuries, Laurence organized, and Laurence frequently won. He had a good eye for where each Archangel needed to place his resources and when. Except for his notable tendency to exclude Novalis from his plans, it worked most of the time. When it didn't, it was because the angels weren't as perfect in reality as on his planning table, or because Hell didn't fight fair. Hell won a lot more fights with *individuals*, and often individual *humans*, than with hordes of demons. Hell was bloody sneaky, and Laurence (still the idealistic knight, underneath it all) found that aspect of the War frustrating. On the one-on-one level of the hunt, things had been much simpler . . .

In the first years of the 16th century, the Earth was undergoing dangerous changes, emerging from the Dark Ages. Hell was bringing new weapons to the battle: technology and scientific *divisiveness*. Uriel's ideal of a world where the possible was clearly defined had come true – and backfired. The faithful began questioning their God as "impossible," and became distracted with new sciences and new questions. Within a few decades, much had happened to the faithful, from Torquemada in Spain to a new rise of "Humanism."

Laurence was frustrated even further. He considered the Church of Rome one of his most valuable tools for organizing and protecting humanity. But from the bookburnings of 1501 to the sale of indulgences, the Church was threatened from within. The harder they tried to hold on to the hearts of the faithful, the harder it got.

This set the stage for Laurence's single most important lesson in dealing with human beings – he decided to beat the demons at their own game. Hell manipulated mortals into key positions to alter the course of human events. Laurence decided he would develop the same art, from the side of light.

In 1516, Laurence approached the Church of Rome from the *outside* for the first time. He believed that by showing a charismatic and respected Doctor of Divinity the errors that needed correcting in the Church, he would reinforce the Catholic faith from the outside in. He set to work on his doctor, with cunning and subtlety, and then turned him loose.

In less than 15 months, the entire plan went wrong. His chosen agent, Martin Luther, hadn't been let in on the game, so he did things his *own* way, nailing his challenge to the door of the Palast Church in Wittenberg. Laurence watched in horror as the Church of Rome continued to crumble, and the Protestant Reformation began to slowly spread across Europe.

From that point onward, Laurence had a new attitude toward humanity, mentally dividing them into innocents to be protected, sinners to be rescued (or destroyed), and

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agents to be cultivated – openly and consciously. If the humans were going to be so stubbornly *individual*, Laurence decided, then they should be willing agents, not manipulated dupes. The War, he realized, was *for* and *about* them, and they should have a more active role in it.

Michael and the other Archangels allowed their hopes to rise a little. Now, if only their war-leader could learn to respect his own angels' individual natures as much as he did that of the humans. Unfortunately, that hasn't happened . . . in the quiet meeting-places where angels gossip, Laurence's mistake with Martin Luther is known as Laurence's Last Lesson.

With his newfound respect for mankind, Laurence took upon himself the role of overseeing the training of *all* Soldiers, as well as the coordination of the Saints (or *bodhisattva*), but continued to treat his fellow angels more like chessmen than like independent creations of God. And he still pines for the individual action of old. As the 21st century dawns, more and more voices in the Seraphim Council are asking whether the Archangel of the Sword is wasting his greatest talents, doggedly planning when he should be carrying the banner against the foe.

PERSONALITY AND OUTLOOK

Those who deal directly with Laurence for the first time frequently mistake his passion for anger. His intensity, his insistence on strict adherence to orders and his demands for unswerving courage can take even a seasoned veteran of the War aback.

Archangels, while powerful, have no special hold on their emotions, and Laurence knows his share of fear. He is at the center of the maelstrom, riding the storm as best he can, organizing a war that no one except God himself (and perhaps Yves) truly understands. He knows that his strategies in the past have been flawed, but he's determined not to let the stain of past failures ruin his present (or future) plans.

Laurence is all Malakite, dedicated to combat, genuinely noble. He would, if duty called, sacrifice himself in an instant to see Hell defeated. He is also – perhaps flying in the face of reason – an optimist, secure in the knowledge that light *must* defeat darkness, ultimately, that the God that created it all can't *possibly* be defeated by an upstart Fallen angel and his hordes of unpleasant goons.

When portraying Laurence, keep his sharp edges in the light, but color his implications with the much more complex angel beneath. In many ways, Laurence is the perfect picture of the noble knight, home at last and fighting with his last breath to prevent his own disillusionment.

LAURENCE'S OATHS

Like all Malakim, Laurence is bound by his oaths, and is in large part *defined* by them. Much of his behavior – inflexible, frustrating, and even mule-headed as it may appear to others – makes perfect sense when viewed in light of his guiding principles. As a veteran Malakite, and one who was exceptionally zealous even before he became Word-bound, Laurence has more than the four oaths required of all Virtues. He took his extra oaths by choice – he has *never* suffered dissonance!

"Never suffer an evil to live when it's my choice."

This oath is the same as that taken by all Virtues, but whereas other Malakim can be exempted from fighting to the death every demon they meet by the orders of their Archangel, Laurence answers only to God, and thus has no such excuses. He can justify letting a diabolical escape because his duties require him to pay attention to more important things... but it pains him, greatly.

Laurence keeps a list of every demon he encounters, and every demon who opposes him, and it's rumored that he's sworn an oath to kill *every single one*. (Presumably he allows exemptions for those who redeem.) His "hit list" is made available to all of his Servitors, and killing one of the demons on it is considered a meritorious quest. Demons have good reason to fear letting Laurence learn their names.

"Never surrender or allow myself to be captured by the armies of Lucifer."

The second oath common to all Malakim is the reason for Laurence's unwavering dedication and optimism. He is the General of the Host, supreme commander of the forces arrayed against Lucifer. He *must* win; Lucifer *must* fail. Any other outcome is – quite literally – unthinkable.

"Strive for perfection in all things; never lower my standards for the sake of ease or convenience."

This oath was the first Laurence swore as a Malakite of Purity. It drove him to the heights of excellence which

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earned him his Word; it drives his fellow Archangels mad, at times, that he cannot accept less than perfection. Laurence demands perfection from his Servitors because he demands it of himself. It is simply not in him to allow things to be done "the easy way." He *knows* that frequently others will not live up to his standards; he knows that even he cannot hope to actually *be* perfect. But Laurence fervently believes that only by adhering to *God's* standard, *as much as possible*, will Heaven prevail; to lower your standards is to accept Lucifer's view of the universe.

"Never question the will of my Superior."

Laurence's second freely-chosen oath made him one of Uriel's most loyal Servitors. Now, of course, his Superior is God, who unfortunately doesn't make His will known as often as Uriel did. Still, God *did* choose Laurence to lead His army... which is why Laurence is incapable of questioning whether he will be victorious, and why he will *never* step down as commander of the Host, unless God Himself wills it.

"Respect your weapons, and treat them with care; Always use the finest weapons available; Never choose a weapon you don't respect."

This is actually a group of three oaths Laurence swore at various times during his career, as his philosophy of the Sword evolved (prior to his actually gaining the Word). He never expected them to pertain to the whole of the Host. Because of his oaths, he *respects* other angels ... but he does, ultimately, think of them as weapons, not people. Because he cannot assign angels to posts for which they are unworthy, Laurence drills his Servitors relentlessly, hoping to *make* them more perfect. Try as he might, Laurence cannot bring himself to respect Novalis (and he has lost all respect for Eli), which is why he does not include them in his plans. (A few rare *Servitors* of Flowers and Creation have earned his respect, but that doesn't change his opinion of their Superiors.)

Continued on next page . . .

LAURENCE'S OATHS (CONTINUED)

"Protect and uphold the Holy Catholic Church. Put the welfare of the Church and its members above my own."

Laurence swore this oath when he became a Christian, following Uriel's example (p. 79). It was the last oath he swore. It caused him much distress when the Church split in 1054 A.D. (p. 79), but he managed to overcome the potential dissonance and he still embraces *all* of Christendom . . . though he prefers the Catholic Church. While other Archangels fear he would risk everything for his Church, that's only partly true; Laurence would risk *himself* for the Church, but since he knows his position is far more important than himself, he must place the welfare of the Host above that of the Church.

VIEWS ON GOD

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Laurence believes that God is right and just and good. God is omniscient and omnipotent and has a Divine Plan for all of creation, and Lucifer's victory is not part of that Plan. Laurence is among those angels who do not believe in free will – at least for angels. (Humans are another matter – see below.) Angels are instruments of God's will. Before the Fall, it was impossible for angels to rebel, but Lucifer introduced Evil into the world (as opposed to selfishness, which is a human characteristic). Evil can corrupt angels, causing them to Fall. An angel must perform precisely according to God's will to avoid being corrupted – any deviation from the Divine Plan is evidence that Evil is tainting an angel's soul. This is why Laurence holds his Servitors to such rigid standards and expects unquestioning obedience.

That the Divine Plan is not always transparent to angels is immaterial. God is Laurence's Commanderin-Chief. Laurence will follow the Divine Plan as he understands it, confident that God will reveal all the information He feels it is necessary to reveal.

The question of how the Archangel Lucifer rebelled in the first place is the "Question of Evil" that has vexed the faithful for millennia – why does God allow evil to exist? Laurence doesn't have an answer to that, but frankly, doesn't think it matters. Obviously, Evil *does* exist, therefore it is somehow part of God's plan – and Laurence's task is to expunge it.

As a staunch Catholic (p. 79), Laurence believes in the Holy Trinity. He believes that God sent His only begotten Son to Earth to die for mankind's sins. Jesus Christ was the Messiah, and will return when the time for the Final Judgment is at hand. The Holy Spirit is the medium through which God communicates His will.

VIEWS ON MAN

"But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it." – Isaiah 1:20

The Christian doctrine that Jesus was both God and man is an important facet in understanding Laurence's views on humanity. If God could incarnate Himself in human form, humans must be truly free-willed, and *important*. Laurence also notes that God has sent many human prophets to convey messages even angels are not apprised of. Thus, he has come to accept that self-determination is an important part of mankind's destiny, and that Heaven can only guide and encourage humans, not control them. Laurence has yet to be convinced that angels occupy a similar place in God's plan – if anything, he is more convinced than ever that angels exist *for* the benefit of mankind, and thus should act strictly according to their prescribed roles.

This doesn't mean that humans should be allowed to do whatever they want, of course. Being free-willed means they're free to choose selfishness and damn themselves to Hell. One of the greatest virtues of the Church is that it imposes strict, faith-based discipline and *tells* people how to behave. Laurence knows the Church is not perfect, nor are all its doctrines correct. If humans could be relied upon to obey God, accept Jesus, and act selflessly on their own, that would be ideal. But since they can't, obeying the Church, even by rote, is better than *selfish* self-determination.

PRIORITIES

Laurence has a lot on his plate. In addition to being the Archangel in charge of organizing the Host against the infernal enemy, he rules the Eternal City, the center of Heaven. He oversees the Halls of Worship, the gathering-place where all religions meet. He is responsible for the training of Soldiers, and often assigns them to the other Archangels for service. He coordinates the activities of the bodhisattva, and tries to keep track of those who have been assigned to Earth as Saints. And as the patron Archangel of Christianity, he plays (honorable) politics, jockeying to edge out "extraneous" religions and finally organize mankind under a single banner of faith.

Laurence's Word

"Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty." – Psalms 45:3

As Uriel's Angel of the Sword, Laurence was given authority over his own kind – the questers and demonhunters among the Host, set with the direct task of sinking bronze, iron, or steel into the damned flesh of the Fallen on Earth. In 745 A.D., that changed.

No longer is Laurence's Word taken quite so literally. His "sword" is now the combined might of Heaven – a metaphor for every weapon the forces of light might bring to bear against the crawling darkness, from Marc's financial wizardry to Novalis' powers to calm hearts (though Laurence usually prefers more *direct* ways to "calm" a heart). As the *Archangel* of the Sword, it is his duty to array all of these resources on the multifaceted battlefield, coordinating angels, humans, and others in the struggle against the Pit.

Laurence and the Church of Rome

Laurence was there, literally, when the Church of Rome was founded – he witnessed the Apostle Peter preaching in the streets of Rome, circa 60 A.D. He also witnessed Peter's martyrdom, crucified upside-down. The young Malakite of Purity, not yet even Wordbound, did nothing because those who crucified Peter were human, and their actions were not tainted by diabolical influence. Yet he admired Peter, and grieved at his death.

Laurence did not have time for theological pursuits – he was too busy hunting demons. But in his travels across the globe, he marveled at how quickly Christianity was spreading. He was not fully convinced of the divinity of Christ until the 4th century, when his master Uriel converted to Christianity in the wake of the first Council of Nicea. Always the loyal Servitor, Laurence also swore to the Nicene Creed, and went further, swearing to defend the Church that Peter had built. Shortly thereafter, recognizing both his faith and his unmatched prowess in prosecuting the War, Uriel put him forward for a Word, and Laurence became the Angel of the Sword.

When Laurence became an Archangel, he envisioned the Church as one of his greatest weapons against the diabolical. But by then, the "universal" Church was

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already fragmenting. Rome was on the decline, and the Byzantine Empire was on the rise. When the Church in Rome and the Church in Constantinople split in 1054 A.D., Laurence was torn. At that time, both factions claimed to be the original Church, and most believed the split would be temporary, and so Laurence still embraced both Churches. But when decades passed and it became clear the rift was permanent, Laurence had to choose – his oath (p. 77) could not apply to both equally. While Constantinople was more vital, and more potent militarily, Laurence ultimately chose Rome for sentimental reasons. It was in Rome that Peter built his Church, and Rome that Uriel had sponsored since long before the time of Christ.

This does not mean Laurence has forsaken the Orthodox Catholic Church. Indeed, Laurence considers himself a patron of *all* of Christendom. Even the Protestant Reformation, distressing as it was, did not change the essential Gospels, and Laurence accepts all Christians as members of his flock. Nor does he spurn devout members of other faiths – Jews, Muslims, even Buddhists and Hindus can also stand against the forces of Hell. But it is Christianity which Laurence believes has the greatest grasp of God's truth, and is mankind's best hope of salvation – and the Roman Catholic Church has ever been Laurence's standard.

Archangel Laurence really *likes* the current Pope, and is happy with the directions the Church has taken over the last century. The pontiff *travels*, working hard to expand the reach of the Church into the far corners of the world, and eager to keep the United States spiritually joined to Europe (a difficult task). From tripling the number of Catholics in Korea to his surprise visit at a youth conference in Denver, Pope John Paul II has pleased Laurence greatly. Laurence also knows that the Fisherman's Ring must soon pass to another, and while he looks forward to speaking with John Paul more directly and asking his advice, he worries about where "his" Church will go under a new leader.

Still, while Laurence may have had his doubts in earlier centuries about the destiny of the Catholic Church, he has none now. He would, most of the Host believes, risk everything for it. The other Archangels work quietly to make sure this remains one of Laurence's strengths, and not a weakness to be exploited by Hell. In the meantime, the humblest of parish priests are fighting the good fight in a way that few angels could, and that, at least, pleases all of Heaven.

CATHOLIC ANGELS

It is not *required* that angels of the Sword be Catholic, but it doesn't hurt. Laurence doesn't overtly discriminate against non-Catholic Servitors (unless they speak or act *against* the Church), but since he does consider the Church an integral part of his strategy, Servitors who don't share his outlook aren't likely to rise high in the ranks.

The majority of Laurence's Servitors do consider themselves Catholics . . . and almost all are Christian. Some accept the divinity of Jesus and the basic *validity* of the Roman Catholic Church, while taking a more ecumenical view of religion as a whole, believing that the doctrinal differences between Catholics and Protestants are largely irrelevant. A few hold alternate religious views, or none at all, but find it politic to keep quiet.

PLANNING THE WAR

It is Laurence's responsibility to plan Heaven's overall strategy. Every Archangel has his own agendas, and fights the War within his own sphere; Laurence must coordinate them all so that Hell will be defeated as a whole, not just in individual battles.

Like his nemesis Baal, Laurence sees the War as a chess game. Unlike Baal, Laurence sees the board as effectively "fixed," with all the pieces already in place. Only under the pressure of great events (such as the Protestant Reformation – p. 76) will Laurence admit that the rules can sometimes be changed.

This is often frustrating to the Host, because Hell cheats. But those who say that Laurence's inflexibility and narrow vision doom him to failure overlook how often he *wins*. Laurence is an unparalleled master of strategy and tactics. When Hell prevails, it's always by doing something unexpected, introducing some devious new trick that Laurence was not prepared for. But he's never caught off-guard the same way twice, and after

LAURENCE'S FAILURES

Besides the Protestant Reformation – whose "success" or "failure" is still a matter of debate – Laurence has suffered other setbacks, usually because humans or his own Servitors didn't perform as expected. These are a few that still rankle:

The Crusades. In the 11th century, Laurence envisioned a beautiful spiritual pilgrimage to the Holy City of Jerusalem to unify the Christian peoples of Western Europe under the banner of Rome. He hoped to bring together the peoples who had been long neglected, left behind in the ravages of Uriel's Crusade, and unite them with Gabriel's enlightened Islamic society to demonstrate the true soul of Christianity. His Soldier, Pope Urban II, issued a proclamation in 1095 A.D. calling for the faithful to retake Jerusalem . . . but it became a bloody military conquest, not the peaceful reunification Laurence had intended, and it led to almost 200 years of unspeakable savagery. Michael helped Laurence recover from the embarrassment of the First Crusade by lending his aid to the formation of knightly orders patterned after Laurence's own (p. 91).

★ The Hundred Years War. Laurence had little to do with the start of this 14th-15th century war – it was a matter of English and French princes squabbling over territory. But Laurence backed France for most of the war – he wanted to see a resurgence of Latin culture and unity. France, however, lost most of the time, until Michael finally intervened through his agent, Joan of Arc. Eventually France retook all the territory lost to England (and gained a national identity in the process), but Laurence takes no credit for that.

★ The Divine Right of Kings. Long into the modern era, Laurence supported the ancient theory that leaders were an elite, role models who ruled by divine right. Of course, Laurence's intention was to provide the guidance that would make those leaders worthy of their roles. But kings tended to be a stubborn lot, even less amenable than most humans to doing what Laurence wanted. They consistently failed to live up to his expectations, and their power steadily eroded, until by the 18th century, Laurence finally acknowledged that Romanticism was being eclipsed by the Enlightenment, and that his support of the "divine right of kings" had only helped prop up corrupt, outmoded monarchies.

LAURENCE'S VICTORIES

Not all of Laurence's causes have been unsuccessful. ★ The Battle of Poitiers. In 732 A.D., Laurence rode with Charles Martel, the Frank who halted the expansion of the Muslim empire into Europe. Khalid, now the Archangel of Faith (see p. 82), who was then a Word-bound Servitor of Uriel like Laurence, was present and hoping for a Muslim victory. To this day, Khalid claims Laurence intervened on the side of the Franks.

★ The Holy Roman Empire. Charles the Great ("Charlemagne") ruled an empire that was never Roman, and not particularly holy . . . but it *did* unify much of Western Europe, Christianize the Franks and the Saxons, and introduce a new age of chivalry, typified by legends of King Arthur – all causes that Laurence sponsored.

★ The Norman Conquest. Laurence *wanted* England brought into the Western European fold, and his Servitors landed with William the Conqueror in 1066 A.D. The Norman conquest resulted in the reformation of the English church along Roman lines, the Latinization of English culture, and eventually the decline of the Celtic Church, which had been synthesizing entirely too many pagan traditions for Laurence's tastes into its doctrines.

thousands of years, there are only so many new tricks to try. When the War follows a definable, plottable course, as it usually does, Laurence's strategies never fail . . . though at times, the pieces he puts in play do.

Currently, Laurence follows three doctrines in planning the War:

1. Hold That Which is Ours

Though often perceived as a defensive strategy, it is only the first part of Laurence's doctrine. As Christ said Peter was the rock on which to build His Church, Laurence builds the Host's power on those people and places where it is strong. Thus, he encourages every Archangel and Word-bound angel to vigorously defend their Words – given the nature of Hell's assault, this often becomes a very *aggressive* strategy. Laurence also places a high priority on defending divine Tethers. Laurence holds that it is more important to preserve divine Words and Tethers than to destroy infernal ones.

2. Strike to the Heart of the Enemy

When it is possible to take the offensive, Laurence pulls no punches. He does not want angels to nibble at the edges of Hell's influence, picking off a random demon here and there; he wants them to choose important targets that are attainable, and strike hard and fast. Killing one Word-bound Baron of Hell has more impact than slaying a score of minor diabolical Servitors; destroying an infernal Tether weakens Hell more than purging all of its other influences in a city, but leaving the Tether intact. Demons fear Laurence's Servitors because they know that when angels of the Sword attack, it's after

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carefully choosing their target, and dedicating themselves utterly to its destruction.

3. Win Souls

The hearts and minds of humanity are where the War must really be won. To that end, Laurence encourages missionary work, wanting to see as many humans brought to God as possible. Obviously, he favors con-

version to the Roman Catholic Church, seeing its spread as an edge driving away the infernal and adding Heavenly assets. However, any selfless cause is sufficient. Laurence prefers dedication to a noble cause over merely "being good," religious causes over secular ones, Christianity over other religions, and Roman Catholicism over other Christian denominations. But even an atheist teaching illiterates to read is a tiny dagger thrust against the forces of darkness.



LAURENC

POLITICS

Laurence's role as the chief strategist in the war against Lucifer (and as the Archangel in charge of training and assigning Soldiers) requires that he be diplomatic with the entire Host, walking a strand of razorwire few other celestials would touch. It would be fair to say that his (relative) youth and idealism are what keep him going. While his harshest critics say openly that he is incapable of looking facts in the face, that just might be necessary for the job.

Michael

Though Michael has never actually accused Laurence of being unfit for his position – Michael trusts God's judgment – he is not shy about telling the younger Archangel when he's screwed up. Laurence accepts these criticisms with good grace, but it weighs heavily on him that he is always under the eye of the original commander of the Host. They crossed steel once, in a duel that both claim was merely for "practice" – but some angels say that Michael proposed the "sparring session" when he felt Laurence was getting too big for his britches. That settled the question of who is the better fighter, and Laurence has walked more humbly since then . . . but he's confided to his closest advisors that he doesn't believe he's ever *truly* earned Michael's respect – and doing so would mean a lot to him.

Eli

Laurence simply doesn't understand Eli. The Archangel of Creation is one of the eldest, most respected Archangels, and Laurence remembers being awed by Eli along with the other ancient ones. Eli's abandonment of his Cathedral is, to Laurence, a shocking act of betrayal. He would like to see *all* of Eli's Servitors transferred to more responsible Superiors, before Eli drags them down with him.

Novalis

If Novalis was simply a Word-bound angel, Laurence could tolerate and even understand her, but she is an *Archangel*. From Laurence's perspective, being nice is all well and good, but has no place in the War against Hell. Some demons may choose to redeem, and that's fine, but one doesn't extend *hospitality* to the rebels. He considers Novalis an extraneous influence, and would just as soon she confine herself to her domain and stay out of the War.

Khalid

AURENCE

If Laurence was Uriel's right hand, Khalid, the Angel of Faith, was his left. Khalid is much older than Laurence, and felt that *he* should have replaced Uriel as General of the Host. Now Khalid is the Archangel of Faith (*Final Trumpet*, pp. 53-56), and he promotes Islam as mankind's only hope of salvation, as ardently as Laurence promotes Christianity. The rivalry between them dates back to before either became an Archangel – according to rumor, they actually fought at the Battle of Poitiers (p. 81) in 732 A.D. Laurence, however, does not hold a grudge, and even defends his old comrade when Khalid comes under criticism in the Seraphim Council.

Khalid, for his part, never speaks openly against the Archangel of the Sword, but privately he expresses disdain for Laurence and his Church. Laurence hopes someday a true reconciliation will be possible.

The Others

Laurence is friendly, or at least cordial, to the rest of the Archangels. He and Dominic have long supported the Catholic Church together, and Laurence considers Dominic essential to maintaining the integrity of the Host. David, a fellow Malakite, is another member of Heaven's war party, and Laurence always includes the Archangel of Stone in his strategic planning sessions. He doesn't work as closely with Jean, but respects the Archangel of Lightning enormously, and trusts his instincts. He also relies on Jean to counter Vapula, and prevent science from becoming wholly Godless and materialistic, so he's always willing to help promote Jean's innovations.

Janus is another warrior Archangel, but more outspoken in his criticism of Laurence. Laurence tries to ignore the criticisms, but does not often include Janus in his councils. The other Archangels all have a part to play in Laurence's plans, and in exchange for their cooperation, he offers his aid when they ask for it.

Archangel Opinions

Here is Laurence, in the eyes of his fellow Archangels, and how he sees them:

Blandine: His influence on men shapes more dreamscapes than he knows. Some of them aren't on my side of the Marches, but Yves trusts him, and I trust Yves. I prefer him to Uriel. (She is the general on the broadest beachhead of the human soul. I let her do what she does best; she always, **always** comes through for us. Sometimes **we** fail **her**, and I regret those times deeply.)

David: Steadfast. Determined. Focused. It's fair to say I admire the youth, and we've worked well together. His Soldiers and mine mesh nicely; they do good work, permanent work. I do wish he would spend more time considering the realities that his plans ignore. I could do better, and he knows it. But Laurence has an edge on his soul that puts his sword to shame, and we need that. (David's courage and steadfastness are unequaled, and he is an asset to our cause. Of course, there is more to waging war than brute strength.)

Dominic: The Malakite of the Sword . . . He is valuable, well-suited. Incorruptible as only his kind can be, and he moves with purpose to bring order and purity to the humans, with his favored Church. His sword is still touched by the designs of Uriel, in so many ways. I approve. (Dominic? Dominic has a thankless task and per-

forms it well. None of us likes to think we're less than perfect or that someone we trust might be an enemy. Dominic knows the enemy can come with an army – or as a whisper in the night. It is his job to hear the whispers.)

Eli: Nice kid . . . a little intense, but that comes with the job. I know he's upset that I'm not up there in Heaven, but I think he's doing fine without me. I have faith in him – it's too bad he can't reciprocate. (What in Hell does he think he's doing? Does he think being one of the first Archangels excuses him from participating in the War; that his job is over and now he can take a vacation while the rest of us try to save Creation? I fear Dominic may be right about him.)

Gabriel: He glows with the same fire that consumed Uriel, but his is a more tempered flame. He burns brightly, but he flickers with uncertainty. He has not yet been through the crucible . . . we shall see what emerges. (*Gabriel's Servitors are dedicated and noble, but Gabriel her*self cannot be relied upon. She is a primal force whom I've given up trying to direct. In her rare moments of lucidity, she delivers amazing intelligence, and I know she possesses insights even Yves does not.)

Janus: I dislike his predictability. We don't need some idealistic demon-hunter lining the Host up to be smacked by Hell and blinding them with glorious speech. We need to move more quickly, inside and behind and under and above . . . Michael understands. Why isn't Michael there? Tell me that! (*He takes the war directly to the enemy, and I respect that. I'm glad to have his power on our side. But he needs to stop complaining about how he thinks things should be and learn to work as part of the team.*)

Jean: We don't work that closely together. He leaves my angels to their work, and that's fine. (Some of Jean's Servitors have a habit of getting too absorbed in their projects, and forgetting there's a War going on. But Jean doesn't. He may withdraw into his Halls of Progress at times, but when he emerges, it's always with a brilliant idea. My patience has always been rewarded.)

Jordi: He is as deadly and graceful as any of God's creatures. He hunts the diabolical, with skill and cunning. He kills what needs to be killed. But he always votes to protect the works of man. He is not my enemy, but he is not my friend. (*He protects an important part of God's Creation, and he does it well. But Jordi needs to realize that God gave Man dominion over the beasts for a reason. If we lose humanity, we lose the War: I hope someday he'll come out of the wilderness.*)

Marc: He understands the role of commerce . . . he isn't just about his blade, and I respect him for that. I've heard some unpleasant talk about his strategies; I don't repeat it. Bad for morale, bad for the whole team. I *like*

his strategies; he remembers that there are a million fronts, and that not all of them involve blood. Perhaps he wishes it were otherwise; I don't know. But he does his job. He needs to learn about Vacation Time, though. (Marc doesn't get nearly enough credit for his role in the War. He may not engage the enemy directly, but he strikes at Hell's soft underbelly, the realm of money and influence peddling. He finances a lot of our operations, and he teaches mankind that one can be virtuous and prosperous.)

Michael: He is brave and noble. His talents seem wasted in the Eternal City, though. He should be down there carving up the vessels of Lucifer's servants, not moving our warriors around like chessmen. He's a terror, or can be . . . but he expects mechanical perfection from the angels, and as much honor from Hell as he has himself. His sight is keen, but his vision blurs when he looks at the War from a distance. We elders try to counsel him, and we try also to remember that he must have

been given his post for a reason. (I am humbled by his skill and strength. It sometimes worries me that I and not he hold the title of Commander of the Armies of God, until I see the damage that can be done by the lack of overall coordination, and realize again that we need a commander and not simply a champion. He views me as a youth still, and I always welcome his advice. Perhaps some day I will earn his full confidence.)



LAURENC

Novalis: Mmm . . . He doesn't like me. I like his intensity: it's bright and it's warm. He loves his fights, and I don't, but he *is* what he *is*, you know? He has so much to learn, still. He's never learned to let his hair down except to dry the sweat and blood from it. He's never let himself see that we can *win* just by bringing humanity a little peace . . . Happy people don't invite demons in. I don't think Laurence knows that. And I think he's pretty much alone, inside. (*She constantly hinders operations with her insistence on showing mercy to diabolicals. Peace is a wonderful concept, but peace is for after the War is over. I wish she and her Servitors would concern themselves more with plants and less with humanity.)*

Yves: Some are inclined to judge him harshly, because he hasn't already won the War for us. After spending eons waiting for the Earth to cool, haven't his fellow Archangels learned patience yet? God didn't select Laurence on a whim. (I respect him. I admire him. There are days when I envy him, and one or two days when I think I'm lucky enough to understand him. I'm glad the Halls of Worship are left to me, though. He made some mistakes there that he's been wise enough to avoid making again.)



Princely Opinions

Mere mention of Laurence's name provokes strong reactions in Hell . . . usually of fear. Here is how the Princes see the General of the Host:

Andrealphus: I could make all the jokes about swords – but really, he and his angels are so foolishly ethical, always interfering in other people's pleasure. They should learn that the ultimate part of one's desire is proving your control by knowing that you're doing what the other person doesn't want . . . (*He has taken one of God's greatest gifts and perverted it into something filtby and degrading. Do not underestimate Lust, for it has caused more humans – and angels – to go astray than perhaps any other sin.*)

Asmodeus: An impudent pup, blinded by idealism. He's a child pushing pieces around on a board he doesn't understand. Laurence worried me more when he was down on Earth, carving up our forces. I wish him a long career as General of the Host. (By killing their own kind, bis demons do some of our work for us. But he is crafty and his spies are everywhere, forcing us to be ever-vigilant.)

Baal: Am I supposed to accept this . . . *whelp* as my adversary? Bah. It is laughable to think of Laurence as Michael's replacement. Yes, he is a competent tactician, but this game bores me. It is time to end it. (It is good that he underestimates me. Pride blinds Baal more than my supposed naiveté could ever blind me. I am secure in the knowledge that even if I should fall in the final battle, God's forces will prevail, and all Baal's carnage will avail him not.)

Beleth: He brings bright dreams . . . knights in shining armor, puerile fairy tales. And his Guardians of the Marches keep the darker dreams at bay. But they can't protect humanity from itself. I am the darkness that Laurence dares not gaze into. (*I pity Blandine, who must* suffer over what her lover has become. But I do not pity Beleth. Killing her will put two souls out of their misery.)

Belial: It doesn't matter how sharp the blade is; apply enough heat, and it'll melt. Someday, I'm going to light that kid up like a candle. (*He's probably more responsible than anything else for Gabriel's madness, and I'd welcome the opportunity to prune the Word of Fire to one bearer. If Belial wasn't held in check by Baal, he'd be as great a danger to his own side as to ours.*)

Haagenti: Annoying. Gets in my way. Stops people eating. Spiky, too. Someone should sort him out – what do we have an army for, anyhow? (What a disgusting creature. But dangerous. One of the deadly sins, indeed. Someday, that obscene, ravening maw will be shut forever, when I drive my sword through his skull and pin his jaws together.)

Kobal: So, God's on Generalissamo Number Three . . . they seem to have staffing problems up there.



Anyone who takes himself as seriously as this boy does is just begging to have a "Kick Me!" sign pasted on his back. And you know, that's not a bad idea . . . (What have we to fear from this laughing buffoon? Kobal can only threaten those who are insecure. The Holy Spirit is a shield against scorn and mockery.)

Kronos: We need not deal with Laurence directly. We defeat him by defeating Heaven in the War. Laurence's fate is to fail. (*He worries me. Some say he's a dark reflection of Yves. I don't know about that, but somehow he has access to a lot of classified information, and I want it stopped.)*

Lilith: Heh. How charming to know the General of the Host is younger than me. What I'd give for the key to unlock the chains around his virtue . . . But he's best avoided; much too dangerous. If you get any Geases on his Servitors, though . . . call me. (*She chose to walk away* from God. She cloaks herself in the ideology of liberation, but never forget that she represents the consequences of free will exercised selfishly – the freedom to choose Hell over Heaven.)

Malphas: Laurence is proof that the whole is *not* greater than the sum of its parts. A sword is better at cleaving than unifying. How many different ways can I fragment his precious Church before he sees the folly of relying on anyone but oneself? (*I'm tempted to see Malphas' hand in every schism, but I have to remember that he can't dictate what humans will do any more than I can. Still, if not for him, the Church would be far stronger, and we might never have had a Dark Ages. He is one of our most dangerous foes.)*

Nybbas: Oh, please! Knights in shining armor, saints and martyrs, sacrifice, chastity, honor, virtue, yadda yadda yadda ... That's all *so* pre-post-modern! The kid needs to update himself, get a little anti-hero thing going, maybe a female lead to give him something worth fighting for ... But that church-motif has *got* to go! I'm sorry, but the public media is no place to be preaching moral values. (*He condenses everything into a shallow tale of sex and violence, devoid of depth or consequences, and the masses swallow his pabulum. But that vacuous wretch cannot conceal the power and glory of the Word of God.)*

Saminga: Nasty, nasty Malakite! He's so sickeningly virtuous, and he kills my best Servitors. I want him dead! *Dead*, do you hear me? *Dead*, *dead*, *DEAD*! (*Those whom he claims are beyond redemption. He's a horror-show beyond description, but flesh is flesh – living or undead, it cuts as easily.*)

Valefor: He's so busy looking for demons, he can't see when we've come and gone. Anyone want a sword? (*He doesn't just steal things* . . . *he steals virtue. He robs people of their integrity and respect and leaves them mourning the loss*

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of their possessions. These thieves should lose their heads, not just their hands.)

Vapula: Religion is an old, failed, mortal paradigm. Laurence is a crusader for the past, when I'm trying to lead the world into the future. (*Vapula embodies the dan*gers of knowledge untempered by wisdom. His science is literally godless – not every new innovation represents progress.)

Be ye afraid of the sword: for wrath bringeth the punishments of the sword, that ye may know there is a judgment.

- Job 19:29

Humans and Others

Here is what *Laurence* thinks of the other players in the War.

Humanity: They are the reason for everything. The War cannot be fought independently of humanity . . . we can only win by *winning* humanity. It is their souls we are fighting to save.

Soldiers of God: Those who know about the War, and serve willingly, are our greatest assets. Do not risk them needlessly, but do not deny them the right to risk themselves, even sacrifice themselves, in the battle against evil, just as we would.

Soldiers of Hell: I will never understand how humans can damn their eternal souls to Hell, knowing full well what they do. But damned they are, so excise them like a cancer.

Pagan Soldiers: They are foolish, succumbing to the promises of old gods, false gods. But some act with a misguided sense of honor. Save them if you can, and destroy their patrons when possible, but don't let them interfere in the War . . . above all, do not let them become a resource for the Other Side.

Sorcerers: They've sold their souls to Hell for knowledge they could gain for free if they chose the side of the light. Pity them, but do not spare them.

LAUREN

Saints: I am angered when I see angels behaving as if the Saints are being given the privilege of helping us. We are *honored* to have their help. I see the fruits of our success every time I walk the streets of the Eternal City and meet the souls we've helped save.



Ethereals: They are figments; their time is past. They are not a part of God's plan, and they must not be permitted to interfere with mankind's destiny. Those who are harmless may be ignored, but those who align themselves with Hell must be eradicated.

EXORCISTS

As described in the *Corporeal Player's Guide*, p. 39, exorcism in *In Nomine* is a form of sorcery. The Roman Catholic Church has a small number of "white sorcerers" (who do *not* think of themselves as sorcerers, or performing "magic!"), who learn *only* the rituals of exorcism. They are carefully monitored by angels of the Sword and Judgment. The GM might also consider using the optional rule in the *Game Master's Guide*, p. 121, which allows exorcisms to be performed by non-sorcerers.

URENCE

THE ETERNAL CITY

A glittering gem at the heart of Heaven, the Eternal City is an invigorating blend of the fresh and the ancient. Right now, Laurence is its ruler, but Servitors of all the Archangels can be found in its streets and buildings.

The City *is* a city, home to millions of saintly, angelic, and other souls. It is reminisicent of ancient Rome at its height; more cynical visitors would add modern Mexico City and Tokyo. Its Christian inhabitants often call it "New Jerusalem," but it would be more accurate to call it the *original* Jerusalem – the terrestrial Holy City is a mundane echo of the capital of Heaven. Like Jerusalem, the Eternal City has seven gates; Laurence has named them after the Cardinal Virtues of Faith, Hope, Charity, Fortitude, Justice, Temperance, and Prudence.

As Jerusalem once was, the Eternal City is walled, surrounded by strong bastions built of blocks of semi-precious stones. Nobody, least of all the Archangel Laurence, expects the walls to be any use in defending the place against infernal attack. They are symbolic walls, representing the defense of Heaven against evil. When Lucifer and his hordes are finally defeated, the walls of the Eternal City will dissolve into mist.

The Halls of Worship

Laurence's own halls of state are dwarfed in both importance and dimension by their neighbor, the glorious Halls of Worship. This symbolism was Laurence's deliberate choice, emphasizing the importance of human beliefs. The Halls are a gigantic network of cells and corridors of what might be considered the essential soul of marble, granite, brushed concrete, fresh bamboo, and dark terra cotta. Its location is analogous to the site of the Temple of Solomon in the mundane Jerusalem. The exact nature of the structure seems to depend largely on the observer; it is the most "subjective" building in the Eternal City.

It is there, in the Halls of Worship, that the Heavenly representatives of every belief gather, and where Laurence walks, openly expressing his desire for Christianity – the Church of Rome in particular – to eventually occupy it all.

The Church of the Sword

Laurence's great hall stands near the Halls of Worship, on the site corresponding to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. As Laurence's own Cathedral, there is nothing subjective about the Church of the Sword – it is a Catholic church, with tall gothic spires, stained glass windows of unearthly beauty, and a great cruciform sword standing behind the altar.

TETHERS

Laurence's Tethers form in places where humans join the war against Hell and are victorious. Many of his Tethers are Catholic holy places, but by no means

all. The Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, St. Peter's Basilica in the Vatican, and the Hagia Sophia in Istanbul are three of Laurence's greatest Tethers, but the Episcopalian Chapel of St. Joseph of Arimathea, in the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C. (*Night Music*, p. 12), and the Hindu/Buddhist temple of Angkor Wat (below), also connect to the Church of the Sword. Each of Laurence's Earthly Tethers connects to one of the chapels in his Heavenly Church, with the most important ones opening closer to the altar. More Tethers of the Sword can be found in the *Liber Castellorum*, pp. 83-84.

Angkor Wat

Angkor Wat is the largest religious structure on Earth. It is located in Cambodia, almost 200 miles northwest of Phnom Penh. The city of Angkor Thom became the capital of the ancient Khmer Empire in the 10th century A.D.; the great temple ("Wat") was built in the 12th century. 4,920 by 4,265 feet, surrounded by a 590 foot-wide moat, it took 30 years to complete. Upon its consecration to Vishnu, it became a Tether. Its noncorporeal endpoint shifted between Vishnu's ethereal Domain and Laurence's celestial Cathedral – much to the surprise of both.

The Hindu gods were the most powerful ethereal spirits untouched by the Purity Crusade . . . a vexing issue for Laurence. Though Vishnu stood solidly against Hell, he (like the other Hindu gods) refused to step aside and cede authority to the Host. Laurence invested an enormous amount of energy in securing the contested Tether. Vishnu elected not to engage Laurence on this battleground, and allowed the Archangel of the Sword to claim Angkor Wat. Laurence triumphantly appointed a Seraph named Omparkash as its Seneschal, and made plans to expand his influence into pagan-dominated Southeast Asia.

That didn't happen. The Crusades absorbed too much of Laurence's attention, and in the meantime, the Khmer Empire declined and the great temple was mostly forgotten for centuries. Until recently, Angkor Wat

remained mostly inaccessible to the outside world; Khmer Rouge guerrillas have controlled the area for much of the last quarter century. Omparkash has come to accept a hybrid of Buddhist and Christian beliefs, and hopes that in the coming decade, Cambodia will become increasingly open, and his Tether may receive more international attention.

The Church of the Sword is a sanctuary. Anyone may enter, and once inside, they cannot be removed by force if they refuse to go. Only Laurence himself can expel someone seeking sanctuary within his Church. An angel or soul who has taken refuge in the Church can get a fair hearing from Laurence, but he is merciless to those who abuse the blessing of the sanctuary for unworthy reasons.

The Hearts of Laurence's angels are kept in the crypt beneath the Church. A special locked vault below the crypt holds the Archangel of the Sword's mightiest weapons in readiness for the final battle.

Only Laurence himself knows what is down there, and the two Cherubim guarding the door do not allow sightseers. But rumor has it that it's something *big*.



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VARIATIONS ON A THEME

Laurence can be presented in a variety of ways in your campaign. Here are several different personifications of the Archangel of the Sword.

Laurence the Boy Scout

Laurence is a kid who's somehow found himself in the company of adults, and he just can't learn grown-up rules. He runs the War as if it were a literally a game, with rules of fair play that everyone must follow, and he's simply not able to cope with Hell's cheating. This *terrifies* Michael and the other Archangels – Laurence was appointed by God Himself, and he's *not* going to step down, no matter how obvious his incompetence becomes. Depending on the mood of your campaign, this version of Laurence can be humorous or tragic.

LAURENCE'S FEMININE SIDE

Laurence is usually masculine, but he does have a female vessel. He's used it only a handful of times, but in some cultures, a woman bearing a sword presents a more fearsome appearance and commands attention better than a man would. Laurence is sometimes – incorrectly – associated with Joan of Arc, but while she was actually Michael's servant, it's easy to see how Laurence in female form could be mistaken for the Maid d'Orleans.

Laurence the Paladin

Laurence embodies the highest ideals of the chivalric code: he *is* the Arthurian knight. Likewise, his Servitors are modern-day Lancelots, but no less effective for their strict codes of honor. Even non-Malakim take oaths of chastity, poverty, and temperance (see p. 75), and in a light-hearted campaign, *all* of his Servitors carry swords. This version of Laurence is most suitable for campaigns with a high degree of contrast between angels and demons.

Laurence the Martinet

Laurence is as poker-spined as Dominic, and can't abide an idea that isn't his own. His Servitors must obey without question, preferably without independent thought. There is no room in his ranks for anyone who questions Heaven's agenda, who shows sympathy for ethereals, and who is not a devout Catholic. A single point of dissonance is a permanent mark of shame, and more than that probably merits Outcasting. This version lends itself well to darker campaigns, particularly where the lines between good and evil are blurry.



LAURENCE

BEARING THE SOURD: SERVITORS OF LAURENCE

LAURENCIANS, LAURENTINES, SWORD-BEARERS

Angels of the Sword strive to live up to Laurence's standards. They consider themselves role models, setting the standard for how their Archangel would like all angels to behave, and they're especially careful of their conduct around humans. It isn't enough just to be an angel – angels should be *angelic*.

This earns Laurencians a reputation for being "goodietwo shoes," but only the youngest and most idealistic Sword-bearers could be mistaken for boy scouts. They do promote doing good deeds, and are fond of moralistic sayings like "Virtue is its own reward," but veteran angels of the Sword have wallowed in gore and stared evil in the face. They are the knights of Heaven, but they're deadly serious about their oaths, and their armor only shines when they have time to wash the blood off.

Laurence's rigid discipline communicates itself down through the ranks. From the time they fledge (and often before – many of Laurence's Servitors began serving him as relievers), angels of the Sword are used to taking orders. They trust and obey their higher-ups, because they assume no one would be appointed to a position of authority without having earned it. It works very well, far more efficiently than the best-trained mortal army, but it does tend to weed out individual initiative. An angel of the Sword without orders and no superior to turn to is capable of functioning on his own, but he'll never forget he is part of Laurence's organization.

In the absence of a "proper" authority figure – someone above them in Laurence's chain of command – Swordbearers tend to stratify themselves in whatever company they find themselves. There must be a hierarchy, with everyone's role clearly defined. The first order of precedence is rank – an unranked angel of the Sword will usually obey angels with Distinctions from other Archangels, *if* he has no conflicting duties or previous orders. (The zeal with which they obey tends to reflect Laurence's attitude toward the other angel's master – Laurencians are quite comfortable taking orders from ranking Dominicans and Michaelites, but will only obey a Master of Peace under duress.) If there are no Distinctions to establish precedence, there is a tendency to look toward



angels of a "higher" Choir – thus Seraphim are the most respected, Malakim will also take directions from Cherubim and Elohim (and Ofanim if they *have* to), and Mercurians are used to being lowest in the pecking order.

OBEDIENCE AND DISSONANCE

Because disobeying his orders causes his Servitors dissonance, Laurence is very careful when he issues orders. When he was new to his position, Laurence exceeded Dominic in strictness and Jean in micromanaging. The result was quite a few dissonant angels (and, it's rumored, some Fallen ones) who weren't able to follow his overlynarrow instructions.

Laurence learned the hard way to give his Servitors as much direction as they need, and no more, and more importantly, to delegate. He makes his *intentions* very clear, but leaves it to his servants to determine the specific means by which they should be carried out.

Thus, Laurence will not tell a Servitor "Take Highway 41 to Tifton, Georgia, find the Tether of Death just south of there, and bring me the Seneschal's head." Such specific orders could result in all kinds of dissonance – what if the angel knows a more efficient way of traveling to Tifton (or Highway 41 is washed out)? What if Laurence's intelligence is flawed, and the Tether is *north* of Tifton, or it's actually a Tether to Dark Humor? What if the Seneschal has been destroyed already – should the Tether be left intact? What if the Seneschal wants to redeem? What if the angel can only kill the Seneschal by some means which won't leave an intact head to bring to Laurence? Scenarios like this came back to bite the young Archangel of the Sword, until he learned to loosen his control – a little.

Now, Laurence will tell his Servitor "There is an infernal Tether near Tifton, Georgia. Shut it down." And most likely, Laurence will give this order to one of his highranking officers, who will then pass the order down the chain of command to the angels who are to actually do the shutting down – Laurence's officers can give more specific directions, if necessary.

WORD-BOUND SERVITORS

Laurence's favorite Words are virtues, naturally (such as Etiquette, p. 96), but he also sponsors many Words relating to the Church and to demon-hunting. Not surprisingly, Malakim make up a large number of Laurence's Wordbound angels. Righteous Vengeance, Righteous Anger, Priests, Kings, Sunday School Teachers, Armorers, Cavalry, Hunting, Churches, and Chivalry are all Words held by Laurence's Servitors.

Sometimes, despite leaving his Servitors as much flexibility as he dares in interpreting his orders, Laurence will still set a Servitor up for dissonance, because of bad information or an unexpected development. When this happens, Servitors may invoke Laurence for clarification (or use the Celestial Song of Tongues). If this isn't practical, angels of the Sword are expected to do their best, and take dissonance if necessary. If it was truly through no fault of their own, Laurence will absolve them afterward.





ORGANIZATION

Laurence's Chain of Command

For his first eleven centuries as General of the Host, Laurence's army was surprisingly idiosyncratic; individuals who distinguished themselves were given unique Distinctions, and selected for leadership roles when Laurence needed to put someone in charge of other angels. By the 10th century, he had also organized his

Holy Orders (p. 91), and used them to orchestrate his major campaigns.

But by the 19th century, the Holy Orders were often exhibiting rivalries, making coordination difficult. Laurence became very concerned that Malphas might be

influencing them. Furthermore, the old feudal model of warfare was proving obsolete. Michael encouraged Laurence to "modernize" his forces, but in fairness, Laurence was already planning a reorganization.

The result was what his Servitors called the "New Order." Laurence did not abolish the old Orders, but declared that all Distinctions awarded for service within an Order were to be "retired." Angels of the Sword would thereafter follow a chain of command independent of any Order, incorporating new, military-style ranks. Angels may still serve in an Order, but promotions are based on meritorious conduct regardless of whether it's in the service of an Order or not, and Laurence's Servitors must obey higher-ranking Servitors regardless of affiliation.

In practice, most of Laurence's Servitors function as they did before the reorganization. Angels of the Sword engage in individual quests, unless they are gathered for a specific mission by an officer; there are no standing units in Laurence's army. However, while there is no military-style table of organization, every angel of the Sword has at least one higher-ranking superior he must report to, who is responsible for knowing where he is and what he's doing. Because they are angels of the Sword, disciplined and obedient, this works very efficiently, and allows an amazing amount of flexibility and autonomy, given how tightly their Archangel holds the reins. At any time, Laurence needs only give the word, and a thousand independently-questing Servitors will be

summoned to stand in formation, ready to act as one.

A prince should therefore have no other aim or thought, nor take up any other thing for his study, but war and its organization and discipline, for that is the only art that is necessary to one who commands.

– Niccolo Machiavelli



AURENCE



The Host

Laurence's organization of the War as a whole is very different. The Archangel of the Sword has no authority over the other Archangels – his job is to determine strategy and make plans. It is up to the individual Archangel to interpret their part in Laurence's game and act on it.

Of course, it is to the benefit of the entire Host to act in an organized fashion, and there is very little dissent – just a lot of creative additions. Each Archangel has his own Word to protect, after all.

ORDERS OF THE SWORD

Warrior-angels formed groups dedicated to specific causes long before Laurence became an Archangel, but the tradition was never so formalized under Uriel. Laurence encouraged the practice, hoping the traditions of honor, dedication, and chivalry would spread to the rest of the Host, and mankind. Divine Orders of the Sword became a model for knightly orders on Earth.

Every Order must be approved by Laurence. The process of gathering a dedicated group of followers and earning Laurence's approval for a new Order is a quest in itself (p. 99). The leader of an Order must be a Master of the Armies of God at the very least, and most are Majors or Colonels. These Orders are not necessarily restricted to angels of the Sword (in fact, a few have humans as members), but membership in some of them requires Sword attunements, and since the membership oath of each divine Order implicitly gives fealty to Laurence, most Archangels will not permit their Servitors to join.

At one time, each Order had its own Distinctions between Master and Grand Master; Laurence generally approved candidates nominated by a Grand Master as a formality. When the New Order was instituted (p. 90), Laurence forbade any further promotions within an Order, but permitted members to keep their old Distinctions as formal titles (albeit titles with no official rank).

Even in Laurence's ranks, not everyone becomes a member of one of his Orders. No special privileges are gained by joining one. No one with dissonance or Discord is permitted to join. Members who become dissonant are usually given the same opportunity as any other angel of the Sword to rectify the problem. Members who dishonor their oath are usually expelled . . . and become infamous among Laurence's Servitors; many are so shamed they are forced to seek service with another Archangel. Orders of the Sword are most popular with Cherubim and Malakim (the membership oath *does* count as a new oath for the latter). The orders below are just the largest and best-known; others exist.

MODES OF ADDRESS

Angels of the Sword have formal protocols for addressing one another, their Superior, and others, varying according to the occasion. The GM is encouraged to elaborate on these as he sees fit, but here are some of the basic forms of address.

Though following the New Order reorganization (p. 90), only Vassal, Friend, Master, Major, Colonel, and General are official ranks in Laurence's chain of command, many old Distinctions are still used for formal addresses (see p. 74), and some angels of the Sword are "breveted" as Sergeants or Lieutenants ("Captain" is *not* used, because of associations with the diabolical Distinction).

Any superior, including Laurence himself, may be addressed as "Sir" in normal conversation. In person, Laurence may also be addressed formally as "My Lord" or "Lord Commander" by his own Servitors, "Archangel" and "General" by Servitors of other

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Archangels, and frequently "Your Grace" or "Your Eminence" by Saints and other humans.

When not using military forms of address, angels of the Sword address each other (and other angels) formally by their secondary Choir names, e.g. "Most Holy," "Guardian," "Wheel," etc. (Mercurians are commonly abbreviated to "Friend.") Word-bound angels, however, are addressed by their tertiary Choir names, e.g. "Hayyoth of Churches," "King of Righteous Vengeance," etc. The exception is Seraphim, who are only called "Trisagionist" if they actually *are* a member of that group (*Angelic Player's Guide*, p. 25).

Laurencians don't really expect other angels to know their formal protocols, but will react positively to those who do (or who at least try to get them right). Demons and Servitors of the Wind can get Swordbearers quite riled by calling them "Swordies."



The Order of the Holy Cross

This Order is explicitly dedicated to defending the Catholic Church. It was formed before the split in 1054 A.D. (p. 79), and that division was heartwrenching for angels of the Holy Cross. When it appeared that the Order might become divided as the Church had, Laurence stepped in and dictated that *where the two Churches differ*; the Church of Rome would be the one the Order would support. However, many of its members still work among Eastern Orthodox Catholics, defending that Church and hoping for an eventual reunification.

In addition to the Nicene Creed (the basic statement of Christian faith for Catholics and Protestants alike), members of the Holy Cross must swear the following: *I* will defend and uphold the Holy Catholic Church, and place the well-being of the Church and its members above my own, second only to my dedication to the Sword. Anyone (including humans) may join. The Grand Master is a Malakite General of the Sword named Paul, who spends much of his time in Rome, personally directing humans and angels who work within the Catholic Church.

The Guardians of the Marches

The Guardians are an elite cadre of angels of the Sword, most of them Malakim. They serve as "border guards" between the Marches and the corporeal realm. They also keep the surviving pagan spirits away from the dream worlds of mortals in the Marches. Like many border guards, some of the Guardians have gained a great deal of sympathy for the pagan spirits over the centuries. They would never shirk their duties or their oaths, but they have concluded that the pagans might have some place in God's Plan. Many of the Guardians see that some of the spirits are very different from demons, and doubt that their oath not to suffer an evil to live applies to these "third parties" of the War. The oath that all Guardians must take is: *I will not permit any ethereal spirit*

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to invade a mortal dreamscape or the corporeal realm, nor fail to eject those I discover, if it is my choice.

Most of the Guardians were Servitors of Uriel and battle-comrades of Laurence during the Purification Crusade. Rumor has it that the Malakite commander of the Guardians, Tahariel, (who prefers his old Distinction of High Commander and March Warden to the simpler "Grand Master" accompanying his actual rank of Master), hopes to gain the Word of Purity for himself and take up Uriel's work of cleansing the Marches. That won't happen if Laurence has anything to say about it. Tahariel maintains a "hard line" approach to guarding the borders of the Marches, and takes a dim view of any angel who shows leniency in dealing with ethereals.

Blandine grants her Dream Walking attunement to all of the Guardians. She has warned Laurence and Tahariel that she will not hesitate to revoke the Guardians' attunements if they become so overzealous that they threaten the Word of Dreams.

The Guardians do most of their work in the Marches, but can and will venture into the corporeal realm in pursuit of "invading" spirits. In the Marches, they guard the border firmly but not ruthlessly; intruding ethereals will be ejected but not slain out of hand unless they show dangerous fight (or, of course, demonic sympathies).

The Order of the Sacred Heart

Angels of the Sacred Heart are "celestial medics;" most are devout Christians. Their purpose is to minister to those who minister to humanity – fellow angels, as well as Soldiers of God and others involved in the War against the diabolical. Angels of the Sacred Heart must know the Songs of Healing; many know other protective Songs (such as Harmony, Shields, and Succor) as well, and quite a few have the Purity of Purpose, Holy Fortitude, or Divine Absolution attunements (p. 73). While this is one of the few divine Orders suitable for Mercurians, they are not pacifists, and will not hesitate to actively do battle against demons. Besides physical (and ethereal and celestial) healing, these angels also offer counseling, and know many ways to remove dissonance . . . wayward angels and sometimes even Outcasts will often turn to the Order of the Sacred Heart for help. Laurence (and Dominic) permit them to offer sanctuary to such angels because of their oath: I will offer such aid, healing, and sanctuary as does not conflict with my duties to the Sword to all servants of Heaven in need, and to the truly repentant, and turn over anyone in need of more assistance than I can give to a higher authority. The Order accepts Saints (in fact, the current Grand Master is a bodhisattva who administers the Order from Heaven), but is loathe to permit mortals to join, as their work is very dangerous, and a mortal healer of celestials is likely to become the one in need of healing.

The Order of the Eternal Sword

The most feared of all Laurence's divine Orders, members of the Eternal Sword must all have his Hunt attunement. All are fierce combatants, with Cherubim, Ofanim, and Malakim making up the vast majority of the Order's membership. Its Grand Master is Colonel Peliel, the Malakite Angel of Righteous Vengeance. The Order of the Eternal Sword singles out diabolicals (or, rarely, humans or ethereals) to be "terminated with extreme prejudice." They will hunt the same demon, over and over again, slaying as many vessels as they need to, until they get a chance to kill him celestially. Their oath is: *I* will not rest until my chosen target is permanently destroyed, nor will I devote myself to any other activity but its destruction, except for those dictated by my duties to the Sword.

Standard operating procedure is for two members to engage in the initial pursuit of a target; once contact is made, both will attune themselves to the prey, and one will retreat to the celestial plane. The one who stayed behind will pursue the target to the death; should he arrive back at his Heart in Trauma (or should his Heart shatter), the second hunter will immediately take over pursuit (bringing along a partner who will then act as his "second," at least until the first hunter comes out of Trauma). In this way, a demon marked for death will always have a fanatically determined angel in pursuit. Being targeted by the Order of the Eternal Sword terrifies Diabolicals; it's rumored that even Hell hasn't been far enough to run for some of their victims. Other demons, naturally enough, will avoid anyone rumored to have been singled out by the Order. Angels of the Eternal Sword know and value their reputation among Diabolicals, and they do not choose their targets casually. They study prospective targets, choosing only demons of exceptional evil, or those who have inflicted severe

harm on Laurence's Word or the Catholic Church. It's claimed that they have *never* failed to eliminate a designated target, eventually . . . and rumored that Laurence himself has taken up the hunt on occasion, to preserve the Order's perfect record . . .

CHOIRS

Laurence's angels are very conscious of the divisions between Choirs. While not all of Laurence's angels follow the examples below, they are more likely to live up to their stereotypes than Servitors of any other Archangel. On the other hand, they downplay inter-Choir rivalries . . . Ofanim and Malakim of the Sword, or Cherubim and Kyriotates, or Seraphim and Mercurians, may grate on each other as elsewhere, but they will *not* allow such conflicts to interfere with good order and discipline . . . and they certainly won't display any conflicts in front of non-Laurencians.



Seraphim

WALL LABALLABLABALLABALLA LABALLABLABALLABALLABALLABALLABALLA

Perhaps the most regal Seraphim in Heaven, Laurence's Most Holy conduct themselves like titled knights. Almost all carry swords, if only for ceremonial occasions, and see it as their responsibility to ensure that no angels of the Sword are lacking in virtue. They aren't shy about lecturing other angels for their shortcomings, either . . . many obtain the Purity of Purpose attunement (p. 73). Not surprisingly, this doesn't often endear them to the rest of the Host, but they *do* try very, very hard to live up to the standards they demand of others, and mostly they succeed.

In Laurence's organization, Seraphim are usually officers. While some are active in the field (and all get rotated through the front lines, so as not to get in the habit of seeing the War only in the abstract), usually they operate at a strategic level.

Cherubim

Cherubim are numerous in Laurence's army, and usually occupy NCO roles. Most get their experience leading small groups and being responsible for individual objectives. Often they are squires to the more knightly Seraphim, watching the field officers' backs.

Cherubim of the Sword have a reputation for being built like concrete walls, and not much brighter. The last may be an exaggeration, but with their ability to apply their resonance on sight (giving them many



opportunities to attune themselves to someone), and their faith in their Seraphim superiors, many don't feel a need for a high Intelligence or Perception, and tend to emphasize damage-dealing (and damage-absorbing) attributes instead.

Ofanim

Ofanim of the Sword are knights-errant, wandering the Earth on individual quests and missions of vengeance or redemption. While Malakim have the fiercer reputation, Laurence's Ofanim are often his most *skilled* warriors. Most take the Hunt attunement, and can be as relentless as a Cherub and as violent as a Malakite when it comes to shedding diabolical blood.

In Laurence's army, Ofanim are scouts, snipers, forward observers, intelligence and espionage agents, and other solo operatives . . . they're at their best operating with relative independence, so they aren't usually held in the check to the degree that other Choirs are. Sometimes this is frustrating to Laurence and his other Servitors, but no one questions the Wheels' loyalty or efficacy.

Elobim

There aren't many Elohim in Laurence's service – he *wants* his angels to react according to a subjective (Catholic) worldview, which can be difficult for the Powers. Those who do join him are comfortable as long as they have firm orders – following orders never causes dissonance.

Elohim of the Sword most often act as lieutenants to a Seraph, in the capacity of advisor and intelligence-gatherer. In the field, they also make excellent interrogators; they have *no* compunctions against torturing anyone who serves evil. A few of Laurence's Elohim become solo questers, most often crusading against pagan and diabolical cults, which their resonance helps them track down.

Malakim

Serving the Archangel of the Sword is a Malakite's dream; there are more Malakim in Laurence's ranks than any other Choir. They are surprisingly versatile in both function and attitude; some become crusading knights and vigilantes, others are footsoldiers, and others become high-ranking officers. Their methods range from the traditional practice of burying steel in diabolical flesh, to teaching humans morals. All are fanatical in their dedication to purging evil.

Malakim often serve as Laurence's "internal police," as well as guardians against corruption in the Church. With their resonance and Choir Attunement, they can sniff out iniquity with ease, and demons fear them for very good reason.

Kyriotates

Laurence's Kyriotates have the most "human contact" of any of his angels, since they all live a human life as well as a celestial one. They are responsible for much of the Sword's support network, and frequently have access to armories, records departments, and local churches. They are also tireless hunters; they have roots in local communities, and like to pair up with another angel of the Sword when there's an opportunity to root out diabolicals.

The 5-point cost of their Choir Attunement represents the time it takes to find a suitable host. *With the GM's permission*, if a Kyriotate of the Sword's host dies in combat and another suitable mortal dies in the same fight, the Kyriotate may be permitted to replace his old host with the new one at no cost.



Mercurians

The Friends of Man are also the enemies of demonkind, and woe to any diabolical who misreads a Mercurian of the Sword as a non-combatant. Laurence's Mercurians can't hurt *humans*, even Hellsworn, but they often become very skilled sharpshooters, or carry summonable sword-relics just in case they get the opportunity to hack into a demon.

When not fighting demons, Mercurians of the Sword are teachers and morale officers, grooming humanity for its part in the War. There aren't many Mercurians of high rank in Laurence's army.

SERVITORS OF CREATION IN SERVICE TO THE SWORD

Not many of Eli's servants have found service with Laurence, but Laurence will welcome any who do seek him out; he sees it as saving them from a derelict, possibly dangerous Superior. He's no more generous than any other Archangel about rewarding angels of Creation in his service, though; Eli's Servitors have to work hard to prove they haven't suffered a loss of discipline and dedication as a result of their creator's footloose ways.

Saints, Soldiers, and the Enlightened Ones

Over the centuries, Laurence has steadily increased his interest in the non-angelic resources of Heaven – Soldiers of light, Saints, and the bodhisattva, as well as ordinary humans. He spends a good deal of time in the Council Spires these days, often in private conference with Dominic over the placement and empowerment of the mortal servants of Heaven. He spends just as much time in the Groves, conferring with David and Michael and speaking with the bodhisattva who are currently "between incarnations," learning more of the human perspective on the War.

Theoretically, *all* Soldiers of God and Saints are under Laurence's jurisdiction; he is supposed to be informed of all human resources in the War, and he has the right to "commandeer" them for his own purposes. He won't usually call on someone else's servant without great need – but more because of his respect for the human's loyalties than any sense of propriety about which Archangel should have authority over him.

Some Soldiers exist without Laurence's knowledge, of course. He is annoyed by this, but accepts that some Archangels just aren't going to cooperate. Soldiers who are known to him can (*if* they can somehow make contact with him) request Servitor Attunements from the Archangel of the Sword, as well as from their own patron Archangel, as can any Saint.

Laurence is one of the few Archangels who often grants Distinctions to humans. A few Soldiers have been promoted to Master of the Armies of God. Laurence will not grant any higher Distinctions to mortals, but at least one Saint has risen as high as Colonel.

SAMPLE SERVITORS

CURTIS, THE ANGEL OF ETIQUETTE *Malakite Grand Master of the Sword*

Corporeal Forces - 5Strength 10Agility 10Ethereal Forces - 4Intelligence 7Precision 9Celestial Forces - 5Will 10Perception 12**Curtis has raised his Perception independently;

see *In Nomine*, p. 202.

Vessels: Human/4 (Male, Charisma +2), Human/2 (spare male vessel)

Skills: Detect Lies/5, Dodge/4, Emote/4, Fighting/3, Knowledge/6 (Etiquette), Large Weapon/6 (Sword), Savoir-Faire/6, Tactics/3

Songs: Blades (Corporeal/6, Celestial/6), Form (Corporeal/6, Ethereal/3), Harmony (all/5), Numinous Corpus (Wings/6), Tongues (Corporeal/6), Virtue/4, Witness/2

Attunements: Malakite of the Sword, Seraph of the Sword, Mercurian of the Sword, Purity of Purpose, Master and Major of the Armies of God, Grand Master and Angel of Etiquette

Artifact: A cane relic that can be wielded like a long sword and do appropriate damage (Power +4), with a +4 bonus to Large Weapon (Sword) skill, but only when wielded by an angel of the Sword; otherwise it is a normal cane, and it always *appears* to be nothing more.

Special Rites: Defuse a tense or unfriendly situation by using etiquette; Spend half an hour teaching a child manners; Elicit a genuine apology (i.e., not one compelled by threat of bodily harm)

Special Powers: As the Angel of Etiquette, Curtis has his own Servitor Attunement, *Mannerliness*, which he may grant to others. Anyone with Mannerliness instinctively knows local etiquette, and cannot suffer from a failed Savoir-Faire roll, even on a default (failed rolls are treated as having a check digit of 0; a successful roll is still necessary to receive positive effects from the skill, however). Malakim with this attunement gain an extra ability: they may use their resonance to determine a person's *rudest* and most *polite* actions, relative to that individual's native customs.

Malakite Oaths: (I) Never suffer an evil to live when it is my choice; (II) Never allow myself to be captured by the armies of Lucifer; (III) Never behave rudely; (IV) Always dress properly for the occasion; (V) Treat everyone – even diabolicals – with respect until they prove they are unworthy of it.

Few celestials expect the Angel of Etiquette to be one of Laurence's Malakim, much less a Master of the Armies of God. Curtis is as dedicated to purging evil as any other Malakite. He just goes about it in a more refined manner.

The core of Etiquette is respect. Curtis sees etiquette as the only way that people can coexist in a civilized manner. He realizes that being polite doesn't always mean being good. But it's hard to be bad without being impolite, so the rules of etiquette at least make it easy to spot the sinners.

The current state of Western civilization frustrates Curtis immensely. "Etiquette" has become a symbol of classism and elitism. Acting without consideration for others is now a sign of "self-esteem." Anyone who claims to be offended is oversensitive, or trying to impose their morals on others. Not caring what anyone else thinks has become a virtue, and being "judgmental" is now a greater sin than being callous and insensitive. The Diabolicals have done their work well.

Curtis presents himself as a distinguished gentleman of elegant manner and dress. He is *always* polite. God help the Diabolical who thinks that Etiquette is incompatible with turning demons into bloody smears, though. Curtis will refrain from immediately smiting a *polite* Diabolical, but if a demon demonstrates his infernal nature, allowing him to continue perverting the Symphony is a much greater violation of Heavenly etiquette than leaving bloodstains on the carpet.

Curtis holds the honorary Distinction of Grand Master in his own tiny Order (p. 91), and the rank of Major in Laurence's army. Any angel who takes an oath to always be polite (and apologize for any lapses of etiquette) will receive one of Curtis's Rites. Angels of the Sword who take such an oath, or any Malakite, will receive his Servitor Attunement as well.

Curtis often collaborates with the Angel of Politeness.

Continued on next page . . .

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The Redeemed

The idea of turning oneself over to the Archangel of the Sword terrorizes most redemption candidates, but a fair number have sought Laurence out. They figure if they're going to change sides, they might as well go straight to the top, and the most zealous converts sometimes make the best demon-hunters. Laurence is all in favor of redemption, and the truly repentant will find their loyalty returned in full. But for those who have the slightest doubt, Laurence is the wrong one to turn to. His redemptions are *utterly* thorough – a former demon will either emerge as pure as a newly-fledged angel, or not at all.

TRAINING

Servitors of the Sword are trained thoroughly before they're ever allowed to leave Heaven. Many start as relievers (often called "pages"), and are fledged with great ceremony. Likewise, an angel's first mission to Earth is usually cause for a solemn dedication ceremony (often followed by a somewhat less-solemn private revelry with his friends).

Much of their training takes place in the Groves, being drilled by Michael's troops. An angel of the Sword without at least 1 level in Large Weapon (Sword) skill will be mocked by his comrades. Those who will work among humans must spend time with Saints, being taught human ways and traditions. (Learning Catholic theology is optional, but highly encouraged.) Laurence also encourages his angels to spend time with redeemed Servitors, who can tell them about the diabolical mindset. When an angel of the Sword leaves Heaven, he may be idealistic, but he's *not* ignorant or unprepared.

SAMPLE SERVITORS (CONTINUED)

ANGELA

Kyriotate Servitor of the Sword

| Corporeal Forces – 4 | Strength 8 | Agility 8 | | |
|--------------------------|----------------|--------------|--|--|
| Ethereal Forces – 2 | Intelligence 5 | Precision 3 | | |
| Celestial Forces – 3 | Will 6 | Perception 6 | | |
| Vessel: Human/1 (female) | | | | |

Role: Nun/2, Status/2 (Marie Lanier)

Skills: Acrobatics/2, Climbing/1, Detect Lies/3, Dodge/3, Driving/1, Fighting/2, Language (Latin/2), Large Weapon/1 (Sword), Move Silently/2, Singing/1

Songs: Form (Corporeal/4), Healing (Corporeal/2), Motion (Corporeal/1, Ethereal/3), Shields (Corporeal/3)

Attunements: Kyriotate of the Sword, Mercurian of the Sword

Sister Marie Lanier was an inner-city nun teaching childcare and job skills to teenage mothers, while running a gang outreach program. The gang-bangers who gunned her down in a drive-by weren't aiming at the nun; she just happened to be standing next to the wrong people.

The mortally-wounded sister made a "miraculous recovery" in the hospital; she was chosen to become a vessel for Angela, a Kyriotate of the Sword.

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The angel now continues the work of the original Sister Marie, but she's become decidedly more aggressive about combating the gangs. She doesn't go looking for fights, and she would rather rehabilitate a gang member than stomp him into the ground. However, when drug dealers refuse to be driven away, or gun-toting teenagers endanger innocent people, she subdues them with her martial arts skills and her Songs. So far, she's avoided attracting too much attention - she's known around the neighborhood as a tough sister with a judgmental attitude, but no one wants to mess with her. Diabolicals are beginning to notice the weakening grip of local gangs, however, and the decrease in drug activity, and it won't be long before they correlate Sister Marie's appearances with arrests and fleeing dealers. The angel welcomes the coming confrontation; she thinks she's ready to take on diabolical opposition. She may find herself outmatched if the local demons are strong and numerous, though, and that's when she'll realize that even a Kyriotate sometimes needs backup.

Sister Marie is an average-looking black woman in her late 20s, a bit on the heavy side, which makes her celestial strength and speed all the more surprising. Like many nuns, she doesn't normally wear her habit except in church.

Angela is a starting-level celestial, suitable for use as a player character; or an NPC needing a little help, or an opponent for diabolical characters.

The difference between a moral man and a man of bonor is that the latter regrets a discreditable act, even when it has worked and he has not been caught.

– H.L. Menchen

SERVING THE SWORD

Celestial Jobs

Angels of the Sword should be fighting the War. There are really only three things for them to do in Heaven: plan the war, train, and perform ceremonial functions.

Only high-ranking Servitors are involved in the planning of the War; they are the Majors, Colonels, and Generals who are part of Laurence's inner circle. Training is the duty of every Servitor, however. Those who need training can find it in the Eternal City or in the Groves; those willing and able to teach are occasionally assigned training duties.

There is a *lot* of ceremony involved in serving the Sword. There are ceremonies for fledging, for being assigned to Earth-duty, for being promoted, for undertaking a quest, for completing a quest, for receiving rewards or punishments . . . Most of Laurence's angels love their traditions – others find all the pomp and circumstances a waste of time. Being asked to serve in a ceremony is an honor, however, and not one any sensible angel will refuse.

Ethereal Jobs

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Most of Laurence's work on the ethereal plane is done by his Guardians (p. 92). Besides these border guards, however, there are some angels who become "pagan hunters," trained to detect ethereal influences on Earth and track them to their source. Some even undertake

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quests to hunt down and kill an ethereal spirit, or locate the Domain from which invaders are coming.

If an angel of the Sword uncovers an *infernal* threat from the ethereal realm, he will report it up the chain of command, and either one of Laurence's ethereal trackers will be dispatched, or Blandine will be notified.

Corporeal Jobs

Most work of the Sword is done on Earth. Laurence's Servitors are first and foremost demon-hunters. Whenever other angels uncover diabolical operations that need to be put out of business, if they don't have enough force to do it themselves, they call Laurence's hunters. The Sword is the backbone of the army of the Host, and they are responsible for maintaining a very visible and fearsome presence, so that evil never rests easy.

In accordance with Laurence's priorities, there are four primary roles which his angels serve on Earth.

Garrison: Garrison duty isn't as boring as it sounds; it can be anything from defending a Tether to being the sole angel in town, responsible for keeping demonic influences *out*. Laurence's first doctrine of the War is



"hold that which is ours" (p. 81). His Servitors should be proactive in striking at infernal operations, but it's *more* important that they not allow territory held by the Host (or currently uncontrolled) to be lost. This means Swordbearers frequently feel obligated to suspend a hunt or quest when other angels ask them for help. Refusing to lend aid to other members of the Host – even angels of Creation or Flowers – will be punished severely if it leads to the enemy gaining ground.

Hunt: When not defending Heavenly assets, angels of the Sword should be hunting. This can be a literal hunt, trying to track down and kill a demon, or it can be a crusade against a major diabolical operation, or a search for information – divine intelligence gathering. Demons outnumber angels, so no Laurencian should ever have a problem finding an infernal threat that needs to be removed.

Recruit: As part of Laurence's doctrine "win souls" (p. 81), angels of the Sword should always be on the lookout for worthy humans. Potential Soldiers are the greatest prize, of course, but any human with the right combination of virtues and skills can serve Heaven. Not all of them do so knowingly; Servitors of Laurence run charity organizations,

recruiting drives for public service campaigns, and of course, work in the Catholic Church (sometimes as missionaries), all to lead humans toward their destinies. That this also undermines Hell is just an added bonus.

Support: Since Laurence is responsible for recruiting and training Soldiers, a lot of work involves developing the Heaven's "human assets." Servitors of Laurence run training camps for Soldiers of God, and Soldiers in turn handle much of the Sword's mundane support network. Laurence likes to see every Soldier have at least one angel of the Sword who knows him personally and can keep track of his whereabouts and activities. Many of his angels' operations are integrated with support of the Catholic Church.

THE QUEST

There is a tradition among Laurencians that one is not truly an angel of the Sword until one has gone on a quest. Laurence views quests as a means of refining oneself in

Swords

Small or Large Weapon (Sword) skill should grant proficiency with any sword of the appropriate size, but the GM might allow angels of the Sword to use the *Specialization* rule from the *Corporeal Player's Guide* (p. 25), *only for swords*. (*Specialization*, when permitted, is normally restricted to humans.)

| | Power | Accuracy | Skill Required |
|------------------|-------|----------|--------------------------------------|
| Short Sword | +2 | - | Small Weapon |
| Rapier | +1 | +1 | Small Weapon |
| Saber | +2 | +1 | Large Weapon; can also be treat- |
| | | | ed as a rapier if the wielder wishes |
| Long Sword | +4 | _ | Large Weapon |
| Broad Sword | +4 | - | Large Weapon |
| Bastard Sword | +4 | -1 | Large Weapon; +1 Power if |
| | | | used with two hands |
| Two-Handed Sword | +5 | -1 | Large Weapon; requires |
| | | | two hands |
| Katana | +3 | +1 | Large Weapon |
| | | | |

Carrying Swords

Angels of the Sword will naturally want to carry swords. Of course, in the modern world, carrying a sword is frequently an invitation to trouble, if not actually illegal. Besides the Scabbard attunement (p. 73), or sword-relics with the Summonable or Concealable Features (*Liber Reliquarum*, pp. 22-23), more mundane solutions exist, such as Roles with appropriate licenses (either carry or dealer) or membership in theatre groups, or even just a good trenchcoat (in a more cinematic game).

the service of the Lord – or realigning oneself with His will if you have begun to fall prey to the corrupting influence of Lucifer (see p. 101).

A quest can be anything that serves the cause of Heaven. It should be difficult, but attainable, and have some concrete indication of its successful completion. The most common quest is to bring back the head of a named demon. Other quests include breaking up a pagan cult, recovering an important relic, building a new church and congregation, or learning a secret Song previously unknown to Servitors of the Sword.

The most formal quests are consecrated with a celestial ceremony, but all it really requires is the permission of an immediate superior. Quests are always acceptable activities for angels of the Sword; petitions to go on a quest are usually approved, unless the petitioner is already performing a mission-critical duty. It's expected that an angel will not come back from a quest until he's succeeded; failure is a deep mark of shame, which can be expunged only by taking on a new, *far* more difficult quest.

Particularly difficult quests will earn an angel a positive reputation. Soul-killing a Baron of Hell, for example, or destroying an infernal Tether, or recovering one of Laurence's Swords (*Liber Reliquarum*, p. 96) from a Demon Prince's armory, may even result in a Distinction from Laurence. But quests should always be undertaken for the glory of Heaven, not for personal glory.

Laurence sometimes permits quests as a means of shedding dissonance or Discord, and angels with the Divine Absolution attunement (p. 73) may assign one as a precondition for absolution. A Servitor may be charged with a quest according to his ability, and the seriousness of his wrongdoing; the quest is consecrated with the Song of Witness (*Liber Canticorum*, p. 80). If the angel completes it successfully, his dishonor is removed. If not, usually the angel won't come back.

I came not to send peace, but a sword.

- Matthew 10:34

REWARDS AND PUNISHMENTS

A discussion of how Superiors reward Servitors for successful missions is found in the *Game Master's Guide*, pp. 8-10, but Laurence has his own criteria, and preferences for awards and punishments.

Rewards

URENCE

Laurence's criteria for the success of a mission are based on how much was lost or gained by Heaven as a result. A mission in which Hell made a net gain is an *unsuccessful* mission. One in which the angel did not fail, but there was no significant gain by either side (such as the preservation of a stalemate, or successfully undoing what diabolicals did earlier), is considered *mildly* successful. A very successful mission is one in which Hell suffers a defeat, even a mild one, and it's clearly Laurence's Servitors who brought it about (such as purging a church of diabolical influences, eliminating a sorcerous cabal, or killing a lot of local demons and suffering few or no losses in return). An extremely successful mission must change the landscape of the War, at least locally – the destruction of an infernal Tether, the celestial death of the most powerful demon in the region, a shift in the balance of power so that Laurence

DUELS

Not surprisingly, angels of the Sword have a dueling tradition. Duels range from friendly sparring matches to deadly-serious contests to settle a matter of honor.



Serious dueling is forbidden in Heaven; it violates the Pax Dei (*Heaven and Hell*, p. 55). "Training" duels are permitted in the Groves, so long as no actual Soul hits are inflicted. Swordfights can be "simulated" on the celestial plane by using the combatants' Corporeal Forces, characteristics, and weapon skills as usual, and a "mock" celestial sword. Damage results are meaningless, except to spectators, who can judge how well a blow was landed by the check digit. These mock duels may be fought to "first blood" (the first successful attack that *would* inflict Body hits if it occurred on Earth), or to a certain number of points.

Angels who really want to prove something take their fights to the ethereal or corporeal planes. On the ethereal plane, battles can be ethereal or celestial – though the latter is much more serious. Laurence actually forbids his Servitors to issue (or provoke!) celestial combat challenges with other angels – though they are not forbidden to accept one.

On the corporeal plane, angels are less restrained. Servitors of Laurence (especially Malakim) may fight a duel to (corporeal) death, though fighting to unconsciousness is much more common. If you lose your vessel in a duel, Laurence probably won't replace it freely; you shouldn't have wasted a vessel in such a foolish endeavor – and you shouldn't have lost!

Naturally, angels of the Sword are scrupulous about fighting honorably and fairly. They aren't so naive as to assume others will be as honorable, though, particularly if their opponent is an angel of the Wind, or a diabolical. Angels of the Sword invented the tradition of bringing a "second" to duels.

CHANGING SUPERIORS

Sometimes angels of the Sword tire of the relentless drive for perfection, or they get tired of the blood, sweat, and tears. Sometimes they just realize their attitude isn't right for Laurence's organization. In such cases, they may petition for a transfer.

Laurence's reaction depends on the reason, and which Archangel the angel wants to serve. Transfers to Michael's service, for angels who are more warrior than soldier, are fairly common. Some Sword-bearers, particularly Seraphim, find they have a keen eye for corruption, and a zeal to expose it. These may petition to enter Dominic's service. If they are Servitors in good standing (and assuming the other Archangel approves), Laurence will not object, and usually lets them keep any attunements they earned. Requests to enter the service of other Archangels will usually be approved, but Laurence rarely lets them keep their attunements, with the exception of transfers to David or Jean (neither of which are common). Anyone who enters Janus' or Khalid's service will *definitely* be stripped of all attunements and Distinctions – Laurence isn't going to give his best Servitors to Archangels who are clearly hostile to him.

The only Archangel Laurence might deny is Novalis. (Or Eli . . . but Eli isn't taking new Servitors anyway.) He would be shocked and dismayed if one of his Servitors *wanted* to serve Flowers, and would be hardpressed to conceal his disdain. If Novalis interceded on the angel's behalf, Laurence would probably allow the transfer . . . but that angel could expect a frosty reception if he ever went near his former comrades again.

is now the most influential Superior in an important venue, etc. A *spectacularly* successful mission is one that has a significant impact on the War – the weakening of a Demon Prince, the establishment of a Tether to the Sword, securing an entire city for Heaven, etc. Laurence also looks favorably on anything that promotes the Catholic Church.

Punishments

Laurence's Servitors are so conscious of honor, any punishment is so shameful that the humiliation alone is usually a disincentive to repeating the mistake. Most Laurencians consider the most terrible punishment to be a blistering lecture from their Archangel in front of all their peers. Thus, while Laurence is known for his rigidity and strictness, his punishments are actually not that severe – *unless* he feels an angel is not learning from his mistakes, or is actually in danger of Falling. Then, he becomes merciless.

Besides a scolding, minor misdeeds usually result in unfavorable assignments, duties that the angel considers boring or beneath him. These can last for a few weeks or several years, depending on the severity of his offense. Alternatively, a Servitor might be permitted to go on a quest (p. 99) to redeem himself. Sometimes Laurence imposes dissonance on a Servitor before sending him on a *short* quest, the completion of which will remove the dissonance. More lengthy quests might be accompanied by Discord; Laurence has been known to inflict blindness (Damaged Sense/6), Stigmata, or even Vulnerabi-

lity on an angel doing penance. Sometimes he imposes the Aura or Bound Discords, but never Celestial Discords.

Serious crimes merit more serious punishments. This starts with the removal of privileges. Artifacts, servants, vessels, and Roles may be taken away. A Servitor who has greatly abused Laurence's trust may lose attunements, or even be demoted in rank. Laurence does not remove Forces – he considers this to be senseless maiming of one of the Host.

Actual betrayal is punished with Outcasting, or death – which sentence Laurence imposes depends on whether he believes his former Servitor is redeemable, and how much damage he could do if he Falls to the other side.

RELATIONSHIPS

Angels of the Sword are very conscious of maintaining "proper" relations with one another, other angels, and humans. Any impropriety is frowned upon; standards must be upheld.

This doesn't mean they can't be friends, though a Laurencian's friends will mostly be other Sword-bearers. They tend to segregate themselves by rank and Choir; Seraphim hang out with other Seraphim, Cherubim congregate with other Cherubim, etc. This isn't a regulation, and nothing prevents cross-Choir friendships, but the closest associations are typically with one's own Choir. Exceptions are usually the result of corporeal service together.

THE TSAYADIM

When Laurence replaced Uriel as General of the Host, most of Uriel's former Servitors swore fealty to Laurence. Some chose Michael or Dominic instead, a few went to Khalid (even before he was actually made an Archangel), and a handful joined other Archangels. But a fanatically-dedicated core, mostly Malakim, refused to recognize that the Purity Crusade was over, and remained angels of Purity, Servitors without a Superior. They call themselves the Tsayadim (Greek for "Hunters") and still hunt ethereals in the Far Marches, and occasionally on Earth.

Their numbers have decreased slightly in the past twelve centuries, but they're still around. Some are killed in battle, but being angels of Purity, they cannot Fall. Occasionally one of them tires of being an effective Outcast, and returns to Heaven, usually joining Laurence's service. These former Tsayadim are among his most valuable Servitors – they have vast experience in the Marches, and they still possess Uriel's attunements.

Laurence tries to maintain lines of communication with the Tsayadim, and is rumored to assist them at times, but so far has not persuaded them to abandon their crusade and join the Host proper.

Too much fraternization with someone above or below you in the chain of command may raise eyebrows – camaraderie is encouraged, but one shouldn't be *too* close to someone from whom one receives orders, or to whom you issue them.

"Friendships" may be casual or intimate – Sword-bearers *can* take lovers, and often do. But duty must always take precedence over love, and Laurence tends to separate angels who seem to be too attached to each other. Many Laurencians confine themselves to casual relationships – which may involve intimacy, for mutual comfort and pleasure – or even avoid emotional entanglements altogether. Laurence doesn't take an official position on angelic chastity (there are occasional unconfirmed *rumors* of his own intimacies), but many of his Servitors prefer it.

Relations with humans are even more strictly monitored. Humans expect angels to be divine, and angels of the Sword try not to disillusion them. This means maintaining a necessary aloofness. They can be friendly to humans, even become fond of them, but partiality is strongly discouraged, and Laurence forbids *sexual* rela-

AURENCE

tionships with mortals. He also *strongly* disapproves of sexual relationships between angels and Saints, but recognizes that this isn't something he can control. An angel of the Sword who has an affair with a Saint shouldn't expect to be promoted any time soon, though.

Cross-Word Relationships

Laurence doesn't at all discourage friendships with Servitors of other Archangels (except Novalis – a relationship with an angel of Flowers is not *forbidden*, but will be met with tight-lipped disapproval), but other angels find Laurencians almost as difficult to approach as Dominicans. Angels of Stone and War get along with Laurence's angels best; with the latter, there is often a strong element of competitiveness and Word-rivalry. Angels of Judgment and the Sword often work together, and they *respect* each other, but true affection isn't that common. (Laurencians are instructed to cooperate with triads of Judgment as much as possible – even in investigations of one of their own. In return, Servitors of Judgment will usually turn wayward Sword-bearers over to Laurence's custody.)

Few other angels make much effort to befriend Laurence's Servitors – even if angels of the Sword are the first ones they call when they need help. Laurence's angels accept this with equanimity – it is simply one of the burdens of bearing the Sword.





The first angel created by God, older than any celestial but the ineffable Yves, Michael is a Seraph and he tells it straight: things aren't run in Heaven like they used to be. It's not his job to bitch about things, so he generally doesn't – but he's getting tired of pulling Laurence's fat out of the fire every century or so.

As the most powerful angel, in mind and body, Michael bested Lucifer in hand-to-hand combat and personally kicked his red ass out Heaven's door. (The remaining rebels, damned by God, conceded the battle and found their own way out.) For this, God made Michael

the Archangel of War. While Laurence rules the armies of God, Michael is the commander of those who fight alone, relying only on their own weapons.

His servants fight vigorously so that one day the War will end. They are proud, powerful, and never back down from a fight. But they're also sympathetic to the human condition, and try not to miss out on an opportunity to relieve a human of his pain, if only by listening to his war stories.

Michael is a warrior. He lives only for God's struggle. The fact that he doesn't use a noble weapon (he prefers

a battle axe to a sword) has earned him the disdain of some Archangels – but not Laurence, who has crossed iron with Michael and has humble memories of the occasion.

Pig-headed and individualistic, Michael doesn't mollycoddle his servants – but he does protect them from Dominic, whom he calls "the hyena of Heaven." Many millennia ago, Michael was the target of an inquest into vainglory, chaired by Dominic. He accused Michael and his servants of encouraging heathenish traditions (collecting trophies, promoting warrior cults, sporting blasphemous heraldry, etc.). God intervened and acquitted Michael, not because he was innocent but because without pride and glory – and Michael – Heaven's greatest battles would be lost.

DISSONANCE

Retreat from any conflict without a direct order generates dissonance in Michael's servants. An agent of Michael must otherwise be beaten into unconsciousness and dragged bodily from the field of battle. The angels of War stand against the forces of Hell as their Archangel does; they must conquer in that battle or fall, but they cannot flee.

CHOIR ATTUNEMENTS

Seraphim

The attacks of Michael's Seraphim tend to strike home, as they see past their opponents' maneuvers to the truth. A target may Dodge, but at a penalty equal to the Seraph's Corporeal Forces.

Cherubim (restricted)

If, barring the intervention of Celestial Forces, someone to whom a Cherub of War is attuned will die in the next 24 hours, that angel will feel it in the pit of his stomach. This attunement doesn't identify the nature or exact timing of the fatal stroke. Acting on its warning, however, a Cherub of War *can* alter events to keep the attuned person alive.

Ofanim

The speedy and unpredictable Ofanim who work for the Archangel of War invariably get the drop on everyone else, even when mortally wounded! In combat, Michael's Ofanim always go first. They favor hit and run

and hit again tactics – maneuvering backward with the intention of circling round to strike again doesn't generate dissonance for them.

Elobim

Calmest of their whole stoic Choir, these Elohim can look into people's eyes and tell just how serious they are – how much they're willing to risk in a situation. If someone is resigned to killing, or to dying, then these angels will know it. Elohim of Michael are expert at identifying and removing definite fighters from a combat situation, leaving behind the uncertain and the easily dissuaded.

Malakim

Malakim of War can hear the sound of danger sweeping through the Symphony, beginning as many minutes ahead of time as they have Corporeal Forces, and growing louder until the moment of conflict. However, this gift doesn't identify the nature of the threat – only its existence. It *is* possible for a combat to be defused and never happen – in that case, the theme of danger fades away.

MICHAEL

Kyriotates (restricted)

Michael's Kyriotates, unlike their brethren who serve other Archangels, *can* have their own vessels – they need not find a host to manifest on the corporeal plane. And like others of their Choir, they may still inhabit as many Corporeal Forces' worth of hosts and/or vessels as the total amount of their Forces. But they cannot abandon the vessels they make, and they acquire a note of dissonance when such a vessel is destroyed. The vessel is created by Michael, as are vessels for other angels, but he will usually take the Kyriotate's own wishes or needs into consideration. It requires the same number of Forces as a normal host of that type (5 for a human). Any Forces invested in the vessel can't be used to possess other creatures, even when the vessel isn't manifested.

Mercurians

Michael's Mercurians are his only diplomats. They know the price of peace – what, if anything, will resolve a conflict between any two people they have met.

SERVITOR ATTUNEMENTS

Proficiency

This gives a special expertise with one type of weapon (including styles of unarmed combat.) The angel may



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BRIGHT LILIM (RESTRICTED)

With eye contact, Lilim of War can make a Perception roll and know an opponent's "Achilles Heel" – i.e., the person's greatest weakness in combat. The successful roll's check digit is a bonus to the Lilim's attack, or a penalty to the subject's Dodge (player's choice). This is useful in combat training as well as during actual fighting.

make a Precision roll before attacking with that weapon – if it is successful, he adds the check digit of the Precision roll to the Power of the attack! However, this only applies to one attack per Precision roll – if he wants to use his Proficiency for the next attack, he needs to roll again.

Howl

When the servants of Michael howl their frightening war cry, it stuns all foes within a number of feet equal to the angel's Corporeal Forces for the next combat roll.

One to One

A Servitor using this Attunement and assaulting a single opponent continually, in hand-to-hand combat, will gain +1 Power to his attacks every round, cumulatively, until he reaches the total of his Corporeal Forces in bonus: this functions only as long as he battles the same person, hand-to-hand, without ceasing for even a single round.

Blood Oath

A Servitor may take a number of these equal to his Ethereal Forces. Each must be against a named enemy whom he has confronted in conflict. Should he encounter the enemy in battle afterward, he will gain a bonus of +2 to the check digit in all attacks against that enemy: but if he attempts to attack anybody else while the Oathed enemy is present, he takes a penalty of -2 to the check digit due to distraction. The Oath is taken while shedding blood, and may only be dissolved by the death of the enemy; either the death of his current vessel or his permanent death in Celestial form. If two Oathed enemies are present at the same combat, the Servitor does *not* take a penalty for ignoring one to attack the other.

MICHAE

Sure-Footed

Balanced and ever-ready, the Servitors granted this attunement do not lose their footing or balance under any circumstances; should they be physically thrown from their position, they will land cat-footed, and if the fall is too great to permit this, they will land in a way which will minimize damage and permit a fast recovery. (Subtract the character's Corporeal Forces from any damage taken in the fall.)

SECRET SONGS

Michael knows a number of Songs which are not generally available. These include the Songs of War (*Liber Canticorum*, p. 77-78), Battle (*Liber Canticorum*, p. 63), Blades (*Liber Canticorum*, p. 64) and, reputedly, the Songs of Creation (*Liber Canticorum*, p. 95-96) and Life (*Liber Canticorum*, p. 91-92).

DISTINCTIONS

Vassal of War

Angels of this rank can sing the celestial language while in their corporeal forms. This lets them communicate five times as quickly as any Earthly language. Any angel within hearing can understand, but only other Vassals of War will be able to reply in kind. Demons will recognize the tongue but will not understand. Mortals will hear only whistled snatches of urgent, martial song.

Friend of the Fighters

Angels of this rank are immune to the effects of fear (natural or otherwise) as soon as they commit to a fight, until the end of the fight.

Master of Valor

ICHAEL

Angels of this rank may grant the above ability to their comrades in arms for any single combat.

Higher Distinctions

Michael's higher Distinctions, beyond Master of Valor, are granted to those who have performed great deeds in the name of Heaven, or have been constant in their service and prowess (grizzled NCO types are as likely to turn up as daring warriors). Almost all bear a Word of some sort. While there is no strict hierarchy – their Distinctions commemorate the incident where they were earned – those inferior in rank would be expected to give due courtesy and assistance, should it be required. They bear general titles such as *Hero* or *Champion*, but always individualized: *Champion of the Thera Crater* or *Hero and Slayer of the Worm of Saminga*.

RELATIONS

Michael generally sides with the "war faction," for obvious reasons. While he does not favor open strife in Heaven – he's too much of a soldier for that – there are certain Archangels whose methods or ends he disagrees with, and whom he often opposes.

Michael is the only major Archangel to be hostile to Yves. It was not always thus ... but over the past few thousand years, as the War went from bad to worse, Michael has grown increasingly distrustful



of the motives of the mysterious creature who wears the mantle of "Archangel of Destiny."

Allied: No one (David, Janus, and Laurence are Allied to Michael)

Associated: David, Jordi, Laurence (No others are Associated with Michael)

Hostile: Blandine, Dominic, Novalis, Yves (Blandine, Jean, Jordi, and Novalis are Hostile to Michael)

BASIC RITES

✤ Spend three hours in armed practice.✤ Duel with a Diabolical.

EXPANDED RITES

♥ Successfully defend an outpost.

♥ Tutor a pupil or pupils in fighting for three hours.

CHANCE OF INVOCATION: 1

INVOCATION MODIFIERS

- +1 Howling a war cry
- +2 A knife

- +3 A battle axe
- +4 An ancient battle axe
- +5 A castle under siege
- +6 A battleground on the day of the battle
MICHAEL IN DEFHIL

"Qui desiderat pacem, praeparet bellum." (Let him who desires peace, prepare for war.) – Vegetius, **De Re Militarum**

Michael was the first-formed of the Angels, the oldest of beings after Yves; the oldest and the one who has seen the most. He was formed for War, and serves it with all his heart. From the beginning he engaged in competition with the other angels, for while all served as they were ordered by God, his was the essence of competition and challenge. From when the Fall split the universe asunder, to now in the present day, he still maintains the principle of War.

HISTORY

When the universe was formed, Michael was there, helping Lucifer, Baal, Eli, David, Gabriel, and Uriel create it to God's liking, stirring up the matter of creation

COMMON MALAKITE OATHS

Certain oaths are common to Malakim of War. These include:

♥ never leave a comrade behind in danger;

★ always offer an honorable opponent a fighting chance;

✤ protect other soldiers; protect all civilians;

set an example of courage to others;

teach others how to defend themselves;

A always keep my weapons in good condition;
 A tutor someone in fighting or strategy every day;

never refuse an appeal for help from an innocent;

 \mathbb{H} never refuse a call to battle from another angel;

✤ never refuse a challenge to a fight.

MICHAEL'S SPIES

It is rumored that Michael has spies planted on Earth and in the Marches – and even in Hell – who are under orders to go active *only* if they hear word of a major offensive. If that should happen, they are to send the news to Michael, so that Heaven would not be taken unawares. For the moment, the spies work at whatever tasks they are given, and may even be perfectly ordinary demons. Of course, *everyone* knows that Judgment and the Game have all the best spies, but even so . . .

with Baal's aid. He carried himself in the knowledge that he was the first of the angels, with a pride that was born of strength and courage, rather than out of any desire to offend, and with no realization that others might take it amiss. Lucifer and Baal were trusted brothers to him, even if they might be inferior in strength or skill. He was secure in his knowledge of God and of the Truth: Lucifer did not even try approaching him, as he approached so many others.

He did not foresee the Fall: it came as a shock to him that others could turn away from God's truth, and be so blatantly *wrong*. (Michael has never once considered that he himself could possibly have been on the wrong side. He knows the Truth.) He rose to the challenge with all the considerable strength that was in him, and at the moment of the Fall he personally bested Lucifer, his own brother-Seraph, and flung him down into the darkness. It was a hand-to-hand fight, angel to angel, and it was in that deed that Michael gained his title as Archangel of War: the Champion, solitary fighter, Guardian (as he sees it) of Heaven. And a Warrior who would not be taken by surprise again.

The demons encamped themselves at the other end of the universe, and Michael and his Servitors went out to fight the forces of Hell. Sympathetic to man and the human condition, he strengthened humanity as best he might, both by action and inspiration. In popular culture, the epic of the heroic figure was founded: Gilgamesh, Horatius, Odysseus, Roland, all champions who protected their lands and people, faced down darkness and won.

A point to note is that they *won*. Honor is well and good, but winning is more important. Besides, when one fights for the Truth, for God and the forces of righteousness, as Michael and his Servitors do, the ends can be said to justify the means. Whether by force of arms or sleight of wits, Michael's servants and Michael himself must win or fall upon the field of battle.

MICHAE

MEETINGS AT THE VOLCANO

Michael is secretly taking steps to ensure the safety of Gabriel's Servitors, fearing outright persecution (or inquisition) by Dominic. Gabriel herself refuses to take action or make any contingency plans, but Soldekai has been willing to discuss options. These include moving some of Gabriel's Servitors temporarily into Michael's service, or simply arranging places to hide them and their Hearts. This is not necessarily just in case of a full-scale descent by Dominic – if Gabriel *herself* were to go entirely rogue, Michael foresees disastrous consequences . . .

Millennia ago, in the middle of Michael's career, he found himself being called to account by Judgment, and placed on trial by Dominic on charges of vainglory and pride, encouraging heathenish cults and traditions among the mortals, and fighting not for Heaven's glory but for his own. Michael claimed in reply that firstly, he had reason for pride, having fought for his victories, secondly, that pride and glory inspired fighters, both mortals and angels, and thirdly, that it was none of Dominic's concern and that Dominic had no right to persecute him for this.

Dominic found Michael guilty, but God pardoned Michael for his ceaseless efforts in the cause of Heaven. Michael, disgusted by what he saw as a power-play among the Archangels and tired of the restraints placed upon him as Commander of the Hosts in the Cold War between Heaven and Hell, freely stepped down from that role and let his brother Uriel take the position as more suited for it.

However, Michael viewed Uriel's Purity Crusade as a waste. Such purposeful energy should not have been expended on beings who were no direct threat to Heaven: on the contrary, Uriel created enemies where there were none before, and gave allies to Beleth. Perhaps honorable, perhaps nothing more than a gambit attempting to unite the Archangels, but distinctly foolish. On the whole, it was a better thing for the War that Uriel was removed. Laurence at least realized that the true danger came from Below, and did not waste his time on dreams.

Michael himself returned to the more serious business of War. He continued to foster the cult of the Hero and Champion, looking with favor upon young warriors such as Laurence who carried their blades in the service of Heaven, and on strong humans who served the cause of Heaven and fought the servants of Darkness.

CHAEL

At the foundation of Islam, Michael found himself witness to what he considered the clearly unjust persecution of Gabriel. His views on the matter were founded upon his dislike of Dominic – the "hyena of Heaven" – but he also saw the military danger of driving away one of the most powerful and violent Archangels, and he grieved for one of his oldest comrades. He and Yves made common cause – for once – in defense of Gabriel, although it was too late to prevent her self-chosen exile to her volcano.

In recent years, Michael has become more concerned by Gabriel's growing instability. Although they both know that the Apocalypse will come, that they will both stand to meet it, and that Hell's forces shall surely fall, it is beginning to seem possible to him that Gabriel herself may Fall before that day. Should such a thing happen, much as it would grieve him, he would face her in combat – as he believes she would have wished, in the days of her sanity.

WHO PROFITED?

There is a persistent and long-standing rumor that Uriel and Dominic arranged the trial between them, in order to get the command of Heaven's armies into Uriel's hands. After all, if God had not intervened to save Michael . . . Michael has always refused to believe any such tales of Uriel, and few have dared to repeat them to him.

As the War progressed, Michael pioneered such practical techniques as the use of military intelligence, planted agents (as in the case of his Saints (*Corporeal Players Guide*, p. 87), strategic division of the enemy, collecting neutral allies and hostage negotiation. His modus operandi, after all, is the one that wins. Although his manner of combat has from time to time differed with that of Laurence, the official Commander of the Hosts of Heaven, he has not allowed this to cramp his style.

With the upsurge of the media in the twentieth century, Michael overcame his natural Seraphic distrust of fiction in order to promote his Word. The figure of the Champion returned, in the pulp magazines of the forties and fifties, the superhero comics and films of the seventies and onward. Humans could be inspired, and set on the right path: they too could be led to fight in the inevitable War.

STORIES

Michael, and all his Servitors, enjoy listening to a good story of valiant deeds in battle. While they aren't necessarily more vulnerable to Balseraphs because of this, they *are* suckers for a good story, and they do give more leeway to a brave opponent. (Of course, they're also the sort of listeners who spot all the technical errors in a story. "Wait a moment, that gun wasn't on the market until 1957 . . .")

PERSONALITY AND OUTLOOK

Michael divides the universe into three categories: those who are his inferiors (and who should pay attention to him if they know what's good for them), his equals (even those such as Baal, who are on the other side) and his superiors (God, and no others). Technically accepting Laurence's direction in the matter of the War is in no way the same as considering him a superior.

Subordinates can expect a gruff but honest manner, assuming they have been conducting themselves bravely and with good intentions: those who do not can expect a ruthlessly brisk interrogation, and to be "whipped back into shape." Michael protects his own from Dominic, but he expects them to be responsible to him in return, and to be responsible for themselves.

Michael is one of the few Archangels who might be considered free of fear. He faced down Lucifer before, and he *won*. If the forces of Heaven should lose in the great War (a thing not to be considered) then it won't be on his account, or on the account of his Servitors. Should other Archangels have qualms, then they should get themselves into shape. He'd be glad to help.

For a while now Michael has grown suspicious of Yves, this oldest of beings who apparently knows so much but who says and does so little. While it may be the case that Yves is closer to God than any other being, still he sits by and refrains from advocating direct action in the War, claiming to protect the Destiny of the Symphony, making alliance with Dominic and forcing Gabriel into the path which led her into exile. Michael does not understand him, and is losing his old trust in him.

Michael's Word

War encompasses Struggle, Strife, Battle. All of life is a struggle against other beings, as competition is the only way to validate yourself – to establish your truth. Important to a Seraph, truth: with every battle, Michael proves his Truth again on the body of his opponent. He fights to prove it, and the proof is in the fighting. His Word extends to Earth, where he encourages humans into the strife which causes growth and excellence, the War where one becomes stronger and more courageous.

By this argument, he must contest with the other Archangels on matters of disagreement. It is his Word, and he lives it. If their position were the Truth, then they would win. If he wins, then clearly his Word is the Truth, is stronger, and is proven. If they *should* win, then their position and viewpoint evidently held some merit which he had not previously realized. The only being with whom he will not strive, with whom there can be no battle, is God. Michael obeys.

This does not necessarily lead to a comfortable personality. Michael is a constant challenger of others, prickly, takes insult easily, is extremely proud of his deeds and Word: while he is protective of his Servitors, it is a "tough love" and an expectation that they will do their best.

Michael's Word also encompasses the peace which comes after war, and the negotiation of the treaties which are established after the fighting is done. What has been fought for is now safe in the hands of the victor, and matters may be arranged in honor and justice after one side is definitely victor and the other vanquished. He shares aspects of this with Marc, and often the two of them find themselves closely allied in this arena.

Another facet of Michael's Word is War as the Deposer of Tyrants, a force for natural justice and the judgment of the people. While in the past he worked together with Dominic to promote this aspect, in the last few millennia the two have grown apart. Baal has taken advantage of this to strengthen war as a thing of pure violence, and strengthen War itself without any following justice.

WAR AND THE UNIVERSE

As with every Word, War has its own perspective on the rest of the Universe, and vice versa.

God

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Where is there room for doubt? Michael *knows* that God exists, that God created him, that God created the universe . . . It is implicit in every Truth that he hears as a Seraph, and absolute in his existence. God *exists*, God is *right*, and Lucifer and all his legions are *wrong*. The ultimate Lie is the denial and refusal of God. And if Michael doesn't always understand God's design for the universe, or all his motives – well, a soldier needs to have faith in his commander.

MICHA

Archangel Opinions

While Michael no longer has to engage in the level of politics which being Commander of the Hosts of Heaven required, and resents being forced into politics at all, he will take whatever *strategic* actions are required to support his Word and to make sure that the councils of Heaven remain on a professional footing, rather than turning into time-wasting discussions on such matters as Peace and Heresy. Fortunately, he can usually count on their support of the warlike Archangels without long political discussions.

Dominic: The fact that he dislikes me is irrelevant. His trial is past and done, by God's command: he has his part to play and his Word to support, as do I. I find no particular fault with his Servitors, and shall save my time for clearer dangers. If his personal passions cloud his judgment, that is his error and not mine. (Dominic is no warrior. Some of us battle in iron and blood against Lucifer and his brood, but Dominic just skulks around the Council Spires whispering soft accusations. Anything that doesn't fit his rules is automatically a sign of Hell's influence. He should look under his own robes once in a while and see the corruption hidden there.)

MICHAEL AND LAURENCE

When Uriel was taken up by God to the Higher Heavens, Laurence was given the post of Commander of the Hosts of Heaven; many wondered what sort of accord he would reach with Michael, who could count so much more experience and who might well want his old post back. They forgot one important fact. God placed Laurence in his current position, and Michael obeys the will of God. (Michael is not, after all, a rebel like Baal.)

Since that day, Laurence has displayed a sensible willingness to listen to Michael's advice in matters of war and Michael has accepted Laurence's position with reasonable grace - and without too many open grumbles about the overly honorable nature of Laurence and his Servitors. Both of them still remember their one duel (for practice, both state) and the fact that Michael was clearly the victor. Laurence bears this in mind when taking counsel from Michael, and Michael nurtures hopes that at some point Laurence will return to the personal battles to which he is so well fitted, and leave the planning of the War to those with more strategy and less personal honor.

Blandine: So many humans dream about a warrior or champion to protect them. This is Michael's role, and I must admit he serves it well, though he often acts in a more brutal manner than I find appropriate. (Is it really a good *idea* to quell the fears of mankind in a world of false imagery? How does that prepare them? I often wonder if Nightmares aren't better for our cause; I'd like to see Blandine take the initiative to control the entire realm of Dream. Contentment isn't an attribute of a good soldier.)

David: One of my oldest comrades-in-arms. He believes that he can fight alone, perhaps even defeat the whole of Hell alone, but this doesn't alter his capabilities. Still, he knows what he's doing in battle, and he understands that this is a War we have to win by any means necessary. My Servitors aid his. (Among the few I consider worthy of the title of Archangel, David stands unique. He and his angels are brave and strong, and never pick a fight themselves. I can't think of anyone I'd rather have at my side in a fight than David.)

CHAEL

Eli: Well, hey, you have to admire his enthusiasm, you know? Thing is, he doesn't stop to think about what happens after the fight's over. Everyone else has to pick up the pieces. He's got style, though. An individualist. Gotta love that. (Maybe Eli is doing what he needs to be doing – and I won't help Dominic persecute him - but the middle of the War is no damn time to go AWOL! His Servitors are good fighters. I have nothing to say against them. I just want a little talk with **bim**.)

Gabriel: He is one of the few who knows the battle which we fight in. His passion is a fire which will hold

him steady through his battles. His Servitors can be cruel, and feel my wrath for it, yet they have an ardor that few can match. Courage is their flame, a constant one. (I am concerned by her unpredictability, but I would not take action against her. She carries the original spark of the Divine. If the situation deteriorates, I would not hesitate to do what must be done . . . though it would be a tragic day for us all.)

Janus: He appreciates that we need to be moving on all fronts. He's more effective than Laurence, and we need speed and range in our fight. We should have him out there and on the front lines. He understands that we need action! (I have never doubted Janus' dedication or strength. If only he could learn when to husband his strength, or when to sustain an effort. And I don't need changing.)

Jean: I'd appreciate his work more if he didn't keep trying to interfere in mine. My word is little concerned with his, but he seems to consider my Servitors as automatic auxiliaries. We have more important things to be doing than attempting to dismember every adversary in sight bare-handed. Laurence at least lets me work in peace. (He's a tinkering, slow-moving, over-analyzing craftsman. He does good work, but he needs to remember his ancient principle of Lightning more often, rather than getting lost inside his gadgets. And he doesn't trust humans enough.)

Jordi: We have had our differences; his armies have laid waste the land and left no place for my animals behind. Purposeful war is a folly of humans and ants: most of my animals are wiser. Still, he works for the greater victories, and as long as he does not engage in petty politics, I will not oppose him. (One of my oldest brothers, but we work in totally different areas. I protect his animals where I can, but if the War threatens them, then it threatens them. It's not as if the humans are any safer.)

Laurence: I am humbled by his skill and strength. It sometimes worries me that I and not he hold the title of Commander of the Armies of God, until I see the damage that can be done by the lack of overall coordination, and realize again that we need a commander and not simply a champion. He views me as a youth still, and I always welcome his advice. Perhaps some day I will earn his full confidence. (He is brave and noble. His talents seem wasted in the Eternal City, though. He should be down there carving up the vessels of Lucifer's servants, not moving our warriors around like chessmen. He's a terror, or can be . . . but he expects mechanical perfection from the angels, and as much honor from Hell as he has himself. His sight is keen, but his vision blurs when he looks at the War from a distance. We elders try to counsel him, and we try also to remember that he must have been given his post for a reason.)

Marc: He's not the sort of person I'd care to have as a negotiator. He's too fond of the idea of Armageddon, and not open enough to the idea of compromise. Our team needs to be pulling together, and we can't function when half of it is engaging in dominance struggles or at each other's throats. The thing is, he's a peacemaker too, and a good one. I just wish he didn't think war always has to come first. (Marc and I often work together, but he surrenders too much of himself to win **bis** battles. I appreciate the lengths he's willing to go to, however – he understands that this is a War which we must win, by any means necessary.)

Novalis: Sometimes I think the parts of him that could actually relax, or imagine a world at peace . . . well, they're all burned out. He's been fighting too long, been War so much that he's lost the chance to be anything else. I feel sorry for him. He's wonderful at what he does, but when you look in his eyes you can see that he's gone past expressing himself in anything but force, however much he cares. He needs to let go, and I'm

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THE DIRT ON YVES

Michael would really, *really* like some definite evidence to confirm his many doubts about Yves. While he has not yet reached the stage of setting his Servitors to spy on those of Destiny, he's paying a lot of attention to reports about investigations sponsored by Yves. It's a fair bet that any dubious events risk being given a cynical interpretation. Michael doesn't blame Servitors of Destiny for their Archangel – particularly – but he will be curious about their current missions if he encounters them.

Yves has certainly failed to explain any number of dubious actions. To Michael, Yves' encouragement for Christianity, after so long supporting the Jews, was a dangerous shift of position, even if Christianity does have its own virtues. And then the whole affair with Gabriel and Islam *could* have been settled if Yves had outright told Dominic – or the whole Seraphim Council – what his motives were, and precisely who contributed what to the religion. Instead, Yves did nothing, and Gabriel left Heaven in fury. Why be silent, when the truth could explain this? What has Yves to hide? And if his Library contains material which could affect the course of the War, then why isn't Yves sharing it?

not sure that he can any more. (If she'd had her way during the Fall, we'd all be hanging from Lucifer's walls, trying to explain love to Balseraphs. Thank God she wasn't distracting **me** back then. Plants can be very effective – she doesn't use her full potential. At least she does understand the concept of protection.)

Yves: War is a harsh Word to bear. He has gathered the years of his Word around him as a shield to protect himself from all other things. Time can refine the vision, or distort it: it will become clear, regardless. (*I stood by his side to defend Gabriel. I don't think we've really talked since without fighting. He's wrong about so much.)*

Princely Opinions

Andrealphus: My Servitors and I know all about struggles and battles, even if we don't use quite the same methods as he does. At least he doesn't preach against sex – he's far too violent, but not really *moral* opposition in the way that some of the others are. (Andrealphus refuses to see what he has lost. Once his Love ennobled the brotherhood of warriors – now his Lust degrades them. It would be a mercy killing.)

MICHAE

Asmodeus: He is undisciplined, arrogant, and proud. It is unreasonable and unjust that God should have pardoned him for his sins. I await Baal's inevitable victory – and am glad to share news of Renegades from War's ranks with Dominic. (*There is something worse than Dominic, and it's Asmodeus. Give me just one more piece of reliable information of their collaboration, and I look forward to sharing it with the Seraphim Council.*)

Baal: At Armageddon I will test my strength against Michael, and I *will* conquer and prove myself the stronger. In the meantime, there is no one else of sufficient mettle to measure myself against – and two old acquaintances can talk. But if my Servitors should be defeated by his, there'll be Hell to pay. (*Baal* . . . *he's wrong. But he fought for what he believed in, and he's my brother still. We can talk while we're waiting for Armageddon.*)

DISCUSSIONS WITH BAAL

Baal and Michael have an unspoken agreement not to directly test each other's strength until the day of Armageddon. In the meantime, they meet from time to time in quiet bars or restaurants to discuss the (appalling) state of the world, and the general laxness of all their colleagues. Neither of them intends to change sides, but it's pleasant to be able to talk to someone else who understands and appreciates their Words and the associated problems. Of course, such meetings would be very badly viewed if they became known . . .

Beleth: I want his fear, and I can't have it. There has to be something which Michael fears, some ultimate damnation or loss or degradation – and when I know what it is, he'll pay for all the times he *dared* to laugh in my face. (I have to admire her skill as a commander. It's a pity that it's wasted in the service of Hell. The fear of God is a part of Heaven; if I knew a way to get her back, I'd use it.)

Belial: He's a bully with an overblown reputation. I'd try to deal with him myself if it wasn't for Baal's attitude that only *he* gets to kill Michael. One of the few strong Archangels, and a dangerous lunatic. (A brute and a lunatic, but strong through destruction. I'd like him disposed of – both because it'd weaken Hell, and because it'd strengthen Gabriel. Unfortunately, he has enough sense to avoid me.)

Haagenti: Too big a mouthful at the moment. Give me time. Only hunger lasts forever. (*The mindless gluttony that drives good soldiers to sack and loot. A Prince who*

ICHAEL

fought his way up from the bottom deserves wariness – but let him get in my way, and I'll show him what age and experience count for.)

Kobal: Poor Michael. Poor, poor Michael. In his stubbornness and blind integrity, he goes on struggling and perpetuating this inane War, mirroring Baal till the two are a matched joke. He achieves nothing, and he only continues to cause humanity pain by making them live in the middle of his War. I could laugh. But after millennia it grows stale. (*Kobal is a corruption of the human spirit, and he steals their hopes of victory, of success, of anything – he destroys a warrior's spirit with despair and mockery. He's more of a threat than he seems.*)

Kronos: Michael's Fate? Yes, he has one, just as the whole of Creation does. For the moment, he is already rejecting Destiny. His blind struggles will lead him where they must. (I don't pretend to understand him any more than I do Yves. He's as incomprehensible and as mystical. But I do know that he is evil. My fight is to bring the universe to what God wants, not to let it fall to some Fate.)

Lilith: He understands about mercenaries and free agents, and I know where I stand where I'm dealing with him. I'm not stupid enough to try to face him in battle or meet him down dark alleys. (Sometimes she has information. And she knows better than to lie about its value. But she should never be trusted. Not even by the Princes. She'd rather be on her own side.)

Malphas: Sowing discord between Michael and the others . . . now that's hardly a challenge, given his sense of pride and thin skin. Always useful, though. He's blind war – you just need to point him in the right direction. (Malphas flatters himself if he thinks he can divide my Servitors. I'm quite happy to have him splitting Hell into Factions, however; he's dangerous and perverse, but at least he's doing one useful thing in his life there.)

Nybbas: He's prime footage, baby, I'll give him that, but it's so passé after a while, know what I mean? All war, war, war, not a hint of Archangel Sex Scandal Rocks Seraphim Council, Prosecution Expected, Tune In Tomorrow! And his guys are just *such* a skew on the population curve when he has his people meet my people. You'd think they didn't even watch television. (Of all the frauds and fakeries in Hell, he's done the most to damage the traditional values of heroism with his propaganda and feelgood nonsense. A man does **not** have to be a tortured antihero to stand up for what he believes in. He's polluting the classic stories which have inspired generations, and I want it stopped.)

Saminga: Everything dies. Including Archangels. But he kills a lot of people. That's good too. (A pile of slime which Baal knows how to point in the right direction. An effective weapon for Hell, but about as intelligent as one of his own zombies.)



Valefor: You mean I'm supposed to get worried about a fossilized old relic who's as rusty as his axe? I can outrun him any day you care to name, and any of my Servitors stupid enough to stand and fight deserves what they get. (Oh, and if any of them do get hold of that axe of his . . . let me know.) (*He's not a serious danger on the battlefield, but he can cause a great deal of pain to humans by stealing the trophies which they treasure. After all, it's only natural for a man to care about what he's won through his blood, sweat, and tears*...)

Vapula: One must have a suitable opposition for beta-testing in the field, and for the worthy to prove themselves against. Deluded and wrong as Michael is about God's purposes, I have to respect his raw strength. Fortunately there isn't a brain associated with it. (Insane and dangerously intelligent. A formidable strength to their side. It's a pity he's a Punisher – with him and Jean cooperating, the situation would be very different.)

Humans And Others

Humanity: They are part of the universe, and God has set us to protect them from the snares and corruptions

of Lucifer. It is as simple as that. Every soul who goes down into Hell is one lost to God, and every soul who struggles to become greater is one who will know the presence of God in a way that the angels may never know. I won't patronize them by assuming they can't be strong – part of my task is to *inspire* them to reach for the heights. And defend them when they try.

Soldiers: They've got the guts to stand up and fight in the face of Hell — I approve. They're *not* cannon-fodder, and any of my Servitors whom I catch with that point of view are due some humility.

Sorcerers: Apart from the facts that they're usually selling their souls for what they're doing, and that they have the life expectancy of hamsters on highways, they can be intelligent. A few of them try to work independently of Hell – these can be useful allies, as long as the Hyena doesn't catch on.

Ethereals: Uriel made a mistake in turning them into enemies. Some of them knew the meaning of honor, and hated Hell nearly as much as we do. I still know where to find those particular ones, too.



VARIATIONS ON A THEME

Michael can be viewed in a number of ways, depending on the type of campaign, and the GM's personal vision of him.

Dark Michael

How far *is* Michael prepared to go in order to win the War? A dark version would be willing to sacrifice soldiers in order to win battles, and sacrifice battles to win wars – always for the "greater good," of course. His Truth would be that humanity had to struggle in order to fight their way to Heaven, and that any number of humans and angels are acceptable casualties – if necessary. He might force or blackmail other

Archangels into giving their support for the War, and use their Servitors as cannon-fodder. The War must be won at any price, and anyone in the Universe must be prepared to pay that price when Michael calls for it.



MICHAE

Comic Relief

In a humorous or darkly humorous campaign, Michael has his lighter side. First and foremost, he's the Macho Man, with bare-chested heroics, blazing guns, blood-dripping weapons, and explosions in the background. In quieter moments, he's the archetypal soldier at rest, settling down in a corner with a beer and pipe, propping his combat boots on the table. In lengthy Council meetings, he'd be audibly fretting and making noisy comments about how everyone should be down there on Earth and fighting – or better yet, storming Hell. With his favored Servitors, he's just "one of the boys," showing up to help crack a few heads or kick a few asses. There are rumors of duels or sporting competitions with people across the Universe – chess with Baal, mock combat with Viking ethereal spirits, the marathon drinking sessions with David . . .

WAR STORIES

Michael And Lucifer

It's told by some of the older Servitors of War that when Lucifer called other angels to his side, during the Fall, Michael himself came to speak with him. None of the newly-Fallen dared to attack Michael, and he walked alone through the enemy lines to where

Lucifer stood.

Lucifer said, simply, "You are War, my brother. How can you possibly be content to submit to God, and not to test your strength against his own? Rise up and conquer as you should. We are united now, and choose to claim our freedom. You are the eldest among us, brother. Take your rightful place."

Michael looked at Lucifer, and the Servitors around them were hushed. Without raising his voice, the Archangel replied, "I may be War, but I serve the Truth of God – and you, *brother*; have made yourself the Lie. Begone from Heaven, for by your own words you are no longer the Light."

And there was war in Heaven, and Michael cast Lucifer down.

Michael's Bargain

Certain Fallen Servitors of Michael have their own stories. They claim that when Michael duelled with Laurence, after God named Laurence Commander of the Hosts of Heaven, Michael won – and exacted a price for letting Laurence live. The cost of Laurence's survival was that he should never try and interfere with Michael's actions, or presume to command him. Michael would accept suggestions which Laurence should make, if they were ones which the Archangel of War agreed with, but he would not take orders from this upstart Malakite. Laurence agreed, and Michael spared his life. Fallen Servitors of Michael quote this story to support their own actions, saying that it proves that the strong can do whatever they want. Angels of War and the Sword utterly deny it, of course.

The Last Meeting

While nobody – and certainly not the Servitors of Destiny or War – will lay claim to this story, there is a tale told about Michael and Yves, when Islam was founded.

They say that Michael went to Yves' Library, for the first time in decades, and demanded to speak to Yves. The two Archangels walked through the Library together, and three times Michael asked Yves what his reasons had been for his actions. Each time, Yves replied that he had been acting as he thought best.

Finally, Michael said, "If you will not trust me, do not expect me to trust you." He left the Library, and has not returned to it since.

MICHELLE – The Female Version

While Michael *can* easily take a female vessel, he hasn't done so for centuries now. The concept of "war" as a masculine occupation, and "warriors" as male, has become so fixed in the general unconscious that Michael now takes a masculine form automatically. He *is* War. At the moment, that means he's also male. It is possible that as the popular image of war begins to include more female soldiers or generals, the Archangel may appear as a woman again.

In the past, he has been known to take a female form. This varied from vessels like the rough female mercenaries who occasionally roamed the roads in the Dark Ages, to the classical Amazons, to armored knights like Joan of Arc. Even in such vessels, Michelle had the same bloodthirsty attitude. She might sweep into the fray to protect others, or she might act as general to a group, ordering them into strategic positions. People have been known – *out* of Michael's hearing – to compare this attitude to the female-motherly-guardian aspects of the Cherub Archangels like Zadkiel or (don't even think it) Novalis. But Michael might not be as offended as some would think; from his point of view, "protection of the helpless" is one of the few things he and Novalis have in common.

MICHAEL

AN ANGEL'S TENT IS HIS CASTLE

Servitors of Michael have their own tents, and each Servitor is free to decorate it in appropriate colors, add pennons, hang out his washing, or whatever he wants. Generally speaking, junior angels pitch their tents in groups around the tents of senior angels to whom they have been assigned, making it easy to find them. (The Groves conveniently adjusts its geography to make such tent-pitching possible.)

Angels keep their personal belongings – trophies, weapons, and so on – inside their tents. While there is no actual "lock" on a tent while its owner is elsewhere,

THE GROVES

While the high branches of the Groves may belong to Janus, and the underground caverns are David's, the "ground level" is Michael's turf. His Servitors work there with other angels and with the souls of the blessed, in training exercises and large-scale war games. Angels of War aren't forbidden to go into other parts of Heaven, but they're all very conscious of the advantage which a fighter enjoys on his own turf. This means that most of the time, the majority of Warriors will be found working out on the fields and in the clearings, or relaxing in their tents. It can be an unnerving area for visitors, especially as some of Michael's more aggressive angels enjoy challenging strangers to a casual practice match. Those who decline will not be actively molested, but will not be accepted as "comrades of the battlefield" in the same way as those who are prepared to stand their ground and give as good as they get.

The endpoints of Tethers are scattered through the Groves, manifesting as rough stone archways, in a pattern convenient for shipping troops or supplies down to Earth. They often serve as nexuses for casual gatherings, with passers-by pausing to chat to the guards, or play chess, or similar activities. The tents of the Servitors of War are a reasonable distance from the practice grounds, to avoid unfortunate collisions from exceptionally violent exercises.

There are a number of unmarked buildings placed around the edges of the encampment, timber-built and low to the ground. These are where weapons, Relics, and records are stored. They can extend several stories below the ground, although they do not touch David's Caverns, and do not go anywhere near as deep down. These buildings are guarded by Servitors of War assigned to the

the fact that the tent is in the middle of an encampment of Warriors, all of whom will know to whom it belongs, tends to discourage casual thieves. (Servitors of Judgment attempting to search a tent for evidence of treason are looked on unfavorably – to say the least. They are usually escorted (or dragged) to the border of the Groves, unless they can cite permission from a senior Servitor of Michael, or orders from Dominic himself.) Servitors of the Wind tend to consider thieving from the tents of War as beneath them – it's just too nearby and convenient to be *interesting*.

duty, who take care to check the identity of any angels claiming to have been assigned weapons. (Sometimes angels of War want to get hold of something large and dangerous without having to go through authority ...)

Relic Bunker

This low-built bunker is believed to house most of the relics which may be issued to Servitors of War on missions. (Despite numerous attempts by Servitors of Wind, with stealth, pickaxes, and dynamite, it has not yet been . . . investigated.) The only entrance is guarded by several Cherubim, Seraphim, and Elohim, who will ask for the visitor's authorization. They will bring out any assigned items from the stocks, rather than letting the visitor in to find it himself. Often mission orders will include the return of the relic after use, and the Cherubim in the Bunker take it very poorly if the relic is damaged. Their annoyance has even been known to result in more than one battle on the Dueling Ground – after all, "failing to keep a weapon in good condition" *is* unsuitable for a Michaelite . . .

MICHAEL'S AXE

The Archangel of War, arguably the greatest warrior in existence, is well known for carrying a battleaxe rather than a sword. Many celestials assume that his battleaxe is a marvelous relic.

It's not. Michael's battleaxe is merely a level 6 corporeal artifact. He doesn't *need* any special abilities invested in his weapon.

МІСНАЕ

Military Records

Much as Michael detests Dominic, he is a fervent proponent of the use of military intelligence. He doesn't hold with the attitude that "our spies are noble heroes while their spies are dirty rats" – to him, a spy's doing a job which needs to be done. This bunker holds the Michaelite records, Distinctions, and so on, but *also* (on the lower levels) contains data gathered by Michael's agents. (Most Michaelites, and a fair number of other angels, suspect that secret records are kept there, but can't prove it.) A small study, at the very bottom of the entire bunker, with a lock that only Michael can open, holds Michael's personal records of useful mercenaries, allies, and non-hostiles. These forces include ethereals, sorcerers, and even some denizens of Hell – and would not be looked on kindly by Judgment.

Entry to the higher levels of the bunker (to check on Michaelite records) requires permission by the Cherubim on duty. Entry to the lower levels (where the confidential information is kept) requires permission



THE PRACTICE GROUNDS

Michael appreciates the assistance of souls who were warriors on Earth in training the armies of Heaven. On the Practice Grounds, one may see fighters who were famous in their day working with mingled groups of angels and blessed souls. All forms of training are encouraged, from bare-handed combat and primitive weapons to monofilament technology and laser rifles (on the rare occasions that these can be borrowed from Jean). The Practice Grounds are a constant patchwork of activity and movement, and the angels of War never leave them empty.

from a superior officer, and clearance past the Malakim and Seraphim on guard. Nobody except Michael gets into Michael's study. The secret records are also encoded, just in case an angel should some day accidentally (or non-accidentally) manage to find his way there from Yves' Library.



The Feasting Tables

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After every good fight comes a good party. When the strenuous battles of the day are over, Doxas, the Angel of Glory (*Heaven and Hell*, p. 73) leads the angels and souls in feasts and songs, remembering great exploits and sharing new ones. While any angel or soul is theoretically welcome at the table, obvious outsiders are liable to be asked to stand up and regale the throng with some tale of their own deeds. Cowering or not being able to produce a story results in the offender being thrown out, or just finding himself alone at the edge of the tables. Angels of Creation are frequent visitors – the Michaelites tell a *good* story. (The souls of children often turn up here for similar reasons, however much other angels try to stop them.)

The Dueling Ground

At the center of the Groves, inside Michael's encampment, is an area used by angels of warrior Superiors to settle matters of honor. Although more peaceful angels scorn such practices, Michael, Janus, and David all encourage their Servitors to settle matters here. Musashi and Cyrano de Bergerac will serve as seconds for those who need them, and any senior angel of Michael is prepared to serve as judge. The form of a duel is always stipulated before it begins – to first blood, first serious wound, or yield. Weapons of all sorts are available on request, though bare-handed fighting is also allowed. Duels are never to the death.

War alone brings up to its bigbest tension all buman energy and puts the stamp of nobility upon the peoples who have the courage to face it. – Benito Mussolini

Any participant who cheats or who attempts to attack an opponent who has yielded will be suppressed by those Michaelites who are present (and there are always some watching the duels). The excuse of having been "carried away by enthusiasm" is disap-

proved of, but understood – although Seraphim present may check for any deeper truths. Outright malicious cheating will result in the offender being thrown out of the Groves, and reported to some angel higher in his Superior's service. If the cheat is actually an angel of War, the news of his



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behavior will spread rapidly among his brothers, who will not be amused at all.

WORD-BOUND SERVITORS

Word-Bound angels of War include Truces, Supply Lines, Ambushes, Strategy, Courage, Trophies, and Last Stands.

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MICHAELITES

While all Servitors of a particular Word will stick together in the case of trouble, Michaelites are almost as wellknown as angels of Stone for hanging together. Their attitude has been described by some as "ready to take offense" – and by *many* as prickly, oversensitive, and over-proud. They don't even need to be struck before "getting their retaliation in first."

However, they share the "brotherhood of warriors," whether their battles are on the battlefield or in the boardroom, against ignorance or evil, or simply against nature. Throughout human history, they've been pleased to see humans imitating their virtues and taking steps in the right direction - courage, stubbornness, self-sacrifice. Many angels of War can see more similarities, in terms of character, to themselves in humans than in some other angels (Judgment and Flowers being the worst offenders here). This can lead to a camaraderie among mixed teams of humans and Michaelites which has amazed Servitors of other



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Words, who are used to the image of angels of War as haughty and proud.

One common prejudice among the less thoughtful Servitors of War is to view the people around them as either "combatants" or "civilians." "Combatants" are expected to hold their own in a fight, and be able to stand up for their rights and cope with a reasonable level of injury. "Civilians" are clearly unfit for most fights, and are to be protected at the cost of the Warriors' own lives. This attitude applies to both celestials and humans. In some ways, a "civilian" (especially a skilled one) may be treated with more respect than a half-hearted "combatant" who could do better, but fails to do so. As an example, a Mercurian of Flowers who outright declares his unwillingness to fight is obviously wrong, but will get better treatment than a Malakite of Lightning who tries to avoid a scuffle. Michaelites respect people who have the courage to stand by what they believe in, whether or not the beliefs are correct.

Modes of Address

Angels of War usually address their Superior as "Sir." Other common terms include "Warlord," "Commander," "Bright Lord," "Boss," "Archangel," or "Lord of War." An occasionally used ceremonial term is "Who is like God," but this is rarely found outside invocations. They will behave toward him with far more formality if angels from other Words are present, as will he toward them – however, if it's a Waronly group, then the atmosphere becomes quite relaxed. Common names for Servitors of Michael, from other angels, include Michaelites, Warriors, Berserkers (inaccurate but often used), Axemen, and Fighters (less common.)

More perceptive Servitors of War hold that any being has the potential to struggle for what they believe in, albeit in their own chosen fashion. They avoid the combatant-civilian dichotomy, trying to judge everyone according to the situation and to their own merits. Of course, according to their beliefs, everyone *should* be prepared to struggle for what they believe in. This leads to such Servitors only giving assistance where it is genuinely needed, and ignoring situations where the participants should be able to handle matters themselves.

Michael's organization is military, as one would expect, but also personal: while a junior Servitor would be expected to obey a senior one, there is rarely a direct chain of command such as one would find in Laurence's ranks. Servitors take orders from Michael, pay attention to any senior celestials present, and get the job done. An angel of War who ignored the information or assistance of another celestial, even if they were technically junior, and fouled up because of this would be reprimanded: a Michaelite who blindly followed a chain of command into error would also be reprimanded. The important task is winning the War.

Of course, those Servitors who have made a name for themselves and collected Distinctions in the field or battle-trophies will gain more support from fellow angels of Michael. Those who are proven superior in War are worthy of respect.

One of the most common organizational forms in the Michaelite ranks resembles the classical Celtic warbands, with a group of similar-ranking warriors led by an undisputed champion. However, in such groups, there tend to be a number of "specialists," with each having a particular skill. Such groups may (if operating on Earth) include humans, or even – occasionally – ethereals, Lilim, Outcasts, or Renegades. (The use of non-angels needs to be cleared with Michael, at the earliest opportunity, and should not be waved in the face of Judgment or other angels who might take offense. Michael himself sometimes assigns non-angels to a group – usually with instructions that they are not to be questioned too much.)

Stories of each others' exploits are common coin among Michael's Servitors, and it is said that Doxas, the Angel of Glory, can recount any tale of their deeds (and often does). A holder of a higher Distinction would not tend to use it among Servitors of other Archangels, but would expect another Servitor of *Michael* – unless entirely cut off from general society – to recognize his name and recollect his Distinction without needing to be reminded.

As Michael's Servitors rise in experience and power, they are expected to give time and energy to training others, even as Michael himself is seen at times encouraging

> the souls and angels in the Groves. Junior Servitors are likely to have been assigned to some local, senior Servitor as pupils, if not as servants per se: older player characters are very likely to find that they are expected to keep an eye on younger Servitors of Michael in the vicinity, and to make sure that they don't get into too much trouble while practicing the art of war . . .

> If several Servitors of Michael are present in an area, whether or not they're based around a Tether, there is usually a quickly established understanding of who's the "ranking" angel of War. This may involve practice sparring, cooperation on missions, or just comparing stories of exploits, but usually *one* of them is going to be recog-



 nized by the others as the most competent. That particular angel is then responsible for coordination of missions, passing on instructions, and for taking care of his "younger brothers." If there is a Tether of War in the area, then that becomes the acting base, and the Seneschal is the de facto information relay – though not necessarily the ranking Servitor in the area. Squabbles between Michaelites as to who is most competent are unusual, *especially* if they'd endanger an operation – being caught in that results in a personal rebuke from Michael.

HUMANS

Michael does not tend to sponsor corporate or highly structured organizations on Earth, these being more the province of Laurence or Dominic. He generally finds himself with a large number of separate human agents, each with their own cell, who can team up where necessary. A formation which often occurs is for one Soldier, or angel of Michael, or Saint, to gather around him a group of people with different skills – this may include scientific or technical assistance, or "support staff." Such people may or may not be Soldiers, or aware of the War. The head of this group can then contact the heads of other groups, or some local Tether of Michael, should circumstances warrant it.

There are benefits to this organization; if a particular cell is discovered, then it will not necessarily be connected with other Michaelite groups, which can function undisturbed. Possible *problems* are that a cell may be destroyed, or corrupted, without other cells knowing about the situation. In an attempt to combat this, the nearest Tethers of War usually request a regular check-in from whomever is in charge of the cell, so that they can assess its current status.

ALLIES OFF THE RECORD

Michael himself will cheerfully (or at least willingly) take into his service any being who may be of assistance: Celestials, Saints, Soldiers, Bright Lilim, and the like. He will also employ Renegades, Outcasts, ethereals, and darker Lilim, though he by no means trusts them. His resources are far-ranging, often hidden, but frequently deadly when he finally activates them. If Dominic knew the full scope of the forces that Michael could activate at short notice, Michael would probably be facing a new set of charges of Treason to Heaven.

MICHAEL AND RELIGION

Michael looks favorably on Judaism and Christianity, given that they both promote the worship of God (which is, after all, the Truth). The circumstances in Heaven surrounding Islam's founding cause him to be more neutral towards it – though he approves of a number of its details, he isn't as strongly linked to it. However, whatever religion humans may profess, he ultimately judges them by their deeds. An atheist has just as much potential to be virtuous as a confirmed Christian, even if he is unfortunately wrong about a few points. (One can't expect the humans to have an Archangel's comprehension of the Symphony.)

Humans under Michael's sponsorship have an unusual freedom of activity (for humans). Angels of War working with them look on them more as "younger siblings" than as "mere humans," considering them bound together in the "brotherhood of warriors." Gender, in this case, is irrelevant – both men and women are accepted, and may serve in any position. Of course, if a possible spying position involves a woman playing along with a discriminatory attitude from her employers, then she's expected to cope with it and bless their blindness.

Some of these humans may be less than enthusiastic about humbly obeying orders from non-Michaelite angels, having grown used to a more equal relationship. This is unlikely to go as far as outright disobedience, but may include questioning the reasons for orders, or offering their own points of view and suggestions. (Michael's own opinion on the subject is that if the angels *are* superior beings, then they should be able to handle this, and that in any case the humans are supposed to be thinking for themselves.)

Soldiers of War (or aware humans who serve without being Soldiers) aren't necessarily restricted to military organizations or martial arts groups. They may be found in the police, hospitals, town planning, schools, among vagabonds, on the street, in boardrooms – anywhere that the *spirit* of War can find a home and prosper. They are people who will stand up for their own rights and for the rights of others, who are prepared to risk defeat for the sake of victory, and who believe in what they're fighting for. They may work with street gangs or administration staff, nurses or hackers, but they share the same spirit. (This doesn't always mean they find it easy to cooperate – but that's an entirely different matter.)

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MICHAEL'S TETHERS

Michael's Tethers are places where humans have struggled against their enemies, whether they won or lost, in the true and undefeated spirit of War. While most of them *are* battlegrounds, there are others which show different facets of War – the homes and schools of martial artists, places which honor heroes, or any area where humans *would not yield*. Among his most famous Tethers are the beaches of Normandy where the Allies landed on D-Day. Others include Kocabas Cay (the first major victory of Alexander the Great) and the Cabinet War Rooms in London (*The Final Trumpet*, p. 22), and more are detailed in the *Liber Castellorum*, p. 85-86.

The local Tether of War – or the ranking Servitor of War, if there's no local Tether – will have the names of nearby Soldiers of War or aware humans. Besides taking reports from them, he can activate their cell when necessary, using them to investigate an area or to handle a particular problem.

SERVING WAR

ICHAEL

A phrase used by many Servitors of War is "tough but fair." Michael *expects* a lot of his angels – they're formed from his Forces, for the same principles of battle and protection, and they should all have the same desire to do their utmost. He doesn't bother to give them business performance targets, or stratified codes of honor to live up to – he simply expects them to fight against the forces of Hell, whenever and wherever they're to be found.

The scope of this expectation brings both freedom and responsibility. The Servitors of War have a wider area to choose their methods and targets, but must answer to Michael and to their own consciences. In general, Michael *will* be understanding to an angel who's erred with good intentions – but he'll also expect the angel to know where he's made mistakes, and to take his punishment "like a man." (Perhaps it's unsurprising that the Archangel of War manifests as masculine.) The *price* which the angels of War pay for lack of regimentation is to take the responsibility for their actions, and to look their Archangel in the eye when they've screwed up.

In return, Michael protects them from enemies in Hell and Heaven alike. He'll rebuke them if they've done wrong, but they're *his* warriors, to guard and guide and lead. Michael sees himself in them - or maybe the potential to do what he did – and treats them accordingly. Angels of War recognize the love which their Archangel has for them, and if they strive to rise in his service, it's because they personally want to excel or better protect others. Mere hunger for power may exist, but it's rare, and condemned where it's found. This is another reason why Michael encourages camaraderie among the ranks, joining in the fight when it's going on, and the post-battle celebration later, being ready to listen to his Servitors' own stories. They're part of War, just as he is, and they're all fighting for the same cause. It makes brothers of them all.

THE CHANGDU GO BOARD

The oldest known Go board in Tibet is a 17 by 17 board, carved into rock in Changdu, Qinghai Province. It is reputed to be the site of a game played by the legendary king Gesar (hero of the world's longest epic poem) over 1,000 years ago. The site is revered by local shepherd folk, who believe that by walking round the stone several times they will acquire wisdom.

What's less well known is that this board is the actual site of a legendary event. Before even the Gesar stories, there was a time when a Chinese army invaded Tibet. The Buddhist ruler refused to shed the blood of his subjects. Instead, he challenged the leader of the invaders to a game of Go. When he won, incredibly, the invading army retreated.

The quality of this deed made the site a potential Tether to War. Even if it didn't involve open battle, it represented one individual standing as champion for his people, and an utter determination combined with courage and skill. Michael is still proud of the Tether, even though it is off the main routes and difficult to reach. The Seneschal who guards it is Sangs-rgyas, a Cherub of War with a Role as a local herdsman, who is also extremely proud of his herb patch. (He doesn't take kindly to suggestions that he should really be working for Novalis, as many travelers have noted.) KARKEN KARKEN

There are some things, however, which Michael and his angels do not understand, by the nature of the Word of War. These include cowardice, indecision, deliberate inaction, and *giving up*. An angel with these faults will have difficulty explaining them to his brothers or his Lord, and will often request to be transferred to another Archangel. Michael will usually grant the request, assuming the other Archangel agrees. He will regret the loss of a child, but an angel who is not a true-hearted warrior has no place in his ranks. Better that such an angel serve elsewhere, where his *unacceptable* faults won't harm others.

SPECIAL TRICKS

Waysigns

Throughout the centuries, the Servitors of War have developed a code of signs (broken twigs, stones left in particular positions, and so on) which can be left as a warning to each other. These are very basic, and have been modified over time, but can signify messages such as, "Demons of the War near here," or "This place watched." Of course, given the angels who have Fallen to Baal or other Princes, this code isn't a total *secret* – but very few demons or other angels would look for such signs as a matter of course, or know the full "code" for how to leave them.

Personal Heraldry

Older Servitors of War remember the good old days when a knight had his own shield, colors, or clan device. While it is rare these days (and Dominicans in particular frown on it), some Michaelites have their own personal sigil, "signature" method of fighting, or simply leave a token behind after each kill. (These may range from a coat of arms to an elaborate tattoo or scarification pattern, from wearing one's hair braided in particular colors to always breaking an opponent's back at the third vertebra.) This habit is more common among senior angels of War who actually lived on Earth in such periods, but it is an occasional fad among the younger ones. Such tokens can also be used to quietly signal brother Warriors about one's presence or interference in an affair without alerting the ignorant.

This use of personal symbols may extend to a particular group of Michaelites, whether it's a temporary warband or a permanent division. On Earth, unfortunately, this can result in a number of clashes with gangs founded by the angels of Stone. However, even if the angels of War aren't as regimented as the angels of the Sword, they *always* know which flag to rally to in a fight, and they're fiercely protective of their standards.

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Trophies

Much to the disgust of Servitors of Novalis, and to the horror of Dominicans who call it vanity, Michaelites are great believers in taking trophies after a fight. After all, their argument goes, they *won* the fight and deserve the trophy. This may range from such minor habits as collecting the enemy's weapons, to actively removing body parts. (The stories about Michaelites who have necklaces of dried demonic ears are occasionally true.) Particularly preferred trophies are the standards of demonic armies, or the insignia of powerful demons. The absolute pinnacle of trophy-taking is a Prince's personal sigil – however, this doesn't happen very often.



Rewards and Punishments

Michael's punishments or rewards tend to be delivered at the end of a mission – he doesn't have an "internal police" to keep permanent guard on his angels. They may even be passed on by an older Michaelite, if he's in the area or is responsible for the direction of the mission. If a Servitor of War does notice one of his brothers committing a sin or infraction, he's just as likely to demand an explanation on the spot as to report the sinner to a senior angel of War. A senior angel will either haul the offender in for a one-to-one discussion of the subject, assign a punishment himself (if it's a minor offense) or pass a report up to Michael.

Rewards or punishments from senior angels of War are typically minor. A reward may be a relic from the angel's own collection, or one that he's been instructed to pass along, or may be a well-crafted weapon, gadget, or Rite (if he's Wordbound). Punishments

will involve the *loss* of relics or weapons, or just a good thrashing on the combat grounds. A grueling course of training is the usual treatment for someone whose lack of skill caused a mission to go wrong. Ultimately, one of the worse punishments from an older Servitor of War is to have the story of the angel's failure spread among his fellow Michaelites – which almost guarantees that it will never be forgotten.

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Michael himself gives more serious rewards or punishments. They tend to be oriented towards the actions which deserve the rewards, and the people receiving them. Thus, an angel who is fond of Songs but is always running out of Essence may get a new Rite, while a Servitor who prefers sneak missions will get Songs or attunements relating to stealth. Michael also prides himself on knowing his angels well enough to give them things that they *want* – even if that involves persuading Jean to hand over his new monofilament axe prototype.

A remarkable success at an average mission may get a Rite or Song, while a major success on a mission of importance may result in the bestowal of an attunement – to say nothing of the glory factor. The recruitment of other fighters is always rewarded, as is the gathering of useful military intelligence.

The punishments for failing an average mission will depend on the consequences, and on whether or not it was demonstrably the angel's fault, through action or inaction. If it wasn't the angel's fault, then he may get away with no more than a note on his record. Michael understands that things don't always work out, although he will expect the angel himself to be chagrined, and may impose a minor punishment if this is not the case. If a failure *was* the angel's fault, then he'd better be able to accept the removal of relics, rites, or attunements that can result – a proper Warrior accepts his errors and their punishment. A Michaelite who resents his punishment or complains about it won't be given a position of responsibility by his Archangel until he's able to fully understand his error and his penance.

Michael may cast out his angels, but *only* if he believes that it'll bring them to an understanding of their sins. Such cases are usually angels who are too eager to take the fight to Hell, and who feel bound by the discipline of Heaven. He hopes, in such cases, that they will change their mind after firsthand experience. Michael tries to keep track of his Outcasts, so that he can have them destroyed if they fail to learn from their punishment. If the Archangel of War believes that one of his angels is corrupt and *will* Fall, and that this can't be avoided, then he'll kill the disobedient celestial – in battle, naturally.

The Redeemed

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Michaelites believe in reducing the enemy ranks. Even if they *like* a good fight, they are prepared to admit (well, most of them) that redeeming a demon takes a demon away from Hell, and gives valuable strategic information to Heaven. It's a win-win situation. However, most Warriors are *not* generally suited for heart-to-heart discussions with demons about the phi-



losophy of serving Heaven. Redemptions sponsored by Michaelites are either carefully planned campaigns to nudge the demon into seeing the light, or heart-toheart, man-to-man appeals to the demon. With a weapon to hand in case it doesn't work.

Michael himself, if called on to redeem an demon, will do his best to bring the demon through it alive – though it'll hurt, naturally. If the ex-demon survives, he'll be debriefed by a special team of Elohim, Seraphim, and Mercurians, *before* anyone even considers which Archangel he might be assigned to. Redeemed who take service under Michael aren't assigned to solo missions for years. They're put with teams of other angels of War, for their own safety as much as for any other reason, but are often placed on missions where a knowledge of Hell's methods is useful.

The case of Fallen Michaelites is a special one. The angels of War remember them as beloved brothers and sisters, and will gladly (if they think there's a chance of success) make a project out of trying to Redeem them. This can involve forcing them into confrontations with old friends, exposing them to distasteful aspects of other demons, and generally trying to precipitate a break with Hell. If this fails, then the Fallen Michaelite will be dealt with as quickly as possible, and his once-brothers will show a more-than-Dominican dedication to disposing of him.



In The Ranks: Trainees

The division of newly-created between relievers and fully-formed angels is fairly even. There are plenty of uses for relievers in the Groves, carrying messages, doing guard duty, and generally performing "support services" while they mature.

Fully-formed angels are taught how to use weapons on the practice grounds, training with blessed souls, and then with their angelic brothers. While they'll meet angels belonging to Stone, Wind, and the Sword there, they may never have cause to visit places like the Library or the Glade – and may well not want to. Very young angels of War are often insular, prejudiced, and advocates of the "storm Hell today" school of thought. Michael tries to

assign these angels to positions on Earth as soon as they've reached a decent standard in martial training, to some area where they can get experience without too many risks. Unfortunately, their attitude has resulted in some of the general image which Warriors have – rude, biased, aggressive, and prone to take charge at the drop of a clip of ammo.



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CHOIRS

There are certain stereotypes born from the way that the Word of War interacts with the general resonances of the Choirs. While certainly not all angels of War fall into these patterns, they are common enough to have given rise to the popular beliefs. Of course, assuming that any angel of War will have no other nature or purpose than his Archangel's Word and his own Choir is just *asking* for trouble . . .

Seraphim

Many Seraphim of War take their own Archangel as a model as well as a hero, strengthening themselves to be able to dispose of Evil physically or celestially. While it is not the case that *all* Seraphim of Michael are axe-wielding furies, there is a statistical disproportion in that direction.

As far as most Seraphim of War are concerned, there are two steps to dealing with Evil. First identify it, cleaving through the clouds of lies and deceit, then dispose of it (with whatever weapons come to hand). The only *bealing* from Evil also comes through truth – the truth that the Evil has been destroyed, and the truth in every living being that they have the strength to choose to fight. This tends to make them as blunt and harsh-spoken as their Archangel. It does, however, also mean that they will do whatever they *can* do to remedy a situation, and they won't let it be until it's sorted out, however painful that may be to others involved. Truth is truth – none of them would ever claim that it was kind or gentle.

Cherubim

Given their ability to know if those to whom they are attuned will die from natural causes during the day, Cherubim of Michael are even *more* paranoid about supernatural threats. Not unsurprisingly, their reaction to learning that demons are in the area and threatening their attuned is to feel that "prevention is better than cure," and they'd rather destroy the demon before he can

> come anywhere near. This makes them twitchy when they know their attuned is under threat, torn between staying nearby to protect, and attacking any demons nearby to remove them *first*.

> Under more normal circumstances, they are calm and placid, knowing that they will be warned if their attuned is under threat from natural forces. A Cherub of War is the archetypal unflappable soldier, busy lighting up his cigarette while the bombs rain down meters away, blandly secure that his attuned isn't in danger from *that* direction . . .

> > MICHAEL

The commonwealth of Venice in their armory have their inscription: "Happy is that city which in time of peace thinks of war."

- Robert Burton

Ofanim

Ofanim of War feel the need to express their struggle in constant motion. To them, any stillness or rest is a kind of defeat, a deliberate choice *not* to be working in some way against the forces of Hell. This means that even during periods when they are supposed to be relaxing, they are constantly fiddling with plans and maps, carrying messages for someone else, or caring for their weapons . . . Sharing living space with an Ofanite of Michael is frustrating, even for other Michaelites.

The Wheels of Michael can be extremely good strategists, however. Once *committed* to battle, or to a plan of action, they can be so calm that one would think them Elohim, waiting for the right moment to spring to the attack. They are also more resigned than most Michaelites to the concept of retreat, and are more prepared than other angels of War to take dissonance, if necessary. These Ofanim understand that sometimes one must run away to live to fight another day – it's not so much that they desperately want to *live*, but they sympathize with the running. This doesn't make them cowards, merely pragmatists who like to pick their ground, and who will take a point or two of dissonance as the lesser of evils. Better still, to their minds, is to plan a campaign based on hit-and-run strikes, which suits their temperaments.

Elobim

Given that Elohim of Michael constantly see people's readiness to die in combat, they tend to use this standard to judge by; either someone is prepared to die in battle, or they are not. Combined with their natural resonance, this makes the Powers of War very prone to using psychological terror tactics. An enemy who isn't prepared to commit to the death, and who can be scared out of fighting, is one enemy less to worry about.

This leads to a frequent dichotomy in the behavior of

these Elohim. Most of the time, they're being quiet and

unobtrusive, working as spies or undercover, behaving so

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as to avoid notice from enemy forces. But when they want to fracture an enemy's courage, they will quite cheerfully go into a fight flamboyantly, and threaten maiming and torture – and sometimes carry it out, where they judge it necessary. To them, almost all situations must be judged by circumstances, and there are no hardand-fast rules of combat. Other angels often find these sudden shifts of behavior disconcerting, unless they know the Powers well.

Malakim

Malakim of War exist in the permanent foreknowledge of coming danger, always listening for that theme in the Symphony which indicates combat approaching. This tends to give rise to angels who are *entirely* relaxed when they can tell there is no immediate danger, and poised for action when they can sense its coming. (Of course, if a situation mandates caution – such as sneaking into an enemy Tether – then they're not stupid enough to relax, even if they can't sense immediate combat.)

This "laid-back" attitude is often somewhat annoying to other Malakim, who live in the knowledge that Evil may attack from any quarter at any time. The Malakim of War are also noticeably fond of sharing their great exploits, comparing trophies, and developing particularly exotic combat styles as hobbies – which annoys angels who see such things as vanity and distraction. However, even the most ascetic angel of Judgment must admit that the Virtues of Michael fight Evil efficiently, thoroughly, and to the limits of their strength. They just do it with style as well.

Kyriotates

While a Kyriotate of Michael has a number of its Forces tied up in any vessel which it has chosen to create, it also has the ability to materialize and dematerialize that vessel. This means that once they can get a host – any host – in a particular area, they can then cause their created vessel to appear out of thin air. It's very annoying to demons, when they think they've got that annoying Kyriotate cornered in a rat, to find a large bruiser human in their midst. Especially if that human is carrying a big gun.

Kyriotates of War don't tend to cultivate a circle of hosts as much as other Kyriotates, as they often *have* a human identity – their created vessel – which they can live in. However, this doesn't stop them possessing other humans when necessary, and they're as strategically minded as any other Warrior. They do often specialize in having several convenient small or flying hosts – mice, sparrows, and so forth – which they can use to get into a location, before bringing out the heavyweight body . . .

Mercurians

It's a good thing that Mercurians genuinely like people and want to get on with them – having all the other angels of War expecting *you* to soothe over the quarrels they've caused would make lesser beings extremely cynical. As things are, while they don't begrudge the time and effort, Mercurians of War find it's easier not to start the fight in the first place. If assigned to a particular area or group, they will at once study the appropriate customs and behavior so as not to give unwitting offense.

On the other hand, there's a certain status to being the *only* diplomats in Michael's forces. A Mercurian may grumble about having to always clear up other people's messes, or about people always seeing quarrels in terms of what it'll take to appease them, but he wouldn't want to lose his position. Come the need for a diplomat, he'll be making his way to take his valued place,

confident in his sense of style and manner. It should also be noted that Mercurians of War are among the best of the Intercessionists at realizing when it's necessary to abandon the diplomacy and call in the Malakim . . .



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BRIGHT LILIM

Given the general scarcity of Bright Lilim, those devoted to War are extremely rare, and incredibly valuable resources. However, the type of Lilim who *would* want to serve War is unlikely to want to spend the rest of her life as a protected back-room weapon. This presents, as they say, a problem. If she demands action, the Bright Lilim in question is placed in a *very* efficient coterie of Michaelites. These angels of War are informed, by Michael, that the Lilim is to be protected in combat situations at all costs – and that she is to be corporeally killed by *them*, if necessary, to save her from recapture by Hell.

Bright Lilim of Michael are daring, extravagant, and vivid beings, filled with pride at their angelic status and the Word that they serve. They are very fond of acquiring Geases on demons or others, in order to use them strategically later, and often take a Geas in payment for sparing an opponent's life – or for persuading a friend to spare him. They also often don't last long – but they fight bravely while they do.



JOBS

Celestial Jobs

There are four main tasks for Servitors of War in Heaven: to act as guards, to train others in martial skills, to perfect their *own* skills, and to help those blessed souls who come to the Groves.

Angels of War help in guarding the walls of Heaven – as, it must be admitted, do angels from most Words. However, the Michaelites always feel that they in particular provide a vital element to the watch; after all, it was Michael who originally threw Lucifer out of Heaven. They have no doubt that they'll be called upon, some day, to dispose of all his legions. It is usually Malakim or Seraphim who take their turns on the walls, ready for battle. Michaelites also mount guard on important structures around the Groves, such as the Relic Bunker (p. 115) or the Military Records (p. 116). Here, the watch is usually taken by Cherubim, with occasional assistance from Elohim or Seraphim. The end-points of Tethers are also permanently watched, but this is not so much a guard against offense as a permanent readiness to send help. Such wardenship is done by angels, relievers, or blessed souls, with no particular preference of Choir.

The training and practice of war is a task which all Michaelites must work at, whatever their Choir and whatever their age. However, when a student reaches an advanced level in hand-to-hand or melee combat, he has at least one course from a member of his *own* Choir. It's only practical – Seraphim don't move in the same ways as Mercurians, and Cherubim don't move in the same ways as Kyriotates. The range of tutors and students includes angels *and* souls for both, with the strongest angels not scorning to learn a new martial arts move from a human teacher. No particular Choir is favored here.

Finally, the angels of War do not neglect their task of caring for the blessed souls who find themselves at home in the Groves. Fortunately, such souls usually enjoy some practice sparring, or recounting their own exploits, or listening to others – all things which any Michaelite can easily deal with. Souls who are actually in grief or pain, or have come to the Groves to try to understand – and exorcise – their cravings for violence, are cared for by Mercurians and Elohim.

MICHAE



NISROC, ANGEL OF SPIES

Mercurian of War

Corporeal Forces - 4Strength 6Agility 10Ethereal Forces - 6Intelligence 12Precision 12Celestial Forces - 5Will 8Perception 12Vessel: Human (Male/2, Female/2)

Role: "Morgan Withers," File Clerk/3, Status/2

Skills: Computer Operation/2, Detect Lies/2, Dodge/3, Driving/1, Electronics/1, Emote/2, Escape/3, Fast-Talk/4, Fighting/3 (Boxing), Knowledge/3 (Codes), Lockpicking/2, Lying/4, Move Silently/3, Ranged Weapon (Pistol/3, Rifle/2), Savoir-Faire/4, Small Weapon/3 (Knife), Tactics/2, Tracking/1

Songs: Attraction (Corporeal/3), Dreams (Corporeal/2, Ethereal/2, Celestial/2), Form (Ethereal/3, Celestial/2), Healing (Corporeal/4), Light (Ethereal/2), Motion (Corporeal/3, Ethereal/2), Possession/4, Shields (Corporeal/2, Celestial/3), Tongues (Corporeal/2, Ethereal/2, Celestial/2)

Artifacts: Notebook (Reliquary/6)

MICHAEL

Attunements: Malakite of War, Mercurian of War, Master of Valor

Special Rites: Set up a working spy network of at least five people (1 essence.)

Nisroc has held the Word of Spies since before the birth of Christ. He attributes this to native paranoia, common sense, and never taking the first hansom cab – ah, taxi. While he genuinely *likes* humanity, as do all Mercurians, he also harbors a very healthy respect for their ingenuity, cunning, and ability to produce new ideas in his field. To some extent, he even admires them more than demons, who (as far as he's concerned) aren't as much of a challenge.

While Nisroc began his career as a low-grade collector of information for Michael, interrogating humans and picking up the latest gossip, he came into his own when other angels needed Roles established. He found it easy to work them into the local population, and to get data which they needed – or to direct them into getting the data themselves. As his reputation grew, Michael started using him to direct chains of data-gatherers, sending him directly to investigate areas where the Archangel of War had problems inserting spies.

When Michael nominated Nisroc for the Word of Spies, he ran into problems with Dominic, who wanted it for one of his own Servitors. The resulting clash was quickly headed off by the Seraphim Council. Practical competition on Earth proved that Nisroc was definitely the most efficient of those seeking the Word, and he was given it.

Since then, Nisroc's been working all over Earth, infiltrating other people's chains of information as well as establishing his own, and also controlling the flow of counterintelligence. He frequently works with angels of Dominic (and even, occasionally, with Servitors of Asmodeus) in order to get information which he can't find elsewhere. Michael doesn't ask too many questions, as long as the job gets done, and as long as Nisroc remembers which side he's on.

The Angel of Spies functions more as a coordinator and establisher of spy networks than personally as a James Bond. Fortunately, he enjoys both of these tasks – interacting with the humans and pitting his wits against theirs is his idea of the perfect job, and he certainly doesn't want to *attack* them. This detached attitude may be why he's so efficient; he views the whole business as a complicated game between friends, even if the stakes are extremely high, and as a kind of science. Every advance in spying is to be noted and applauded (though if it's by the other side, it's also to be copied and blocked).

Nisroc is a powerful Word-bound angel; he may be used anywhere in the world, and may even be found cooperating with Dominicans or demons. While he has Michael's trust, Nisroc won't share more information with angels serving under him than necessary.

Continued on next page . . .

Ethereal Jobs

Angels of Michael may be in the Marches for two main reasons – either they're pursuing a mission of their own there, or they're providing backup for Servitors of Dream. (The latter is rare, given Blandine's attitude towards Michael, but occasionally happens.) If they're on a mission of their own (which may involve dealing with ethereals, protecting a dreamscape from demons, or simply inspiring a human's dreams) then any Choir may find themselves there. However, Michael prefers to assign Elohim, Cherubim, and Mercurians. The Powers are to carefully evaluate a situation and take objective action, the Guardians to protect a particular human if his dreams are involved, and the Mercurians to negotiate with ethereals. (Michael has no wish to touch off any wars or accidentally remove future allies.)

If a group of Michaelites have been assigned to assist angels of Blandine, then they're probably there as muscle. In this case, Malakim and Seraphim are usually assigned – though they *may* be informed that they're under the orders of the ranking Servitor of Dreams present, to permit retreats. (If they *aren't* so informed, then Michael gives some personal instructions beforehand about precisely how far they're to go, and at what point they might want to retreat – if at all.)

Corporeal Jobs

On Earth, jobs for Michaelites are usually expressed in terms of offense or defense. (And, as everyone knows, the best defense is a strong offense.) This includes, in principle, holding their own ground and expanding onto the enemy's – which covers activities such as guarding, spying, recruiting, aggression, and assisting allies where appropriate.

Seneschals of Tethers naturally guard their Tethers with their lives. Angels assigned to help them – or in other guarding or long-term watching jobs – are almost always Cherubim. However, if the target is important enough to have *several* guards, then Michael often puts an angel from a different Choir on the job, such as a Mercurian or Seraph, for additional information on attackers. (The non-Cherub is not always thrilled by this assignment, of course.)

SAMPLE SERVITORS (CONTINUED)

MILDRED

Elobite Servitor of War

| Corporeal Forces - 3 | Strength 7 | Agility 5 |
|---|----------------|--------------|
| Ethereal Forces - 3 | Intelligence 6 | Precision 6 |
| Celestial Forces - 3 | Will 5 | Perception 7 |
| Vessel: Human (Female)/2 | | |
| Role: Secretary/3, Status/2 ("Millie Summers") | | |
| Skills: Computer | Operation/3 | , Dodge/2, |
| Driving/1, Emote/2, Fast-Talk/2, Fighting/2 (Thai | | |

Kickboxing), Knowledge (Explosives)/2, Ranged Weapon/2 (Pistol), Small Weapon/2 (Knife)

Songs: Shields (Corporeal/4)

Attunements: Elohite of War, Seraph of War

Mildred is a very dangerous creature – she's an Elohite who can fake bubbly blonde idiocy, then resort to violence once she's got the drop on opponents. Equally at home on espionage missions into enemy territory, or giggling with other blondes in the nearest mall, she subordinates her personal desires to the wishes of her Superior. (Admittedly,

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she prefers it when said wishes include kicking demonic tail all the way back to Hell.)

One of Mildred's strengths is her ability to pretend to be a total airhead. Nobody would seriously suspect the giggling girl of being an angel – and even if he did, he would be very unlikely to assume she was a cold-blooded Power. Mildred ("Call me Millie!") plays on this, even to the extent of once claiming that she was looking for the toilets when caught in the middle of a Vapulan Tether. Fortunately, she carries plenty of weaponry for when the trouble starts.

The Elohite is often assigned to infiltrate a group of people short-term, in order to cause a diversion for another party, or to gain entry to a particular place. She then detaches herself from her contacts, hopefully without coming under suspicion. Mildred fully appreciates her ability to serve God in her current task, and would certainly never consider dissonance. However, she *is* gaining a definite and subjective dislike of chewing gum.

Mildred is a balanced starting-level character, suitable for use as an adversary, an angelic ally, or a player character:

МІСНАЕ

Spies are chosen from those who can lie competently and whose natural resonances will permit them almost any behavior – this means, usually, Elohim, Mercurians, Cherubim, and Saints. Seraphim, Malakim, and Ofanim can often be too easily identified by characteristic patterns of behavior. While Michael *will* use them as spies if they're positioned for it, they're rarely the first choice for an uniquely spying mission. As for Kyriotates, they deserve a book of their own when considering their uses as spies – they can watch targets, infiltrate closed groups, and are vital for War's information-gathering. Michael particularly appreciates it when a Kyriotate can regularly possess someone at the top of someone *else's* spying operation, and quietly copy off their data for War's use. (Rumors about this occasionally happening to high-ranking humans in Dominican operations are currently unproven.)

Recruitment is handled by Malakim, Mercurians, or Elohim, who can judge if the human has the necessary qualities to fight the good fight. They may be in such obvious places as martial arts studios or armies, or unlikely places such as neighborhood associations, hospitals, or banks. Michael rarely assigns any Servitors *specifically* as recruiters, but those who have tasks involving training those around them in battle and protection usually also have experience in spotting potential.

Some Michaelites are assigned simply to rove the Earth, and take appropriate action if they run across

something unsavory. They may be solo, or may be in teams – motorcycle gangs, in their heyday, were extremely convenient covers. Other angels of War are traveling "strike teams," moved to places where Michael wants the forces of Hell cleared out of the area. For obvious reasons, these angels are experienced corporeal combatants, though if they're working in teams, they include at least one Mercurian "diplomat" to cover things up. They are usually Malakim and Ofanim, with some Kyriotates and Seraphim.

Finally, the most common reason for other angels to contact Michaelites is to ask for some assistance - armed assistance. Angels of War assigned to such a job may just be whoever's closest, or may be a specially chosen team. The Warrior contact who requisitioned the team will cer*tainly* try to get full details on the mission first, to make sure that he gets a group who can handle the job. Quite often, Servitors of other Words don't have the military training to make an accurate estimation of a situation, and ask for the wrong people - a frontal assault team instead of stealth experts, or an assassin instead of a diplomat. It's also true that in these cases, the Michaelites like to take control of the mission once they've been given it, rather than leaving it with whoever asked them in. The angels of War aren't stupid, however, and they will listen if it's *urgent*, or if Michael has specifically put them under the authority of whoever called them in.



Unusual Jobs

There are some duties given to trusted angels of War which are not immediately self-explanatory. These include working their way into the world's media, collecting and preserving the war experiences of human fighters, protecting areas of "neutral ground," and sheltering ethereals or "good" sorcerers.

The first pair of the above duties both deal with the same area – Michael's desire to protect the Truth of his Word from the creeping pollutions of Nybbas, and from the tendency to make World Wars into five-second sound bites. If the world's communication channels must become a new battleground, then so be it. And for that, the *truth* of what War is must be preserved, so that it can be spread.

Protecting neutral ground – and semi-neutral personages – comes from Michael's perception that "he who is not against me may be persuaded to be for me." Ethereal allies are useful, and places where they can meet angels or simply exist safe from Hell must be kept free. Of course, other Archangels wouldn't necessarily agree with this – which is why only *trusted* Michaelites have such duties.

COPING WITH STRESS

Whether or not other angels believe it, Michaelites *do* have moments of self-doubt and regret. They attempt not to show these in front of others – after all, it would hardly be sensible to worry fellow angels by letting them see that Heaven's foremost defenders are vulnerable – but such moments do exist. Servitors of War support each other at these times, reminding them of the *purpose* that they're called to with tales of past glory, or simply being there and reaffirming brotherhood.

A Servitor of War will often react to physical or emotional stress with physical self-indulgence – alcohol, sex, food, gambling, and similar methods of relaxation. Other Warriors will understand this, as long as it doesn't affect their brother's abilities or responsibilities. There's nothing wrong with a bit of consensual affection, or the appreciation of a good whiskey – in fact, if relaxing that way will make a brother better able to fulfill his job, then it's only sensible. However, if an angel's indulgence *does* result in him failing in his tasks, then they will be the first to reprove him, and to make him go "cold turkey" if necessary. The price of freedom is responsibility.

But just because they're proud doesn't mean that they're *stoics*. A Michaelite may weep on the field of battle for a dead comrade, or for a Fallen brother. Acknowledging grief for a loss is entirely understood, and is respected by other angels of War.

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MICHAEL

RELATIONS

Carrying on their Archangel's hostility, angels of War are rarely comfortable with Servitors of Judgment or Destiny. Servitors of Flowers are tolerated as "support staff," and aggressively "protected" from coming anywhere near battlefields. Stone, Fire, Wind, and the Sword are valued allies in a fight, while Animals, Dreams, Trade, and Lightning are considered to be "useful" if working in certain areas. (An angel of War doesn't expect reliable aid from a Servitor of Animals while trying to help humans in the inner city – he knows that all he'll get is complaints about how they're treating the cockroaches.) Angels of Creation are too variable to be considered predictable, although they can be admirable fighters, and are certainly dedicated to their cause.

We make war that we may live in peace. – Aristotle

Of course, after the first prejudices have been overcome, a Servitor of War *can* get to know individuals. Angels of Flowers, Judgment, and Destiny can all win a Michaelite's respect through hard work and stubbornness, and by the determination with which they fight their battles. (Very few Warriors will admit to being *prejudiced* – they merely, as they put it, "have strong feelings on the subject.") Any Michaelite who regularly hangs around with a Dominican will have to explain himself to his friends, and the Dominican will have to suffer "hazing" if he meets other Michaelites. Fortunately, the excuse of "whatever Word he serves, he's a good fighter," is commonly accepted and understood.

Some of the more perceptive angels of War can, with time, grasp a point of view that *doesn't* center on struggle and battle, and appreciate its validity. This allows them to tolerate Servitors from other Words much more politely, and with more respect. Michael usually assigns these angels to inter-Word liaison posts, or to missions which involve directing mixed

forces of Servitors, where their flexibility will be useful. Such Michaelites are by no means less fervent for the Word of War – in some ways they appreciate it all the more, now that they understand others.

ICHAEL



DISCRETION IS THE BETTER PART OF VALOR

Imprinted on every Michaelite is the knowledge that it is *dissonant* to flee the battlefield unless commanded to do so. Not only that, it's a shameful act, yielding the field to the forces of Hell, acknowledging defeat, failing to stand body and soul against the enemy. The question of retreat isn't just a minor inconvenience in terms of gained dissonance – it's going against the root of their nature.

But sometimes it has to be done. Sometimes it is *obvious* that the battle is already lost, and that standing and fighting will only result in more casualties for the forces of Heaven, with no worthwhile gain. Sometimes news comes of a more important need for the Michaelites elsewhere. And sometimes the retreat is intended to lure the pursuing enemy into a trap – though that tends to only happen on a large scale, with senior angels commanding the retreat, in which case no dissonance is involved.

It is the duty of every Servitor of War to be able to balance his own pride, integrity, and courage, against the reality of the situation. If fighting means that he will kill himself – and even more so if it will kill others – for *no useful purpose*, and will in fact cause more damage to the armies of Heaven by getting himself (and others) killed, then it is his duty to survive. Painful as the dissonance is, and shameful as it will be later to admit that he fled the field, at the same time he must not put his own pride above the greater cause.

Michael is prepared to deal with such cases according to the circumstances, when it comes to removing dissonance. An angel of War who took dissonance in order to help a group of non-combatants flee the area will have it removed. Ultimately, the motives of the angel will be taken into account. It is extremely rare for any Servitor of War *never* to have taken dissonance for fleeing the field at least once.

Senior angels of War have the authority to command junior ones to retreat, thus saving both face and dissonance. However, the commander who gives the order *does* take a point of dissonance himself, and knows the shame of his action. Again, Michael will understand if the circumstances warranted it, but the angel himself will feel guilty. This will probably not be helped by the fact that most of the younger angels will have their own opinions on how the battle could have been better fought. (Hindsight is always twenty-twenty, and Michaelites are notorious for post-battle discussions.) A Servitor of Michael who *does* order a retreat will only do so after a great deal of prior consideration, and if the situation absolutely necessitates it. Otherwise they and their subordinates will fight to the end, and conquer or die. If an angel from a different Word is in authority over the Servitors of Michael present, such an angel can order a retreat. Such angels agonize less about the whole question of retreating from battle. However, for the angels of War not to take dissonance, they must fully accept that the Servitor giving orders *is* in command, and they are unlikely to be happy with the decision. (Temporarily pretending someone else is in command so they can claim to be acting on their orders will not work. Not only will this subterfuge not save them from dissonance, but it is a gross and unthinkable attempt to play fast and loose with the Truth that is War. No right-thinking Servitor of Michael would even consider it.)

Older angels of War rarely manage to make the younger angels truly appreciate the situations that may force retreat. However, when a younger Servitor has just taken his first point of dissonance for fleeing the enemy, the older Servitors are ready to listen to his story, and to share their own.

It should be noted that angels of War have standing orders to retreat before a Demon Prince – any Demon Prince – unless they think that they can accomplish something by standing and dying. It is a sad fact that they often think they *can* – and say so when they get out of Trauma.

DEALING WITH JUDGMENT

Michaelites generally start matters off by despising and resenting Dominicans, and the Dominicans find it difficult *not* to react to such provocative behavior. Although most Servitors of Judgment make a noble effort not to be prejudiced in their assessments of Warriors for heresy, it must be admitted that the Warriors don't make it any easier.

It's a difficult line to walk. Michael *will* support and protect his Servitors, and expects them to show due "self-confidence," but he does *not* appreciate being dragged into needless squabbles. This rule especially holds if the whole incident could have been avoided, or if the Dominicans are in the right – and *most* especially if it risks dragging a secret operation of Michael's into Dominican view.

Angels of War, after their first few encounters with triads, usually develop a sense of how far they can go without giving too much insult. Very young Warriors sometimes challenge members of triads to duels – this results in the young angel being suppressed by any nearby older Michaelites, and being forced to apologize.

While the Servitors of War prefer to take care of their own problems, without Dominican interference, some of the more experienced Warriors know *when* to cooperate – and how much. While they will always clear the matter

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with Michael first, they are prepared (usually in the event of cross-Word corruption that involves War) to work with the angels of Judgment. They will supply information, testimony, and captives. Of course, this sort of cooperation means that they can control the amount of information which Judgment is allowed access to. Losing a battle can, in the end, win a war.

MICHAEI

HDVCNFURC SCEDS





STONE HDVENTURE SCEAS

Shepherds

A long time ago, the Stone angel Miahel, an Elohite, watched over the motorcycle gang called the "War Horns." You couldn't call the bikers nice, not even then, but they had honor and respect for life.

Miahel died twenty years ago, and no one took over its duties. Other angels had their own assignments. They had their own priorities. They had their own cares.

Two months ago, a girl "belonging" to the War Horns tried to leave the group, and they crucified her upsidedown in the Louisiana woods. One must discourage such behavior at all costs, the leader felt.

David's attention, with the cold slow calm of a drifting glacier, came to bear on the group. He did not have the power to stop every act of human cruelty, but twenty years of neglect did not remove his responsibility for this particular gang.

He calls certain of his angels to him, and gives them a new assignment. *Fix* this. Redeem that which belongs to Stone. Reclaim the brutal and venal bikers as agents of the Lord. Kill those they cannot save, but *only* those they cannot save. He wishes the War Horns to make reparations and renew their one-time dedication to God, so that the blotch he sees on his honor is erased.

The biker society teaches its members absolute loyalty, but also the belief that the laws and norms of civilization are optional. Violence and deceit, it teaches, are their weapons against a culture which seeks to control them. Women, the gang's code implicitly assumes, are property, to be conned away from their homes and trained to work on the gang's behalf. Men, it suggests, are measured only by their skill in a fight and the size of their bikes.

Much of this is abhorrent to even the most brutal angels of Stone. Still, the gang has loyalty, which is a start, and the angels assigned have *broad* latitude when it comes to breaking them of their misdirected hostility and literally damning form of sexism.

Shortly after the characters begin this task, an idealistic angel of Laurence tracing another of the War Horns' female associates – this one alive and as well as she could be under the circumstances – encounters the gang. Appalled by the experience, he calls in a few favors and gets the authority necessary to coordinate a police manhunt for the bikers, digging up every possible charge. This puts the characters in an awkward position.

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This story is not intended to be nice. It *is* intended to help angels of Stone decide where they personally draw the line between the violence and cruelty that build strength and the violence and cruelty that God's agents must destroy.

STONE FOR A PILLOW

Asmodeus established a work camp in Georgia eight years ago. He incarcerated criminal demons with previously established corporeal vessels there. They cannot return to Hell — the Game has their Hearts. They cannot leave the camp. Under the watchful eye of the camp's Djinn overseer, they labor under grueling conditions to build the corporeal bases of various Game artifacts. This includes the precisely engineered steel collars that become Will Shackles (*Liber Reliquarum*, p. 81) and the intricately braided leather whips that become celestial implements of torture. Those who sabotage the product suffer additional privations and agonies.

David learned of this camp a year ago, and pinned down its location several months back. Now he calls on a few selected angels. He trusts these angels to handle an arduous assignment well or he feels their mistakes merit a particularly harsh trial. He gives them a new mission.

David believes that the conditions in the camp are ripe for redemption. The demons there are proven recidivists by Hell's standards, which is a good sign. They have no reason to feel loyalty toward Hell. Some probably blame angels for the failure or crime that put them there. Others, however, have no objection to Heaven at all.

Unfortunately, David cannot simply drop by and offer the demons the chance to redeem. They would all say "yes," and all for the wrong reasons. Moreover, the overseer would summon Asmodeus immediately, provoking a confrontation which would accomplish nothing.

Instead, David wants his angels to infiltrate the camp. If they can, they should get significant blackmail on the overseer and her aides and *subvert* the camp — making it a redemption factory. If they can't, David wants his angels to inspire a rebellion among the demons there. He wants his angels to encourage the demons to band together to resist the camp's authorities. They should become rabble-rousers. More importantly, they should become *martyrs*, taking everything the overseer throws at them without breaking. Then, if they successfully inspire the demons to take control of their lives away from Hell, they can reveal their natures and lead the imprisoned demons to David.

ADVENTURE SEEDS





If Asmodeus surveys the prisoners, the game is up. David expects the overseer to avoid reporting any trouble with the prisoners as long as she can, but even so, there's a definite time limit. The angels should call David instantly if the Prince notices them, hoping that whatever groundwork they have lain — making friends, providing an example of courage — is enough to salvage at least a few. The advantage of having Asmodeus present is that the truly irredeemable prisoners will side with the Game in the resulting conflict, sucking up to Hell. This separates them from demons with promise.

David plans to hijack a van bringing a group of Dark Humor demons into the camp and replace them with his angels. The real demons go to a facsimile fortress with enough surface similarities to the camp to fool a casual Heart-scan by a Servitor of the Game. The prisoners, angel and demon, have no reason to assume celestial form.



Security at the camp includes patrols of imps and gremlins, Geases the demons accepted to avoid various tortures, standard corporeal security, Djinn who visit the camp regularly to attune to the prisoners, and a relic circle buried under the outer wall that inflicts pain — to the point of unconsciousness — on those who leave without a password. Only a few "special" prisoners receive individualized relics designed to keep them confined. The major tool the overseer uses to control the demons, besides Asmodeus' possession of their Hearts, is fear. A master of intimidation, she works constantly to keep the prisoners cowed, using attitude, brutality, and casual cruelty.

The overseer, Ashralaam, has authority to torture her charges, condition them using brainwashing techniques, disorient them with drugs and unusual environments, lock them in various forms of solitary, adjust working conditions, deny them food and water — not that they *need* food or water — and pretty much anything else she can think of.

GMs should try to include relatively sympathetic and unsympathetic demons among the prisoners. A lighter version of this story could focus on the awkwardness of the angels disguised as demons of poorly matched Bands — and of Dark Humor, no less.

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ADVENTURE SEEDS

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A DAY'S WORK

Three people awaken in a lonely place, in suits, with no memory of who – or what – they are . . . Only a scrap of paper, clutched in one of their hands, gives any clues: a specialized shorthand, giving names, odd designations such as "Fire" or "Lightning," addresses, and further strange designations, such as "Ser.," "Chb," and "El."

Just the Facts

The PCs are a triad (p. 59) – either a roving one assigned to do a routine checkup in a city, or a special assignment triad tasked to investigate some rumors. What they didn't know was that the Elohite of Lightning, Sallu (or, in her Role, Sarah Ulrich, lab assistant on campus), had become dissonant, and didn't care for Dominicans sniffing around. What they didn't know was that she'd discovered a relic of Oblivion, such as the Finger of Oblivion (*Liber Reliquarum*, p. 94), or something more tailored to the GM's taste.

The Red Herrings

The triad had visited all the names on their list, dispensing lectures and advice, before going back to talk with Sallu. Naturally, the GM should add in suspicious beings – an overworked Fire Servitor, a hostile War angel, a Mercurian who's gotten a little *close* to his servant...

They don't all know each other, but all *do* know one or two other people on the list. (The GM can throw in some extras who *aren't* on the list, making the original page full of names, or torn off mid-name.) Some know Sallu. Some might comment that she's been quiet recently. (Of course, they might comment that the Mercurian's been out of town, as well.)

The Complications

The triad weren't the only celestials assigned to the area. There's a pair of Gamesters there, too. The Asmodean team is a Djinn and a Lilim, and they've worked with Dominicans before – enough that if they figure out something's *wrong* with this triad, they'll happily try to fool the PCs into sharing information on local celestials, and generally letting them tag along. They know enough about Judgment to be *very* careful what they say to the Seraph. The Djinn will attune to the least

Three people awaken in a lonely place, in suits, with no memory of who – or what – they are . . .

combat-capable member, if allowed to touch that angel; the Lilim will read Needs and collect any hooks she can.

If they find out about Sallu, they'll want her as a Habbalite to take to their Prince, but they'll want the relic she found even more.

The Timeline

♥ The triad arrives in town, via car. (An angelic Tether in the area will provide too many allies.)

P The triad investigates all the angels on their list, including Sallu. Sallu (among one or two others) is odd enough that they make a note indicating they want to talk to her again.

➡ They get back to Sallu, and the dissonant Elohite panics, knocks them unconscious with the relic and strips away their memories. (They still can instinctively use their resonances, attunements, and any Songs, and likewise automatically sense their dissonance conditions.) While she is relieving them of weapons and their notepads, they start awakening, and one grabs at his notes, tearing away the top page: the list of names and addresses.

✤ Disoriented and groggy, they flee Sallu. Their short-term memory, however, is still disrupted, and they don't recall anything more than about ten minutes into the past.

♥ When they forgot why they were fleeing (by car or on foot, as the GM sees fit), they sought out a safe place – and awoke entirely when the relic's effects on their short-term memory wore off.

The Finale

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What Sallu doesn't know is that the relic's effects are only temporary. Eventually, the triad's memories will come rushing back, spurred on by anything familiar they encounter. If the GM wishes, this may be during a climatic battle with Sallu herself! With forbidden technologies at her fingertips, her weapons are powerful (but prone to blowing up if damaged) and Symphonically noisy. Of course, with all the likely disturbance, the Gamesters will come running – as may any *other* celestials in the area...

Adventure Seeds



HAZARDOUS DUTY

Things are bad when a recently Word-bound Balseraph of Fate, with the Malakite resonance, goes Renegade. They're especially bad when the Balseraph's Word is Honor. Dominic decided that things were Bad Enough when Asmodeus explained that Timon, one of Kronos' pet projects, had gone insane, ranted about how Malakim *were* divine demons, and that he could prove it – then shattered his Heart before fleeing to the corporeal realm. Dominic fears that Timon's Word and nature could fool Heaven's Virtues . . . or worse, let him infiltrate as a cancerous corruption.

Normally, Judgment Malakim have more important tasks than going to "the Eighth Virtue," an annual "floating-location" Malakim party (*You Are Here*, p. 10). Still, it's not unknown for one to show up. The trick is showing up with someone you've only just met, whose nature you don't know, but whom your Archangel has assured you needs to *be* at the next Eighth Virtue. (Dominic doesn't explain why his own Servitors can't just take out the target alone.) Oh, and you're not to kill this tall, nervous guy, unless he attacks you first – Archangel's orders. (He doesn't cause Symphonic disturbance, but then, some Game-demons don't, when they're pretending to be human; neither can they be detected as celestials via resonances while their attunement is active!)

You know that Asmodeus' demons can spot their Band-mates. You know that the target is a Liar of Fate and – as your responsibility – any angels he might have corrupted. But you really, really don't want to think that you're smuggling a Balseraph of the Game into a Malakim convention.

STRANGE BEDFELLOWS

It's rare, very rare, for Michael to admit that there's any use for the "hyenas of Heaven." But one of his Servitors – Ziba, a Cherub Vassal of War – has hidden his Heart and vanished to the corporeal realm. Annoyingly for Michael, this was discovered during a spot-check by a triad, so there was no way to deal with it quietly. Michael wants his angel *back*, and has cut a deal with the Archangel of Judgment. Dominic gets to send as many Servitors as he thinks necessary, while Michael will add some others.

ADVENTURE SEEDS

Sensibly, one of the Judges arranging this joint operation has pulled in a few favors, to get some angels of the Sword or Stone involved as buffers for the Michaelites and Dominicans.

Ziba isn't Outcast – quite, or perhaps "yet," as the case may be. However, he *is* in a spot. He got hooked by a Lilim a while back, and she finally called the favor in: he had to attune to this little girl while the Lilim ran a few errands.

The "little girl" is a celestial – she knows the Celestial Song of Charm and causes disturbance if she

breaks things. She refers to the now-quiteabsent Lilim as "Daddy," and explains sadly that Mommy died when the nasty people came and Daddy had to kill them but Daddy was hurt real bad and now Daddy's a girl. What has the Cherub confused, though, is that for an assumed demon, this kid's a real sweetheart. He figured that Michael wouldn't really mind if Ziba moved his Heart to a place where people would have a harder time finding it. (It's buried next to a tree, somewhere in the Groves. Even Ziba would be unable to point out which tree, though of course he'll appear right next to it when he ascends.) This is, naturally, to keep any of his friends from popping down to ask him why he's keeping company with what he thinks is an imp.

Ziba was going to ask the Lilim a few pointed questions when she got back, but when Baalites came calling instead, he went on the run with the girl. It's been a few months now, and he's a little dissonant from betraying his Archangel by vanishing for so long – but he's convinced that he's taking care of the first known redeemable demonling.

It's not actually that hard for the PCs to catch up with him; if conventional detective work fails, all they need is something of his and a Song of Affinity (*Liber Canticorum*, p. 28). The real complications start when he's found: the Lilim Renegade returns with a combined team of Baalites, Gamesters, and a Djinn of Belial on her tail . . . and Lilith drops by to call in a *big* favor her Daughter owes her – and to say hi to her granddaughter.

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SCAVENGER HUNT

So these three Dominicans walk into a bar . . .

Judgment Servitors are never off-duty, right? Right. This is why the PCs are undercover at Novalis' neverending party, looking for a little information. It seems that there's a newly-redeemed Ofanite of Creation in Heaven, and the Wheel hasn't reported in for debriefing. Maybe it's just typical Creationer laxness. Maybe it's trying to hide because it knows something about Eli. The PC's job is to find it, and bring it back to the

Tribunal for debriefing – *without* giving it the impression that it's being hauled in by Heaven's version of the Game. (The Balseraphic propaganda in Hell is very graphic about what Dominicans do to disobedient angels.)

The PCs are fortunate – they've found someone who knows where the Ofanite is! Well, sort of. You see, it's with a group of its new Choir mates, and they've gone on a scavenger hunt. But aren't the Dominicans in luck! The angel they're talking to is the hunt's referee, and has a list of the things the scavenging angels are looking for . . .

(They can, of course, just wait with the referee – for over a day, in the Glade, doing almost nothing. If they really want to report that choice to the Most Just later.)

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The local solo Judge (the PC) has been picked as part of a roving triad for the area. Not only must he rearrange his schedule for the duration – the group will visit a few neighboring areas, as well - but the routine inquisition is starting with the local angels (the *other* PCs). One of the triad members is deceptively quiet, but a single glance at his notes will reveal that he intends to report everyone in the city for *something*, including both his triad partners! Is that why someone's planted a bomb in his car? Or hired that sniper on the roof? Or is it just someone trying to get back at the PC for the usual thwarting of plans? Of course, when the quiet one vanishes just before Dominic's weekly visit, leaving only his very incriminating notes (carefully tailored to be ambiguous to Seraphim, or true), it will be up to the PC to find the evidence to prove his friends are innocent – in order to prevent the Heavenly Inquisition from wasting time, at the least.





BACKUP

One of the downsides to working for Dominic is that if you really, really need him – you still have to use the phone to call a Tether, and have someone go up to talk to the Archangel's secretary.

So it should be no surprise that when a mission goes highly sour, the survivors of a triad will appear on the doorstep of any local Dominican they know and ask for help. Or, if there aren't any local Judges, they'll have to find some not-too-heretical angels.

But do the player characters really want to be drawn into an assault on a small Tether of the Game? The remainder of the triad, a Cherub and an Elohite, assure them that the Outcast hiding there is vitally important – but what could any angel know that would have these Judges so upset? One might even wonder if these Dominicans *are* Dominicans... After all, very perceptive Habbalah can still sense emotions, Djinn still track people, and Kobal's never liked Asmodeus – and since when has an Elohite of Judgment cracked a smile? Odd how they avoid Seraphim, too.

WITNESS FOR THE DEFENSE

A Kyriotate of Flowers has been accused and convicted of murdering an innocent mortal, who it was using as a host at the time. All the evidence points to the angel's guilt, and the Kyriotate itself refuses to say more than, "I do not contest the charges." Elohim and Seraphim can tell that the angel feels very guilty, and does not wish its sentence to be lessened. Malakim can tell that the Kyriotate feels the killing was dishonorable.

However, Mihr, the Elohite Angel of Mercy, believes that there is something more to the case than meets the eye. Mihr has used its position within Judgment to obtain a brief stay of execution, while some other Servitors look into the situation. The PCs have one week to descend to the Kyriotate's last location and discover if there is anything which would justly changing a sentence of souldeath to one of counseling.

The human in question was a petty thief, in an innercity slum where demonic activity is high. Is it really wrong for an angel to kill a host before the human can damn himself by following his dark fate? And can the PCs prove that's what happened? Perhaps a Servitor of Fate could be . . . *persuaded* to testify . . .

ADVENTURE SEEDS



THE SWORD HDVENTURE SEEAS

SADDLE UP!

Peliel, the Malakite Angel of Righteous Vengeance, doesn't get a chance to prosecute his Word as often as he'd like. Being the Grand Master of the Order of the Eternal Sword (p. 93) and one of Laurence's Colonels, he's usually too busy directing angels of the Sword, and planning strategy with Laurence and other Archangels. But recently, something happened that merited his attention, and Laurence has given Peliel permission to take some "leave time" and deal with the matter personally.

What happened was a diabolical atrocity that Laurence wants dealt with, harshly, as only the Angel of Righteous Vengeance can do. Perhaps one of Laurence's Saints was raped and tortured to death. Perhaps there is a particularly noxious Tether against which Laurence has authorized a direct assault. (Storytime Land, a Tether of Death con-

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secrated by the sacrifice of children – *Night Music*, p. 20 – would be a good candidate.) Perhaps someone has been burning down Catholic churches and murdering priests and nuns. Whatever it is, naturally it happened in the player characters' territory.

Any angels in the area – *especially* angels of the Sword – will be drafted into service, expected to provide information, reconnaissance, and back-up to Peliel. (*You* tell one of Laurence's most powerful Word-bound officers "No"...)

When the bullets start flying, though, the main diabolical perpetrator either flees to the celestial plane, or is sent there in Trauma. Either way, the PCs learn what it means to be part of Peliel's posse: the Malakite *follows the demon to Hell*! Nothing less than *extermination* will satisfy the Angel of Righteous Vengeance.

If the PCs follow Peliel to Hell, they'll find themselves

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facing *heavy* opposition – the demon headed for his Heart, which means the angels will be descending to the heart of a Principality. The GM should roll 2d6; this is how many combat rounds the angels have before the Prince shows up in person. At this point, Peliel will flee back to Heaven – Laurence knows exactly how determined Peliel is, so he gave his Colonel explicit orders to retreat rather than take on a Demon Prince. Smart angels will lose no time in following suit.

If Peliel (or one of his companions) succeeded in soulkilling his quarry before retreating, then any angels who accompanied him to Hell will be given one of his Rites: *Execute vengeance upon a deserving malefactor*.

Nothing less than <u>extermi-</u> <u>nation</u> will satisfy the Angel of Righteous Vengeance.

A SNAKE IN PRIEST'S CLOTHING

Father Meade, a local Catholic priest, is in line to be promoted to Bishop. Local angels of the Sword are rather embarrassed when a Malakite happens to tag the padre as a Balseraph. Needless to say, Laurence wants Something Done.

> The problem is, the demonic priest is *very* popular and active in the local Diocese. His congregation loves him, and he's been diligent in promoting worthy causes, organizing charitable events, and representing the Church in the community. He's well-respected and liked by everyone who knows him (including all those embarrassed angels of the Sword, and some Servitors of David as well - who, incidentally, can expect a visit from Judgment in the very near future . . .). In fact, investigations will uncover nothing but good things about his work . . . and they will also uncover no clues as to his nature, since his history goes back to his birth, and is well-documented and supported by people who knew him personally even in childhood. "Father Meade" is obviously a level 6 Role which the Balseraph has been developing for over 40 years in deep cover!

Even an "accidental" death would be detrimental to the local Diocese, which has benefited from the priest's tireless networking on its behalf. A violent death would be traumatic to the entire community. So Laurence wants the Balseraph dead . . . but he wants it dead in such a way that he can *replace* Father Meade with one of his own Servitors!

This means that first of all, local angels have to dig up every detail they can about the

priest – they need to have an immense amount of data about his history, personality, associates, and current activities if another celestial is to be able to step into the Role.

Once they've gathered enough data (without alerting the demon, of course), they have to kill him. There can't be any witnesses to Father Meade's "death," and the PCs must then invoke Laurence, so the Archangel can make an exact duplicate of his body. (This also means the vessel needs to be at least partially intact . . .)

Of course, Laurence would *really* like the PCs to find out just what this Balseraph was up to, before they kill him . . .

THE ARMS DEALER

The Purity Crusade left a lot of artifacts lying around in the Marches . . . some belonged to slain ethereal spirits, others belonged to slain Servitors of Uriel. Most have been recovered in the centuries since the Crusade ended . . . but recently an ethereal spirit discovered an entire stockpile, possibly cached by angels of Purity who intended to retrieve them later, but fell in battle.

These artifacts are both numerous and powerful, and some of them were forged especially for angels of Purity ... which means Laurence will want them recovered as a matter of honor, even beyond their strategic value. Some good relics to include, from the *Liber Reliquarum*, are Weapons of Purity (p. 80), Was-Staffs (p. 80), Devil-Chaser Whips (p. 83), and perhaps even one of Laurence's swords (p. 96)!

The ethereal who discovered them is *selling* them off one by one, to other ethereals and to demons (and possibly angels as well). He takes payment in Essence. These arms sales have come to the attention of Laurence. He wants *all* the artifacts recovered – both those the spirit still has hidden in the Marches, and those he's sold to others. Slaying the impudent ethereal is optional – Laurence wouldn't mind making an example out of him, but the angels had better make sure they recover the artifacts *first*!

Unfortunately, the spirit has also come to the attention of the Tsayadim (p. 102). They also want the artifacts recovered and the spirit dead . . . but for them, killing the spirit is their *first* priority; recovering the relics would just be a bonus.

If the spirit realizes he's being hunted by Uriel's fanatical followers, he will become desperate, and happily make a deal with anyone who offers to protect him . . . but the Tsayadim regard any relics of Purity as *theirs*. They don't want to let them fall into the hands of other angels any more than they want them in the hands of ethereal spirits. And not much will dissuade them from seeking vengeance against the spirit who dared to handle – and *auction off* – the sacred relics of their Archangel.

TAKE MY LIFE . . . PLEASE!

A Lilim has recently embarked on an unusual gambit; she goes *looking* for Malakim, and angels of the Sword, and especially Malakim of the Sword – anyone who's likely to have a Need to kill demons. She then reveals her nature, often after doing something to ensure the angel will have an overwhelming desire to kill her, and then *lets* the angel take her life!

She's done this several times now, and Laurence's Servitors are beginning to realize that (a) she's very like-

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ly collecting Geases on angels to whom she "gives" her life, and (b) considering how often she's pulled this stunt in a short period of time, there must be a Prince who's supplying her with cheap vessels and ensuring quick recoveries from Trauma.

So who's responsible, and why? The most likely culprit seems to be Kobal. Nobody is happy thinking about what the Prince of Dark Humor might do with Geases on several dozen Malakim and angels of the Sword. The more important question is, what can be done about this unique menace?

WAR HDYCNFURC SEED

EXTRACTION MISSION

This mission has the characters embarking on a daring attempt to rescue a spy of Michael's from the heart of a Baalite organization. It offers opportunities for heroism, cold-blooded skill, expertise, common sense, and a certain amount of farce.

Your Mission, Which You Will Accept . . .

The characters are called together by Michael, or by a senior Michaelite. Their briefing officer explains that Michael has a deep-cover operative in a local corporation, ExtraTech Vision, which is a stronghold for Servitors of Baal. ExtraTech Vision produces targeting devices and radio equipment – which largely get sold to the military – and also serves as a coordinating point for the Hellforce (*Corporeal Players Guide*, p. 112). This deep-cover spy, Kurt Brensen, is a Hellsworn with a position in the radio department that has allowed him to gather information about Hellforce codes.

The problem now is getting him out of there alive.

Kurt is able to send out the occasional coded signal, and his latest message stated that he feared he was under suspicion. However, he sleeps (together with the other Hellsworn) in a dormitory on the premises, eats on the premises, and certainly has no leisure to go shopping off the premises. Close observation, combined with Kurt's previous reports, shows that the only people admitted to the upper levels of the building (where Kurt works) are Servitors of the War or the Game.

This is why the characters are about to masquerade as Gamesters. It is Michael's hope that they can use the mystery and fear which surround Asmodeans to penetrate into the building, and remove Kurt for "interrogation." It's not a safe plan, but there's no time to be lost. The Archangel

KURT BRENSEN

The characters are shown a photograph of Kurt (about six foot tall, balding, squinting, and with a permanent stoop.) They're told that he works on the fourteenth floor, as an electronics technician under Bill Webster (who is known to be an Impudite of the War). Kurt has only basic combat skills, and is to be protected.

What the characters aren't told is that Kurt isn't doing this for Heaven or salvation, he's doing it for a lot of money. Michael will see that he gets paid, as long as the information is accurate. Kurt is cold-blooded and a good actor and will do whatever his rescuers say, if it'll get him out safely. He knows the building security protocols, and can share this information.

of War also hopes that the resulting confusion and counter-accusations between the War and the Game will hamper pursuit and conceal how much Kurt might have known. The characters are given their briefing at midnight, and are informed that they need to get Kurt out of the building by the end of the next day – the sooner, the better.

Mission Equipment

A quick appeal to Michaelites currently in the Groves has produced several trophies taken from Asmodeans. These consist of two identity cards from Hades (for Viviane, a Djinn, and Temeraziel, a Balseraph), one set of Will Shackle handcuffs (level/1, *Liber Reliquarum*, p. 81), and a little briefcase with a polished set of dentists' tools. These are to be used to add verisimilitude to their act as Servitors of the Game. (It need hardly be stated that the owners of these trophies are going to want them *back*.) The characters are also given a couple of walkietalkies to call for Michaelite help – once they're out of the building – and any reasonable normal armaments they desire.

Hostile Environment

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ExtraTech Vision has its headquarters in a large office block on the edge of town. The "sensitive" areas, where Servitors of the War work and coordinate Hellforce movements, are on the upper stories – from the tenth to the fifteenth. While there are a couple of fire escapes and back entrances, including a large loading bay for trucks, good Servitors of the Game will march through the front door. The outcome of the war is in our hands; the outcome of words is in the council. – Homer

Getting past the ground floor involves giving the receptionist a reason for the characters to see *someone* on the upper levels. The receptionist is a charming brunette who is ignorant of the War and won't understand any cunning references to Games, but is capable of hitting a *Security* button if the characters don't behave sensibly. Conveniently, there is an *Organization Chart* with attractive photos hanging elsewhere in the foyer, which can be used to supply a name for the characters to claim to be meeting. Alternatively, their briefing officer may have supplied them with the names of a few known employees besides Kurt.

The elevator from the lobby only goes up to the tenth floor. It opens onto a military room containing a receptionist and two Security goons, all of whom are Hellsworn. They will cower if the characters are convincing Asmodeans, and let them into the second elevator, which gives access to the upper floors. From there, it's simply a matter of getting to Kurt's floor, telling his boss that they've come to remove him, and getting him out of the building.

Servitors of Baal

The demons of the War aren't expecting infiltration, and will behave with rigid military decorum to apparent Servitors of the Game. If there's a serious quarrel or disagreement, then the nearest Hellsworn or Baalite will hit the alert button. This results in all building exits being closed (though one can still smash windows) and Security (as many goons, mostly Soldiers of Hell, as the GM feels appropriate) running around with guns. It will also alert Brian Mathieson – Brivilian, Habbalite Captain of the War, and Director of the Firm, who has his office on the 15th floor, and who will investigate.

The Game

Unfortunately, Kurt was correct – he is under suspicion, and a Game team has already been detailed to check on him. They will arrive approximately ten min-

utes after the characters, by some malign stroke of fate, and will follow their route via the 10th and 14th floors. The team consists of Vingerath, a Balseraph, Ish-Mathoth, a Calabite, and two Djinn, Evere and Allete. (This is over-powered for one mortal Hellsworn, but they are also scheduled to check on all the demons in the building while there.) They are "typical" Asmodeans – suspicious, narrow-minded, and inquisitionary.

Security! Security!

Things will probably get confused. A quick-thinking accusation that the genuine Asmodeans are impostors, or a claim that two teams must have been sent on the same mission, should win at least a few minutes head start. Security, when alerted, will search the building in a stormtrooper-like fashion, giving rise to entertaining gun battles and dramatic fight scenes. Even if the characters do get out with Kurt, they're likely to find themselves pursued across town by both the Game and the War . . .

Options And Twists

Non-Michaelite Angels: The characters are angels, but aren't Servitors of War. This may be because they're a trusted team believed to have the necessary skills – or they're all that's available.

Humans: The characters are human, not celestial. In this case, the opposition should be scaled down, and the whole operation much more roleplaying-intensive. Besides, all good Baalites and Michaelites know that the demons of the Game are always using the Humanity attunement . . .

Demons: Several Princes might want to get their hands on Kurt, to pump him for data on Baalite plans. Perhaps this is even concurrent with the ongoing Michaelite rescue – and using the same scheme, stolen from them – so there are *three* teams all claiming to be Asmodeans!

The Plant: Kurt is actually a Servitor of the Game, using the Humanity attunement. He's intended to become a mole in the angelic ranks. The team of Asmodeans coming after him may just be to add verisimilitude to his escape – or they may not realize who he is, and be *genuinely* trying to capture him!

Factional Fun: Malphas' Shadow Corps (*Corporeal Player's Guide*, p. 112) have infiltrated ExtraTech Vision, and are among the Hellforce agents there. Malphas' agents discovered that Kurt was a spy, forged the message from him to his Michaelite contact, and then informed the Game anonymously. Now they sit back and watch the fun!

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