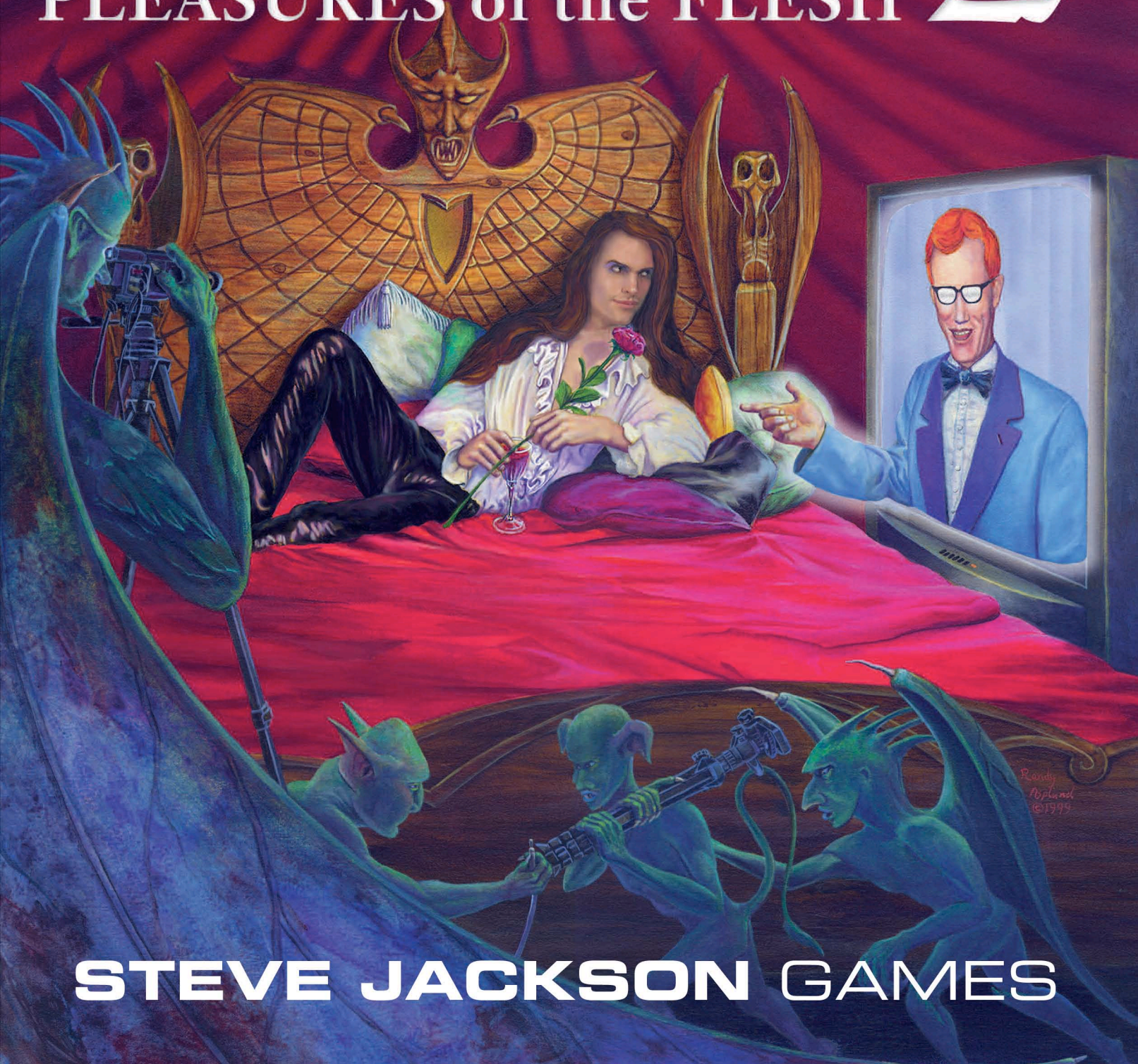


IN NOMINE

SUPERIORS 2

PLEASURES of the FLESH



Randy
Riplund
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STEVE JACKSON GAMES

IN NOMINE

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SUPERIORS 2

Pleasures of the Flesh



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STEVE JACKSON GAMES



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ABOUT *IN NOMINE*

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INTRODUCTION

SINS OF THE FLESH

"Flesh is transitory, flesh is a prison, flesh is . . . an instrument. Flesh can be replaced. And flesh does as it's told. Or they will become most annoyed."

– Morden, *Babylon 5*, "The Hour of the Wolf"

Welcome to Hell, leave your inhibitions at the door . . .

Not all battles for human minds and souls are fought upon battlefields. In Hell, there are Princes who know that without humanity to feed from, they would starve indeed. Others might call them "soft" and "weak," but these Princes know that subtlety will carry them farther than brute force.

Enter their world, learn their secrets, partake of their pleasures. Just don't get in their way.

NEW AND IMPROVED

*There are things you need not know of,
though you live and die in vain,
There are souls more sick of pleasure than
you are sick of pain;
There is a game of April Fool that's
played behind its door,
Where the fool remains forever and the
April comes no more. . .*

– GK Chesterton,
"The Aristocrat"

This book contains the most complete information currently available on Nybbas, Prince of the Media, the major Princes of Shal-Mari (Dark Humor, Gluttony, and Lust), and their Servitors. Information from previous books has been collected, combined with new material, and updated to become the *definitive* canon for these four Princes.

Not only are there game mechanics and new powers, such as Servitor Attunements or suggested Song variants, but there is also in-depth explorations of each Word's subculture: its community, attitudes, and perspective. Players will find plenty to flesh out their characters, while Game Masters can make NPCs who are far more than cardboard cutouts.

Readers may notice some new terms in the Band Attunements – some attunements *require* a certain resonance or tap into the Band's very nature. Other Bands simply could not use them, or could not use all of the ability. These attunements have been labeled "restricted," if other Bands cannot take them at all, or "partly restricted," if other Bands may take the portion that does not directly rely upon Band resonance (such as the cooking ability of Lilim of Gluttony). There may be other differences as well, subtle or large, which correct errata, misinformation, or *disinformation* in earlier reports about these precincts of Hell.

USING THESE USERS

"Tell me what you want most."

"Something here in my castle that can answer me when I speak to it. As white and smooth as that statue, but not cold like the marble. As soft and sweet as my roses, that can break as easily in my claws. Something that can speak. Something that can die . . ."

– *Beauty and the Beast*, Nicholas Grey

The information in this book – on Andrealphus, Haagenti, Kobal, and Nybbas – is as complete as we can make it, but it's hardly the final word on any of them. Now *you*, the player (or Game Master), must explore the implications. What rumors do you believe? (Which ones are *true*?) Which ones will you refuse to consider, either because they're unthinkable, or because you fear what would happen if others found out? Do you worship your Prince's Word to the extent of becoming a stereotype, or do you covertly ignore his strictures when you can? Do you descend to the depths of evil that your Master's Word offers, or prefer "Damnation Lite," with half the evil and none of the guilt? What do *you* want . . . ?

Game Masters shouldn't overlook the adventure seeds, tailored to provide challenges and questions which hit Servitors of these specific Princes right where they live, and work, and think.

Welcome to Hell. Have a nice stay.





ramón perez 2000

IMPEDITE PRINCE OF LUST

The world is lusting, writhing with desire.

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ANDREALPHUS



Andrealphus and his demonic Servitors are the most hot-handed and cold-hearted creatures ever to crawl out of Hell. The Prince of Lust, Andre to his friends, is a perfect Impudite. He enjoys worldly missions of glamour and politics. When subtlety is required, Andrealphus has many eager servants.

He and his Servitors are well-liked by all the Princes with a taste for pleasure. Andre frowns upon any demon whose general appearance is even the least bit monstrous, preferring to deal with “pretty people.” His servants, and even other Princes, often have trouble contacting him – he’s always got a rendezvous to attend to.

In recent decades, Andrealphus has been working with Nybbas, the Prince of the Media, to create a new paradigm for religion, based around the kind of selfish freedom which demons best appreciate. Between Nybbas’ deliciously deceitful media and Andre’s diabolical charm, they expect to found a new religion of entertainment in the cracks of the corporate state before the end of the next century. In the meantime, Andrealphus has committed his Servitors to teaching humans that sometimes it’s good just to lose yourself in the pleasures of the flesh.

DISSONANCE

These demons stay physically close to their victims, but distant from any emotions. It’s dissonant for Andrealphus’ Servitors to feel sympathy for a human; they are strictly prohibited from feeling concern for the fleshly beings surrounding them. Mortals exist only to be ruthlessly manipulated. (However, *faking* affection to manipulate a human is permissible, as is recognizing the useful quality of a human tool and keeping it in good “working condition.”)

BAND ATTUNEMENTS

Balseraphs

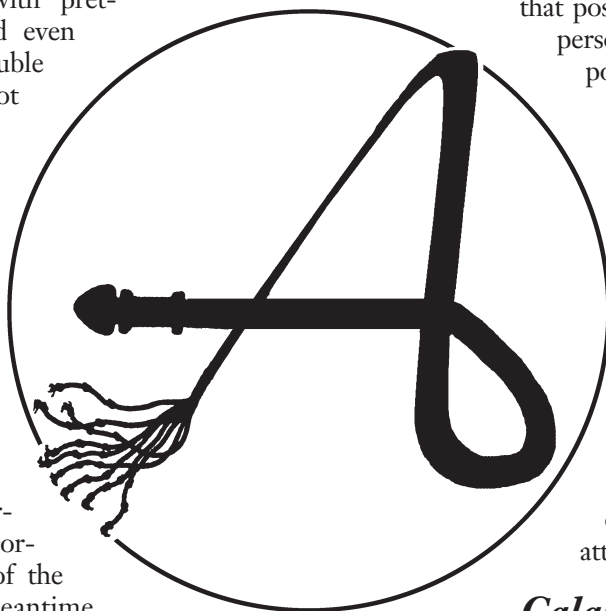
A Balseraph who works for Andrealphus can force a victim to enjoy any single physical sensation that the Liar chooses to inflict upon him, for a number of minutes equal to the demon’s Celestial Forces. A victim may resist

with a Will roll, but if that roll fails, a check digit of 6 indicates that he is now permanently wired to feel that experience as extremely pleasurable, however harmful it may actually be.

Djinn

(partly restricted)

Andrealphus’ Djinn, who couldn’t care less anyway, are the best at faking affection. They have the uncanny ability to keep a person in mental “cuddlespace,” that post-coital afterglow during which a person is most susceptible to a demon’s powerful will. As long as the demon continues touching an awakening human, or maintains physical contact after satisfying sex, the human will remain calm no matter what is going on – and the demon may add his Ethereal Forces to any Will roll or Will-based skill roll made to influence his victim, and to any resonance roll thereafter if he is attuned to the target. Other Servitors with this attunement can use any part of it that doesn’t depend on being attuned to the victim.



Calabim

(restricted)

The Calabim of Lust, using their resonance, may do celestial damage to any target they can touch – even one protected by a corporeal vessel. Sadly, this attack will *not* do the final hit of soul damage that would cost the victim one of his Forces.

Habbalah

(restricted)

The Habbalah who serve Andrealphus never suffer a reversal of their resonance if their target resists; the emotional storms they generate merely spin randomly into the world and afflict someone else. Also, these demons may add their Ethereal Forces to any resonance roll against a victim with whom they have physical contact.

Lilim

(restricted)

The Lilim of Lust are Andre’s favorite minions. (He asked for a full page in which to express their virtues, but it boils down to, “If you ever get a chance with one, you should take it.”) They automatically detect what a victim needs if they can make physical contact, although they must roll to establish the check digit for the level of those needs.

Shedim (restricted)

Andrealphus' Shedim, by making physical contact, can move at will into a human experiencing an orgasm. Also, they may add their Corporeal Forces to any resonance roll against a person they touch.

Impudites (restricted)

Impudites who serve the Word of Lust may add their Corporeal Forces toward using their resonance on anyone they've had sex with.

SERVITOR ATTUNEMENTS

Dark Desire

This power costs 1 Essence, and allows a demon to imprint any desire upon a person's psyche. The victim may make a Will roll to resist his urges, but if he fails, he'll have no goal except to satisfy the chosen desire, for a number of hours equal to the demon's total Forces.

First Lust

This subtle attunement costs 2 Essence, and causes the target to feel a duplicate of his first "crush," but toward the Servitor who used the power. The effects are gradual and not immediately noticeable, but build up over an hour. The victim is smitten with the demon, but may *choose* to resist, as one would with any crush – no Will roll is necessary. However, if carefully used, the subtlety of the attunement may mean that the victim fails to realize there is anything *to* resist. . .



Kiss of Death

This power permits a demon, by succeeding in a Will roll, to attempt to kill someone with whom he is having sex. This is considered a physical attack, doing hits equal to the check digit times *twice* the Essence spent. (As an Impudite, Andre rarely likes finding that this "grande morte" has been used on a *human*, but he doesn't often ask, either.)

BEHIND THE CURTAIN

Andrealphus knows a number of Songs which are not generally available. These include the Songs (available in the *Liber Canticorum*) of Sensation (p. 51), Ecstasy (p. 68), and Enslavement (p. 69).

Like others of the elder Superiors, he also knows Correspondence (*Liber Canticorum*, p. 65), Fruition (*Liber Canticorum*, p. 70), and Pestilence (*Liber Canticorum*, p. 73). While he's leery of teaching Fruition to his Servitors, he *has* been known to use it in their behalf from time to time.

One group of Songs which he *does* make available to many of his Servitors is Numinous Corpus, in "ornamental" forms that are best left to the imagination . . .

Sensitivity

This attunement can be used to enhance any physical sensation from the merely ordinary to the unbearably precise. It costs 1 Essence for every ten minutes the demon wants it to last, and requires physical contact. It allows the Servitor to magnify a single sensation in his victim, be it pleasure, pain, heat, cold, or even the simple pressure of touch. The target may make a Will roll to resist; should he fail, he takes a penalty equal to the check digit of his failure on all die rolls, due to the heightened sensory and sensual distraction. (If the target does *not* attempt to resist, the penalty is automatically 6.) Besides the penalty, there will be other effects; sensitivity to cold would make a victim pile on clothing, sensitivity to light would make him blind unless he wore dark glasses, sensitivity to touch might have him shedding his clothes . . .

Sensory Deprivation

Demons with this dangerous power can deprive the target of one sense per point of Essence spent, with physical contact and a Will roll. For example, five points could render the target totally cut off from the outside world. This doesn't affect resonances, if the target has any applicable (such as a Cherub locating his attuned). The Servitor chooses which senses to cut off, while spending the Essence. The effects last for ten minutes times the check digit; the victim may resist with a Will roll. The Servitor can remove the blockage on the targeted senses at will during this period, but must then reapply the attunement if he wants to reblock them.



DISTINCTIONS

Knight of Infernal Pleasures

The demon can detect an individual's degree of sexual fulfillment, both at that moment and in his life as a whole. Andre always grants this rank to any of his demons who seduces an angel.

Captain of Diabolical Delight

Andre's Captains can bring a person instant pleasure with a touch, increasing the target's reaction roll to the demon by +4.

Baron of Eternal Ecstasy

A Baron of Lust can make someone he's seduced do *anything* sexual with the demon, even something the victim wouldn't normally consider.

Higher Distinctions

Andrealphus' higher-ranked Servitors – Marquises, Counts, and Dukes – are all Word-bound demons who have made a definite impression on the mortal world. However, they can't now sit idle; work is expected on both the organizational and the personal level. The highest Servitors are expected to get out there and get their hands (et cetera) dirty, just like the lowest demonling in the forces of Lust. Andrealphus does not accept excuses, and Word-bound Servitors must be able to demonstrate the growth of their Word on Earth, or suffer his displeasure.

RELATIONS

Andrealphus is quite happy to ally himself to those who do not interfere with his Word, or who can contribute to it. Naturally, he is hostile toward those who would detract from his Word's power, or steal his devotees. This explains his hostility toward Haagenti, who – although one of the Princes of Shal-Mari – wishes to broaden Gluttony at the expense of Lust, stealing Andrealphus' power base and narrowing his Word.

Allied: Lilith, Nybbas (*Lilith, Nybbas, and Valefor are Allied to Andrealphus*)

Associated: Valefor (*Malphas is Associated with Andrealphus*)

Hostile: Baal, Haagenti (*Asmodeus, Baal, Beleth, Belial, and Kronos are Hostile to Andrealphus*)

Enemy: Saminga (*Saminga also considers Andrealphus an Enemy*)



BASIC RITES

- ✧ Spend half an hour participating in sexual acts.
- ✧ Spend an hour reading an illustrated magazine in a public place and smiling very pleasantly at passers-by.

EXPANDED RITES

Andrealphus sometimes grants additional Rites as rewards.

- ✧ Take someone's virginity.
- ✧ Cause a human to introduce another human to a new form of sexual activity.
- ✧ Publicly preach the virtues of lust or sex to a group of at least 100 humans.
- ✧ Cause someone to forswear their values for desire of you.

CHANCES OF INVOCATION: 1

INVOCATION MODIFIERS

- +1 A dirty picture, scrawled on a wall
- +2 An issue of *Playboy*, well-thumbed
- +3 A good-looking person having sex
- +4 An extraordinarily beautiful person having sex
- +5 A person having sex for an audience
- +6 Ten people having sex for an audience

ANDREALPHUS IN DETAIL

*But she, she heard the violin,
And left my side and entered in:
Love passed into the House of Lust.
— Oscar Wilde, **The Harlot's House***

HISTORY

Andrealphus is one of the oldest of the Impudites; he is the dark mirror to Eli, the joining of bodies that never touches the spirit. Nothing is actively created from his continuations and perversions of sex. In the movement of the flesh he leads the human race to forget their souls, and strives to forget what he once was.

Andrealphus was Angel of Love before the Fall, Word-bound and raised to Archangel when Blandine and Beleth declared their affection for each other. As a Mercurian he maintained his Word in Heaven and on Earth, among angels and mortals. The Word of Love is a broad one, and covered the aspects of love from romance to brotherly affection, from the friendship of groups to the loving-kindness of compassion. With all the angels of Heaven united in serving God, and with Blandine and Beleth apparently together for eternity as the first two angels to have loved each other, Love seemed a Word that could not be overset or broken. It was unthinkable to the Archangel that Love could cause another being pain.

Lucifer's words to Andrealphus were few, but carefully chosen. He spoke of the pain that Love could cause, and the loss when a loved one died. In the end Love was fragile and easily destroyed; giving your heart to another would only leave it open to being broken. Then the Lightbringer stood aside, and let Andrealphus watch Heaven fall apart as a third part of the Host raised their hands against their brothers. Andre watched as Beleth's love of Blandine twisted to hate, and he saw the pain that Blandine felt, as love grieved her worse than any hatred could have done. He saw the final death of many who cared for each other, and the bitterness and emptiness it left behind. He saw the creation of the Malakim as an expression of wrath. When the love of the Divine for the angels was so obviously broken, when angel could *fight* against angel, when the purest Love had produced the purest pain . . .

Lucifer had been right, Andrealphus realized. All along, he had been right. The only real happiness was that of personal pleasure; to care for any other being was to risk pain and loss. Rejecting empathy for any other

REMNANTS OF LOVE

Portions of Andrealphus' Word passed into the keeping of other Archangels. Novalis encompassed compassion and motherly love, while Gabriel governed passion; Eli covered sexual love and romance, while David included the aspects of brotherly love under his Word. Yves and Uriel both took on some areas of love for God. To this day, no angel holds the full Word of Love, and Andrealphus takes pleasure in shattering those aspects of it which come under his hand.

being, he lost all Love, his Word becoming that of Lust – the touching of bodies and grasping at pleasure without any empathy through which one could suffer pain.

Andrealphus descended with the other Fallen, and joined forces with Kobal to create Shal-Mari. Kobal's motivations in this were suspect, but both of them – as Impudites – saw more to gain from “farming” and “harvesting” human souls than in destroying or merely torturing them. The Servitors of Lust were much in demand to provide pleasure for other demons, and Lust was a common sin on Earth. While the Prince of Lust did not have quite the level of power or influence of the War or the Game, he was comfortably ensconced in the “second rank” of Princes.

Andrealphus worked on expanding his influence on Earth, and thus empowering his Word and increasing the flow of souls into Shal-Mari. He took particular pleasure in upsetting the projects of Uriel, Archangel of Purity, who was notoriously unsympathetic toward Lust. One of Andre's many boasted triumphs – other Princes also claim responsibility – was the Roman Empire's slow lapse into decay and corruption. The Prince of Lust watched it decay from one of Uriel's favored nations, from ideals of personal honor and just rule, into a broil of lusts, wastefulness, and excess, inspiring histories of decadence that would last for 2,000 years.

Unfortunately, that interesting vein of decadence came to an end when the Goths, Vandals, and other barbarians stormed through the Roman Empire. Although this encouraged pillage and rape, it was a case of short-term gain and long-term loss. Andrealphus fanned what flames of lust and hedonism he could in the remnants of civilization, and did his best to encourage the building of cities and towns, the better to spread the sex trade.



Naturally, Europe wasn't the only area of interest to the Prince of Lust – he was glad to encourage any culture which guided mortals toward his Word. The harem tradition (which started with the Assyrians); the concubines of Chinese emperors; the temple prostitutes in Babylonia (even if ethereals might be collecting Essence, Andrealphus approved in principle) . . . His Word was strongly supported by these and similar instances, and the Prince was quite prepared to come to an “amicable arrangement” with any pagan deities governing the area of erotic love. As long as physical lust and desire were emphasized, while emotional affection was weakened, he was prepared to come to an agreement, rather than entering into a “turf war.” A permanent hold on human souls was more important to him than a temporary flow of Essence to ethereals.

SAFETY IN THE SHADOWS

Some rumors suggest that while Andrealphus *could* make a bid to exercise more authority (and is more powerful than he seems), he chooses not to. Outright challenge of Baal, Asmodeus, or Kronos would make the Prince of Lust a very obvious target for the entire war faction, and it's unlikely that other Superiors would support him. Much safer to be thought a “weak” Prince by the more aggressive ones, and to bide his time . . .

As the Catholic church expanded, Andrealphus became interested in the idea of placing Servitors of his own within it, to weaken its spiritual message and broaden his own fleshly one. While the more secret agents, such as corrupt priests or nunneries that concealed brothels, were a great success, his personal pride was the Borgias. This family flaunted their sin, with Popes setting their illegitimate sons in public positions; they openly sneered in the face of morals while holding the highest of positions in the Church and indulging their lusts. Even if they didn't require assistance from Andrealphites to reach power or become corrupt, the Servitors of Lust were pleased to indulge their vices.

Laurence was a distinct nuisance, when the Archangel of the Sword took an interest in the Church. He spoiled what was a very pleasant time (in the carnal sense) for a large number of humans, with his attempts at forced reforms for Catholicism. Andrealphus has been heard to complain that one wonders why angels bother ranting about free will at all, when they are so quick to deny it to

*Devil, don't you know you are
as beautiful as an Angel?*

– G. Leopardi

his followers. Of course, Uriel had originally sponsored the Church when it became an instrument of government and advocated chastity and temperance – but the Prince of Lust had been corrupting it ever since. To find Laurence taking over Uriel's role, just when the coast seemed clear with Uriel gone, and attempting to *purify* the Church, was a definite annoyance.

The tides of lust continued to rise and ebb throughout history. Even in societies or times where Puritanism had surged and his servants were openly persecuted, Andrealphus could feel content that the *secret* vice trade was flourishing. Indeed, it was often patronized by those who were virtuously and publicly denouncing his Word. The Prince of Lust found that such private practitioners were often more ardent than in societies where Lust was commonplace or open. What could be better proof of the eternal verity of his Word?

As the Victorian era passed, a new spirit began to rise from the changing modes of propriety: it flowered with the aftermath of the First World War (such a *waste*) and the emancipation of women. Andrealphus nurtured the freedom of attitudes and moralities, as best he could, into sexual freedom, with the assistance of Lilith.

During the Sixties, Eli and Novalis nurtured the wave of the counter-culture, the “free love” generation, and Andrealphus spread the oil-slick of lust and self-gratification behind them. His Servitors warred with those of Eli at every meeting, each calling the other perversion and fool. While feminism freed women in many ways,

RUMORED CONQUESTS

Servitors of Lust are quick to boast that Andrealphus has seduced pretty much everyone in Heaven and Hell – including Laurence. (They even claim that Andrealphus has one of Laurence's own swords on the wall in his room of personal trophies, from the days when Laurence was newly come to power.) Most celestials merely shrug at these boasts, but angels of the Sword tend to take them *very* personally . . .

it also made them more vulnerable in others; many of their previous social “protections” were cast off with their restrictions. The new class of “liberated women” fell outside the caste of “respectable women,” and were considered unworthy of proper ethical treatment by many people. The Prince of Lust supported sexual freedom as the liberty to enjoy one’s lusts, and nothing more, disassociating body from soul. The word “responsibility” was unimportant.

Now, at the end of the 20th century, Andrealphus works with Nybbas to promote a new “religion” – one that preaches obsession with the physical. Spirituality is reduced to catchphrases and feel-good cliches, used to urge free will and self-indulgence as synonyms for happiness and joy. The Prince of Lust will utilize any tool, from those who indulge their vices in secret, to those who – with an honest heart – call for the relaxation of prejudice and the freedom to choose one’s own partners. In the flesh one can lose one’s self and soul, and Andre’s wish is to see fascinating, charming, beautiful humanity lose itself in flesh and body and lust – and to lose himself with them.

PERSONALITY AND OUTLOOK

Andrealphus is a true Impudite, in that he loves humanity even more than other humans do – just as a gourmet loves steak. He finds their new inventions and

PERSONALS

Many Servitors of Lust read the Personals section of the classified advertisements in newspapers with great interest – it’s an easy way to find someone anonymous for an evening’s fun and games. In fact, the whole institution of anonymously advertising for sexual partners (as they see it) is greatly admired by the demons – they consider it a definite step forward by humanity. A number of Lusties have tried (and failed) to take credit for the idea, but were ultimately forced to admit that humans invented it all on their own. In some areas, the local Andrealphites maintain a permanent advertisement in the column, using certain key phrases, as a regular contact point. Unfortunately, this gambit has become known to some angels – giving rise to a very embarrassing recent raid on a local Lust-Tether by a group of Servitors of Creation.

SERVITORS OF LOVE

When their Archangel Fell, many of his Servitors Fell with him, but others maintained their allegiance to Heaven (and a few even became Malakim). These abandoned angels of Love mostly transferred to other Archangels – mainly Novalis, Eli, David, and Yves – though some stayed faithful to their once-Archangel’s Word. Unfortunately, Servitors of Love became prime targets for the Prince of Lust, who would stop at nothing to convert or destroy them. Between that and the tighter organization of Heaven’s armies, which discouraged “freelance” angels, the beloved of Heaven are considered extinct in the modern day.

perversions constantly fascinating, and frequently has to be invoked by his Servitors to attend to current *business*. His response – should any dare question him about this perceived lack of attention to duty – is that he is advancing his Word, which *is* his business.

Lacking in any Love, he solaces himself utterly with Lust. He seeks to forget such a thing as the soul, as much as any human caught up in the Word of Lust does. To him, every conquest is a proof that he was *right*, and that Lust is the truth. He does not, and *will* not, permit himself to feel for any other being. Other entities may be pets, mirrors, objects, or perhaps enemies, but never real. Never anything of the same order as himself.

He expects others to make the same effort for him that he does for them. After all, he goes to the trouble to be beautiful, seductive, personable, and utterly desirable. He really does not have time for people who cannot *bother* to try to interest him, especially not with so many new objects of lust to investigate.

Andrealphus’ Word

Lust is both desire and tool, chain and freedom. While primarily the lust for flesh and carnality, it can also include – and it would greatly increase Andrealphus’ Word if this were so – lust for power, possessions, safety . . . territory now claimed by Mammon and even Haagenti.

As matters stand, Lust *is* one of the Seven Deadly Sins. It is the passion which forces people to forswear all that they hold honorable out of desire for another’s body: to betray, to break oaths, to hurt others in order to satisfy their own whims. Lust teaches that only the wishes of the initiator matter, and that any act upon other people is acceptable.

NEVER TOO CLOSE

It has been noted that Andrealphus treats some of his Servitors with particular cruelty – often those he has recently rewarded, or who hold marks of his favor. The demons are rarely in a position to object; indeed, given his charisma, they usually crawl and beg for more. The truth behind it is that Andrealphus takes the trouble to genuinely hurt people that he might possibly, conceivably care about. He refuses to accept that such affection may exist, and deliberately indulges his sadistic urges to prove to *himself* that he doesn't care. Of course, he isn't going to admit to this . . .

His Word is also Andrealphus' safe haven from memories of Love, and his path to strength and power. Through Lust, he controls, and through control, he cannot be hurt again. Lust in others is a tool to bind them to him, or to expose them naked before his eyes, dismantle their personalities, and remake them as he desires them – vulnerable. It is a hunger that cannot, by its nature, be satisfied. He blurs the line between fantasy and reality, encouraging people to act out their dreams in ways that pay no heed to the safety or sanity of others, intent only on the taker's own pleasure. After all, to a devotee of Lust, no one else in the world truly matters.

WHISPERS AND RUMORS

The Broken Diamond

One story has it that Andrealphus, as Archangel of Love, was present when Blandine and Beleth swore their love for each other, and that he created a diamond the size of a woman's fist as a token of their devotion. When Beleth turned against Blandine, the diamond shattered into two pieces. According to the rumor among some Servitors of Dream and Nightmares, Andrealphus still keeps both halves of the diamond, though nobody knows where, or why.

Daughter Of Eve

Naturally, Andrealphus took an interest in the relationship between Adam and Eve. After the Fall, when the Archangel of Love had become Prince of Lust, some celestials whisper that he took an even more personal interest . . . and sired a daughter on Eve. (For some reason, this story never got into the Book of Genesis.) The woman grew to be a seductress of incredible beauty and

talents, and was among the first humans to become Hellsworn, besides being a skilled sorceress. According to the rumors, she was also involved in the downfall of the Grigori – and even survives to this present day, an efficient and favored agent of her father.

The Missing Malakim

During the Purity Crusades, the Servitors of Purity attacked a Domain in the Marches which was home to one of Andrealphus' ethereal paramours. The ethereal begged the Prince of Lust for help – and Andrealphus answered, enveloping the whole Domain in a miasma of darkness and hot desire through which none could penetrate.

Nobody has seen that Domain since that time, nor the ethereals who once lived there, nor the Malakim who were there when Andrealphus appeared. However, wanderers in the Far Marches have claimed to have visited a city where dark-winged angels in chains served an impossibly handsome lord. But one hears so many rumors in the Far Marches . . .

The Countess' Punishment

Marou, Impudite of Lust, was a powerful Servitor of Andrealphus – she held the rank of Countess, and had been well known under the corporeal identities of Delilah and Salome. At the peak of her career, Marou was favored by a visit from Lucifer himself. She entertained him, and when she felt the time was right, she requested the Word of Seduction from him. Unfortunately – most unfortunately – the Lightbringer decided that she had been presumptuous, and said as much to Andrealphus. The Prince of Lust promptly stripped Marou of titles, Distinctions, and most of her Forces, reducing her to a lowly Impudite in the gutter of Shal-Mari. While she has managed to work her way up to a position of power again, over the last thousand years, the stigma of her punishment will always be with her, and she remains an example to other demons.

Marou has just about regained the confidence to ask for a Word again, but this time she's not going to rely on her sexual wiles. She wants to capture one of the very few angels of Love that are still in existence, and then break him and present him to Andrealphus. Marou believes that if her Prince petitions Lucifer, she will be protected against a repeat of her last ignominious fall.

She has a lead on the location of an angel of Love, but she doesn't want to tangle with the ancient creature herself. So she is recruiting tough (i.e. foolhardy) demons to help her, and promising them lavish rewards for their assistance.

FREEDOM IN CHAINS

Lilith is one of Andrealphus' most reliable allies, as part of the group of Princes governing Shal-Mari, and they are on good terms. However, the Prince of Lust can hardly prevent himself from considering the notion of controlling Lilith – and having the monopoly on the Lilim which she produced. There are two main problems with this; firstly, other Princes would take this as a serious grab for power on Andre's part, and secondly, Lilith herself would object. The most likely scenario

would be if the Princess of Freedom should be accused of treason, and have to throw herself on some other Prince's mercy for protection. Such as Andrealphus. Of course, this has to be weighed against Lilith's current worth as an ally – but a Prince can always think about the future. (Lilith herself merely smiles, when she sees the Need to control her in the eyes of other Princes. *Not* seeing it would be the unusual thing.)

LUST AND THE UNIVERSE

God and Lucifer

Andrealphus was, as he sees it, *betrayed* by God. He was given a Word that was self-defeating and flawed, and allowed to continue in this painful delusion until matters all came crashing down. Surely it is appropriate that religions claim God is Love – nothing else could cause as much agony in its name. Lucifer might be a Balseraph, but he was honest with Andrealphus – or so the Prince of Lust is determined to believe. The only truth is the self, and humans are there to be exploited. God is a living lie.

As for Lucifer . . . Someone has to be dominant in any relationship. Andrealphus still owes him "gratitude" for the "truth" which cut him free of Heaven, and still desires the Lightbringer, most beautiful of Balseraphs. The Prince of Lust is also too practical, and too realistic a judge of his own strength, to consider mounting rebellion.

LUST IN THE MARCHES

Many whisper about Andrealphus' relationships with a number of ethereals. Beleth is particularly opposed to these, as she finds it useful to be the only point of contact between the Marches and Hell. Some demons even claim that the Prince of Lust gives Essence to his current favorites, permits them vessels, protects their Tethers, and so on. If Beleth had definite information about this, several divisions of Servitors of Nightmares would be mobilized extremely quickly . . .

Princely Opinions

Given any situation, Andrealphus will almost always side with the Shal-Mari bloc, in the interests of preserving human lives for corruption, rather than mass destruction. However, he is quick to supply agents to the War faction, for spying or blackmail, thus gaining influence with them. While he cannot hope to be *trusted*, he knows the benefits of everyone finding him useful. . .

Asmodeus: He wastes time in his own physical pleasure rather than usefully furthering the cause of Hell; he may serve his own Word, but that is of small concern to me. A distressing number of Renegades come from his ranks, and he takes little interest in pursuing them. I would be interested in evidence of personal recusancy on his part. (*He acts the cold fish, with his only pleasure being paper-pushing. It's as if he thinks that the rest of us don't understand the desire he has for control. But I understand that perfectly. Oh yes.*)

Baal: He wastes his capabilities. Sex is an *extremely* efficient motivation for violence, or for anything else, and he dribbles away his Word in self-indulgence. Useful in diversionary or distracting tactics, and certainly corrupting to humans, but of small offensive value in the actual War unless he learns to take orders. (*Rape, pillage, and slaughter. What's the fun in that? Well, rape . . . But humans at war don't have much time to think about pleasure, and Baal is definitely a party pooper.*)

Beleth: Such petty fears; minor worries, little anxieties, nothing significant. The real terror that a rapist or sadist inspires is too infrequent for my liking. My work is more important than his, though I concede that he does a tolerable – and enthusiastic – job. Would you be interested in knowing what *he* fears? (*She's a cold shower with a knife in it. Not the right kind of thrill for most, but there's a delicious few who really get into terror. For their sake, I find her work indispensable. I just don't use it much personally.*)

ANDREALPHUS AND ELI

The Prince of Lust and his minions pursue the most bitter of vendettas against Eli and the Servitors of Creation. Each is perversion to the other. With the angels of Creation, all life is linked, all things are joined, and the sharing of joy with another is one of the highest of Rites. But to the Servitors of Lust, every being is alone in their personal universe of mirrors, and there is no reason other than physical gratification to give another being pleasure, let alone joy – self is all.

Andrealphus and Eli were once companions, Mercurians who worked together for the good of humanity. Andrealphus' Fall has colored those memories. The one-time Archangel of Love cannot – *will* not – remember what he once was, or wish to remember that he could have been happier then. So he abuses those who he might be able to care for, to deaden his own capacity for emotion, and to *prove* to himself that he does not love them. This is, again, perversion to the Servitors of Creation, as it is deliberate destruction of affection and loving bonds.

To the Servitors of Eli, sex is a sacrament for body and soul combined, as well as a way to bring new life into the world. To the Servitors of Andrealphus, sex is a way of indulging the body and forgetting the soul, and is for the pleasure of the user only. The two views are irreconcilable, and neither can even consider that the other might be true; it is a heresy that must be destroyed.

Belial: His words are unimportant – they're all soft and fleshy, as weak as he is. Everyone must burn or be burned, and his lust is second-rate compared to the glory of fire. Let him keep his place, and not interfere with his betters. *(Just because I understand the idea of an all-consuming need doesn't mean I agree with Belial and his ways. And while I often burn with lust, too often his fires burn what would otherwise be lovely flesh.)*

Haagenti: Lust, hunger, wanting: he's part of me, however pretty he makes it. That endless *famine*. Can't help feeling friendly to a Prince who falls under my Word, even if I'm not pretty enough for him. Some day we're going to renegotiate that relationship, though – with *me* on top. *(A rabid newcomer, with a surprising amount of raw, unrefined force. I appreciate Kobal's use of him as "muscle," but if he attempts to expand any further at the expense of my Word, he will have cause to regret it.)*

Kobal: It's amusing that someone so obsessed with one sort of contact should be so averse to any other sort of

contact: contradictions are part of the best jokes. He produces such delightful comedies of manners and heart-break, all with the human body as a stage and motivation. *(Human lust certainly can be amusing at times, I'll grant you that, but Kobal tends to use it as a one-trick pony. There's a great deal more to the sins of the flesh than slamming doors and hiding in coat-closets, after all.)*

Kronos: Preoccupied by the secrets of the flesh, and uninterested in the secrets of the soul. He may lead mortals toward their fates unwittingly, yet he acts without deeper knowledge. Dependable in a small way, but ultimately a foolish, sensualist pawn. He has already achieved his own fate. *(A brilliant one, in his way, but sad and wretched just the same. He thinks we win by plotting out the future. I saw we win by sliding softly around them – binding them, gasping, to the sensations of the moment.)*

Lilith: Think of him as a perfect example of freedom – do what thou wilt. He refuses to acknowledge any bindings other than the ones forced on him by position or power – or Geases, of course. It's hardly surprising that we get on so well. *(Charming, stylish, heartbreakingly beautiful, and wonderful in bed. No morality, no affection, simply the trading of body for Need. I have many of her Daughters in my service. A reliable ally, and so stylish.)*

Malphas: Who would have thought that so simple a thing as lust could produce so many ways for people to hate each other? He promotes distrust, personal gain, and the admirable principle of putting one's self first in every way. I appreciate him. And look at his attitudes about empathy and love – he *understands*. *(We lust fiercely for those who are on our side, and even more fiercely for those who are our untouchable enemies. Oh yes, he does good work.)*

Nybbas: All right! Me and Andre have a definite arrangement. He provides the faces, I make them famous. Now this is a guy with a real head for business, a real understanding of what the man in the street wants. It's all in the selling, and boy, can his people sell it. We're going to drag Hell into a whole new era, kicking and screaming if we have to. *(Nybbas is a delightfully useful ally, and an example of what an Impudite Prince should be – exploitative, progressive, and hungry for more. Together, we will lead humanity into pleasure – and into our waiting arms.)*

Saminga: This pitiful wastrel spends himself among the living, ignoring the truth which is Death – and I am Death. He tries to keep the humans from me, squirming in his games. Some day I shall reduce him to a rotting mass of meat and worms, and chain him in that carcass to scream at his own body for the rest of eternity. *(What an ugly, idiotic simp. He has no concept of what any of it is about. His efforts are ruinous and he himself is both repulsive and ridiculous. It would benefit us all if he would finally taste of his own demise, instead of sitting in his citadel cackling like a*

parody of the rest of us. Inelegance gilded with displeasure and mounted on stupidity.)

Valefor: We need the living to corrupt them, and they need the freedom to act – and to steal. Andrealphus is absolutely on the right track. Bring down the barriers, let's get that throbbing mass of humanity on the road to Hell! He can have their bodies if I can have their goods. (Dear Valefor – always in such excellent style. His mercenary, self-centered attitude is perfectly sensible. I adore working with him, and would be even happier if he didn't steal the occasional lovers before I was quite finished with them.)

Vapula: A shallow-minded, feckless libertine – but he has mapped out the human soul. He knows exactly where the weak points are. (Mmm, all that energy, and such enthusiastic application, as if the universe were a lover underneath his probing hands . . . I'm quite capable of ignoring his delusions, if I must, in order to use his technology.)

Archangelic Opinions

Andrealphus remembers many of the Archangels from before the Fall, as his brothers and colleagues. Some still harbor memories of what he was, and wish that he could rejoin them – others are all the more disgusted by what he has become, and all the more fervently wish him destroyed. Andrealphus himself would not object to some of them coming to understand the truth of self-interest, and joining him in Hell. . .

Blandine: Because he failed Love doesn't mean that the rest of us need to. His dreams can be disturbing to mortals, either because they're nightmares, or because they cause them to grow obsessive for more and more sensation. (Blandine, the first proof of the folly and pain of love. I like to think that I do my little bit to make her life easier, and make some people's dreams sweeter. There are no dreams like the dreams of desire.)



David: Lust's Servitors fold like paper dolls in a fight, and strong humans can ignore all of Andre's temptations. However, Lust can inflict enormous damage if it gets to a weak human before we do. (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.)

Dominic: Love . . . Fell. Fell, into a parody of what he was. Now he spreads the lie that there is nothing beyond one's own flesh. (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.)

Eli: Andre? He doesn't understand. He just does *not* understand. I and my angels have to fight him where we could have worked together to make things better. He twists what I share, and then he claims it's the truth. Man, some days I just pity him . . . and some days I want to kill him, too. (He's undisciplined and self-indulgent – and those are his good points. But he wants to drag my Servitors and all of us into **feeling**. That I can't allow. Fortunately, his angels require very little training to make them see the light. As for Eli himself. . . I have all the time in the world.)

Gabriel: He burns for all the wrong reasons – the passions of the flesh, the obsessions of the body, never the true inspiration or the desire for righteousness. He willfully blinds himself to the *pure* passion within him, that which he once was – for is not divine Love one of the greatest flames of all? (Poor lost Gabriel, torn between her prophecies and the rest of the universe. She and her Servitors are so deliciously passionate – dangerous, perhaps, but who could resist such burning eyes and bodies?)

*The Beautiful Prince. As long as you look gorgeous and do whatever he and his Servitors want, you're one of their favorite servants. And they say it's even **BETTER** in Hell.*

– Rob Morrison, Soldier of Hell

Janus: Lust only hurts people who get trapped by it, tied up in a relationship, addicted and kept still – nothing my people should have to worry about! I say, clear them away from humans when you run into them, but don't take them too seriously – they're too slow-moving to seduce anybody who can race the Wind. *(So frustrating – where's the time to build up the heat of desire with someone who can't keep his attention on you for two seconds together?)*

However, by the same understanding, he's often prone to take surface values for the truth. I like that . . .)

Jean: I recollect that Love was an efficient and vital force for the greater good. Lust, on the other hand, corrupts any beings in whom it takes root, reducing their clarity of vision and their ability to function. Andrealphus is a force for entropy, and should be cut out wherever his traces are found. *(I'd like to peel back his skin and see how similar to Vapula he is underneath. The electricity would burn, but the creature of naked passion underneath would be worth the finding. I don't think that he'll stay the perfect Power forever – and in the meantime, his angels show a charming thirst for knowledge when my own Servitors meet them.)*

Jordi: Should I be concerned with what he does to humans? Animals know better. However, if he tries to use any of those belonging to my Word in his perverted games, then he'll pay. *(Really only useful to the devoted experimenter – naturally I'll do my best to assist in those areas, but most of the time we have absolutely **nothing** to do with each other. Much simpler that way.)*

UNITED FOR PEACE

Andrealphus wants to keep humanity alive for his own use, while Novalis wants to keep humanity alive out of simple compassion. As the most “peaceful” on either side, they've found common ground against the War factions, in a comparatively recent alliance spurred by the recent developments in military technology. Andrealphus is happy to pass her information about assaults that would result in a high death toll, which she can then hand over to the more warlike Archangels to utilize. Novalis, on her side, has provided healers for demons of Lust, or for their “pet” humans, in the hope of evangelization and eventual conversion. Both nurture hopes of eventually persuading the other of the righteousness of their own side – or simply of its *sense*.



Tenuous as this alliance is, both realize that it would cause treason trials if they were caught. (They might even weather or win these, if they could convince their respective judges that they're doing more for their own side than the Enemy's – but it's hardly a safe bet.) However, they're both known to be very busy on Earth, so they can manage the occasional meeting. Angels of Novalis sent on healing missions are usually warned that they're working with demons, and that the mission is partly to try to convert their targets.

Demons of Andrealphus know better than to question their Prince – on pain of pain – and are warned not to molest the visiting angels.

There *have* actually been a couple of redemptions from the ranks of Lust, but Andrealphus has taken no action – yet.

Laurence: He has taken one of God's greatest gifts and perverted it into something filthy and degrading. Do not underestimate Lust, for it has caused more humans – and angels – to go astray than perhaps any other sin. *(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 . . .)*

Marc: I have to admit he knows how to run a business, and that he can turn a profit. However, what he sells is ultimately as bad for the humans as any other drug – so I often need to close down his outposts. Of course, there are times when a limited accommodation is necessary. There are worse Princes out there. *(I can deal with Marc. It's a pity about all these ethical concepts he has, but really, he and his people are wonderfully businesslike. One of the more sensible Archangels. And if I need to throw the odd demon to his people every now and again – well, it's not as if I'd give him attractive ones.)*



Michael: 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. *(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.)*

Novalis: If he could be convinced that he was wrong, that Love is greater than Lust, then he'd be such a force for good. Of course what he's doing now is *bad*, and of course I'm working to stop it – but conversion is much, much better than destruction. I will not accept that he is unredeemable. *(She and I both agree on the absolute necessity of preserving the human race. And if she's far too ethical, too naïve, and too innocent – well, nobody's perfect. A relationship that deserves further pursuit.)*

*Love gives naught but itself and takes
naught but from itself.*

*Love possesses not nor would it be possessed;
For love is sufficient unto love.*

– Kahlil Gibran

Yves: Some say that the road to Hell is smooth and pleasant. Andrealphus embodies this. But even if he chose his path at the Fall, he cannot prevent the possibility of his redemption from existing. I think that frightens him more than anything else. *(Yves may be an insufferably ineffable being, but a single soul reaching his fate in Hell proves him wrong, and proves that the entire universe is flawed. The only happy endings are the ones that we take for ourselves. He embodies a lie.)*

Humans And Others

Humanity: They can invent perversions that even the most skilled of my Servitors would never imagine. They can overthrow kingdoms for lust, cause wars over each others' flesh, and commit the vilest of crimes to satisfy their desires. Each one of them is a potential flame of hunger. There is no innocence – there is only ignorance. They burn with life, with imagination, with my Word. They are my nourishment and my power, my purpose and my own lust. They are beautiful, and I want them.

Soldiers of God: Look on them as a challenge. Anybody who declares allegiance to Heaven that blatantly *demand*s to be taught better – and can be used against the angels, once trained properly.

Hellsworn: I do appreciate a properly trained human. Really enthusiastic ones make ideal minions and pets – of course, I prefer quality to quantity.

Sorcerers: The way that they keep trying to summon up succubi and incubi shows an admirable sense of priorities. My Servitors have orders to indulge them until they are under control – and then to use them.

Ethereals: Really, the angels were most helpful by driving them into our arms. Lust doesn't care what religion it flourishes under, and the spirits who *tried* to exercise dominance in my area learned better – fast. Useful pawns.

*Of all the worldly passions, lust is the most
intense. All other worldly passions seem to
follow in its train.*

– Siddhartha Gautama

BROTHELS, BROTHELS EVERYWHERE

Establishments in Shal-Mari take as much care in displaying themselves as any individual demon does. Signs hang over the doors, house staff display themselves in the windows, and damned souls or demonlings are sent out onto the streets to lure visitors to their doors. Life inside a Shal-Mari brothel – beside the obvious fact of service – depends on whether you're in a high-class establishment which employs expensive courtesans, or a gutter-level cathouse skimming Essence off damned souls. The lowest minions act as cleaners and servants, beautiful Servitors of Lust cater to the customers, and the owner of the house collects the fees. It's really no

different from any human establishment – as the demons will point out cheerfully.

The exceptions to the rule of self-display are brothels that cater to the *very* highly-ranked, or that offer particularly specialized services – which usually amounts to the same thing. Such establishments can do without gaudy public signs and advertisements; in stark contrast to other buildings, they're undecorated, or decorated with tasteful understatement. Their contents and staff may vary, but they all have one thing in common – heavy defenses and extremely thick walls.

VARIATIONS ON A THEME

Andrealphus can be viewed in a number of ways, depending on the type of campaign, and on the GM's personal vision of him.

Comic Relief

In a humorous or darkly humorous campaign, or if he's being used for light relief among the Princes, Andrealphus is an obsessive, shallow romantic. He's constantly being distracted by his latest passion, can be talked into favors by anyone sufficiently good-looking, and avoids fights for fear of being hurt or even overly mussed. He (and his Servitors) are preoccupied by fashion and beauty treatments, but useless when it comes to anything except looking good, or the occasional seduction. The slightest conversational gambit is misinterpreted as a come-on, and Servitors of Lust are known for being distracted from their missions in order to have sex in the nearest corner.

Dark Andrealphus

Darker versions of the Prince of Lust only get pleasure from the active *pain* of others. This may be merely physical pain, or it may be mind games, forcing them to betray what they care about for his sake, persuading them into actions they don't want or find degrading . . . Lust can only be gratified and assured of its power by forcing others into what they don't want.

This Andrealphus is bored of simple sex, and prefers S&M, pedophilia, snuff films, bestiality – any sort of perversion or gratification. He and his Servitors may *act* like empty-headed, vain fools, but beneath it they're all brutal, calculating hunger.

Andrea – The Female Version

Many people find Andrea's female form much less of a threat than her male form – which is an excellent reason to use it. Though she is still utterly seductive and beautiful, she takes any shape that amuses her; from a red-haired amazon to a tiny geisha, from a stately black woman to a shy brunette. Her appearance is chosen to match the setting and the people present, in order to manipulate them better.

Andrea usually acts less sexually aggressive than Andre. She is cool, allowing others to impress *her*, though she will also demonstrate a flattering encouragement toward those whom she wants to beguile. In the case of a non-Superior who is unaccustomed to females in authority, or whose relationships tend to the male-dominant, she enjoys being aggressive and taking control. She expects to be actively flattered, or at least appreciated, when in female form – far more than in male form – and will be insulted if this doesn't happen. Her whole attitude and appearance are a challenge, conscious or unconscious, to everyone around her, designed to set them competing from desire for her. She likes to give the appearance of some hidden flaw or vulnerability in her character – while not true, it adds to her allure.



PRIVATE QUARTERS

Very junior demons of Lust rarely have a room that they can call their own – or, if they do, it's also used for “entertaining” visitors. Servitors of Lust who have developed some standing, or been assigned to Earth, usually have a room or two to themselves, and possibly a couple of damned souls as servants. These rooms may

be in the Bordello itself, or in brothels elsewhere in Shal-Mari. Senior Servitors of Andrealphus will certainly have their own suites of rooms in the Bordello, or own mansions in the Principality, or both, manned by a staff of junior demons and damned.

THE RED LIGHT DISTRICT

Shal-Mari is a melange of styles and architecture from different eras of history. Medieval alleys weave at the feet of skyscrapers, and Roman baths and vomitoriums rub shoulders with squalid tenements. The streets are thronged with demons and souls soliciting trade, trying to lure souls or other demons into their establishments. (Or, quite often, engaging in a little quiet mugging down a dark street – free enterprise is free enterprise.) The inhabitants come from all ages of history, and while many are fashionable enough to keep up with the latest trends, older demons frequently cling to the decor and dress of their time on Earth. Damned souls are rarely allowed the luxury of clothing, and when they are, it is usually the uniform or “themed clothing” of some demonic organization. Many low-ranking demons of Lust “work the streets,” often in a pimp’s string, either because they haven’t managed to find a place with a permanent brothel, or because they want to stay freelance.

*As long as you don't interfere with
HIS business, he's happy to leave
you alone. Usual procedure, if his
people find out we're in the
neighborhood, is to throw them
someone pretty to buy them off.
Just DON'T mention the word
“love” anywhere near him.*

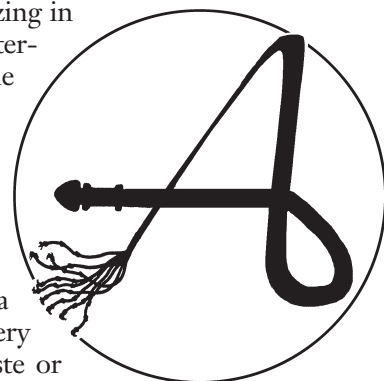
*– Whytelok, of the
Unseelie Court*

The Bordello

Andrealphus holds court in a structure resembling a New Orleans hotel from the turn of the century, bedecked in understated splendor, which is generally referred to as “The Bordello.” Its appearance changes with the centuries and with fashion, and in the past it has appeared as a Moorish castle, a Roman villa, and as Versailles itself. Its exterior is as mutable as its Prince’s appearance, and while the *main* entrance is always in the same location, back doors and windows vary from day to day – or vanish entirely.

The rooms inside are a mixture of old and new, and a cellar devoted to Victorian flagellation may be next door to another specializing in chakra massage. The decor is utterly gaudy and tasteless in some areas, but highly refined and elegant in others – the exterior itself is understated and attractive. Some demons of Lust murmur that the entire Bordello is a manifestation of Andrealphus’ mind, and that a new room manifests inside it every time he discovers some new taste or perversion.

No part of the Bordello is entirely silent or devoid of life – unless, of course, it should be part of the diversion which that area offers. From the holding cells in the basement and the headquarters of the PFD (see p. 30), to the demonstration areas and lecture theatres on the ground floor, to the rented rooms and film studios on the floors above, to the private bedrooms of Servitors, all the way to the records archives in the attic turrets, there’s always *someone* around, some noise or scents coming through the walls. It’s like existing inside a giant living organism – a heart, even – that pulses to the beat of sensuality. The general areas used for parties or group sex are always in use, with new participants coming to join in from the nearby Tether endpoints, or from the streets.



WORD-BOUND SERVITORS

Famous Word-Bound demons of Lust include Cremnian, Shedite holder of the Word of Orgies, and Saleos, Demon of Fecundity. Other Words known to fall under Lust include Rape, Adultery, Bondage, and Wife-Swapping (a comparatively recent one). There are some notable Servitors who have never managed to acquire a Word, of course – such as Marou, an Impudite who made an impression in Biblical times as both Delilah and Salome.

There are two areas in the Bordello which every Servitor of Lust knows – the Heartrooms, and Andrealphus' own throne room. The Heartrooms are guarded on the outside to prevent non-Andrealphans entering, and have a Djinn inside to keep a general watch on the place, but are otherwise remarkably relaxed. Walled and carpeted in black velvet, the rooms exude an air of luxury, and the Hearts themselves rest on pedestals, allowing their owners free access to caress and fondle them. On the other end of the scale, the throne room changes with its Prince' mood, but is always magnificent, and always has his couch-throne at one end. Andrealphus holds audience there, and administers public rebukes and punishments – or simply declares Bordello-wide orgies.

The Living Notebooks

Andrealphus does keep his own private records, of favorite techniques, remembered adventures, private conversations, and personal broodings. Being who he is, he keeps these jottings on the living forms of those, demon or human, who have displeased him – or who were unfortunate enough to have beautiful skins. Recruits have all senses except touch removed, by a permanent application of the Sensory Deprivation attunement (p. 7) from the Prince himself, who then dictates his thoughts to his Scribe. The Scribe, Nemo, is a blinded Habbalite of Lust; once found guilty of attempting to defect to Creation, he has been imprisoned in the Bordello ever since. He uses techniques of scarification, tattooing, and stitching with wires to record Andrealphus' words in the skin of the subjects.

These living documents wander through a carefully padded and carpeted section of the cellars of the Bordello, guarded by a chosen group of Djinn. Senior Servitors of Lust are occasionally allowed inside to consult a particular "document," though this must be with

Andrealphus' specific permission. It is believed that by its nature, the corridors must adjoin Kronos' Archive, and from time to time, a "document" does go missing – which requires a fresh subject and recopying . . . All demons of Lust have heard rumors about the existence of this area, though few fully believe them.

SEX, LUST, AND PORN TAPES: SERVITORS OF LUST

ANDREALPHITES, ANDREALPHANS, LUSTIES

The common image of Servitors of Andrealphus, among more warlike angels and demons, is that of degenerate narcissists, obsessed with the pleasures of the flesh, serving a weak Prince. At least one of these points is usually correct – they do tend to be obsessed with the flesh. What else *should* one expect of demons bound to the Word of Lust?

Their dissonance condition demonstrates the level of amorality which they *must* achieve if they wish to avoid dissonance or Discord, and rise to power. Other demons are permitted to feel mild affection for humans, on occasion – rare as this will be – and even to demonstrate it. Andrealphans must not feel sympathy for humans, must not show it, and must not act on it. The most that they can ever have is the critical appreciation for a well-groomed specimen, or enjoyment of a trained human's skills. Certainly they can pretend emotion, in order to manipulate the human better, but the slightest true feeling behind it risks dissonance. Even to feel emotion toward fellow demons is a risk, because it leads a demon into the dangerous path of *caring* about other beings. One never knows when such tendencies may result in actual affection for a human. Far, far too dangerous.

This manifests, in many demons of Lust, as a profound shallowness of feeling or emotion, though they can fake affection almost as well as an orgasm. Even the philosophical fits of angst which they may indulge in are no more than indulgence – just another way to display themselves to the world, but without any genuine feeling for the ideas that they toy with.

A few Andrealphites possess something which could be called "good care of livestock," if not actual affection. They have enough understanding of human needs – both

SERVING LUST

Many Servitors of Lust love their Prince desperately – where “love” means “worship, adore, desire, and fear.” They all cherish the belief that if they can catch his attention, they may reach the heights of being his personal concubine, and gain true power. Even those with a reasonable level of common sense find it hard to stay practical in the Prince’s presence – he’s so *beautiful*. Near their Prince, most Servitors fawn, kneel, and grovel at his feet, eager for his touch. Andrealphus is always glad to oblige – assuming they’re attractive, well-behaved, haven’t displeased him, and that he’s in the mood for their particular style.



The Prince of Lust alternates between a very stratified chain of command – he does, after all, understand the principles of dominance – and handling problems personally. Junior demons often prefer serving under a senior Servitor to answering to the Prince directly. An older Andrealphite can sometimes be persuaded to overlook an error or failure with the help of the lower-level demon’s personal charms, but the Prince himself won’t forgive failure. On the other hand, the Prince rewards far more lavishly than mere Servitors do . . .

physical and spiritual – to limit their own depredations. While this doesn’t necessarily mean they are selfless creatures, they show a disinterested kindness to their own pets, and refrain from too much random cruelty. After all, the carrot is as effective as the stick, and a human spoiled is one who can’t be used for other purposes . . . Such Servitors of Lust don’t always have the drive to rise to high positions, but they can be extremely effective in missions on Earth. They’re capable of holding a long-term role in human society without betraying themselves – and without too much self-indulgence – while furthering long-term objectives for Lust.

ORGANIZATION


Servitors of Lust often fall into layered hierarchies of command, with junior Servitors theoretically obeying their masters unquestioningly, and having total authority over their inferiors. However, the constantly shifting sexual relationships can alter these with barely a moment’s warning, or can “short-circuit” them. A low-grade Impudite who manages to catch a Word-bound’s eye and please her might suddenly find himself with an incredible amount of influence, and senior demons may temporarily have to bow and scrape to him. (Of course, when the Impudite no longer pleases his new Mistress . . .)

In such a hierarchy, *everyone* inside a particular chain of command will understand their position relevant to each other. X is dominant toward Y, who is in turn dominant toward Z . . . and so it goes. This can result in conflict when two different groups of Andrealphites interact, and

everyone has to sort out precisely who is dominant toward whom. Such an adjustment of position may be accomplished through signs of the Prince’s favor, demonstrations of personal power or resources, actual fighting, or week-long orgies. Quite often it comes down to simple contests of desirability – the first demon to crack and show a desire for a colleague, *unless* he’s powerful enough to forcefully take what he wants, is demonstrably inferior to the other.

FEATHERFIRE PRODUCTIONS

One of the largest operations sponsored by the Prince of Lust on Earth is FeatherFire Productions, a subsidiary of Eminent Entertainment (owned by Nybbas, though Andrealphus has a lesser partnership in it). Featherfire Productions primarily deals in pornography, prophylactics, and recreational drugs, but also owns organizations like the Hellfire Society (a chain of nightclubs promoting “alternative lifestyles” throughout the western world). A lot of Hellsworn started their careers in the service of Hell under FeatherFire Productions . . . and many still work there.



A strict chain of organization, however, doesn't imply mercy or justice. An inferior who failed to do *everything* in his power for a superior could be punished for it – and if he *did*, then he might well be punished for “acting outside his orders.” Treatment by a dominant Servitor of Lust toward a minion is governed by his feelings toward the target, and the target's current importance in the Servitor's schemes. (Not by any such thing as affection, naturally.) Lower-ranking Andrealphites know this and accept it as the natural manner of things. A healthy-self interest, usually coupled with desire for the favors of his superiors, produces a well-trained demon of Lust. Such an Andrealphite is classically polite to those above him, dreaming of one day being dominant to *them*, and rules his minions as cruelly as he is ruled.

Humans

Humans are *vital* to the Word of Lust. Every Servitor of Andrealphus acknowledges this. Even if they don't *like* the talking monkeys, even if they certainly couldn't care less what the monkeys feel or if they're in pain, they *need* them. Humans must be made to desire each other – and to desire the Servitors of Lust even more, naturally.

One of the “perks” of being on Earth is getting to interact with humans. Most Andrealphites interpret this as “gathering mortal minions to serve my every whim.” (After all, the humans make such *good* servants . . .) Naturally, the humans don't care to hear it put quite that way. The demons of Lust need to express it in terms of services offered, bargains to be made, and pleasures beyond mortal conception. However, while they may treat humans politely at first, scarcely any Andrealphite is going to see any human, *ever*, as an equal. The highest position that a human can realistically hope for is “favorite pet” or “useful servant.” Demons of Lust slowly lead them into relationships where it is quite clear who is dominant and who submissive, snaring the humans into addiction, where the Andrealphite is the drug and the human the helpless user.

Mortals unaware of the War may or may not be “taught their place” relative to the Servitors of Lust. It depends how useful they are in their current positions and attitudes, and what the seducing demon's role is. If a high-ranking human is being manipulated toward particular actions or policies, and is unaware of the War, then the Andrealphan may allow the mundane to consider himself the dominant partner in the relationship. Sometimes it's easier to “train” a human into abusive habits by providing victims (possibly including oneself), rather than by abusing him first. At other times, a mortal may be more effective if he doesn't know about the War, and merely acts from his own convictions.

Humans who are aware of the War know their place. Whether they are “normal” humans or full Soldiers, they are aware that the demons of Lust are masters rather than equals or servants. A Soldier may be allowed to behave freely in public, but in private he is expected to be the humble minion which he is. By the time that humans *are* made aware of the War, they are usually already involved with Andrealphites, and need what only the Servitors of Lust can give them. Breaking free of these carefully trained habits is possible, but as difficult as giving up any other addictive drug. *Skilled* humans get a little more consideration – at least, they're not abused in a way that will hinder their performance in their specialty.

The common view that all human minions of Lust are either whores or bodyguards is not totally accurate. While many human servants *do* serve in those ways, Andrealphus needs other resources, and doesn't necessarily want to have to depend on other Princes for them. There are positions for scientists, couturiers, politicians, teachers, businessmen – anyone who can be useful in defending Lust's interests, or spreading its power. Naturally, such minions *will* be controlled through sexual relationships. Even if they begin by serving for money, power, or fear, they'll soon have a “very special relationship” with a Servitor of Lust. Most Andrealphites tolerate such specialized human servants as a necessary evil, but don't actively solicit their company unless they happen to be attractive.

Andrealphus does not create undead, given his hostility toward Saminga. Humans who deserve a longer lifespan, due to their services or beauty, can be rejuvenated with the Songs of Form or Healing. This also keeps them dependent on the demons of Lust . . . On very rare occasions, he might give sanctuary to a *presentable* mummy or vampire on the run from other Superiors – especially Death, as that has the additional bonus of annoying Saminga. However, such undead rarely last long among the Servitors of Lust. Even if their former Princes weren't attempting to dispose of them, they just don't fit in, and slip rapidly to the bottom of the dominance ladder to become expendable.

The worst thing about Andrealphite relationships with humans, to many angels, is that the humans are often *happy* in their degradation. After all, the Servitors of Lust are very good at their job . . . The demons produce loyal minions, who helplessly adore their masters, and who will automatically, reflexively perform their tasks. At the same time, many of the humans also *loathe* their Andrealphite superiors on some level, and hate what they have been forced into becoming. Not that this troubles the Servitors of Lust, unless it affects the human's efficiency – after all, it's not as if they *cared* about the little monkeys . . .

Rewards and Punishments

Signs of favor or disfavor are very important in Andrealphite society. If a higher Servitor shows publicly that he is pleased with a junior one, it results in an immediate rise in prestige. This translates into increased possibilities for bribery and influence for the junior, coupled with the fact that others will pay more for his services. This is usually signified by a piece of jewelry or clothing as a gift from the senior Servitor, to show that the junior one is currently in his favor.

Above that, one of the most common physical rewards is the gift of a trained human servant – or a demonic one, for higher ranks. Another reward is to be trained in some sort of skill. However, to be trained in a skill which has *no* clear application to Lust is rather a backhanded comment, suggesting that while the Servitor may have fulfilled his duty, he lacks real ability as an Andrealphite. To receive actual Songs, Rites, or attunements (in ascending order of difficulty) only comes from definite success in a mission, or from somehow pleasing the Prince greatly. (Given how jaded Andrealphus is, that's not easy.)

A common punishment involves an immediate lowering of rank toward other local Andrealphans, at least temporarily. (Being required to submit to a superior's desires isn't really a penalty – it's just normal practice.) Another usual punishment is for the victim to be forcibly mutilated or scarred, and not allowed to heal himself for a while. This is a severe shock to an Andrealphite's self-esteem. About the worst low-grade punishment is for a Servitor of Lust to be ordered to cooperate with Samingans for some reason, as this is both severely degrading, and will result in a permanent slur on his name. (Although Andrealphus and Saminga are enemies, their Servitors *occasionally* must cooperate on Earth – even if it's only a matter of a formal meeting to set up territory boundaries.) Andrealphites may also have property or servants removed (and given to more “worthy” Servitors), or even commanded to total chastity (hard as this is to enforce) to prove their penitence.

Serious punishments such as Force-stripping, or the removal of attunements or abilities, come from significant failure in a major mission, or actual damage to the Word of Lust. Andrealphus doesn't care to weaken his Servitors too severely unless they are genuine liabilities – or threats.

The Fallen

While Andrealphus considers himself a connoisseur, and prefers quality to quantity, he appreciates every Fallen who joins his ranks. Such ex-angels have rejected Heaven's

FALLEN CREATIONERS AND REDEEMED ANDREALPHITES

Given the absolute divergence of opinion between the Archangel of Creation and the Prince of Lust, both are delighted to recruit from the other's Servitors. Andrealphites aggressively target nearby Creationers for Falling or destruction, and Creationers return the favor with redemption or death. Both sides will use Fallen or redeemed Servitors as examples to taunt each other – and will attack the celestials whom *they* have lost with particular vigor.

lies, and come to understand the falsehood of Love, and the truth of Lust. They assuage his own gnawing doubts and self-hatred. (Of course, if they wish to serve Lust, they'd better be beautiful, too.)

Servitors of Andre are therefore always ready to assist an angel to Fall. While the obvious course is to lead the angel into sexual self-indulgence, deadening a target to empathy and affection can be equally effective. If a demon of Lust can slip into the angel's circle of friends while appearing to be human, this allows a relationship to be established before the angel realizes what's going on.

Ex-angels unsuited to Lust can be placed with another Prince, thus garnering favors. Fallen who can serve Lust are gladly accepted by Andrealphus, and are usually granted a night in the company of the Prince himself. (The demon or demons who can claim the credit for such a Fall will gain the Distinction of Knight, if not more.) The new demon is then placed with other demons of Lust, ones who will be dominant to him and teach him “appropriate behavior.” Of course, this sort of treatment is painful enough that the Fallen takes his anger out on anybody inferior to him – which only makes him fit in even more . . .

Those Servitors of Lust who redeem are rarely pursued aggressively, unless they did it in a particularly public manner or have important information. In the former case, the Prince of Lust likes them to be brought back alive – or better yet, led into Falling again – for suitable public display. In the latter case, Andrealphus is prepared to suppress his own desires on the subject, and simply orders that they be killed by any means possible. In any event, Servitors of Lust *hate* those who redeemed from their ranks – the action undermines their beliefs and their lives.



ANDREALPHUS' TETHERS

Tethers to Andrealphus are often brothels, harems, or pornographic film studios. Other spots are possible, as long as they are focused strongly enough on Lust. They are plentiful, but rarely very powerful; Lust is everywhere, but not often *concentrated*. Major Tethers include La Coste (the castle of the Marquis de Sade), and a small island off the coast of Haiti, famous for the orgiastic rites celebrated there. Some of Andrealphus' other Tethers are detailed in the *Liber Castellorum*, pp. 89-90.

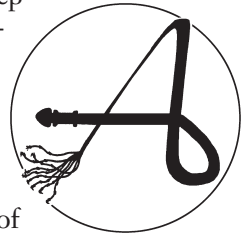
On Their Knees: Trainees

Andrealphus creates far more fully-shaped demons thanimps or gremlins. (Quality over quantity, after all . . .) A demonling who wishes to be accepted into the ranks of Lust, or who wants to gain enough power to become a full-fledged demon, will have to work extremely hard to be noticed, and will be ruthlessly exploited. Given that

one of the primary criteria for acceptance is desirability, and that simultaneously the demonling is going to be stuck with all the messy, dirty jobs, things aren't easy.

However, just-fledged or just-created demons aren't much better off. They're at the bottom of every single dominance chain, and are sometimes even ranked below particularly skilled or favored *damned souls*. Such lowly Servitors work the streets, dealing with other low-grade demons who can't afford a *trained* Andrealphite, and desperately attempt to gain the notice of their elders.

A few Andrealphites – usually Balseraphs, Habbalah, or Shedim – are set to teach new Servitors the basics of obedience and seduction. However, they're low-grade themselves, or they wouldn't be set to working with the novices. Demons come out of such classes knowing only the very simplest techniques and manners. The rest they're expected to pick up by themselves, through watching others, or *paying* for further lessons – which is an education in itself.



SAMPLE TETHER: PURPLE STUDIOS



One Tether of Lust is Purple Studios Ltd., a double-fronted organization. It's based in a small suburb in California, and appears to be a low-grade film studio, working the romance video market. The few films that they put out are hardly of brilliant quality, but are just watchable enough to justify the studio's existence. The second layer of the studio is more clearly kin to Lust. It's a full-fledged pornographic movie operation, "Purple Passion," producing far more videos than the romance brand. It often employs college students who need some easy money, offering them a reasonable sum for some posing or consensual, non-exotic sex in front of the

camera. Most pornographic stores have a few "Purple Passion" films on their shelves.

The third layer of the studio is what truly makes it a Tether to Lust. In certain private rooms, movies are filmed that cater to the most extreme ends of the porn market. Many of the students who started in the less serious films end up "graduating" to work here, absorbing all the permutations of the word of Lust along the way.

The Seneschal of this Tether is a Shedite, Cyrade, Word-bound to his Tether. He does a reliable job, and the students or workers who are corrupted under his aegis spread the Word of Lust on their campuses or at their homes. He flits from person to person within the small sprawl of buildings which house the studio, seldom in the same host for very long (they last longer that way). Cyrade has been doing his best to keep his Tether out of the general War. He fears that any attention drawn there will blow the first level of the studio's cover, making it a great deal harder to keep the low-grade recruits coming in.

SPECIAL TRICKS

Braille

While the formulation of Braille was extremely useful to the Servitors of Lust, they'd been using similar tricks for centuries beforehand. One common expertise among Andrealphites is a very delicate sense of touch – making it easy to leave messages behind for others, embossed or engraved where they wouldn't easily be seen. Most Lusties have at least some experience with Braille, and can check for it or read it inconspicuously. (Braille should be treated as a Knowledge (Braille) skill.)

Description

Some Andrealphans are *very* good at describing views or sensations. While their phrasing may lack grace or style, and be purely photographic, they nevertheless can describe fashions, appearances, or styles efficiently, down to the last pleat on a dress. This can make them very efficient spies – or catwalk commentators. Unfortunately, it doesn't always make them subtle . . . (A Perception or Intelligence roll may be required to remember an appearance, or to choose the right words to describe it.)

Celestially Charming

Any Servitor of Lust with an attunement that depends on overcoming his victim's Will – which is to say, most of them – is aware of the utility of the Celestial Song of Charm. However, making it *obvious* that he is Singing Charm against a target can often alert the target, and warn him that something's coming. Servitors of Andrealphus therefore often learn Celestial Charm at a high level, or develop some skills in Singing (or possibly other music) to mask preparation for it.

Interrogation

Whether through wheedling and pillow-talk, or through torture, many Andrealphites are skilled at persuading others to talk. Such demons won't necessarily make their skills publicly known to those not serving Lust, but their brothers will know who they are. Being given particular instruction in this area is a sign of the Prince's favor. (This is treated as a Knowledge (Interrogation) skill if considered in terms of torture, or as a variation on the Seduction skill if it's a case of pillow-talk.)

BANDS

Certain stereotypes arise from the way that the Word of Lust interacts with the general resonances of the Bands. Of course, assuming that any demon of Lust

SLOBS AND LUST

While some Andrealphans scorn to make themselves seductive and desirable to humans, preferring to rely on attunements (or just lazy), only the most foolish allow their appearance to lapse so much that they can't *become* presentable on short notice – such as a surprise visit from their Prince. At the least, they keep themselves clean enough that they can simply shed any sloppy clothing and display their attractive vessels. In Hell, constant good grooming is far more of a survival trait.

will have no other nature, purpose, or personality than his master's Word and his own Band is to *invite* seduction . . .

Balseraphs

The first lie that any Balseraph of Lust tells himself is that he is beautiful, irresistible, perfect, and that any sensation from his hands *must* therefore be pure pleasure. They impose this lie upon others, addicting their victims to anything they may choose to do to them. While not all Balseraphs of Lust insist that *pain* from their hands is pleasure – some consider themselves artists who work in ecstatic sensations, and others are merely lazy – it is a common trait. They often start off as masochists in an attempt to rationalize the abuse they receive from their superiors, graduating to sadism as they acquire inferiors of their own to abuse.

Their belief in their own perfection leads to two general manners of behavior. The greater proportion of them do their best to look perfect, handsome, beautiful, and dress stylishly and sexually. Others – a smaller but still sizeable proportion – *deliberately* refuse to bother dressing up to expectations, and use their resonance to make people desire them as they are. Either way, Balseraphs of Andrealphus *expect* people to automatically throw themselves at their feet, helpless with lust, desperate for their touch – and they behave that way.

Djinn

It's not just that Djinn of Lust would be dissonant if they cared about any of their partners – it would be a betrayal of their Djinnish reputation for not caring. Fortunately, once they have satisfied a partner in bed, their attunement keeps the partner well-behaved, uncaring, and generally an ideal pet. It's a pity they have to go to the trouble of satisfying the partner first, but they can always explain it as fulfilling one of their Prince's Rites.

FREE LILIM IN LUST

Although Andrealphus has a large number of Lilim already working for him, he's often happy to hire their Free sisters, or allow his Servitors to do so, in the hope of permanently luring them into his service. With this in mind, he has given general instructions that they should be treated well (or seduced, addicted, and sworn in, if that's a feasible option and word won't get out). He is always happy to provide a Free Lilim with some personal favor, in return for a night in her company . . . which lures many into a more permanent relationship as a new Servitor. (The Tempters feel that anyone who willingly sleeps with the Prince of Lust has effectively consented to the probable results.) However, from time to time, a Free Lilim provides the perfect cut-out to coordinate some operation which mustn't be traced back to Lust. Daughters hired for such tasks are either experienced ones, who are treated well, or novices, set up to fail and take the blame.

Djinn of Lust are rarely *actively* cruel or sadistic, unless they feel the need to make a point; it would involve too much attention to the victim. They rarely go to great efforts to look sexually desirable, unless they're seducing a target for the first time, and are as near as any Andrealphite will get to being slob. They also don't tend to bother with truly exotic perversions – too much effort – though they enjoy voyeurism. It's generally known that the best gift one can make to a Djinn of Andrealphus is a well-trained servant who he won't *need* to care for or bother about.

Calabim

Calabim of Lust comprehend flesh, through their Prince's Word, so well that they can bypass it and damage the soul. This ability often promotes a corresponding pride in *not* damaging the flesh – at least, not with their resonance. Some Calabim of Andrealphus even claim that it's proof that the soul of a human is less important than the body, since they can damage it without harming the body. Such Calabim have been known to form extremely unpleasant partnerships with Punishers . . .

However, the basic nature of a Destroyer is to damage, disrupt, and break. They're fond of violent sex at the very least, and usually prefer rape. They have enough pride in being desirable to make themselves look attractive, even though they tend toward the "street rough" look. More restrained Calabim develop a taste for refined sadism or psychological violence, though they always finish with the destruction of their victims. To them, lust *is* destruction. Some Calabim have even become dissonant through loving their victims, even when they killed them, as to them the killing *was* love . . .

Habbalah

The Punishers of Lust live in the joyful certainty that they are *truly* the chosen of God, as their attunement from their Master's Word prevents the reversal of their resonance. (This frequently makes them insufferable toward Habbalah of other Words.) They flaunt themselves all the more, with highly sexual vessels and clothing, and luxuriate in their ability to use their resonance and cause any target to desire them.

Their actual beliefs usually fall into two general categories. Some feel that they have been given their powers to test humans through temptation, and others persuade themselves that physical sex is a *vital* part of divinity. (It is quite possible for a Habbalite of Lust to believe both of these at once.) This does mean that an Andrephan Punisher, once involved in a relationship, will push any partner to the limit, either to test their will to resist, or to celebrate in the flesh. Partners don't tend to last long.

Lilim

Many Lilim of Lust are very, very happy. They can sense precisely what their targets Need, and give it to them, and collect a Geas in return. (As they would point out, is there anything *wrong* with being paid for services rendered?) Those who think much about the nature of their Prince's Word point out that a partner can always say no, and that he doesn't have to choose to satisfy his needs. And if he does so choose – well, he can hardly complain about consequences.

Demons of Lust are quite easy to summon and command. A strong-willed sorcerer has nothing to fear from their temptations.

– Rosabella the Silent, Sorceress

While the concept of bondage (at least, on *them*) runs counter to the Word of Freedom, most Tempters view it as just another job – of strictly limited duration, with high payment. (The rumors concerning certain perverted Lilim of Lust who acquire a taste for it are denied by all others of their Band, and by Lilith herself. Surely Freedom would never stoop to such a thing.)

Lilim who work for Lust fall into three categories. Firstly, there are the Tempters who don't bother thinking deeply about the Word, and just regard the whole thing as a job which pays well. Then there are the more



“ethical” Lilim, who consider that their targets could always “just say no” – but, for that reason, don't particularly like getting involved in bondage sex or no-choice situations. (Such Lilim rarely reach a high position, and are often targets of the PFD (p. 30).)

Finally, there are the Tempters who understand what Lust is about, comprehend its utter amorality and self-interest, and *like* that. They're willing to do anything that's required of them to gain power and satisfaction, and often rise to high positions. They're also treacherous, cold-blooded, and see other beings only in terms of sexual needs.

SAMPLE SERVITORS OF ANDREALPHUS

ATHAN

Demon of Teenage Crushes

Habbalite Knight of Lust

Corporeal Forces - 2 Strength 3 Agility 5
Ethereal Forces - 5 Intelligence 11 Precision 9
Celestial Forces - 5 Will 12 Perception 9

Suggested Word Forces: 4

Vessel: Human/2 (young male), Charisma +2

Role: Fanboy/1, Status/1

Skills: Computer Operation/3, Dodge/2, Driving/3, Emote/2, Fast-Talk/1, Knowledge (Fanzines/2, Hollywood/2, Sports/2, Television/2), Lying/2, Seduction/3.

Songs: Attraction (Ethereal/2, Celestial/2), Charm (Corporeal/3, Ethereal/1), Dreams (Celestial/2), Entropy (Ethereal/3), Motion (Celestial/3), Tongues (Corporeal/2).

Attunements: Djinn of Lust, First Lust, Habbalite of Lust, Dark Desire, Knight of Infernal Pleasures, Demon of Teenage Crushes

Special Rite: Inspire someone to do something foolish or self-destructive in an attempt to attract the attention of a person who he has a crush on (1 Essence).

Special Ability: Naturally, Atham may use the First Lust attunement (p. 7) for no Essence; further, he may spend 1 Essence to cause the victim to focus on someone *besides* him.

Athan has held the Word of Teenage Crushes for 50 years now. Attrition for the holders of this Word has been high, due to pointed attention from Servitors of

Novalis, but Athan seems to be a survivor. A Habbalite to the core, Athan is sure that he acts for the best in exposing and corrupting the weak, letting their magnified emotions and desires drag them down. He encourages obsession, anorexia, jealousy of others who have the same romantic interest, stalking, desperate one-night stands, foolish risks, and so on.

Athan has cheerfully expanded his interests in tandem with Nybbas' work and the Information Age. It has allowed him to start newsgroups and sites on the Internet for people to collect information about their idols, thus giving them even *more* material to obsess with. However, he hasn't let his own standards of on-the-job work slip; celebrity crushes are all well and good, but a hopeless passion for the football player down the road can be just as devastating. In this spirit, he's kept up the attention to detail which has made his name a byword among those demons who appreciate definite corruption and work on a single soul.

Athan is always pleasant; he appears as a youth somewhere between 16 and 24, unthreatening and helpful, with just a hint of loneliness. He tends to mingle with the crowds at conventions, concerts, or public occasions, deepening the obsessions of the fans with their idols. However, he's just as likely to be found working on the personal level, encouraging half a dozen girls to obsess over their handsome teacher. If he can just keep ahead of Novalis' Servitors, he may be one of the new rising stars in the world of Lust.

(Athan is a Word-bound demon rising in power; characters may be sent to help in his operations, or (if angelic) to work against them.)

Continued on next page . . .

SAMPLE SERVITORS OF ANDREALPHUS (CONTINUED)

DOUGLAS

Djinn of Lust

Corporeal Forces - 3 Strength 8 Agility 4
Ethereal Forces - 3 Intelligence 5 Precision 7
Celestial Forces - 3 Will 7 Perception 5
Vessel: Human male/2, Charisma +2
Role: "Doug James," Repairman/2, Status/2
Skills: Driving/1, Engineering/2, Large
 Weapon/1 (Wrench), Lying/2, Seduction/2.
Songs: Charm (Ethereal/2), Form
 (Celestial/4).

Attunements: Djinn of Lust, Dark Desire

Douglas has a comfortable job, even if it's somewhat strenuous – he helps other Servitors of Andrealphus produce blackmail material. In his role as repairman, he shows up on the doorstep of the chosen target to fix an (arranged) breakdown. Between his charisma, skill at seduction, and Dark Desire, he then lures the victim into bed. Once the partner is suitably calmed by Douglas' attunement, she (or he) doesn't pay any attention to the people with cameras or sound devices, or worry about the requests to perform for the viewers . . . Douglas frequently uses his Celestial Song of Form to alter his appearance, so that the blackmail films don't all have the same face on them.



Douglas doesn't actively *dislike* the job, and his fellow Servitors treat him well enough. It's all just . . . such a bother. The Djinn would rather be in his shabby little flat, taking care of his prized geranium collection, with a human minion or two to obey him *without* needing to be ordered. As it is, he has to strain himself to seduce the pesky humans, work hard to keep them calm and untroubled, and generally act as if he cared about it. He's beginning to vaguely wonder about this human concept called "going on strike," and its application to going Renegade . . .

(Douglas is a balanced starting character.)

Shedim

As Shedim of Lust can move at will into any victim experiencing an orgasm, they often find it easiest to transfer among sexually active people. Group sex parties, wife-swapping circles, and orgiastic cults are frequent haunts of theirs. They consider their demonic forms to be exquisitely beautiful – for what it's worth, Shedim of Andrealphus *are* perhaps a shade less disgusting than other Fleshless. They're certainly better groomed.

However, when dealing with hosts, what can be done in any human body grows more and more boring as time goes on and as the Shedite becomes more and more jaded. They constantly push their hosts to new perversions, and often find it wearying to have to work through the whole cycle of experience in a new host. Unfortunately, this can result in utter innocents being forced into total depravity with no steps in between. Not only does this prompt horrified expense of Essence in Will rolls by the host, it can cause enough public disturbance to alert angels. Older Shedim of Lust learn self-control, and take time off for the occasional tension-releasing atrocity.

Impudites


Impudites of Lust are well known for imitating their Prince – a shining example of their Band – to the extent that whenever he appears in public, a whole new fashion is started among his Taker minions. Their ability to use their Corporeal Forces to improve their resonance means that Impudites of Lust are often surprisingly physically capable – and that can include the martial arts. After all, it's an excellent way to keep in shape and meet new partners . . .

Older Impudites of Lust grow more and more rarefied in their tastes, with some even claiming to be able to "taste" different kinds of Essence, depending on the nature of their victims. Naturally, they lust for humans, hungry for the Essence they can give, delighted by their society and potential. While they hardly ever kill a partner – dissonance, after all – they like returning to "old friends," but grow bored by them unless they can keep on pushing them to new extremes. An old Impudite of Lust can corrupt almost as thoroughly as a Shedite.

JOBS

Celestial Jobs

In Shal-Mari, the most constant job is getting the Essence out of the damned souls. Generally speaking, this is done by the lower-grade Andrealphites, of any Band. Brawny and untalented Lusties find jobs acting as



“muscle,” as bodyguards, debt-collectors, brothel-bouncers, and gate-guards. Other low-grade demons – usually Impudites and Lilim – find employment in Nybbas’ studios, especially the pornographic ones. Above that come various low-grade administrative staff, such as information-collators (usually Djinn), brothel-mistresses (any Band), and teachers (frequently Balseraphs or Habbalah). At a similar level are the courtesans skilled and attractive enough to service fellow demons – who, again, may be of any Band.

Other, more important demons, supervise multiple operations and corruptions from their offices in the Bordello. Honored by their proximity to the Prince, they filter collated information to him, keep track of the operations of the brothels (who naturally all pay their taxes) and negotiate local business with demons of Gluttony and Dark Humor. Again, these demons may be of any Band – Andrealphus is a great believer in promotion through quality of beauty or efficiency, and has no particular biases.

Ethereal Jobs

Influencing the dreams of humanity is an excellent first step in leading them into Lust as a way of life. Andrealphus has some of his subtlest demons working in the Marches, either targeting particular mortals, or generally corrupting any dreamscapes they can find. Such demons have the Song of Dreams – it’s very rare that one of them should please Beleth enough to be granted her Dreamwalking attunement. (Though it has been known to happen, if the Andrealphite should be priming someone for sadism and rape on the mortal world, as the terror and nightmares produced are worth the investment for Beleth.)

Andrealphites in the Marches usually work in pairs. One of them is the actual influencer of dreams, often a Balseraph or Habbalite, who sculpts the dream to suit; the other is a bodyguard, a Djinn or Calabite. The Marches aren’t safe for Servitors of Lust – if it isn’t the angels chasing them on one side, it’s the Servitors of Beleth on the other, claiming that they’re giving humans *pleasant* dreams. This may actually be true, as one of the aims of such Andrealphans is to give humans dreams of unattainable, ideal pleasures, so that the human will spend the rest of his life trying to recreate the experience. Despite the ultimate effect, such dreamscapes may well drift into *Blandine’s* side of the Marches before the sleeping “encounter” is over.

Corporeal Jobs

Much of Lust’s most important work is done on Earth, among the humans who are vital to the Word. The most

common image of a Servitor of Lust on Earth is as a prostitute – this is a frequent role for them, and one they’re not ashamed to admit to. Impudites usually take this position, and get Essence while they work. Shedim also often work in prostitution, though usually only for a short time in each new host, until the host is “broken” to the job.

Another important task is influencing the popular *zeitgeist*, persuading people that Lust is a natural and reasonable thing. One position Servitors may take is as *objects* of Lust to others – models, porn film stars, any sort of popular icon which others can desire. Habbalah, Balseraphs, and Impudites are useful in such jobs. Elsewhere in the media, there are jobs for Balseraphs, Djinn, and Shedim as *writers*, gossip correspondents, cult leaders, and politicians – all ways to influence popular opinions on Lust. Others find positions to persuade the already-influential, as secretaries or mistresses – this is a popular task among Lilim and Habbalah. At lower levels, Andrealphites can infiltrate society as doctors (emphasizing the importance of a regular sex life), teachers (with their own slant on the curriculum), or similar roles. They can even occasionally pose as priests – though Laurencians take *grave* exception to this. Such subtle jobs are often best handled by Shedim or Djinn, who work patiently and effectively.

There are always times when Andrealphites need muscle or assassins, however. This is where the Calabim and the Djinn come into their own, providing subtle or unsubtle violence and death. This may be because some human – or angel – needs removing in order to complete a demonic operation, or it may be simply a matter of keeping order inside one of Lust’s establishments. And the Tethers always need defending, too . . . which is a job for all demons of Lust, under any circumstances.

Andrealphus is openly expanding into the Internet and scientific research – including the concept of “virtual sex.” While this doesn’t have the same *closeness* as physical sex, and certainly can’t replace it in his opinion, it can be used to influence many mortals who he’d never otherwise reach. (Scientists and computer nerds deserve sex too, even if they aren’t necessarily raving beauties – just ask Andre.) The Internet provides a vital contact resource for “enthusiasts” in unusual forms of Lust. Combine that with the fact that people across the world, of all ages, can access sexual material on newsgroups or websites, and it’s clear that Lust needs to dominate this new frontier. Balseraphs, Djinn, and Habbalah are some of the best (and most computer-literate) in this field, but any Servitor of Lust capable of handling a computer can make a contribution. Andrealphus would also like to persuade or subvert demons of Technology into assisting, and has set a number of his Lilim and Impudites to this task.

PEINE FORTE ET DURE

The Peine Forte et Dure, or PFD, as they are usually referred to, are feared among the Servitors of Lust. Much as Andrealphus dislikes the thought that any of his minions could want to act counter to his interests, he is aware that it *can* happen – and that Asmodeus isn't always the most convenient person to have interrogating his Renegades. The PFD are the secret police among Lust's Servitors, collecting information, watching for treason, and questioning traitors – or those suspected of being traitors. Their current supervisor is Fainite, a Balseraph Marquis of Lust who reports directly to Andrealphus. They operate in teams of two to four demons, both in Shal-Mari and on Earth, and their numbers include a large proportion of Habbalah. (The phrase "Peine Forte et Dure" means "strong and lasting pain," and comes from a medieval torture involving pinning the victim under a flat piece of wood, then piling stones on top.)

Servitors of Andrealphus are extremely nervous about the PFD. Servitors of the Game can sometimes be fooled by the tricks of Lust, but the PFD already know them all. What's more, attention from the PFD means that you're suspected of actual disloyalty to the Prince of Lust, not just casual dissonance. Demons who fall into the PFD's clutches are taken to the cellars under the Bordello for interrogation. If they wish to warn the target's associates, the PFD leaves a single polished stone in his bed. Other demons of Lust recognize the symbol.

Unusual Jobs

Andrealphus values the information which his loyal demons pass on – it's vital in protecting the interests of Lust, often through blackmail. Certain of his Servitors regularly sort through the data which comes in, and pass dossiers on to their Prince, or to operations which require it. Andrealphites who are not overwhelmingly attractive, but are good at handling information, may be employed here once they have proved their *absolute* loyalty to their Prince. Information of this kind is so sensitive that only the truly trusted can handle it. The bulk of the data-sorters are Djinn, but the Servitors who actually correlate and judge the importance of the information are usually Shedim or Habbalah.

Andrealphans may also occasionally work as assassins. It's certainly easy enough for them to get close to people, and those with the Kiss of Death attunement are perfect for the job. Andrealphus takes care not to let this become too obviously the work of his Servitors, however – he doesn't want people to start associating Lust with danger.

Another specialized group of Servitors of Lust cooperates with angels – in particular Servitors of Novalis. These demons are a mixture of somewhat ethical Andrealphites, and totally amoral ones – the ethical ones get to work personally with the angels, while the amoral ones control the operation. (The logic behind this decision is to give the angels a somewhat unrealistic image of what Servitors of Lust are like, while still letting the more "sensible" Lusties pull the plug on their romantic friends.)

Finally, some of the least likely Andrealphan projects are those centering on the care and protection of humans. They're working on matters such as world hunger, AIDS cures, safe fuel sources, and peace, without being in any way inspired by angels – though they may from time to time pass anonymous information or help to angelic groups. Andrealphus is a prudent husbandman, who realizes that he needs humanity alive and healthy. Servitors of Lust on such projects are primarily Impudites, who best understand their Prince's appreciation for humanity – they are mainly assisted by Lilim and Djinn. These operations are kept secret from other Princes, to prevent their interference. Most of the time, angels wouldn't believe such things could even exist.

Coping With Job Stress

It isn't always easy for a demon to devote himself to a life of hedonism, ruthlessly exploiting the humans (and other celestials) around him while feeling no compassion for them. Sometimes a human might do something which inspires genuine emotion – saving the demon's life, for instance, or simply being devoted enough that the demon grows fond of him. At other times, the demon might just grow *bored* with a life that involves nothing more than emotional destruction, entropy, self-indulgence and corruption. This doesn't even take into account the continual threat of angelic intervention – thoughtless ethical brutes that they are – or the strain of dealing with other backstabbing, self-interested demons.

Some Servitors of Lust react to stress by throwing themselves further into their indulgences, often inviting other Andrealphites to join the party. Others restrict themselves to chastity, for a while – this doesn't last *long*, but is one way of reawakening jaded tastes and enthusiasm for life. Those who suspect they are feeling something approaching affection for human pets may mistreat

the humans (or even kill them) to remove the temptation. Alternatively, they may send them away, usually to some other Andrealphite who will find them useful. Ultimately, there's always the possibility of a temporary alliance with some other demon – or even an angel, or ethereal – to watch each other's backs in case of trouble, and to talk over problems. As long as all this is on a strictly *business* footing (or as part of an affair), most Servitors of Lust can justify it to themselves. Now, justifying it to the PFD (p. 30), or the Game, is more of a problem . . .

ORGANIZATIONS AND SOCIETIES

The Church Of The Flesh

Primarily composed of Habbalah, but also including a number of other demons who just plain enjoy the ceremonies, this society holds that Lust in itself is Divine. Some of the more theologically expert members will state that the birth of Jesus Christ into a human body proves that the flesh is superior to the spirit, and therefore argue that the adoration of the flesh – or Lust – is

the highest ideal to which any celestial can aspire. Their rites and rituals involve a lot of sex. Some members of the Church have a more Christian slant, with versions of Holy Communion which would appall Servitors of the Sword, while others find satisfaction in Tantric rites or esoteric Black Masses. Church members can technically call on each other for help, but in practice it's a good idea to have a gift of some sort for your "brother in the Flesh." They are demons, after all . . . The current Head of the Church of the Flesh is Epith, a fervid Habbalite who truly believes the dogma which he spouts. Hierarchy is a tangled and confused matter, as the only firm ranks are those of the Head of the Church and "anointed priests." If several demons belong to a particular subgroup of the Church (such as those who would claim to be Catholic) then they may have their own hierarchy – though, of course, none of it will be of any significance to other demons, or even other Andrealphites. Andrealphus himself finds the Church amusing, and a useful way to channel certain of his Habbalah whose religious delusions might otherwise be awkward. Rumors that he has attended some ceremonies anonymously are probably untrue – anonymity is not the Prince of Lust's strongest point.

Government Work

This group is a very secretive faction, whose members want power and lots of it. The surprising thing about them is that they cooperate as well as they do, and have – so far – not betrayed each other for some personal gain. Customarily, they select a low-level member in some rival organization, either corporeal or celestial, and ensnare him in an affair. Then they threaten him with exposure, break his will (by whatever means necessary), and turn him into a mole in the enemy group. The victim will then pass information to the Government Work faction, until they believe that he's suspected – at that point he suffers an unfortunate "accident" or "suicide." While this tactic is not uncommon among demons of Lust, the astonishing thing is that the members of the group seem positively unselfish in their assistance to each other, and watch each others' backs very effectively. Most of this is due to their leader, Belphebe, a Balseraph who lacks any Distinctions but who is extremely good at inspiring loyalty and team spirit. What nobody else in the group realizes is that Belphebe is secretly sworn to Baal's service, and ensures that any interesting information gets to him, and gets to him first. If the Prince of the War needs agents within Lust's ranks, he need only send a message to the faithful Balseraph, who is quite convinced that she will some day be rewarded . . .

MODES OF ADDRESS

Servitors of Lust are known as Andrealphans or Andrealphites if other demons wish to be polite – and as "Lusties," "Whores," or "Catamites" if they don't. They are very affectionate in their address to each other if they're of equal rank, or if the rank question is uncertain, calling each other "dear," "sweetheart," or "pet." Inferiors or superiors inside the hierarchy of Lust are addressed in master/servant style, with an inferior calling a more powerful demon "Master/Mistress" or "Lord/Lady", or using his Distinction, should he have one. A superior addresses an inferior demon by name, or by some diminutive such as "pet" or "pretty one."

Andrealphus himself is referred to as "The Beautiful Prince," and more rudely, "The Pretty Prince," "Prince Charming," or "The Pimp." His Servitors address him as "Master," "Lord," or "Your Highness." Even if Andrealphus does give them permission to be less formal, he expects a *certain* level of respect. ("Call me Andre." "Yes, Lord Andre.")

*Subtle he needs must be, who could
seduce Angels.*

– Paradise Lost, Milton

The Sculptors

A loose group of self-declared artists, these Servitors of Lust pride themselves in breaking the wills of others through psychological methods rather than through physical pleasure. Their unstated manifesto is that any *worthwhile* Andrealphite should be able to reduce humans – and occasionally demons – to groveling slaves without having to sleep with them. (That comes after the above reduction to slavery, and is strictly for the Andrealphite's pleasure.) Sculptors are usually young and arrogant, assured of their irresistible sensuality, and consider themselves artists in perverting and scarring the minds of victims. Older demons often consider them to be affected poseurs, deliberately put them in the forefront of dangerous missions, and disclaim any past membership in the group.

RELATIONS

Servitors of Lust will always try to appear *desirable* to other demons, even – or especially – if their Princes are hostile. After all, being able to attract an enemy's passions is a victory in itself, as it shows you have manipulated the other. When “on the job,” and actually working on assignment, an Andrealphite will still behave seductively toward his colleagues, especially if they're attractive. However, he *will* pay attention to requests to leave them alone – if he currently considers them “dominant” in the situation. If he should feel that he is master of the situation, or be clearly superior to them, then he will indulge himself as he wishes. This is subject to his desire not to offend *their* superiors, of course, and the current safety of the situation – no sensible demon of Lust would deliberately offend a Prince by seducing his best Servitors. (Unless, of course, he'd been ordered to . . .)

If not actually working as part of an operation, but currently at leisure, Andrealphites may actually relax and refrain from trying to seduce everyone around them – unless they actually want to. To have someone *ignore* them is an insult. Even obvious resistance to their charms is preferable, as it shows that they are desirable enough to *need* to be resisted.

Demons of Lust are always prepared to enter relationships with other demons in order to *use* them. When it comes to actual partnerships that benefit *both* sides, certain Words are more trusted or approved than others. Free Lilim are always good partners, as they are considered to understand the unimportance of empathy – it's even better if they Bind to Lust afterward. (The Lilim may object to this view of her . . .) Servitors of Theft, Factions, Gluttony, Dark Humor, and the Media are also considered rational people who can cooperate in a relationship. The danger here is that *their* selfish desires will get in the way of the Andrealphite's *own* selfish desires – but that's a perfectly normal thing. Demons of the War or Fire sometimes enter a relationship with a demon of Lust due to personal passions, and this is understood, indulged, and profited from. Servitors of the Game, Nightmares, Technology, or Fate usually only cooperate with Servitors of Lust because they need the Andrealphite's talents, and often have enough sense not to end up in bed with them. (Naturally, the Lusties find this annoying, as this lessens their influence over the other demons.) Such relationships are tenuous and “strictly business.” No Andrealphite would *ever* work with a Servitor of Death, far less sleep with him, unless it is absolutely necessary to an operation, or the Andrealphite can achieve a *major* gain this way. The hostility between the Princes goes all the way down to the ranks. And Samingans are so *ugly*.

RELATIONSHIPS

To the average Servitor of Lust, a “normal” relationship is one where both partners are involved in order to gratify their desires, or for benefits, or both. Gratitude is not a demonic concept, but mutual advantage is. An important Servitor can indulge himself with an inferior demon, and in return the demon gains status through his master's protection, and from the mere fact of having been used by someone of higher rank. An angel, ethereal, or human may be bedded for gain or influence, or even pleasure, without attracting comment from other Lusties – as long as the Andrealphite did well out of the deal. In a society based on sexual skill and power, bedding others is *necessary* in order to demonstrate one's own prowess.

However, within a relationship, one partner is usually dominant and the other submissive – though the dominant may respect the submissive's skill or knowledge in particular areas. This sometimes results in temporary flip-flops between partners, with each becoming the superior for the duration of a situation, and the other falling into the inferior mode. Such an attitude is entirely normal for Andrealphites, and can even be quite com-

fortable for them. If he is involved with someone from another Word – or even a human, ethereal, or angel – then the demon of Lust will still consider himself as either the superior or the inferior within the relationship, even if he doesn't make the other party aware of this. Genuine equality is a pretty concept, but one look at Hell makes it quite clear to the intelligent Servitor of Lust that things just don't *work* that way. One partner is stronger, and that partner should clearly be in charge.

Such an attitude contributes to the perception of Andrealphites as weak, petty creatures, either crawling in submission or temporarily acting the tyrant. It's more often a case that the Andrealphite has, given a particular situation, assumed the submissive role and allowed someone else to take charge. If a demon of Lust is on the same side of a firefight as a Baalite, he is *not* going to argue with the demon of the War – he's going to obey the dominant. Self-preservation is a strong instinct. After the battle is over, the question of dominance may become fluid again, unless the Baalite continues to assert his authority.

Naturally, other Andrealphans understand this best. In a Lust-based chain of command, everyone knows where they stand in relation to everyone else. It's easiest, it's safest, and it's very unlikely to promote undue thoughts about affection. Relationships only exist for what the partners can get out of them – and that includes sex. No strings attached.

To Care or Not to Care?

It's a good thing that Servitors of Lust *can* fake concern for humans – it would be nearly impossible for them to support their Word otherwise. Humans are so entrenched in the concept of "love" as linked to "lust" that they would find it hard to understand that empathy is *not* necessary. (Or so the Andrealphites see it.) Fortunately, current modern attitudes toward free love, one-night-stands, and "don't tie me down in a relationship" are making this easier to deal with.

However, as matters stand, it is often necessary for a demon of Lust to pretend affection for his bed-partner, or to demonstrate sensitivity to their moods. This won't cause an Andrealphite any dissonance, as long as he doesn't *really* care. Nothing forbids Andrealphus' minions from lying – indeed, to fake genuine love without meaning it is an entirely demonic thing in itself. The key note is that they will express whatever emotions are necessary in order to manipulate humans, if this is necessary. Humans exist only as toys, conveniences, tools, or victims, and no more.

Nothing forbids a Servitor of Lust from genuinely caring for another celestial. It's not dissonant to be fond of



another demon – or even an angel. However, to feel that degree of affection for *any* other living thing is a slippery slope toward feeling it more generally. One might even start to feel empathy toward humans – and that's dissonance. Real, sincere affection opens dangerous cracks in the selfish demonic heart. It can exist, but it's usually hidden, as others will view it as a sign of weakness or even treason. Certainly Andrealphus would never tolerate it!



DEALING WITH THE GAME

Servitors of Lust don't like the Game – not that *anyone* particularly likes the Game, but Andrealphites definitely loathe it. They know that they're viewed by the Asmodeans as weak, irresponsible, lax, and liable to be found in bed with angels. (And having to prove one's intentions to corrupt the angel can take a while, resulting in many Andrealphites being sent to Trauma before they could explain . . .)

On the other hand, being viewed as non-threatening and ineffective *can* be extremely useful if one wants to avoid the Game's notice. While the local Tether of Lust may be the first place to be checked for treason if there's trouble – and often with reason – it can then slip back into normal functioning, after a cursory scan. People *know* that the Andrealphites are easily threatened into dutiful behavior, after all, and would hardly ever consider serious treason. They protect humans, true, but that's because they want them for their own use. Entirely understandable – and extremely convenient for those Servitors of Lust who are prepared to admit to sexual misdemeanors, and then be sneered at as “weak.”

Some lower-grade Servitors of the Game can be bribed with sexual favors, or by promises to manipulate their enemies. More important ones can be dealt with by informing on other demons – *not* those of Lust – or by providing services, usually interrogation or information-gathering. Generally speaking, Andrealphites would far rather betray other demons than be personally taken off to Hades. It's well known that the only ones who emerge again are the most innocent, or the most powerful, or those on whose behalf the Prince of Lust intervenes – and Andre really can't be bothered, usually. The concept of informing on fellow Lusties in order to raise one's own position *is* understood, but is only practiced if there's no chance of the details becoming known. Andre is not happy at giving any information or Servitors into the Game's hands, and the PFD (p. 30) handles known traitors of this kind.

The Game recognizes this closing of ranks against its investigations. Asmodeans are always on the lookout for a weak link, and will falsely promise immunity and total secrecy to any Andrealphite willing to inform for them on his brothers. Naturally, once he's done this, they possess evidence which they can use to blackmail him further – and he's doomed.

Servitors of the Game often haul in demons of Lust on the charge of “empathy for humans” or “treason to Hell by consorting with angels.” It's rather difficult for an Andrealphan to prove that he *doesn't* care about any

PRINCE OF DESIRE

The air whipped hotly through the corridors of the Bordello, rubbing against the skin of the Calabite who was cowering behind the curtains, and making the leather hangings hiss and shift against each other. Faint moans were still drifting down the corridor from the remains of the Impudite, but Avicinis wasn't even going to consider stepping out to examine the body. Not until he was perfectly, absolutely sure that the Prince wasn't in the vicinity any more.

At the Calabite's feet, two female souls huddled closely against each other, one of them biting down on her fingers to control her whimpers. They were both naked, neither of them having earned any clothing as yet, and one of them bore a tracery of brands down her left hip. She had clearly received some training in the Bordello, as she knew enough to cling to the demon's thigh enticingly. If he'd had the time to spare, he might even have considered spending an hour or two in her company. As matters stood, he was just hoping to *survive* the next hour.

Silence spread in the corridor like oil on water, and the moans stopped. Slowly the sounds of the Bordello began to assume their normal rhythm; pants, cries, whispers, moans, tiny shivers on the edge of perception. Avicinis slowly relaxed. Whoever the Beautiful Prince was taking his temper out on, it was someone *else*.

"What happened?" whispered the more experienced soul. "I never . . ." She shivered, lowering her eyes.

Avicinis decided not to discipline her for her impertinence. After all, she might belong to someone important. "The Prince was angry," he said, shortly. "One of his Corruptors displeased him. Carpus . . ." He remembered the screams of the Shedite as it had been dragged away in chains by Asmodeus' Servitors, the silence from the other Andrealphites who had been watching. "The Beautiful Prince doesn't like giving the Prince of the Game any chance to interfere with his affairs."

From the corridor came a scurry of demonling feet. They would be clearing away what was left of the Impudite, mopping up the stains, and restoring the Bordello to its proper state. The Calabite smirked slightly, remembering his own days as a gremlin, and cuffed the soul who had spoken. He decided he didn't care if she belonged to someone else. "And you, shut up, dead little *bitch*! Don't open your mouth until I *tell* you to. Do I look like I *like* your kind? What do you think I am, a Taker?"

"No." The voice from behind him – and surely there was a firm wall behind him, there had always been a wall behind him – was like a hand around his heart. Avicinis could feel the burning heat of his Prince's presence like a physical blow. "My pet, my little Avicinis, why are you hiding from me? You're just what I want at the moment. Strong. Faithful. You wouldn't betray me, would you?"

The Calabite had no attention to spare for the two human souls any more, no time to see how they mewed and groveled on the floor, rubbing their bodies on the soft carpet as they crawled to the Prince's feet. Fear and desire mingled in him as he fell to his knees before Andrealphus, eyes fixed on the glorious Impudite. Every line of his Prince's body was perfect, a work of art, a thing of pure desire. And the worst thing was, he still *knew* that he was probably going to be used and torn and thrown away, and it still mattered, it mattered more than ever because he wanted to live, he lusted for life and all the pleasures of the flesh. It made it worse than ever.

Andrealphus softly caressed the Calabite's shoulder. "Pet. My little one. There is an angel named Apphiael, and you are going to find her for me. She is a Mercurian of War, but she is not for you. She has unfinished business with me."

The Prince of Lust leaned forward, heat rising round him in a wave of desire. "But first, I have unfinished business with you . . ."

humans he may be with, even if he can show that he's dissonance-free. The least amount of kind treatment can be used as evidence for "treachery to his Prince's Word." In cases of *genuine* suspicion (as opposed to simple arrests to fill a quota, or to get the demon in custody for other



purposes) the usual test is to torture the demon's "objects of affection" in front of him, or to make him hurt them himself. His attitude and behavior are carefully observed, to check for any signs that he may actually care about them. No Andrealphan likes this – not so much because they *care*, but because they dislike destroying their own property.

HAAGENTI



CALABITE PRINCE OF GLUTTONY

The world is starving – it must be fed.

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HAAGENTI

Just don't stand too close, or you might lose an arm. (Mmmm. Arm.)

Haagenti usually appears as a hairy, screaming demon about three feet tall, with a huge maw ringed by razor-sharp teeth. He moves by hopping and skipping, and eats everything he can get into his greedy little hands.

Haagenti despises almost all the other Princes, mostly because he spent 600 years toiling under them. He started as a gremlin in the domain of the Prince of Sloth, and pushed himself upward with ruthless, angry, hungry energy. He promised himself that someday he'd destroy his enemies, and devour them.

Over time, he became a full demon, a Calabite, and a Servitor of Belial. While in Belial's service, he caught the eye of Kobal, Demon Prince of Dark Humor. Kobal bartered with Belial for the services of the fat Calabite, sponsored him for the Word of Gluttony, and finally adopted Haagenti as his "brother." Protected and encouraged by Kobal, Haagenti grew ever more powerful.

Eventually, supported by servitors of his own, he attacked and consumed Meserach, Prince of Sloth. After that feat of gluttony, Lucifer made him a Prince in his own right.

As a Prince, Haagenti is as energetic and informal as ever, and as greedy. He demands obedience and food. He retains the sense of humor that first drew Kobal's attention, but he's not subtle; he likes torture and sight gags (which, some might argue, are a kind of torture.) His disciples swarm across the Earth to encourage consumption, especially overeating. They also help the Servitors of Kobal harass mankind.

DISSONANCE

Haagenti's Servitors ooze through the mortal crowds, destroying the will of humanity as they go. It's dissonant for these demons to go more than a number of days equal to their Corporeal Forces without forcing a human to Consume (as detailed below). They can't hold back the urgency of Gluttony without taking dissonance for it.

BAND ATTUNEMENTS

Balseraphs

(restricted)

With the power of their personal symphonies, these infernal Liars can impose the Celestial Discord of Gluttony upon their victims, at a level equal to the demon's Corporeal Forces. This lasts a number of days equal to the check digit of the demon's resonance roll. While humans do not gain actual Discord, they behave as though they had Gluttony while the resonance lasts.

Djinn

(partly restricted)

Haagenti's Djinn can spot gluttons from miles away. Not only do they know the direction to the closest glutton, but their resonance automatically succeeds, with a check digit of 6, toward anybody to whom they are attuned who has the Celestial Discord (or disadvantage) of Gluttony!

Non-Djinn may know the direction to the closest glutton, but receive no resonance enhancements.

Many a man digs his grave with his teeth.

– Puritan Proverb

Calabim

(restricted)

Haagenti's Calabim have a special Rite. They regain 1 Essence if they can provoke, or participate in, an orgy of consumption by destruction . . . such as a demolition derby, or the sort of party where all the furniture goes out the window.

Habbalah

(restricted)

Habbalah of Haagenti can use their resonance, adding their Corporeal Forces, to make their victims feel physically hungry. With a check digit of 6, the victim will gorge himself to bursting while still feeling starved . . . but there are more subtle uses for this nasty power, too.



Lilim (partially restricted)

Haagenti's Lilim are wicked cooks. They may spend a number of hours in a kitchen equal to (4 minus their Corporeal Forces) – minimum 1 – to produce a gorgeous meal which can hardly be refused. In fact, the person to whom the demon offers the food must make a Will roll minus the demon's Celestial Forces to avoid devouring it on sight. If the meal isn't poisoned, the diner will also owe the Lilim a small favor (Geas/2, treated as a normal Geas-hook). The Lilim can only prepare a meal for *one* person at any given time, although they do not have to select the target until the food is offered. If other Bands take this attunement, then the meal is irresistible to the target, but they don't get a Geas out of it.

Shedim (restricted)

If the host of one of these Shedim is a glutton (GM's decision), then his resistance rolls against the Shedite's Will are reduced by the demon's Corporeal Forces!

Impudites (restricted)

Haagenti's Impudites, true gluttons themselves, need only make physical contact to steal Essence – they need not charm the victim. However, this produces a disturbance in the Symphony by an amount equal to the Essence stolen plus the demon's Corporeal Forces, and leaves the victim complaining of ravenous, biting hunger.

SERVITOR ATTUNEMENTS

Consume

This attunement lets a demon see what secret hunger lies in a human heart . . . and amplify it to fiendish proportions. The victim must make a Will roll, minus the demon's Corporeal Forces, to resist wastefully consuming the object of his desire, whether it's wolfing down a jelly donut or putting yet another VCR on an overloaded credit card.

(All Servitors of Haagenti must purchase this attunement at character creation.)

Devour

The demon can consume (10 × Corporeal Forces) pounds of *any* matter in a minute. It requires a Strength roll to invoke. He must have the Numinous Corpus Song of Fangs to break up anything the GM rules is harder than normal food. For 1 Essence, this can also be used as a Power +5 attack. A demon who uses this power more than once in an hour, and fails the second or any later success roll, will vomit up what he consumed earlier. This does a number of dice of damage equal to the number of times

the power was successfully used earlier that hour. The damage is inflicted on the demon himself *and* on anyone directly in front of him!

Insatiable

The target of this attunement grows *more* hungry, the more that he eats. After eating a plateful of food, he must make a Will roll not to immediately consume another helping – and takes a penalty to this roll equal to the number of servings which he has already eaten! If he eats more servings than he has points of Will, he must be forcibly restrained, or he will eat himself to death. (A single successful Will roll from the victim, at any point, negates the attunement.) Should he consume all edible matter nearby, he'll go looking for more, and won't be able to vomit it up. The attunement costs 5 points of Essence to invoke, and the demon invoking it must be within (Corporeal Forces) yards of the target. It wears off – if the target doesn't die first from a ruptured stomach or suffocation – after the demon's Celestial Forces in hours.

Hair of the Dog That Bit You

This ability allows a demon to relieve his target (which can be himself!) of the effects of over-indulgence, by having the target commit an example of that indulgence again. Thus, if the victim had been drinking too much the night before, a stiff drink would be appropriate to make the attunement work. The demon must win a contest of Wills with his target – however, the target can *choose* not to resist – and the target must indulge in a suitable manner. If the demon succeeds, then the target won't feel physical pain or discomfort from the excesses in question for the demon's Celestial Forces in hours. (Any physical damage will remain, however.)

DISTINCTIONS

Knight of Banquets

The demon can detect every form of nourishment (anything edible by a normal human) within a 40-foot radius. Note: humans, living or recently dead, qualify.

Captain of Cannibals

Haagenti's Captains gain the ability to give any flavor to anything they touch, for 1d6 minutes.

Baron of Satanic Dishes

The demon can make anything he touches look and feel like an equal mass of food for 1d6 minutes. This is just an illusion, which is not apparent until its effects pass.

Higher Distinctions

Haagenti's higher Distinctions, beyond Baron, are awarded to those who have pleased Haagenti personally or expanded his power. He often gives his Distinctions on Kobal's recommendation, too. Of course, those who don't have the power to maintain the position are quickly devoured by their subordinates. Those who receive his higher Distinctions are almost always Word-bound or swiftly recommended for a Word. If so, the Word will become part of an ornate and often ridiculous titles, such as *Most Esteemed Earl of Belching* or *Her Magnificence the Duchess of Chocolate*, which inferiors are expected to remember and use.

RELATIONS

Haagenti cooperates with the other Princes of Shal-Mari – especially Kobal, his brother. He's often a random factor in everyone's plans, though, as his Calabite instincts drive him toward aggression, while the Shal-Mari bloc would rather preserve human lives for their own use. Of special interest is Mammon, a now-minor Prince whose Word is Greed; though Mammon tries to stay on Haagenti's good side, claiming to be Associated with Gluttony, Haagenti is at best neutral to him (see p. 40).



IN THE CUPBOARD

Haagenti often gives his Servitors the Songs of Draining (*Liber Canticorum*, p. 32-33) and the Mouth variant of Numinous Corpus (*Liber Canticorum*, p. 72). He also possesses the not generally available Song of Hunger (*Liber Canticorum*, p. 70-71) which he personally discovered, as well as several specialized variants of more common Numinous Corpus – particularly long and drippy Tongues, multiple rows of serrated Fangs, etc. Even his Mouth Numinous Corpus is rather . . . daunting.

Allied: *Kobal* (*Kobal is Allied to Haagenti*)

Associated: *Saminga, Nybbas* (*Saminga is Associated with Haagenti*)

Hostile: *Belial, Malphas, Valefor* (*Andrealphus, Asmodeus, Beleth, Belial, Kronos, Malphas, and Valefor are Hostile to Haagenti*)

Enemy: *Asmodeus* (*No Princes consider themselves Haagenti's Enemy*)

BASIC RITES

- ✦ Cause someone to eat 15 pounds of food (the equivalent of at least a dozen large meals) at a sitting.
- ✦ Absorb 200 pounds through *Devouring*, above.

EXPANDED RITES

- ✦ Joint, prepare, cook, serve, and eat or have eaten the body of an animal at least the size of a sheep. (Humans count.)
- ✦ Spend six hours continuously eating.
- ✦ Cause a human to spend all his current resources on self-indulgence – the target must have *nothing* left afterward.

CHANCE OF INVOCATION: 3

INVOCATION MODIFIERS

- +1 A piece of candy
- +2 A Big Mac
- +3 A normal meal
- +4 A luxurious meal (paté de foie gras, champagne, etc.)
- +5 Fifty pounds of fast food
- +6 Ten thousand whole fried chickens

HAAGENTI IN DETAIL

... There are three things that are never satisfied, yea, four things say not, It is enough: The grave; and the barren womb; the earth that is not filled with water; and the fire that saith not, It is enough.

— *Proverbs, 30:15-16*

The Prince of Gluttony is the consuming hunger which is never satiated, the ravening mouth that is never filled. Created as a mere gremlin, he has always been as hungry for power as he was for anything else. Where he goes and devours, he leaves nothing behind, and *produces* nothing – he is ultimately destructive, consuming or breaking anything he wants. As the years go by, he is growing and developing, extending the reach of his Word. And as the Word of Gluttony spreads in the 20th century, through all the indulgent habits of humanity, his power grows with it.

HISTORY

Haagenti began his existence as a nameless gremlin, toiling for the demons of Meserach, the Prince of Sloth. He was abused and scorned as all demonlings are, given the most menial tasks to do and forced to watch as his superiors took the credit for his work. Given that the whole Principality celebrated the Word of Sloth, junior Servitors found it almost impossible to advance. The lazy did nothing, and the energetic were despised for failing to properly honor the Prince's Word. Older demons in positions of power stole the work of their servants, claiming it as their own, and thus kept their poses of sloth, while the junior demons could only stand by and curse.

It was no life for an ambitious young gremlin. Haagenti was constantly tormented and mocked by the creatures

ROAST PORK

Among demons who do not serve Gluttony, there's a tale that Haagenti discovered the joys of eating purely by accident. The story has it that, as a gremlin, he burned down a poor farmer's Earthly hovel, and the pigsty as well. Later, he investigated the novel scent of roast pork . . . and the rest is history.

who thought him their minion. A time would come, he *swore*, when he would take revenge on everyone who had belittled him.

A perilous (for a gremlin) trek across Hell brought Haagenti to Sheol, where he found life much more to his taste. His angry energy was appreciated by the minions of Belial. Naturally he was still used and abused, but he was actually able to make an impression on his superiors by his zeal and efficiency at destruction. He became a full demon, fledging as a Calabite, and began to rise in power.

Haagenti was sent to Earth, where he burned and destroyed freely. He was not the most inventive of the demons of Fire, but he really enjoyed his work of destruction, and displayed a wicked (if very basic) sense of humor. Belial was pleased.

But in the corporeal realm, Haagenti's Calabite Discord (Gluttony, of course) grew out of control. He spent more and more time building up his mortal power and gathering minions to feed his own fleshly urges . . . especially for *food*. He sought worldly power for his mortal vessels, and held violent, gluttonous orgies at which he amazed his followers by eating impossible feasts. As long as he lit his parties with the flames of burning Christians, and regularly torched the villages his armies overran, Belial was still happy. Haagenti was given a Distinction and more power.

GLUTTONY, GREED, AND WORD-BOUNDARIES

Gluttony and Greed have a certain amount of overlap, which has been steadily increasing – much to the dismay of Mammon, the Balseraph Prince of Greed. Greed is the urge to *own* everything, possess it, and for nobody else to have it; what one does with the goods or money owned is irrelevant. Gluttony is the urge to consume, and to consume *everything*, regardless of ownership. Originally Gluttony was defined in terms of food, but in the popular mind (thanks in part to Haagenti's own

efforts) it grew in scope to include the desire for ownership and also the aspect of destruction. Gluttony is now becoming a category which *includes* Greed, and is starting to infringe on Destruction, and even on Lust. As Mammon's power has been subsumed, he has declined, becoming no more than a minor Prince. And if it goes further – well, Haagenti has eaten other Princes before . . . Mmmm, Balseraph Prince.

But Haagenti had come to the notice of another Prince. Kobal, the Prince of Dark Humor, enjoyed the simple, vicious energy of the Calabite's jests. He visited Haagenti, and saw something in the fat, angry demon . . . perhaps even something he *liked* . . . but certainly something he could use.

Kobal continued to visit and support Haagenti. But even as the Calabite gained the support of a new Prince, he lost the favor of his own. Always alert to plotting, Belial was sure that something was going on behind his back. It was, of course, and he walked right into it. Belial recalled Haagenti to Hell, away from his empires, his toys, and all that lovely corporeal food. Bitterly angry at this unfair slight – for he had been perfectly loyal – Haagenti turned to Kobal for help.

Kobal was happy to lend his aid; the joke was working out perfectly. Since the destruction of the Impudite Carniel, former Demon of Gluttony, and the recent replacement of Genubath, Prince of Rapine, by Valefor as Prince of Theft, certain aspects of *hunger* were not fully represented in Hell. If Kobal were to turn Haagenti in this direction, he might not only gain a powerful servant, but also increase his own power in Shal-Mari. (An active proponent of hunger, or Gluttony, would drain away some of Andrealphus' power, thus strengthening Kobal's position.)

So Kobal – who did not, and does not, get along with Belial – visited the Prince of Fire, all apologies, to speak on Haagenti's behalf. He apologized for casting suspicion on the Calabite, and praised his energy. Belial was having none of it; he was sure that Haagenti had become a spy in his ranks. In Kobal's presence, he summoned Haagenti, stripped him of his Distinction and extra

WAS IT THAT EASY?

There are many theories about how Haagenti managed to dispose of *two* Superiors, apparently without subtlety of any kind. One of those theories is that Lucifer himself wanted Mariel and Meserach removed, and assisted Haagenti – possibly without the Calabite realizing it. Another theory is that Kobal helped, while a third is that Haagenti sold future favors to Lilith in return for Geases to hinder the Prince of Sloth and the Princess of Oblivion. No one knows, but everyone agrees that there had to have been *something* going on behind the scenes. Haagenti couldn't be that powerful by himself, could he?

FUEL SHORTAGE

To this day, demons of Fire and of Gluttony compete for resources. Things that are burnt can't be eaten, and vice versa. Humans who die by fire can't practice Gluttony and swell Haagenti's ranks. Haagenti particularly orders his Servitors to "remove" local demons of Fire who are killing too many humans – without getting caught in the act, naturally.

Rites, and literally thrust him at the Prince of Dark Humor. "If you like him so much, you can have him!"

Kobal accepted, of course. He had just what he wanted. Haagenti was grateful to Kobal, and added Belial's name to the long list of those who'd feel his vengeance someday.

Haagenti rose swiftly in Kobal's service. Returned to Earth, he was encouraged to give way to his most gluttonous urges, and to incite humans to consume more, and more, and more. His growing strength showed when he distinguished himself in battle against Legion, eating his way through the opposing ranks. Kobal took this opportunity to request the Word of Gluttony for the Calabite. The Lightbringer was pleased to grant it. Kobal even adopted Haagenti as his "brother," attracting comment and scorn from some Princes – and caution from others, waiting to see who would be the butt of the joke.

As a Word-bound, and a major Word-bound at that, Haagenti's power grew. Kobal supplied him with trained and intelligent Servitors. As the Vikings ravaged across Europe, plundering, looting, and burning, Haagenti's scope widened. Lilith viewed the new power in Shal-Mari dispassionately; the more factions there were in the game, the more deals she could make. Andrealphus, on the other hand, saw the threat that Gluttony could pose to Lust's power base, and was torn. Should he attempt to destroy Haagenti, and come into conflict with Kobal, or should he pursue a long-term strategy of bending this jumped-up gremlin to his Princely will? He chose the second course.

Haagenti's pride and thirst for vengeance had only sharpened over the years. He threw the burgeoning power of his Word into a strike at his oldest "enemy," his once-Prince Meserach. The swiftly growing armies of Gluttony stormed the Principality of Sloth, and Haagenti personally devoured his erstwhile master – in, rumor has it, one bite.

LEAVING THE PLATE BARE

When Haagenti passes, he leaves *nothing* edible behind. Every scrap of food is consumed, everything which can be broken is smashed, everything that can be destroyed is wrecked. The place is reduced to bare walls and rubble, or dry earth and scoured stone. Gluttony takes everything and leaves nothing, and gorges itself on whatever is available – if it did less, it would not be the pure concept. For this reason, while his Servitors hope for his favor, they know that his visits to their sanctums will result in the utter destruction or consumption of their most cherished, gluttonously collected luxuries.

Lucifer was impressed enough with Haagenti's energy and demonstrated power that he made Haagenti a Prince – and Kobal's jest was complete. A demon who had risen from being a mere *gremlin* now sat in the company of the First among the Fallen, beings who had been Archangels (or at least *angels*) and had helped in the creation of the universe. Mariel, Princess of Oblivion, raised her voice in protest, and sought alliances with other Princes to dispose of this distasteful newcomer. Her public claims that this farce of a Prince should be disposed of and forgotten made her a target.

However, Haagenti's power, new-minted though it was, caused the other Princes to consider their stances carefully. The War faction saw him as a useful pawn . . . surely such a newcomer could not possibly match it in manipulation? Kobal, Andrealphus, and Lilith had already leagued themselves on his side. Mariel found herself unsupported – and Haagenti's next target.

The Prince of Gluttony recruited many of the remaining Servitors of Sloth, who had been thrown into panic at the death of Meserach. Using them as expendable shock troops, and with his Servitors already tested in battle, he swept into Mariel's Principality and consumed her too. At that point, though he had other scores to settle, Haagenti allowed himself to be "persuaded" to abandon his aggression.

The structure of Gluttony throughout Shal-Mari had become well-developed while Haagenti was still a Word-bound. It wasn't difficult for the new Prince to expand it further, arrange for the endpoints of his new Tethers to be guarded and staffed, and recruit more Servitors. As usual for rising stars in Hell, many ambi-



tious demons from other Words flocked to him. He listened carefully to Kobal's advice on how to proceed. He also began to think for himself. The Calabite Prince wasn't stupid – he'd just come all the way up from the bottom, rather than being created an Archangel like *certain* Princes. He was quite conscious of their pride, their disdain for him as a lesser being, and their belief that they could manipulate him. He also realized that without Kobal's support, and to a lesser degree without the Shal-Mari group, he would be extremely vulnerable.

Haagenti knew he couldn't cope with several other Princes allying against him. So he quit rocking the boat. He threw himself into expanding his Word on Earth, and allowed his fellow Princes to see him as nothing more than Kobal's stupid pawn. Secure in their contempt, they no longer view him as a danger, and some now find him useful . . . so he is as safe as a Prince can be.

In the 20th century, far from being one of the Seven Deadly Sins, Gluttony has become viewed as near to a virtue in some quarters. Businessmen drive themselves to succeed, gaining of wealth as an end rather than a means. Children – sweet, selfish children – stuff themselves with sweets until they are sick, then demand more. Middle-class families drive themselves to consume more and more, attempting to "keep up with the Joneses" by spending more wildly than their neighbors. Tacky pieces of mass-produced glitz are celebrated as trophies simply because their buyer was able to waste money on them, rather than because of any intrinsic worth. From the isolated buyer desperate to swell his collection of stamps or collectible card games, to the football players trying to out-eat or out-drink each other at the bar, Gluttony is everywhere. And Haagenti is eating well.

PERSONALITY AND OUTLOOK

The Prince of Gluttony is a very hungry Calabite, and delights in destruction. He has great difficulty even understanding the *concepts* of temperance, prudence, or self-control. To him, larders aren't to be stocked, they're to be emptied. Everything that comes beneath his eye is considered to be a potential snack, whether it's animal, vegetable, mineral – or celestial. He is constantly watching everything around him, wondering what it might taste like, and licking his lips in anticipation. If he appears in human form, he's usually either a bloated gourmand or a frighteningly skinny man with an insatiable appetite. He doesn't like prolonged conversation, he's alert for the slightest hint of disrespect, and there had better be some food nearby – or he'll snack on his own Servitors.

Haagenti has no real concept of anything other than hunger. In the past, before he was Word-bound, his scope was wider – but now that he is tied to his Word, his

view has diminished in consequence. He can't comprehend why others should *want* to create, though he'll gladly take advantage of their inclinations. However, he's also a sensualist to the core, and enjoys new and varied tastes. Anyone who can titillate his palate will be rewarded. (He's never tried Archangel, for instance . . .)

Haagenti does know that motivated Servitors are good Servitors. Hunger recognizes hunger. He appreciates that they're smaller versions of himself – and therefore watches them with a careful eye for when they will doubtless try to eat *him*. He must keep expanding, and increasing the scope of his Word and its influence on Earth, in order to have enough to satisfy himself. And, of course, as his grasp expands, so also does his hunger: there is *never* enough, *nothing* is ever enough, and he will never be satisfied.



HAAGENTI'S WORD

Gluttony is the urge to devour, to immerse one's self in the taste of the object being eaten and the moment's sensation, with no concept of past or future. While anticipation of what is to come or pleasant memories of what has been can both add subtleties to the palate, the *true* glutton lives only for each bite as it occurs. Everything around him is only an object for his consumption – while some of it may taste better than the rest, the act is in the devouring. The whole of his existence is in pampering his hunger by forcing down more and yet more food, with every bite being a sensual experience in itself. There

His Servitors don't usually bother to chase us out of town, as long as we don't get in their way. Keep your heads down – and if matters go badly, either offer them whatever they want, or tell the angels about them and leave town till the screaming dies down.

– Hans, Norse spirit

is neither good nor evil, neither pleasure nor pain, only the *famine* if he is not currently eating and the ecstasy of every mouthful.

To Haagenti, Gluttony is the path to power, and safety from all those who would try to rule him. More power will make him safe, and the consumption of others will prevent them from threatening him. Looking around, he sees nothing but hunger throughout the universe. Those on high are hungry to control and use everything around them, and those below wish to grow stronger to consume in turn. To Haagenti, Gluttony is the natural law that drives both humans and celestials, and is necessary to life itself. And in the end, only the hungriest will survive: himself.

This fixation on his Word doesn't make him the drooling moron that his foes (including several Archangels) believe, but it does narrow the *area* of his intelligence. He can be a genius in specific areas that deal with Gluttony, but incapable of keeping his attention on anything other than that. He takes sensible actions for self-preservation – but he'll easily follow up a moment of wit with a week-long passion for steaks, ignoring possible gains or political moves. Haagenti may truly be the least intelligent of the Princes (except Saminga) and is viewed by them as an idiot – but given that they're many times smarter than most humans, this means little in comparison to *human* brainpower. If he's not currently obsessed by his food, he may display a sudden flash of strategy. He shouldn't be underestimated – but he certainly encourages the other Princes to do so if they wish, as long as they don't get the idea that he's *weak*.

Haagenti and Slapstick

Haagenti's rise to power coincided to some degree with Kobal beginning to lose interest in the broader, less refined aspects of ironic comedy. Given Haagenti's extremely basic sense of humor and his attempts at the time to learn from Kobal, it was an area into which the new Prince of Gluttony could logically expand. And he did so.

Even as a Servitor of Belial, Haagenti had a sense of humor. It was simple and brutal, true . . . but the Calabite really did like a laugh, especially if it involved someone hurt or worse. He didn't have the wit or inclination to set up truly ingenious jokes, or to indulge in genuine irony. For the Prince of Gluttony, the custard pie in the face (or the piranhas in the toilet) is still the height of humor.

Servitors of Gluttony follow their Prince's distinguished example, and enjoy gaudy and embarrassing "sight gags." (These demons *love* television collections of outtakes or "Embarrassing Home Videos.") They don't practice any degree of restraint or refinement while setting up jokes – the bigger and more wasteful they are, the better. Slapstick is all about destruction, wreck, and waste. Where's the joke if the Armani suit doesn't get smeared with feces or the expensive hairstyle comes out intact? The whole point is the destruction of someone else's self-esteem or property, and the more the better.

Most servants of Kobal regard the jokes of Haagentians as unimaginative, unintelligent, and trite. Kobalites certainly wouldn't want to lay claim to anything as, well, *dull* as smearing an expensive car's seats with mustard. They look down their noses at the Servitors of Gluttony in this area, while the Gluttons merely try to invent more enthusiastic demonstrations of gross humor and slapstick.

GLUTTONY AND THE UNIVERSE

God

Haagenti's concept of God is extremely simple. Either God will eat him some day, or he will eat God. In the meantime, he isn't concerned with morality, religion, or the concept of a divine universal creator mercifully providing food. If God *does* exist, then he can be eaten – and that's all Haagenti asks for.

Lucifer

Haagenti's feelings toward Lucifer are complex. He believes that what Lucifer gave him, Lucifer can also take away, and being reduced to a demonling again is a night-

mare for the Prince of Gluttony. However, Haagenti was created after the Fall, in a universe where the Lightbringer had always ruled Hell. Lucifer is, to Haagenti, a part of life, the biggest predator in Hell – and Haagenti won't cross him.

Princely Opinions

Most of the other Princes think that Haagenti's stupid – and in comparison with them, in terms of planning and forethought, he often is. However, he has the sharp cunning of hunger, and is capable of a degree of common sense which the elegant schemes of more intelligent Princes may overlook. He is swayed between the War bloc, who promise him the chance of more food and destruction, and the Shal-Mari bloc, who point out that keeping humans alive sustains his Word. If Kobal *bothers* to take a hand, then Haagenti will usually side with his brother – but otherwise, he's more of a swing vote, apparently guided by his stomach. And, as a swing vote, he is courted even by those who disdain him.

Andrealphus: A rabid newcomer, with a surprising amount of raw, unrefined force. I appreciate Kobal's use of him as "muscle," but if he attempts to expand any further at the expense of *my* Word, he will have cause to regret it. (*Lust, hunger, yearning: he's part of what I am, however pretty he tries to make it. That endless famine. Can't help feeling some fellowship to a Prince who falls under my Word, even if I'm not pretty enough to suit his tastes. Someday we're going to renegotiate that relationship, though – with me on top.*)

Call me old-fashioned, but my firm belief is that a person should not eat any kind of gonad without an extremely good medical reason.

– Dave Barry

Asmodeus: Excessive and unintelligent. Not necessarily faults in themselves, but he listens to *Kobal*. To be watched like all that Prince's other tools. (*Rules, rules, rules! All this talk about rules gives me indigestion! Can't he ever leave well enough alone? I can't be truly hungry if I'm thinking about the rules – and I don't like his attitude toward me and Kobal. He'd better be careful. Or else.*)

Baal: Like all powerful fools, effective if pointed in the right direction. He and his Servitors are useful fighters. He may satisfy his hungers on angels as much as he likes. (*So we're at war, people still gotta eat! Let Baal do the planning, just make sure I get fed!*)

GLUTTONY VERSUS THE GAME

Haagenti is protective of Kobal, recognizing the importance of his ally and his power-base in Shal-Mari. Somewhat by default, this sets him against Asmodeus, given the Prince of the Game's attitude toward Kobal. In the spirit that the best defense is a powerful offense, the Prince of Gluttony is sending some of his subtler Servitors – few as they are – to launch random and unexplained attacks on Game outposts. He hopes that the resulting confusion will distract Asmodeus, and maybe cause him to suspect some great ongoing scheme. Certainly nobody would think that the stupid, brutish Haagenti was behind it . . .

Beleth: He is a nightmare to many, which makes him useful. His own fears are primitive enough – what has risen may also fall, and the devourer may be devoured. Simplistic and uninteresting. *(I once dreamed I got so hungry I started gnawing on my own leg. Then I woke up and TRIED it. Ha! Some nightmare! I taste goooood!)*

Belial: Foolish little upstart, pretender who claims to be the equivalent of the First-Fallen, protected by Kobal for some typically lunatic reason. He was my Servitor once, and he will be again. He steals from me by devouring – everything must burn. *(Fire's hungry, like me. But there's not enough room for both of us. And he was Superior once, dared to give me orders . . . he'll pay for that.)*

Kobal: Dear, dear brother Haagenti . . . our brother princes laugh at you, and at me for supporting you. I've worked for centuries to set up this punchline, but it won't be much longer. *(The only other reason to open my mouth, apart from eating, is to laugh at Kobal's jokes. Once he made me laugh so hard that French fries came out my nose. Mmmm, French fries. Maybe with chili and cheese and sour cream and [trails off into indistinct gurgling noises].)*

Kronos: A fool who is useful in dragging others down to meet their fates, if he does not eat them first, and who pursues appetite to the exclusion of everything else. I am glad that Kobal enjoys his company. *(Kronos? Fate? I don't care! I'm fated to suck down that pile of sausages right behind you! Either put on some mustard or get the Hell out of my way!)*

Lilith: He's hungry enough to have plenty of Needs. However, he's developing, and growing more intelligent – I'm not sure how many of the other Princes have

realized that yet. Potential, oh, definitely. *(I wanted a ham sandwich, and she gave me one! With a whole pig! It was great!)*

Malphas: His pitiful lack of intelligence prevents him from seeing all the sensible, practical reasons why he should leave Kobal behind and strike out on his own. I'm working on it. *(He thinks he can try and split me and Kobal up. He'll find out he's wrong. Sometimes a Shedite is a Demon Prince, and sometimes he's just an appetizer.)*

Nybbas: He gets people in the right mood for buying what I'm selling: excess. They don't call them consumers for nothing! The little furball makes them swallow anything and come back for more. That's the kind of viewers I want. And he's so cute, I'm thinking of licensing his image for plush toys. *(Yeab! He's helping me get the message out to all those people – eat eat eat! He's got an eye and a mouth in every house, and I want them all talking Gluttony.)*

Saminga: Eating people kills them. But making them eat keeps them alive. The first is better than the second; he needs to work on his priorities. *(He hates the others as much as I do! He laughs loud and loves his work! And he makes lots of meat.)*

Valefor: The difference between us is that he takes things in order to consume them, but I take them for the sake of the theft – oh, and let's not forget the style question. Still, at least he has a sense of humor. *(He's a Calabite too, but he's not hungry enough. No threat to me, though – you can't steal things once they've been eaten!)*



TAKING PRECAUTIONS

Haagenti is intelligent enough to realize that if Kobal should ever turn against him, Lilith would make a convenient ally on a “cash down” basis. Her main virtue, in Haagenti's eyes, is that she wouldn't try to subjugate him as all the other Princes would. With this in mind, he's keeping on reasonable terms with Lilith and making sure his Servitors pay their debts to her. So far, no other Superior has seen more in this than “the Shal-Mari Princes sticking together . . .” If Haagenti were forced to ally himself with Lilith, one of his first goals would be to get enough resources to pay her off – which would probably involve defeating another Prince, or an Archangel.



Vapula: A valuable case study in evolution and potential. I look forward with interest to continuing my observations, and possibly adjusting the line of development. Wonderful proof that the strong demonstrate their ability! I need more experimental subjects like this. *(Some of his gadgets are cool! Flash-fried angel, mmmmm . . .)*

Archangelic Opinions

Blandine: Dreaming of what one hopes for is one thing, but dreams of nothing *but* hunger are wrong. He limits all the humans he touches. While not the most openly corrupting, he must be prevented from expanding further. *(Fluffy. Useful. People dream of stuff they want, they dream of eating more. My kind of Archangel.)*

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

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

Eli: This is wasted *potential*, man. He could have been so much – look at how far he's come – and it goes *nowhere*. Imagine that sort of energy harnessed where it could do some good. As it is, he doesn't create. He's just walking entropy, and I won't stand for that. *(He makes stuff; I eat it. It's the perfect relationship! Besides, the way he's acting, he has to be heading our way – can't wait to have him down here!)*

Gabriel: He is cruel without knowing it, without realizing it. He takes bread from the mouths of the starving and gives it to those who have no need of it. Either he must learn better, or he must burn – there is no middle way. *(She hates Belial, which makes her okay with me. If only her idiots would stop frying my people – mmm, frying – we could get something going! She's the fire that cooks my food, or something like that. I leave the philosophy to Kobal.)*

Janus: I'm into change, not consumption – someone needs to teach Haagenti the difference between the two. Then again, he and his Servitors are so obsessive that you can steal the shirts off their backs, as long as you don't take their food. But that's hardly a challenge . . . *(Slides between the teeth. Not filling. Not bothersome. Kind of a waste of time – except when his people smash stuff! Yeah! Now that's good.)*

Jean: Need I remind you that gluttony is traditionally one of the deadly sins? A danger to humanity, “inspiring” them to wastefulness, excesses, and indulgence. To be extirpated wherever encountered – prevention is better than cure. *(Those Lightning things blow up real good! He's one of the old-fashioned types – doesn't want humanity enjoying themselves. Give them what they want, I say! Give them more! More!)*

CONVENIENT TOOLS

Servitors of Janus occasionally find Gluttons extremely useful as unwitting agents of change. Forcing a target to confront the logical outcome of his behavior in the form of a Servitor of Haagenti, or simply leading a Glutton into the target's possessions and standing well back, can be effective tools. This only works with fairly stupid demons of Gluttony – but fortunately there's no shortage of those yet. The demons themselves have a particular hatred for the Servitors of the Wind who so easily run rings around them – although no Glutton will *want* to admit that he was manipulated.

Jordi: I understand hunger. All nature lives through hunger. But only the more foolish animals eat more than they need and foul their nests. He will drive himself to extinction when there is nothing left. *(So many animals, so many tastes! Pity some got wiped out – but people have to eat!)*

Laurence: 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. *(Annoying. Gets in my way. Stops people eating. Spiky, too. Someone should sort him out – what do we have an army for, anyhow?)*

Marc: Unfortunately, he doesn't understand the principle of paying for what he eats, moderation in consumption, or *anything* useful. Sometimes I wonder if he has a brain at all inside that tiny head. Still, his demons are very easy to bribe when one wants a little work on the side . . . *(He's Supply, I'm Demand! Yeab, this is the sort of Archangel I can handle. Makes nice, pays up when I ask. Free Trade! No tariffs! Export it all, bring it all to me!)*

Michael: The mindless gluttony that drives good soldiers to sack and loot. A Prince who 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. *(Too big a mouthful, so far. Give me time. Only hunger lasts forever.)*

Novalis: Poor lost child – so hungry, so lonely, so convinced that the only way he can ever be satisfied is by consuming the rest of the world. He's as dangerous as any hungry animal, but he's not as truly *evil* as some of the others. Humans can be taught better – perhaps he can, too, in time. *(Plants are good to eat too! And they grow back and you can eat them again. She's not a bother, and her people are all wimps. But Kobal says she's dangerous – and I listen to my brother.)*

Yves: Gluttony is a deep-buried root that can lead many toward their fates. However, the Prince has not yet reached his own – it is darker than he would ever guess. *(Philosophy is paper. I'd rather have food and leave the words to Kobal.)*

Humans and Others

Ethereals: Taste interesting. Okay as long as they don't stop people eating.

Humanity: Mmm. Humans taste nice. Souls taste even better. And the hungrier they are, the more powerful I get. Then I get to eat their souls. It's a JOKE like Kobal's!

Soldiers of God: They don't *taste* any different . . .

Hellsworn: They're useful because they're hungry, just like me. I like that. And they're useful to my Servitors. But in the end, they're food like everyone else.

Sorcerers: If they bother my Servitors, then we eat them. If they pay us well, we take the pay and **then** we eat them. Spicy!

GLUTTONY AND RELIGION

Often, when one thinks of festivals like Thanksgiving, Christmas, or Easter, the mind automatically jumps to turkeys, expensive presents, and chocolate eggs. Even secular holidays, like Halloween, are filled with consumption – and it's *cute* to see little kids eating themselves sick on candy! This, of course, is the work of Haagenti, who has very successfully promoted the idea of consumption as celebration.

Laurence and Dominic hate this; they value Catholicism as a belief, not just as a set of days for overeating. Weddings should focus attention on ritual and vows, not on whose daddy can spend the most.

Haagenti's *first* motive isn't to debase religion or cheapen its sacred holy days – for Christianity or any other faith – but it's such a fertile field for his Word, and it's *funny* to turn holy days into gluttonous feasts! Not only does his Word expand, but he also has the satisfaction of outraging the powers of Heaven (who, he knows, would all like to halt the flow of food to his maw) while pleasing Lord Lucifer and his fellow Princes.

*Nobody ever went broke
underestimating the tastes of the
American people.*

– attributed H. L. Mencken

VARIATIONS ON A THEME

Haagenti can be viewed in a number of ways, depending on the type of campaign and the GM's personal view of him.

Comic Relief

Haagenti (or Haagen-Dazs, as other demons call him in mockery) is just a big fat demon who likes to eat. He may always be shoveling food down – that doesn't change – but he won't be actively *evil*, just self-indulgent. The same may go for his demons, who will be looking for a good time on Earth rather than deliberately trying to corrupt humans. The Prince of Gluttony and his Servitors will be easily distracted ("Hey, is that a truckload of mozzarella?") or bribed, and might even be quite redeemable, if approached with a plateful of food in one hand. Even in Hell, his demons pride themselves on being good chefs, taking care to give the damned souls value for their Essence.

Dark Haagenti

This version of the Prince of Gluttony is only truly happy if the food he's eating has been taken away from someone else. Better still if the other person needed it to survive. The perfect sauce to food is watching people starving while you eat. This Haagenti is no longer satisfied with "plain" food, or "ordinary" hunger – he demands delicacies to tickle his palate, and that humans be goaded into acts of Gluttony that harm others. He works closely with Kobal, combining the latter's malicious intelligence with his own native cunning, and the two of them cause country-wide famines and disasters. His Servitors promote cannibalism, anorexia, bulimia, the hunting of endangered species, and every sort of Gluttony that harms both the consumer and those around him.

Haagenti – The Female Version

Haagenti doesn't often appear in female form – after all, any mouth can be used for swilling down food, whatever the gender of the body. However, when she does, she

is typically attractive, made up and clothed in *haute couture* fashions. Unfortunately, she doesn't put them together in any way that demonstrates taste or style – what matters is the *expense*. Her beautiful face and body are also spoiled by her lack of manners, as she crams food into her mouth or slouches around the room. She often grows bored by her current clothes or jewelry halfway through a meeting, and will insist on new ones, throwing the old ones out of the window or destroying them.

In terms of pure manners or intelligence, there's very little difference. Haagenti remains a boor and a comparative idiot, interested primarily in Gluttony and consumption. She adores crashing expensive cars (naturally, she can walk away intact) or visiting cake shops and devouring their entire stock. The Princess of Gluttony tends to have refined tastes in food and other indulgences, but still gobbles down the gourmet treats in huge mouthfuls, and then demands seconds. She is, if anything, *more* willful and demanding in female form than in male form – and most of her Servitors would agree that that's difficult to accomplish.

FANCIES AND RUMORS

The Apple

How could a mere demonling possibly have risen to become a Prince? Some whisper that Kobal somehow obtained an apple from the Tree in Eden, and gave Haagenti a slice of it to eat. This gave Haagenti the strength to become a Prince, and also made his hunger truly ceaseless. Indeed, they say, the only food that could ever truly satisfy the Prince of Gluttony now is another apple from Eden. What Kobal did with the remainder of the apple is another subject for speculation . . .

I Left My Heart in Sheol

Some rumors have it that Belial didn't hand Haagenti over to Kobal as a Servitor as blindly as most people think. Apparently, during the transfer, Belial kept the shattered fragments of Haagenti's *old* Heart, and still has them somewhere in his possession. He might be able to make some weapon out of them to harm the Prince of Gluttony, if driven to it, or use them to track him – nobody knows for certain. Haagenti would be a great deal more comfortable if he were absolutely certain that Belial didn't have any such thing. Belial says nothing either way.



WHERE TO EAT

The restaurants run by Gluttons range from tiny coffee bars and fast-food joints to major cafes and expensive diners. Some desperately try to attract customers, sending minions into the street to accost passers-by, and even dragging damned souls or lesser demons in by force. Others are so exclusive that they can afford to turn away all those without Distinctions – and insist (where they can) that their customers dress and behave formally.

It's not uncommon to see restaurants publicly disparaging each other. Though the high-quality ones don't stoop to it, lesser diners often have signs in the

window declaring "*Don't Eat At Andreotti's, He Overboils His Spaghetti.*"

Inside any eating establishment, the servers and waiters have the lowest rank, and are expected to pander to the whims of guests. They're demonlings, newly-created demons, or – very occasionally, and only in cheap establishments – damned souls. Slightly higher-ranked are the bouncers and the kitchen menials, who have some status for their skills. These are usually full demons. Master cooks and restaurant owners have the highest position, and rule their businesses with a rod of iron.

FOOD, GLORIOUS FOOD

While Haagenti's restaurants and food chains are spread throughout Shal-Mari, they cluster particularly thick in some areas, outnumbering the brothels and cinemas. The air there is cloyed with the aroma of food, and the clashing scents can offend even indiscriminating diners. Classical Roman stuffed dormice (a nostalgic favorite of Haagenti's) are hawked next to American ice creams, and Russian potato soup is sold next to a booth specializing in health food wheatgerm drinks. Donut stands pack the streets, and snack-sellers wander with trays of goodies. Recipes from all eras of humanity are on sale, and many of the demons of Gluttony will praise the humans who *invented* them. (Sadly, this doesn't carry over to the damned souls present.)

Where the Prince Eats

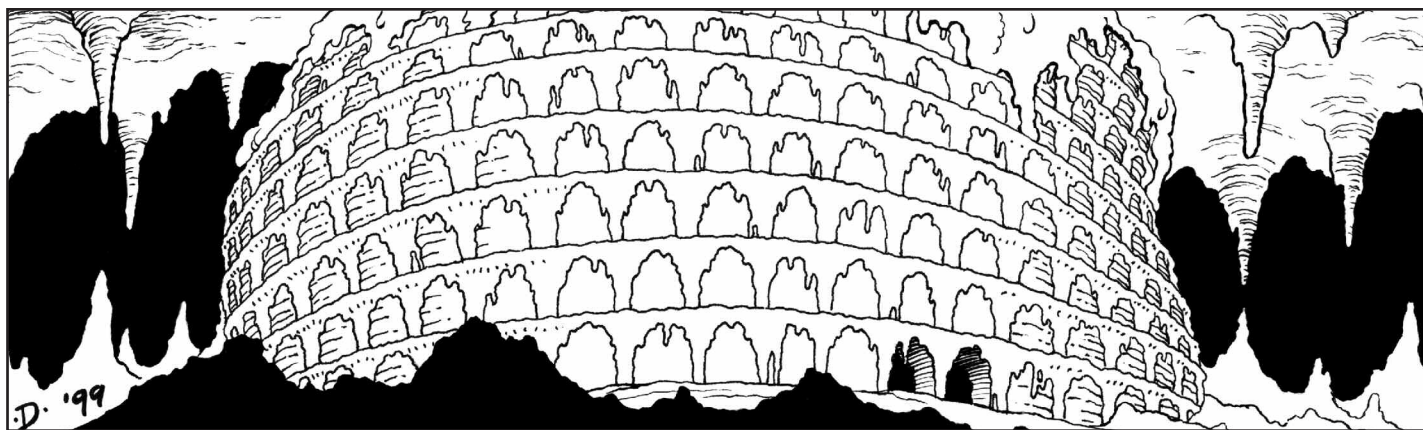
Haagenti doesn't have a regular Palace or home. Instead, he moves around the Principality, making a temporary headquarters of whatever restaurant currently suits his tastes. His titled Servitors and court gather around him, taking over nearby buildings and usually occupying the entire street. The owners of the restaurant may have the Prince's temporary favor, and be in an unparalleled position to rub shoulders with powerful demons – but they will also be working like slaves to *feed* Haagenti. The Prince sits himself in the main dining room, next to the kitchens, and there will always be a stream of minions carrying in new dishes. His honor guard, courtiers, and so forth have to order out for food – Haagenti doesn't share.

Nearby restaurants which are not taken over by powerful Servitors of Gluttony try to keep operating, hopefully

to profit from all the high-ranking demons in the neighborhood. The ones which *are* occupied can only hope that they may get some benefits out of it – usually they're expected to make do with "the honor of having served the Prince." While this is useful for reputation, it doesn't put Essence in the pocket. Low-grade minions are recruited from all the nearby restaurants (sucking away their regular staff) to run errands, perform administrative duties, act as guards, and so on. Regular deliveries or visitors are blocked by all the Court traffic which fills the street. Basically, to have Haagenti descend on a restaurant is as much to be feared as hoped for.

Tether-outlets are sited in the back rooms of particular restaurants and diners and guarded by the staff of that establishment. Owners of such buildings are extremely proud to host a Tether-locus – it's a sign of power and status, and it means an increased flow of potential customers. Having to support it, and provide help if it's attacked, is usually considered worth the effort. However, if an establishment's Tether is demolished on Earth, then the restaurant itself is likely to lose custom fast as the link becomes inactive.





The Grand Recipe Repository

Nobody ever accused Haagenti of being subtle. When Kobal suggested that it might be a good idea to keep formal records of his cooks' best work, the Prince of Gluttony threw himself into the project, and even provided designs for the architects. This has resulted in one of the notable landmarks of Shal-Mari, and has been known to make Impudites who pride themselves on their taste recoil and demand blindfolds. The entire building looks like a sagging, neon, 15-level bridal cake – and that's *after* the builders managed to tone it down. (Kobal loves eating at cafés nearby, especially if his fellow diners dislike ostentation.)

Commonly known as “The Suppository,” the building is run by Gluttons who've had some training in filing. This means that recipes *are* usually findable – they're indexed by name, creator, main ingredients, and main techniques used. Entry is supposed to be on payment of

1 Essence to the guards (a quartet of Djinn), but generally the guards take a bit for themselves on the side. Records of Distinctions and other rewards given by Haagenti are filed in among the recipes, and it's rumored that secret or treasonable information is stored somewhere in the building.

These rumors are true, and in fact the entire building *is* controlled by Haagenti's own intelligence corps, the Fangs (p. 62). These Servitors are extremely intelligent (it's mandatory for recruitment) and keep their identity secret – any demons brought in for questioning come via tunnels beneath Shal-Mari. The Fangs take care that other demons working at the Repository are unimaginative, and won't try exploring too deeply, or investigating where they shouldn't. (And if they do – well, there's a lot to be said for char-grilled Haagentian, over a slow flame, with marinade.)

The Heartroom Vault

Haagenti keeps the Hearts of *all* his Servitors in one enormous vault beneath Shal-Mari. It's reputed to lie beneath one of his favorite restaurants (he has several), but the labyrinth of passages leading down to it has, so far, prevented anyone from being certain which. (The Calabim and Djinn guarding those passages don't encourage loitering around and making maps, either.) The Hearts themselves are jumbled together in drifts, making it extremely difficult for a Servitor to locate his own Heart unless he materializes next to it from Earth. The vault itself has only one exit, guarded by a huge Knight of Banquets, who is capable of swallowing 9-Force demons whole. As security systems go, it seems to work.

MY VERY OWN KITCHEN!

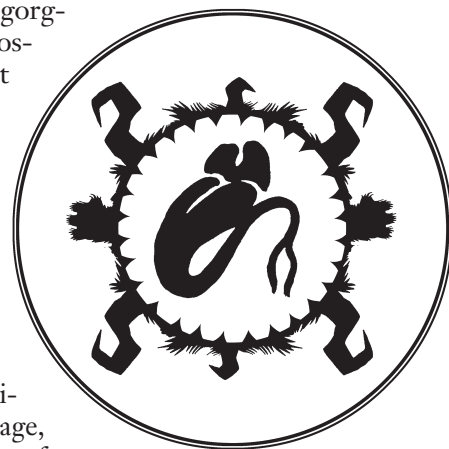
Servitors of Gluttony aren't interested in private bedrooms, libraries, or even torture chambers (though Calabim will stretch a point for rooms full of expensive breakables). No, what many Haagentians want is their very own *kitchen*, for experimenting and savoring the results. While not every Glutton follows the route of expert cookery to fame and fortune, it *is* an established way to attract attention and gain power. A demon who can come up with a new taste is on the fast track to success – assuming someone else doesn't steal it first. This means that a private kitchen is vital for quiet work. Many Gluttons have their own human “tasters,” chosen for their fine sense of taste, who keep the kitchen clean and tidy as well as admiring their master's work. (Honesty is all very well, but no Haagentian likes to hear his cooking is bad.)

WORD-BOUND SERVITORS

Famous Word-Bound demons of Gluttony include Eurynomos, Calabite holder of the Word of Cannibalism, and the Habbalite Karne, Demon of Fast Food. Other demonic Words falling under Gluttony include Binges, Factory Farming, Sugar, Conspicuous Consumption, and Dieting.

ity. After all, they're encouraging the poor humans to express their natural urges and enjoy them. What could be more natural than releasing one's tensions in an eating or buying spree? What could be more *pleasant* than to wolf down the last cream donut and enjoy the delicious taste? To a Glutton, gorging is the greatest possible experience that anyone can enjoy, whether celestial or human.

Of course, more intelligent Servitors of Gluttony realize that this comes with *consequences*. Humans simply cannot keep on consuming forever – they're handicapped by metabolism, age, and finances. Still, it's a case of eat or be eaten. Humans (and even other demons) who can't stand the pace and succumb to pressure are food rather than fellow eaters, and food can't hope for anything other than to be eaten. In the moment that a human keels over from a cholesterol-induced heart attack and ends up in Shal-Mari, he makes a decisive transition from fellow-glutton to table delicacy.



THE EATERS AND THE EATING: SERVITORS OF GLUTTONY

HAAGENTIANS, GLUTTONS, GOBBLERS

Other celestials view Servitors of Gluttony as demons obsessed by their own hunger, willing to do anything for a bite to eat, moronic thugs or degenerate faddists. And this is true – they *are* constantly busy with hunger, either their own or that of other people. Unfortunately for the angels, the Haagentian who spends his time encouraging other people into Gluttony is just as common as the Gobbler focused on his own belly.

Haagentians are motivated, both by their dissonance conditions and by their Prince's wish, to increase the influence of Gluttony in the world around them. They may be many things, but remarkably few of them are *unenthusiastic*. Even a Djinn of Gluttony, uncaring and sullen as he may be, knows the gnawing of hunger, and wants to share it. Many Servitors of Haagenti view themselves as *friends* to human-



SERVING GLUTTONY

Servitors of Haagenti close to their Prince will be overtaken by the aura of hunger that his Word enforces on the world around him. Of course, it's an extremely bad idea to try to take his food – which results in Gluttons near their Prince having to exercise extreme self-control, unless they're permitted to eat. (Haagenti often finds that his meals are spiced by the desperate hunger of nearby Servitors – so that permission isn't common, and in fact demonstrates significant favor from the Prince.)



Demons of Gluttony don't necessarily *love* their Prince, but they respect his power and the magnitude of his famine. He's also a symbol to them (and to many other demons across Hell) that the lowliest demonling can rise to Princedom, thus encouraging their own ambitions. Gluttons often feel that this means Haagenti is more sympathetic to his Servitors, given that he was once humble himself. This isn't the case – the Prince of Gluttony will eat them if they fail in a mission just as readily as any other Prince would kill a Servitor.

Haagenti's not interested in complicated organizations or excuses based on technicalities. His Servitors should do what he wants, when he wants it, and cooperate with the demons of his brother Kobal. Or get eaten. As long as they follow those rules, they can organize themselves as they like. As long as his food gets to him on time, he's happy. (Many Servitors of Gluttony have said private prayers of thanks to Lucifer that Kobal has never yet introduced Haagenti to concepts of modern business management . . .)

ORGANIZATION

Among Servitors of Gluttony, when left alone, chains of organization range from the dictatorial to the anarchic. The most powerful Glutton squats at the top of the local power ranking, and his juniors do what he says – or get eaten. Servitors of roughly equal rank and power squabble for position, but mostly cooperate, unless they have different plans for the same target . . . or there's a food shortage. However, there's remarkably little back-biting or treachery between fellow Haagentians in an area, *unless* several of them are struggling to influence the same thing. In that case, either the strongest wins out, or a more powerful Servitor will preempt the whole matter by taking over the situation himself. (This is a time-honored tradition, as is the sequel of the Haagentians blaming each other for this result.)

The fact that all Gluttons grow dissonant from failing to make humans Consume results in a certain level of fellow-feeling, and a readiness for Haagentians to cooperate. This is *not* necessarily out of any affection for each other (though this can exist!) but from the understanding that they are all served by an increased level of Gluttony in the world. Of course, this won't stop many Haagentians from expecting some sort of bribe or favor in return for their assistance – they *are* demons, after all.

This picture changes if the Gluttons are working with demons of Kobal – which often happens, as Haagenti frequently orders his Servitors to report to Kobalites. In that case, the Gluttons must work with the demons of Dark Humor, which may involve radical restructuring. More tolerant Kobalites let the Haagentians behave as they normally would, only insisting on reports or obedience when strictly necessary, and even sharing the odd binge with them. The Servitors of Gluttony appreciate this, and will cooperate more readily this way – after all, their own Prince does the same thing. Matters are also smoother if the demons of Dark Humor are working on schemes that utilize or advance Gluttony in some way. However, other Kobalites have insisted that the Gluttons adhere strictly to their own particular concepts of organization (which can vary wildly according to the Kobalite in question). If the Servitor of Dark Humor in question is much more powerful, then the Haagentian will obey, but if they are roughly equal in power – well, accidents can happen . . .



HUMAN FLESH

As cannibalism is defined as devouring one's *own* species, it's quite clear that a Haagentian eating roast human flesh (or "long pig," as it's been called) is not a cannibal. Merely a carnivore with particular tastes. (Eating other demons is quite a different matter, and done very discreetly, behind closed doors, given the possible objections from other Princes.) However, a human with a taste for human flesh is a cannibal – and much appreciated by Gluttons, who value someone who'll disregard morality in search of taste.

Servitors of Gluttony like to encourage cannibalism, where they can get away with it, and are particu-

larly fond of opening little restaurants or butchers' shops which serve human-based dishes. This both provides a haven for local gourmets, and allows the Gluttons to spread the taste for human flesh to a wider audience. There's even a particular recipe file shared among Haagentians, named *How To Serve Man* by those who know about it, containing a wide selection of appropriate dishes. The most famous is *Grandmother in Glazed Chocolate Sauce* – though please take care to avoid bony old women, as they cause splinters between the teeth.

Humans

Every human in the world should be eating. The image of a thousand million little jaws chomping away is the sort of thing that brings joy to the hearts of Gluttons. After all, the Word of Gluttony depends on deliberate, self-gratifying consumption – animals *can* strengthen it, but humans do so *so* much better.

Many Haagentians even feel a certain link toward gluttonous humans – the poor apes aren't as good as demons, of course, but at least they've got their hearts in the right place. Any human who's prepared to indulge himself has shown that he's got the proper spirit to rise to greatness. He may be a menial, petty, and inconsequential tool, but it's the thought that counts.

However, Gluttons look on humans as useful servants as well as kindred spirits. They make very efficient deep-cover agents – it's hard to stay completely inconspicuous when a demon has to use *Consume* every day. They also make useful thugs and bully-boys. However, and in the modern day this is becoming more and more important, humans are incredibly effective at persuading other humans of the virtues of over-consumption. Whether a human pawn is an active minions of demons of Gluttony, an unwitting pawn, or simply acting from his own convictions and for his own motives, he can provide wonderful propaganda support for the Word. This can range from articles in magazines about how it does more good to binge than to restrain yourself, to scientific *proofs* about the perils of abstinence, by way of simple advertising.

Methods of attracting human minions vary. Hellsworn are often recruited by being persuaded or dragged to a Tether of Gluttony and forced to gorge themselves till they die or develop an extra Force. However, this usual-

ly only serves to recruit thugs and bodyguards, unless the demonic recruiters happen to be particularly fortunate. More educated or skilled Soldiers must be recruited deliberately – this usually only happens if they're needed for a particular scheme that some Servitor has in mind. In that case, the proto-Soldier is tempted into the path of Gluttony rather than force-fed into its service. Haagentians often target the families of such possible minions – the family that indulges together is less likely to have its members reproach each other and will reinforce gluttonous habits. Any Servitor of Haagenti who has the wit to try recruiting an intelligent Soldier will probably also have the wit to do it subtly.

The trouble with eating Italian food is that five or six days later you're hungry again.

Simple minions are far easier to collect. These humans may or may not be aware of the War, but aren't Soldiers – either they don't have the potential, or their demonic masters prefer them as they are. They can serve any purpose, from low-grade muscle to high-grade propaganda. They're usually attracted by cheap offers of their favorite indulgence, or by threats and blackmail. Those humans who aren't aware of the War make some of the best agents, as they can act sincerely and honestly when they innocently promote the cause of Gluttony. ("It's cruel to refuse to give your child the chocolate he's asking for! Why not make him happy? To refuse things that he wants may create psychological problems in later life . . .")

GLUTTON, n. *A person who escapes the evils of moderation by committing dyspepsia.*

– Ambrose Bierce,
The Devil's Dictionary

As long as they follow the Haagentians' orders and keep up consumption (to prove their dedication to the Word if they're conscious agents of Gluttony), human agents aren't generally mistreated. They may even get to share in the food, drugs, and destruction which the demons are enjoying, and be fellow-partiers. Though, admittedly, less important fellow-partiers. Only a few Gluttons actually find that destroying humans is *their* preferred form of self-indulgence – and a sufficiently valuable agent can usually escape that. On the other hand, if a human working for Gluttony fails in a mission, or doesn't demonstrate enough appetite, then he becomes food rather than consumer. Such humans are lucky if they get traded off to other demonic Words; they're more likely to be used up on suicide missions or served up as a delicious human *plat du jour*.

Rewards and Punishments

Minor signs of favor or disfavor aren't that important among Gluttons – it's power which counts. However, that said, every Haagentian appreciates a reward which allows him to indulge himself – if they didn't enjoy their self-indulgence, what kind of gluttons would they be? Given this urge toward self-gratification, Servitors of Haagenti *love* material rewards. These can range from a meal at the finest restaurant in town, to whole crates of delicacies from across the world, to the title deeds of a chocolate shop – or, for more destructive Gluttons, valuable things to destroy. Minor punishments, in the same vein, can involve restricting the demon to abstinence, or removing some of his usual luxuries. And even if his mouth has been stitched shut, a demon can always use the Song of Healing to restore it – once he's allowed to.

More extensive rewards or punishments vary wildly with the Prince's mood and depend on how much attention he's paying at the time. This is usually linked to how hungry he is – wise Servitors make sure that their Prince has something to snack on while they're reporting their achievements. If Haagenti's pleased, he may pass out

rewards with a lavish hand, serving up Songs, Rites, and attunements readily to enthusiastic and successful Servitors. However, this is done on a wholly arbitrary basis, and on whatever suits his sense of humor at the time – so the Servitors had better be prepared to thank him for anything he gives them, whether they wanted it or not. Punishments are equally arbitrary, and equally vigorous, with Force-stripping being comparatively common. (“Mmm, tastes good.”)

Occasionally, a Glutton can lessen the severity of his punishment by blaming failure on the manipulations of other Princes – since Haagenti is convinced that they all despise him, this can work. It won't save a Servitor who has failed in an important mission, however – not even the most eloquent of excuses can stem Haagenti's hunger.

The Fallen

Generally, Haagenti has neither the subtlety to try to tempt angels to Fall so he can get information from them, nor the hatred to deliberately recruit from certain angelic Words. Fortunately, certain of his Servitors have this in spades. Intelligent Servitors of Gluttony look for angels who enjoy their food or those who utterly deny any interest in food whatever. Careful application of resonances or attunements can result in such celestials gorging themselves helplessly – and then being vulnerable to self-indulgence or self-disgust. However, most of the time a Haagentian would rather kill or bribe an angel than go about the careful process of leading him into Falling.

Outcasts *are* given the “hard sell” – Haagenti's opinion is that as they've already left Heaven, they may as well finish the job. He fails to understand a lack of Gluttony in other beings, and Outcasts who don't accept a position in his ranks are more likely to be a snack for him than to be traded off to other Princes.

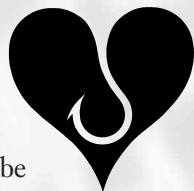
If an ex-angel is recruited successfully and shows himself to be truly gluttonous, he may well be given a high position to start with. Otherwise, he'll be placed in a menial job (whatever his recruiters promised him) until he gets into the *spirit* of things. Once in a while Haagenti gets useful information from a Fallen – and recognizes it as such – and utilizes it to plan a great new scheme. Unfortunately, he isn't always as good a planner as he believes, and ex-angels under those conditions do better to stay out of his sight if things go wrong.



FREE LILIM IN THE KITCHENS

A Free Lilim in service to Gluttony has usually been recruited by some high-level Glutton rather than by the Prince himself. Most intelligent Servitors of Haagenti see the Free Lilim as marvelous resources, with attunements and skills which can't be found inside Gluttony. Such Daughters are generally hired for specific tasks or duties, and will be treated as allied professionals by most Gluttons – and even appreciated, if they join in the parties and conspicuous consumption.

Occasionally, a Free is hired to coordinate or undertake covert operations against other Princes. This is high-risk duty, for the Gluttons will disavow the Lilim if she's caught, and Free Lilim charge a high price for such services. Haagenti personally prefers Lilim workers to be bound to his Word, and generally pays “temps” (if he must) in Songs or relics, not attunements. But he respects Lilith and wants to keep her good will; he won't cheat her Daughters or allow them to be used as purely expendable tools.



Mouths Wide Open: Trainees

The most common task for demonlings is bringing food for their masters or serving them at table. Of course, this conflicts with the in-built urges of any spawn of Gluttony – namely, to eat it himself. Any demonling worthy of the name is inspired with the ambition to grow large and powerful, so that he can have his *own* food. They're kept deliberately short of nourishment and *good* food, and made to grovel and slave for any scraps. The primary ingredient of the training process is that pupils are taught to be *hungry* – the rest comes naturally.

Older demonlings and Fallen are trained in different recipes, tastes, table manners, and etiquette, depending on the tastes of those whom they serve. While many Servitors of Haagenti just bolt their food, some prefer to eat *politely*. Most Impudites, at least, don't want to be unfashionable . . . The usual “carrot” used in this training is allowing the student to eat – failure to work properly means no food for the day. Physical punishment has its place, but for a Servitor of Gluttony, nothing is as painful as being unable to satisfy his hungers.

SPECIAL TRICKS

Domino Effect

One enjoyable trick, which the Haagentians have discovered, is triggering looting riots via careful application of the *Consume* attunement. A single Glutton can perform this if need be, but it's much easier with several seeded through a crowd. The demons trigger the attunement on people in the crowd – preferably low-willed ones – and keep on doing it till general mob hysteria breaks out. This is particularly effective on food lines, or groups of civilians under wartime rationing conditions.

Eat the Evidence

The *Devour* attunement can be very convenient in hiding evidence of wrongdoing – especially if the demon in question also has the Numinous Corpus Song of Fangs. Corpses can be disposed of, as can weapons, goods, and even bloodstained floor. This has, on occasion, been taken to dangerous lengths – one Servitor of Gluttony is reported to have devoured 20 pounds of C-4 explosive, just before a police search. (The police couldn't understand why their sniffer dog seemed so interested in him.)

Medicine

Unlikely as it may sound, a number of Haagentians have a basic grounding in anatomy and general first aid. Having to butcher, joint, gut, and debone animal or human corpses is excellent training in anatomy, while humans who have been encouraged to indulge themselves often need patching up in the morning. This results in many Gluttons developing some skills in Medicine, simply as part of their daily jobs, rather than from specific training.



HAAGENTI'S TETHERS

Tethers to Haagenti are places where the urge to consume as much as possible, as rapidly as possible, has become overpowering. They're widespread, though more common in the developed world, as it's *easier* for humans to indulge themselves there. These Tethers may be connected to restaurants, junk food factories, sugar refineries, or the grand dining rooms of the rich – anywhere consumption is glorified. Famous Tethers to Gluttony include Imelda Marcos' closet in her mansion in the Philippines; the Cathedral of Chiapa in Spain, where the women were so addicted to chocolate that they drank it during high Mass; and the smallest Tether on Earth – a single tiny room in Tokyo, barely large enough for one person to stand in. (This last was created during a bet among several gamblers, when the room was literally filled with raw tuna and one was challenged to eat his way through it.) Some of his other Tethers are detailed in the *Liber Castellorum*, pp. 96-97.

Poisoning

If food is to be poisoned, nobody is in a better position than the cook. While most of Haagenti's Servitors aren't interested in outright killing their victims – after all, the

humans stop eating at that point – a small group of Haagentians is well trained in the uses of poison. These demons serve as assassins when Haagenti, or other Gluttons, require it. They liaise closely with Servitors of Technology and Death, in order to keep up with the latest discoveries in the world of poisoning. Demons assigned to this group count it as a point of pride to create poisoned dishes good enough that the victims hunger to eat them. Poisons themselves are treated as a particular Knowledge skill, while manufacturing them under laboratory conditions requires the Chemistry skill.

Table Etiquette

Many cultures require proper table etiquette for anybody who hopes to infiltrate the upper ranks. As such, it's a skill that most Gluttons try to learn if they plan to work among important humans. It's not obligatory – but it can make life a great deal easier, and is a particularly popular skill among Balseraphs and Impudites. Even if a Haagentian doesn't know the country's capital, population, or principal exports, he'll know how to behave at the dinner table. In game terms, Servitors of Gluttony who have taken the trouble to work at their table manners will have some level of skill in Savoir-Faire.

Vomiting

A number of physically adept Servitors of Haagenti have mastered voluntary regurgitation. This allows them

SAMPLE TETHER: THE SAWNEY BEANE CAVE

This cave on the coast of Scotland, near Galloway, is unknown to the general public. It's common knowledge that the Beane family of cannibals once lived somewhere in the vicinity, but nobody knows or cares to know precisely where. However, it's perfectly well known to the Servitors of Gluttony, and is legendary among horror aficionados and historians.

In the early 17th century, Sawney Beane and his wife took up residence in this cave, and reared an incestuous family of cannibals and thieves there, preying on travelers. The tunnel leading to the cave was flooded every high tide, making it a convenient and easily concealed hiding-place. They continued their career for 25 years before a victim finally escaped them, causing King James VI himself to lead a manhunt there, with 400 soldiers and tracker

dogs. The Beane family was eventually captured and taken to Glasgow for execution.

However, the nature of their activity had established a Tether to Gluttony. Servitors of Haagenti use the place as a convenient base and hideout – the tide still floods the entrance tunnel twice daily, making it hard to locate. The Seneschal of the Tether is Erthad, a Djinn of Gluttony, who's been quite happy to lurk there for the last 200 years and dine off carefully prepared seafood. (Or, sometimes, nets still full of flopping live fish and crabs, or the occasional shipwrecked fisherman.) It's open to other demons for use and is a convenient entry-point to Scotland, but it is kept as secret as possible from angels, as its isolated and hidden nature leaves it vulnerable to open attack.



to swallow small physical objects – such as keys, phials, or even gun parts – and then expel them later at will. (In game terms, this requires a successful Agility roll, or the object is forever lost in the Glutton's digestive system.) They're also fond of combining vomiting with the Song of Thunder – disgusting, but a good visual joke. As a last defense, some demons with the *Devour* attunement have even taken to deliberately failing in its use. *After* successfully employing the attunement several times, they then purposefully let it malfunction, causing them to empty their stomachs over whoever is in front of them (p. 38). While this hurts the demon, it also damages the target, making it a last-resort weapon.

BANDS

It's easy to stereotype Servitors of Gluttony and assume they're all ravening maws with the traits of their Bands. While this is a misjudgment, liable to cause one to underestimate Haagentians, it is true that the interaction of the Word of Gluttony and the Band nature do create some regular effects. Any demon will be an individual with personal tastes and affinities, but certain regular traits *do* keep occurring . . .

Balseraphs

The Liars are so good at convincing others that Gluttony is a natural condition that they are capable of imposing it upon them as an actual Discord. Many of them believe, utterly *believe*, that everyone around them is gluttonous by nature – born that way, and certain to die that way. They don't consider that they're forcing others to feel something unnatural, but rather that they're revealing something already inherent in the nature of their victims.

Of course, not all Balseraphs of Gluttony are themselves gluttonous – personal symphonies are so useful for making sense of contradictions in their own worldviews. They tend to be either gourmands or gourmets. The gourmands devour everything nearby, stuffing themselves to the point of vomiting, and then eating some more, and consume wildly in accordance with their tastes. The gourmets, on the other hand, have very specific and particular hungers, which they indulge fully, but are often ascetic in other matters – one would hardly think that they worked for Haagenti . . .

Djinn

Uncaring as all Djinn are, these Stalkers still feel a kind of kinship – even something which might be described as affection – toward other gluttons. The ease which they have in attuning to them is due to the link between their Prince's Word and the target's own vices, but many of the Djinn find it *comforting* to know how widespread Gluttony is. Besides, what safer vice is there? The diner actually eats and destroys the desired object – absolutely no risk of care or attachment. How very sensible.

Stalkers of Haagenti may be neat or untidy, precise or sloppy, but all of them have some particular foodstuff or indulgence which they prefer. Even if they wouldn't admit it. Many of them get themselves positioned near some place that can provide it regularly, so that they don't have to *care* about trying to find it. If ordered elsewhere, they will be annoyed and generally unpleasant until they can establish a way of getting it again. Some Djinn of Gluttony are particularly perverse when it comes to being attuned to targets and consider that the only really *thorough* way of severing an attunement without affection is to *eat* the target. (The manner of cooking and serving is up to the Djinn in question.)

SAMPLE SERVITORS OF HAAGENTI

JAALA

Demon of Shopping Binges

Lilim Knight of Gluttony

Corporeal Forces - 5 Strength 9 Agility 11
 Ethereal Forces - 2 Intelligence 5 Precision 3
 Celestial Forces - 5 Will 10 Perception 10

Suggested Word-Forces: 3

Vessel: Human female/2, Charisma +1

Role: "Emily Marks," Socialite/4, Status/4.

Skills: Artistry/1 (Sketching), Detect Lies/2, Dodge/2, Driving/4, Emote/3, Fast-Talk/2, Fighting/3 (Brawling), Knowledge/2 (High Fashion), Large Weapon/2 (Club), Lying/2, Savoir-Faire/4.

Songs: Form (Corporeal/2, Celestial/3), Motion (Corporeal/3), Acid/4.

Attunements: Lilim of Gluttony, Consume, Devour, Knight of Banquets

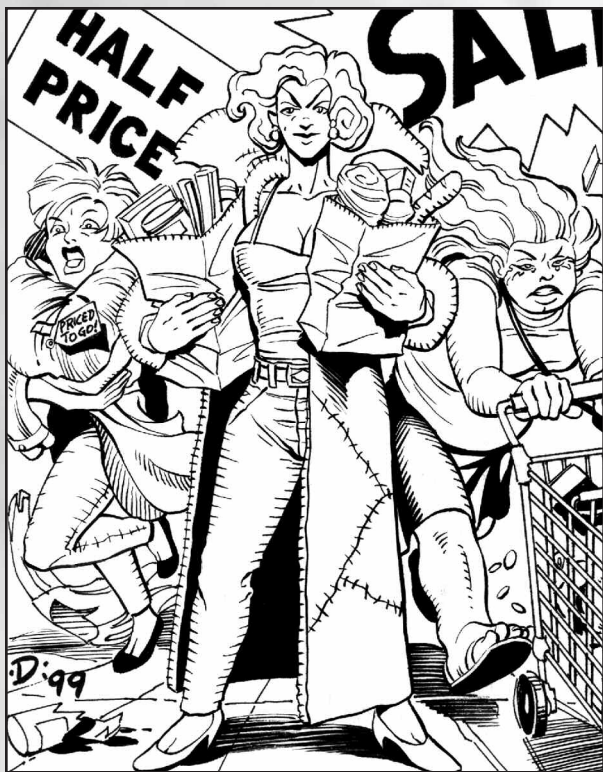
Special Rite: Persuade a companion on a shopping spree to spend at least twice as much as he had intended to (1 Essence).

Jaala is older than many humans would assume – after all, the concept of spending too much in a wild frenzy of purchasing has been around for centuries. And so has she. Of course, it's so much *easier* these days. Every time she fondles a Gold Card, she feels a tiny twinge of thanks in her heart toward Marc and all his angels. Jaala worked her way up from the ranks, and while she doesn't aspire to Princedom, she does hope for further recognition from Haagenti himself. Certainly she always has plenty on hand for him to eat when he visits . . .

The Lilim is a glutton for luxury, and admits it. She lets lesser demons fan the flame of purchasing ecstasy among the poor or middle classes, and indulges herself with the truly rich – socialites, city bankers, and so on. She poses as the sort of person who everyone in a group knows vaguely but isn't really close to. Joining in on shopping sessions – whether for clothing, jewelry, personal computers (cutting-edge, of course), or anything else expensive – she pushes the entire group into spending far more than they can afford. She then lends them money when they need it and collects Geases. It's an excellent system, and Haagenti is happy to keep her well supplied with money. She's also combat-capable, if pushed, and a dangerous hand-to-hand brawler. However, she's not the most intelligent of demons outside her field – she's risen more because of a natural talent and sympathy for indulging in luxury than from strategic planning and forethought.

Sometimes Jaala is a little short on money or Essence, or thinks that angels may be staking out her usual haunts. In such cases, she'll lower herself to work with the masses and can be found next to the housewife in a supermarket, persuading her to stock up wholesale on chocolate biscuits and brandy. She'd far rather be back among the rich, however. This is perhaps the main reason why she hasn't advanced any further than Knighthood – she's lost the taste for applying herself outside the monied upper classes. Still, she's very *good* at working with them.

(Jaala is a Word-bound demon who's ripe to be displaced by someone smarter; or who might be used by someone more intelligent. Characters could be sent to work with her, against her, or might simply blunder into one of her spending sprees.)



Continued on next page . . .

SAMPLE SERVITORS OF HAAGENTI (CONTINUED)

MARINADA

Balseraph of Gluttony

Corporeal Forces - 3 Strength 6 Agility 6
Ethereal Forces - 3 Intelligence 7 Precision 5
Celestial Forces - 3 Will 8 Perception 4

Vessel: Human female/3

Role: "Miriam Dennis," Junior Grade Teacher/3, Status/3

Skills: Computer Operation/1, Detect Lies/2, Dodge/1, Driving/1, Knowledge (Cooking/2, Local Area/1).

Songs: Healing (Corporeal/3).

Attunements: Balseraph of Gluttony, Consume

Marinada is one of those nice ladies who is a family and neighborhood fixture – it's just hard to remember precisely *who* she's related to, and how. She works as a substitute teacher, and shows up at all the local parties, bar mitzvahs, church festivals, and the like. She's always popular, since she takes care to bring such excellent food. The children in her classes love her, both for the sweets she hands out as rewards for good marks, and for her understanding attitude concerning eating in class. Her lessons on diet and behavior emphasize physical well-being through eating whatever one wants. She's so friendly, so understanding – and *such* a Balseraph.



Low-key and genuinely fond of the sweet little kiddies (she tries not to eat more than one a year), Marinada has been given the long-term mission of encouraging gluttonous habits from childhood up. The Balseraph is still young, and doesn't yet hope for major power or important postings, but is confident that in time she'll rise to the status she deserves. Her vessel is matronly, with stylishly dyed blonde hair and a gentle tone of voice. She's so confident of her innocent appearance that she usually goes unarmed, relying on her abilities and resonance

to go unsuspected. Her particular value to other local demons of Gluttony is her ability to strengthen other demons' Roles (by altering school records) and to provide local assistance – or angry mobs.

(Marinada is a balanced starting character who can be used to enhance a neighborhood.)

Calabim

Calabim of Gluttony perceive Gluttony as a method of destruction – and since they are beings of destruction, what more could they ask for? To them, everything vanishes into the entropic maw of pure hunger and is broken down. Their own Prince is an example of sublime Gluttony and devastation and gives them the Rite of following his example in consumption by destruction.

Calabim of Haagenti rarely care about their appearance, their living conditions, or *anything* except eating or wrecking whatever's around them. The world wasn't made to be cared for or cooperated with – the world and everything in it is there to be used till it breaks! Party on! Food is for eating, furniture is for smashing in interesting ways, and everyone around them is either a fellow in destruction or a target to be destroyed. However, these Calabim are rarely deliberately *cruel* or purposefully cor-

rupting. They're merely following their own symphonies of gluttony and entropy, and Heaven help anything that gets in their way.

Habbalah

Habbalah of Gluttony view the satisfaction of hunger as a *reward*, which should only be allotted to the few who are truly virtuous. For proof, they point to their ability to excite and maintain hunger in others as punishment for their sins. Very few Habbalah view gluttony as a positive virtue in others. They are divided between those who claim that it is a sin to be tormented and those who hold that the worthy may do whatever they want – including indulgence in "vices." The first group are ascetic themselves, refraining from personal gluttony, while the second group happily indulge their tastes – after all, *they* are worthy.

“Can you tell all that from smell?” I asked.

“Trolls can smell rainbows, trolls can smell the stars,” it whispered sadly. “Trolls can smell the dreams you dreamed before you were ever born. Come close to me and I’ll eat your life.”

– Neil Gaiman

In either case, Habbalah are eager to maintain Gluttony in those around them, either as test or as torture. Some Punishers enjoy organizing and supervising orgies of devouring, with everyone around them helplessly gorging themselves on food, while the Habbalite himself is the only person not eating. Another might prefer to join in the party, knowing in his heart of hearts that he’s the only one present who *deserves* to enjoy himself. In any case, the Punishers generally despise the gluttonous around them – which can include their fellow-Servitors, their Prince, and often themselves, if they are the ascetic type. Such Habbalah are self-hating and take it out on everyone else.

Lilim

Lilim who serve Gluttony consider themselves *artists* as well as providers. After all, their skill – or rather, some might say, their link to their Prince’s Word – allows them to create meals so splendid that no diner can refuse them or refuse the Lilim a favor afterward. As they point out, they don’t sell their bodies (or not too often), they don’t *kill* people (or not very often) . . . instead they provide works of art and beauty.

This results in a group of Lilim who find it extremely easy to consider themselves “ethical” and have large groups of friends (their regular diners). A Tempter of Haagenti is often all the more selfish because she can comfortably believe that she’s a nice person. And she is – unless someone refuses her. If that happens, she will blandly and cheerfully take any measures necessary to get that person out of the way. Everyone else likes her, after all, so clearly it’s *their* fault . . .

Shedim

Shedim who serve Gluttony view this sin as the perfect corruption, and one which they can indulge in through any host. To them, a gluttonous human is a *happy* human – at least, while the human is indulging himself – and one who is truthfully expressing a part of his nature. After all, humans are hungry – it’s a part of life. Leading them to increasingly indulge that hunger is easy, instinctive, and results in corrupted, amoral hosts who’ll do anything to keep up their schedule of indulgence. This understanding of “natural vices” makes them particularly skilled at turning a host’s gluttony against him in order to further creep into his soul.

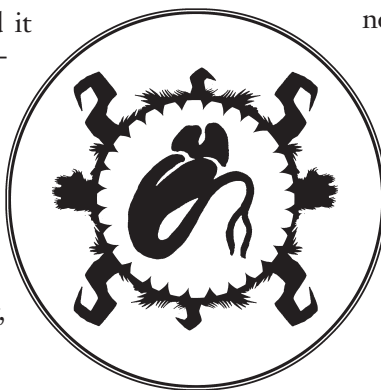
Of course, Shedim do get *jaded*. Many of them react to this by developing cooking skills, or persuading their hosts to do so, in order to fully explore the capacities of taste. Such Shedim become gourmets and often have particular preferences which they will enjoy experiencing from the viewpoints of different hosts, in order to fully capture every intricacy of flavor. Others follow the binge-and-starve cycle, keeping themselves in check by allowing themselves wild orgies of consumption every once in a while.

Impudites

Impudites of Haagenti are frequently arrogant, proud demons. Certainly they enjoy humanity as much as the rest of their Band and wouldn’t want to *waste* them by killing them. However, their ability to rip Essence from their victims without charming them often makes the Takers see the whole concept of charm as unnecessary. Humans should adore and worship them by right – the Impudites shouldn’t have to waste their time with pleasantries.

Of course, this doesn’t stop the Impudites of Gluttony from wanting to look handsome, fashionable, and elegant – it simply means that many of them don’t bother to do more than that. Their ability to charm others is

viewed as a weapon rather than a neutral tool and is used as such. The amount of Symphonic noise caused by their draining of others often makes these Takers prone to rapidly moving around or finding some way of concealing it (such as working at a Tether). If they do deign to charm a victim in order to avoid this disturbance, then rest assured it’s purely mercenary – it’s not because they feel like sparing the victim hunger.



JOBS

Celestial Jobs

In Shal-Mari, the most important job is coaxing the Essence out of the damned souls – and preferably before any other Prince, even an allied one, can get his hands on it. This means that the main job for most Servitors of Gluttony in Hell is to work in restaurants, diners, hot-dog stands, and any sort of food provision that'll bring in Essence. Some of the more refined or intelligent Servitors provide different establishments, where damned souls and demons can buy – or destroy – luxuries. Some surprisingly creative Haagentians have found haven there, producing objects that excite possessive urges in the hearts of every onlooker. (Both Asmodeans and the Fangs (p. 62) keep a careful eye on such demons, fearing possible leanings toward redemption.)

Outside the food-shops, there are other positions open to Gluttons. Some serve in Kobalite establishments, usually as bouncers or muscle, given the cooperation between the Princes. Others, often Djinn and Shedim, staff the Recipe Repository (p. 50), keeping the records under control. A whole subsection of Haagentians have made a career out of acting as property-movers to the most important Gluttons; after all, every time Haagenti moves, his entire Court has to move with him . . . and someone has to carry their belongings. Finally, the border guard around Shal-Mari contains a large percentage of Servitors of Gluttony. Such demons may be of any Band, but always have some damned servants or demonlings nearby to keep them supplied with snacks.

Ethereal Jobs

Generally speaking, Haagenti doesn't often have the interest or patience for complicated ethereal operations. However, when it's put to him in easy-to-understand terms, he *can* comprehend that making humans dream about food will result in increased consumption on Earth. This means that there's a steady trickle of Servitors of Gluttony into the Marches, with the assignment of inspiring humans to dream about food, glorious food. Beleth is mildly annoyed by this, but only mildly – hunger-dreams are far more often nightmare than pleasant, and they always leave the human subjects unsatisfied. For this reason, she doesn't order her own Servitors to go out of the way to pursue Gluttons. (Though if demons of Gluttony and Nightmares should encounter each other by accident – well, full-scale battles do happen.) Very occasionally, an expert and intelligent Haagentian will be seconded to work with Nightmares, in order to fashion a particular dreamscape.

Haagenti himself couldn't care less about working with ethereals, though he's happy to take tribute from them. Some of his brighter Servitors, however, can see the potential gains in *using* ethereals – they make such good decoys or minions. A few Gluttons have even made stealthy explorations into the Far Marches, to contact ethereal Domains and suggest arrangements to their mutual advantage. (This usually translates to an offer by the Haagentian to protect an ethereal Tether or group on Earth, in exchange for service or assistance.) Naturally, both Beleth and Asmodeus would strongly disapprove of this sort of thing, if they knew about it . . .

Corporeal Jobs

There are two main functions for demons of Haagenti on Earth – consume, and encourage humans to consume. Of these two, it is actually the *second* which is more important. A glutton does not require assistance to commit gluttony, after all; if all the Haagentians ever did was to eat, then why should their Prince's Word spread?

Demons who have the assignment of persuading humans to eat (and eat, and eat) may do so in several ways. They may provide food, or other consumer goods, in ways so tempting that humans are irresistibly drawn to it. This is frequently a task for Lilim, Balseraphs, and Impudites, as they are particularly adept at charming the humans. Another job is persuading the humans to overindulge not because the food is exceptionally *good*, but because of pride, false reasons of health, or simply the urge to get a bargain. ("Five for the price of two!") Balseraphs and Shedim particularly like work in this line. Some demons of Gluttony *do* act as public examples, inspiring humans around them to similar acts of destruction, or appearing in the media as public proof that self-indulgence is good. Calabim *love* partying in low-key roles, while more glamorous Gluttons, such as Lilim, Balseraphs, Habbalah, and Impudites, take media-backed positions.

Of course, Tethers are always going to need guarding – that's usually a job for Djinn, though Calabim may assist there too. Another task that Haagenti occasionally assigns is to corrupt a particular target or to make sure that a human takes a particular course of action, such as publicly preaching the virtues of fatty food. Shedim are employed if it's easier to corrupt or persuade the human from within, but otherwise any sort of demon may be used in this kind of operation, depending on its needs. Finally, on Earth there's always a need for ingenious demons to come up with new ways for the humans to indulge themselves. Every Servitor of Haagenti occupies themselves with this task – after all, any demon who comes up with a truly great idea can expect recognition and promotion.

THE FANGS

Naturally Haagenti has a spy network – if he wasn't known to have one, his fellow Princes might decide he was *really* stupid, and vulnerable. His spies are called the Fangs.

The Fangs select their own recruits – picking from demons who display intelligence, skill, and thorough self-centered cynicism – train them, and put them in the field. These agents provide intelligence reports to their Prince, filtered through Canzonetta, Head of the Fangs and Habbalite Baron of Gluttony. They also watch Haagenti's own ranks for evidence of treachery or heresy, to avoid giving the Game an excuse to investigate. Haagenti himself rarely sets them to a specific goal, preferring to let them work in their own way – as long as they don't miss anything important.

What Haagenti doesn't realize (at least, as far as anyone knows) is that the Fangs are organized more for their own purposes than for him. While they do want to keep him in power and therefore work to stamp out treason among his ranks, they *also* see their organization as an excellent tool for their own ends for their own ends. No new Fang advances far in the organization without proving himself more loyal to his bosses than to his Prince; those who fail this test are ruthlessly eliminated. They're corrupt to the core, using their positions to their own advantage and networking furiously throughout Glutton society in order to help each other rise. Canzonetta himself may have ambitions of displacing Haagenti, but if so, he has confided in very few. Even among the inner circle of the Fangs, he always emphasizes the need to retain Haagenti; "We're better off with him right where he is."

What the *Fangs* don't realize is that Asmodeus is becoming increasingly aware of their true effectiveness. At the moment, the Prince of the Game assumes that they are everything they claim to be – that is, a loyal spy network for Haagenti – and is therefore, on principle, working to infiltrate them. Should an infiltrator discover their true priorities, Asmodeus would be faced with an interesting decision . . .

Unusual Jobs

The Feeders are those Servitors of Haagenti whose job it is to make sure their Prince's maw never goes empty. Rank-and-file Feeders bring their Prince souls and Forces by the bucketload in Hell, and chickens and turnips by the truckload on Earth. "Quantity has a quality all its own" is their motto, quoting Josef Stalin. Or just "more is better." Woe betide the Feeder chief on duty if Haagenti ever has to look around and say "Is that all?"

More experienced Feeders are sent on special missions to find exotic foodstuffs or the work of the finest chefs. Haagenti especially enjoys dining on endangered species, and his Feeders do their best to please him, making them much loathed by the Servitors of Jordi.

One special team among the Feeders is completely secret. Haagenti enjoyed eating Meserach and Mariel so much that he'd like to repeat the experience – on other Superiors. But it would be unwise to attack any other Princes right now, and Archangels aren't easy to acquire. In a flash of inspiration, Haagenti decided to search for traces of any Princes believed dead or disappeared, such as Makatiel (the Prince of Disease, destroyed by Asmodeus and Dominic) or Genubath (Prince of Rapine, who vanished when Valefor came to power). The demons who serve Haagenti in this task are educated researchers and detectives. They keep their existence secret – it wouldn't inspire Princely confidence in Haagenti to know that he daydreams of devouring *more* Superiors . . .

Coping with Job-Stress

What does a Servitor of Gluttony do if he no longer feels sufficiently *hungry*? How can he cope, without sheer famine to keep him gorging? Even if he does manage to keep to gluttony through thick and thin, the universe is a dangerous place – angels try to prevent him from indulging on Earth, and other demons sharpen their knives for him back in Hell. How can a Haagentian really *relax*, let alone enjoy himself, in so stressful an environment?

Well, sheer calculated stupidity and obsession are excellent tools for a demon unintelligent enough to adopt them. If a Glutton pays absolutely no attention to the situation, the odds, the approaching Malakim, or in fact *anything* except his meal, he can enjoy the dining experience a great deal more. This accounts for a large number of the stupider Servitors of Haagenti, who are able to bring a frightening focus to their work – for as long as it interests them. They deal with stressful situations and awkward feelings by ignoring them and by not even troubling to think about them. (It's the sort of thing that makes angels tear their hair out.)

MODES OF ADDRESS

Servitors of Gluttony are commonly known as “Gluttons.” They’re referred to as “Haagentians” if the speaker wishes to be extremely polite, and “Gobblers” or “Bellies” if he doesn’t. When talking to each other, demons of low and medium rank are blunt and friendly, not bothering with particular titles. Servitors of high rank (and especially those with Words or Distinctions) expect utter groveling from lower demons, and have wildly inflated titles, which must be used in full. (“Oh, Most Revered Baron of Eructation . . .”) Such high-

ranking Servitors call junior demons by name, or simply “you there.” Haagenti himself is referred to politely as “The Hungry Prince” or “The Famine,” or less politely as “The Mouth on Legs” or “The Idiot Maw.” His own Servitors, among themselves, refer to him as “The Big Guy.” To his face, they address him *extremely* politely, as Haagenti is always sensitive to the tiniest hint of disrespect, using terms such as, “Dread and Magnificent Prince.”

More intelligent Gluttons realize the common sense of making allies. They often begin by providing gifts (usually food), but can achieve genuine camaraderie. It’s not as if Haagentians can’t have friends, after all . . . A lot of the brighter Gluttons find that reliable allies – or even friends – can make things a great deal less stressful, if only by guarding one’s back from angels. Also, demons who *aren’t* Servitors of Gluttony can provide a fresh and unbiased perspective on matters of consumption and excess. This is extremely useful for a jaded Haagentian who needs to be reminded about the urgency of hunger. (“Watching you eat that chili takes me right back to my days as a demonling. Why, the first time I ever devoured five bowls at a sitting . . .”)

In this respect, Servitors of Gluttony are capable of rapid shifts from near-affection to absolute indifference. While they may love their food, it’s only because the food is there for them to eat – it won’t extend to any sympathy for beings who’ve just ended up on the metaphysical platter. A Haagentian may *genuinely* be all fellowship one day, sharing his food, drugs, and breakables, but if his “friend” can’t stand the pace, the Glutton couldn’t care less about him. And, of course, if the food is in short supply, then one’s friends become competition.

There is one final way of dealing with stress – binging. Many Servitors of Gluttony follow this course. It’s easy, reliable, and tastes good.

RELATIONS

Gluttons are remarkably easy to get along with, as long as you don’t object to their table manners – they’re frequently “party demons,” always ready to join in an orgy of self-indulgence. This is even more likely if someone else is supplying the food. If only the rest of Hell were as blithely ravenous and obsessed by con-

sumption as the Haagentians, everyone would be united in cheerful gluttony!

At least, that’s how the Gluttons see it. Many other demons feel that the Servitors of Haagenti are a fleshly and stupid mob who are focused on food, destruction, and nothing else. The Haagentians sense this – and resent it. Many of the less intelligent ones deliberately play up to this biased view of them, doing their best to revolt and disgust other demons. More intelligent Gluttons act with restraint and caution, surprising those demons who expect stupidity or rampant hunger and taking advantage of their prejudices.

Generally speaking, the Haagentians get on well with the rest of Shal-Mari and with the Media. Nybbas’ demons are happy to popularize fads created by Gluttons, who are in turn delighted to be made famous. Despite the feuding between their Princes, Servitors of Gluttony and Lust can cooperate very easily – as long as they aren’t both trying to control the same group of people. Freedom’s “temps” (Lilim or otherwise) are easy to work with, if the Gluttons can negotiate a working arrangement.

Servitors of Technology, the War, Factions, and Nightmares are happy to *use* Gluttons, but will rarely view any relationship with them as one of equal cooperation. While the Haagentians may resent this attitude, they’re willing to cooperate if it’s to their ultimate gain – though if the other demons assume command, they may find the Gluttons very unruly subordinates. Servitors of Fate or the Game consider that Haagentians are sensualists, weaklings, and idiots. In return, Gluttons view the demons of Kronos and Asmodeus as boring killjoys, ineffectual paper-pushers, useless philosophers, and mindlessly strict dictators. Cooperation needs to be enforced, usually with threats. Demons of Theft are convenient when on the same side as the Haagentians – and stealing *for* them – but distrusted since they’ll just as easily steal *from* the Gluttons.



Servitors of Death sometimes work with the Servitors of Gluttony and sometimes against them – it depends on the circumstances. Generally speaking, relationships vary with the current situation, though Haagentians often take offense if Samingans murder a carefully cultured human glutton. With demons of Fire, there's *always* hostility, varying from the mild to the murderous, and exacerbated by their respective Princes.

GOURMET OR GOURMAND

In a sense, both gourmets and gourmands have the same ultimate objective – a total obsession with their food. The gourmand may be shoveling down cheap hamburgers, while the gourmet is nibbling exotically prepared slivers of larks' tongues and caviar, but in the end they are both concerned with their own tastes and food to the exclusion of everything else.

The popular image of Haagenti and his Servitors has them as gourmands, constantly devouring everything in sight and far more interested in quantity than quality. This doesn't mean that there aren't gourmets among his ranks, or that the Prince himself can't have moments when he demands rare and unusual foods to tempt his jaded palate. In their worst moments, they combine both aspects of gluttony, demanding unusual foods in extreme quantities and jamming their mouths with once-in-a-lifetime *fugu* delicacies.

While Haagenti might not be able to explain it in words if asked, he – and his Servitors – understand both these kinds of gluttony and work to inspire both of them in humans. After all, both kinds of obsession lead humans away from concern for each other, from working for the common good, and from Heaven – and therefore, ultimately, they form the Gluttony that leads to Hell.

SPREADING THE HUNGER

Servitors of Haagenti don't get dissonance for failing to personally be gluttonous (unless Haagenti catches them at it), but for failure to spread the Word among humans. Gluttony is in itself an entropic and increasing condition – what was enough yesterday is never enough today and will be even less tomorrow. Similarly, all demons of Gluttony must increase the number of souls affected by their Prince's Word, who ultimately serve his hunger. This condition manifests as the need to force a human to *Consume* every few days or suffer dissonance. Gluttony is a contagious plague spreading among human souls, destroying their wills and feeding Haagenti's power. When in Hell for any length of time, Gluttons are still constrained by the same dissonance conditions (with the length of time passing being measurable by their daily Essence). They have little difficulty inflicting hunger on the damned, however.

WORKING WITH KOBALITES

Haagenti often places his Servitors under the command of Servitors of Dark Humor, or simply orders them to work together. In practice, this usually means that the Kobalites end up with the ultimate authority. Both sets of demons work together well, as both of them have a diabolical sense of humor, and enjoy a good joke – though they'll work in different ways to achieve it. As long as the Kobalites don't force the Haagentians into abstinence and are prepared to join in the consumption every now and again, the demons cooperate almost as well as if they all worked for the same Word. (This infuriates Servitors of Malphas.)

DEALING WITH THE GAME

Generally and universally, Haagentians dislike Asmodeans. The Servitors of the Game are annoying types who clearly consider themselves superior to the Gluttons and who are constantly looking for evidence of treason and heresy. Given that Haagenti is lax in this respect and rates performance and devotion to Gluttony as higher values than orthodoxy to the cause of Hell, his Servitors don't like having the Game poking its nose in. An ideal Asmodean society is rules-governed and law-controlled, while an ideal Haagentian society is excess-driven and lacks any semblance of law. They just don't mix.

Unfortunately, the Gluttons have to answer to the Servitors of the Game when the latter come calling. If the Haagentian *has* something to hide, there are various common bribes which can be offered – food, luxury, and opportunities for self-indulgence. The Haagentian may also have various local humans who owe him favors (if not full Lilim Geases) which he can offer to the Asmodean. As a last resort, the Glutton can offer his services as “muscle,” promising to do some anonymous damage or killing for the Gamester in a way that won't be traced back. Unfortunately, these bribes usually only work on minor Asmodeans – and even if the bribes are accepted, the Haagentian is vulnerable to blackmail afterward.

However, Gluttons are rarely targeted solely for their *own* crimes by the Game; they're often arrested in the

hopes that they'll incriminate *Kobalites* as well. Given the closeness between Haagenti and Kobal and the way that their Servitors are often in close cooperation, it's probable that Gluttons will know of any crimes committed by local Kobalites. Naturally, Haagentians detest being treated this way – but it's very difficult to escape from the dungeons of the Game, once captured. For these reasons, Servitors of Gluttony will *always* defend each other when faced by Asmodeans, even if they have personal quarrels, and take pleasure in quietly assassinating minions of the Game – or serving them up as dinner.

For their part, Gamesters often regard Gluttons as below their notice – “pawns of an idiot Prince” – and ignore their work on Earth. One

charge which they often arrest

Haagentians on is “being

Creative and making the

humans happy instead of

Gluttonous.” This is often

cited when a Servitor of

Haagenti seems more pre-

occupied with creating

art, in food or objects, or

simply providing food to

humans around them,

rather than *actively* inciting

them to Gluttony. It can be

difficult to disprove – which is

just the way the Asmodeans

want it. However, if other

Haagentians can demonstrate (or fake

a demonstration) that the mortals are

obsessed by the arrested Servitor's products, this

proves that he *was* encouraging Gluttony, and he may

be released.



Haagentians don't generally find this a particularly difficult dissonance condition to abide by. They're usually quite happy to push humans into indulging themselves – after all, everybody should be gluttonous as a natural condition. The problem is that humans in the process of Consuming can be very *obvious*, bringing celestial attention down on the Glutton who inspired the human. If a Servitor of Haagenti has an assignment in a small town or a confined area, he may find himself running short of convenient subjects – especially if they start resisting him!

A Servitor of Gluttony can deliberately gain dissonance by not forcing humans to Consume – but he had better have an extremely good reason for it, if questioned by the Game or by the Fangs (p. 62). He may be able to excuse himself if he can clearly demonstrate that forcing those around him to Consume would have seriously endangered his situation. (This argument holds more weight if the disturbance would have damaged Princely operations and not just risked his insignificant life.) If, on the other hand, he was motivated by not *wanting* to force humans into the sin of Gluttony – then he'd better not get caught.

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IMPUDITE PRINCE OF DARK HUMOR

The world is a joke, and humanity is the punchline.

66

KOBAL

Kobal is Hell's court jester, and he seems to have a special place in Lucifer's heart; the Lord of Lies permits Kobal to say, with wicked wit, what no other Prince would dare even think. On Earth, humor is one of God's greatest gifts, making friendships easier and lightening misfortune. It is Kobal's talent to skillfully pervert the art of humor into mockery, hatred, and despair. His demons serve Evil by turning thought to laughter, concern to cal-lousness, reverence to blasphem-y – all in the name of good clean fun.

Kobal manifests in a different guise every time he appears, all the better to fool people – but his servants always recognize him. Sometimes he appears animated; these days he is often depressed and caustic. He specializes in word games and intelligent humor, leaving the crudity of visual gags to his “brother,” Haagenti.

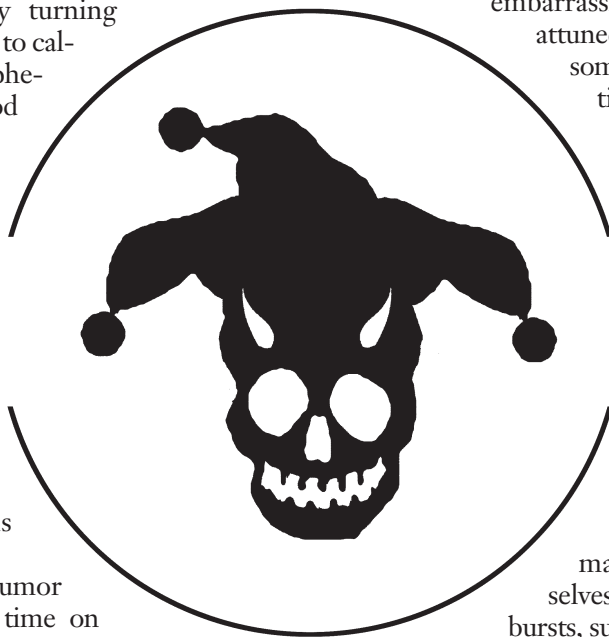
The Prince of Dark Humor used to spend much more time on Earth – after all, he's an Impudite. But with the dawning of the 20th century, he began to spend less and less time walking the corporeal plane. He's heard all the jokes – he's jaded, and he's beginning to get bored and angry. Now he rarely comes to Earth, except to help one of his Servitors out of a jam or to enjoy some especially brutal practical joke. In the depths of Kobal's mind, the ultimate joke is slowly taking shape, whether or not he's consciously aware of it. When he plays it, and upon whom, might make all the difference in the world to the War.

DISSONANCE

It is dissonant for a Servitor of Kobal to go a single day without worsening someone's misfortune by laughing at him or making others laugh.

BAND ATTUNEMENTS

Each Band under Kobal has a special way of regenerating Essence by demeaning humanity. These attunements are considered Rites, and as such may only be used once per day. Each invocation regenerates 1 Essence – or twice that if the demon can laugh in his victim's face afterward!



Balseraphs

Kobal's Balseraphs gain Essence when they lie to someone and make others think he's stupid and gullible.

Djinn

(restricted)

Djinn serving Kobal regenerate Essence by embarrassing a person to whom they're attuned, by making a scene or implying some dark secret on the part of the victim (“I didn't hear you leave this morning . . .”).

Calabim

Calabim of Dark Humor regain Essence when a human discovers at a particularly ironic moment that something important to him has been destroyed (by the demon, of course).

Habbalah

Kobal's Punishers get Essence by making humans embarrass themselves with inappropriate emotional outbursts, such as laughing uncontrollably during a funeral.

Lilim

Lilim serving Dark Humor regenerate Essence for successfully daring (or geasing!) a human to do something patently foolish and dangerous.

Shedim

(restricted)

Humans possessed by Kobal's Corruptors find no end to life's little ironies – these demons add their Ethereal Forces toward making their hosts do anything darkly silly or degrading (singing “Frère Jacques” sarcastically during a business meeting with French trading partners, greeting a date wearing nothing but a condom, and so on). If successful, they also regenerate a point of Essence.

Impudites

Kobal's Impudites regain Essence by playing the kind of practical joke that makes the victim's life miserable. These Impudites don't generate dissonance if one of their jokes kills a human.



SERVITOR ATTUNEMENTS

Farce of Mistaken Identity

A demon with this power can masquerade for a short while, in a single aspect (voice, appearance, smell, etc.), as someone who the victim knows. It requires a Will roll and 2 Essence to take effect. It's resisted by the victim's Perception (Seraphim of Destiny and Cherubim attuned to either the demon or the mimicked being automatically resist), minus the demon's Corporeal Forces. The duration of the masquerade equals the check digit of the demon's Will roll, in minutes. The attunement's effects can be recorded on tape or film. Though the attunement doesn't require it, many Servitors of Kobal use props – Groucho Marx glasses with bulbous noses, fake mustaches, and the like.

Prank

This ability lets the user create an illusion worthy of the greatest cartoon madness. It requires a Will roll and 2 Essence to invoke. Anyone within the invoker's sight can be affected; the number of people affected is equal to the check digit. Pranking creates a convincing but "cartoony" illusion which breaks the basic laws of reality. The best pranks are funny yet terrifying, such as a giant chicken growing out of a car, or dead bodies of secretaries arranged on a boardroom table with apples in their mouths. Above all, the illusion must serve a humorous or ironic purpose. Victims are permitted a Perception roll, minus the demon's Celestial Forces, to resist. If the power works correctly, the victims will genuinely believe the illusion for a number of seconds equal to the check digit of the demon's Will roll *plus* the check digit of each observer's failed Perception roll.



Rant of Scorn

With this attunement, a Servitor can instantly determine a person or an item that the victim respects or cherishes, and then devise a humorous improvisational satire on that person or item, planting a seed of scorn for that object in the victim's mind. The victim is thus forced to laugh at something he loved. The victim may make a Will roll, minus the Servitor's Celestial Forces, to resist the effects of the attunement.

Secretly Replaced

... with *Folgers® Crystals*. Let's see if he notices. With this attunement, a Servitor of Kobal may attempt to substitute one item for another, as long as the two items are similar in some fashion. For example, one might replace a diamond with a shard of glass (both crystalline and reflective), or an apple with an orange (both fruit), or perhaps even a window with a door (both set in walls). Activating this power requires 2 Essence and a Will roll. The victim may resist with a successful Perception roll (Seraph of Destiny and Cherubim attuned to the target or substitute automatically resist), minus the user's Celestial Forces. The duration is a number of hours equal to the check digit of the Will roll. If the item in question is of great power, such as a relic, this attunement may not function properly or at all (GM's decision).

Now THAT'S A Punch Line

The Servitor can bemuse his target with the punch line of a joke. The net effect is to place the target into an instant mental fugue, his immediate goal or objective forgotten, for the moment. This effect requires 1 Essence, a joke, and a Will roll. The victim may resist with his own Will roll, minus the demon's Celestial Forces. The better the check digit on the demon's Will roll, the longer his target will stay in the mental fugue. It takes quite a demon to stop a charging Malakite with a knock-knock joke, but the effect is *hilarious*.

DISTINCTIONS

Knight of Derision

Kobal's Knights can make anyone see the humor in a cruel situation, laughing at the unfortunate. This must be roleplayed. If the victim cannot resist with a Will roll, he demeans both himself and the object of his scorn. Note that, by proxy, this also fulfills the Kobalite requirement to avoid dissonance!

Captain of Repartee

A demon of this rank can make any human within the sound of his voice shrug off the importance of any event he's just witnessed or any news he's just received, merely by making a pithy remark about it. The subject may resist with a Will roll.

Baron of Hysteria

These demons, at a glance, know which kind of humor would affect a target. They can then use their sharp wits to distract that person for 1 round (5 seconds), during which his success rolls will be reduced by the demon's Celestial Forces. The subject may resist with a Will roll.

Higher Distinctions

Despite the relatively loose hierarchy of his Dark Humor organization, Kobal has been known to grant titles and added responsibility to demons who have served him successfully over time. Lesser Kobalites are mindful that these nobles can make or break them in the eyes of their Big Boss.

Marquis

A Marquis of Dark Humor generally heads up a single operation of Kobal's at any given time, regardless of where the operation occurs: Earth, the Marches, or in Hell. These veterans are among the most elite servants in Kobal's service, invariably quick to react to unexpected situations, and are a lower operative's "final" authority on operational procedures.



Count

Demons to whom Kobal awards the title of Count are put in charge of a Marquis or five, and given authority to handle their underlings almost entirely as they see fit. To reach this Distinction, a demon must be extremely exemplary or extremely stupid – Kobal has been known to promote demons whose egos outweigh their talents, and watch, chuckling, as they crash and burn.

COMEDIC DITTIES AND SPECIAL SONGS

Kobalites have numerous little tricks they can pull with Songs – using Singing (Rap Music) skill to disguise a performance, for instance – and there are also some Songs which only Kobal and selected Servitors know. These include numerous variants on Ornamental Numinous Corpus (slime, exotic coloration, bobbing antenna) which can be turned on and off to bewilder mundane onlookers, and the more (or less) serious Songs of Laughter (*Liber Canticorum*, p. 71) and Numinous Corpus: Mouth (*Liber Canticorum*, p. 72). Like many other Superiors, Kobal is also privy to the Songs of Correspondence (*Liber Canticorum*, p. 65), Fruition (*Liber Canticorum*, p. 70), and Pestilence (*Liber Canticorum*, p. 73).

Duke

At the highest level of his organization are the Dukes, Kobal's most trusted servants and aide-de-camps. With only four Dukedoms up for grabs, competition among the Counts can be intense for these positions – if and when they open. They are *not* given to incompetents! The four Dukes of Dark Humor oversee three realms of operation (Hell, Marches, and Earth), and a final position of "personal secretary" for Kobal. This personal emissary is often dispatched as a wake-up call or last warning that things better shape up quickly before the Prince himself appears.

Kobal has, from time to time, created a fifth Duke – who has always been destroyed in an entertaining way . . .

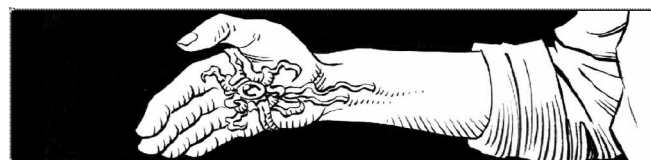
RELATIONS

Allied: *Haagenti* (*Haagenti and Saminga are Allied to Kobal.*)

Associated: *Malphas, Saminga* (*Malphas, Nybbas, and Valefor are Associated with Kobal.*)

Hostile: *Baal, Kronos, Valefor* (*Asmodeus, Beleth, and Belial are Hostile to Kobal.*)

Enemy: *Asmodeus* (*Kronos is an Enemy of Kobal's.*)





BASIC RITES

- ✘ Make someone laugh just before he dies.
- ✘ Make a psychotic joke at the expense of any other celestial – and make the GM laugh at it.
- ✘ Disrupt a serious occasion, involving at least 30 people, with inappropriate laughter.

EXPANDED RITES

Some additional rites which Kobal may grant favored demons:

- ✘ Cause a humorously improbable fatal “accident.”
- ✘ Force someone to confess an embarrassing personal secret in front of an audience.
- ✘ Convince someone to make a wildly inappropriate spectacle of themselves.

CHANCE OF INVOCATION: 3

INVOCATION MODIFIERS

- +1 An original, cruel joke
- +2 A five-minute comedy sketch that makes the audience enjoy something basically evil
- +3 A busy stretch of road turned slick (with oil, banana peels, small animal corpses, etc.)
- +4 A malicious stand-up routine lasting an hour
- +5 Something that would make Kobal smirk (GM’s discretion)
- +6 Something that would make Kobal laugh (again, GM’s discretion)

KOBAL IN DETAIL

“Everything human is pathetic. The secret source of humor is not joy, but sorrow. There is no humor in heaven.”

– Mark Twain

HISTORY

Before the Fall, Kobal served God as the Angel of Laughter. His Word was the divine release of tension, the expression of fondness between friends, and in its purest form, mirthful joy. God even selected Kobal to perform a special mission for him. The Archangels knew that Kobal had a unique assignment, but he wouldn’t discuss it.

At first, Kobal was content, serving his angelic Word faithfully. However, as the years wore on, he became frustrated by humans’ perverse sense of humor. Humanity often denied joy – which was tantamount to denying the God that created them – and demonstrated an insatiable appetite for suffering. They preferred to laugh *at* each other, rather than laugh in a spirit of togetherness and camaraderie.

The Word of Laughter began to change, reformed by human actions, and Kobal had no idea how to prevent it. His hard work was to no avail, and he came to hate humanity for having such control over him.

Kobal was one of the first angels that Lucifer recruited to start his rebellion, and one of the most eager. He scorned God’s plan for him, and fought with smiling savagery to prove that angels should be above humanity in God’s sight. When the rebelling celestials were cast down, he believed that he finally got the joke, and it was on him. He laughed harder than he ever had before, tears streaming from his eyes, burning like rivers of fire. After that day, he swore that no one would ever get the better of him. Any laughter he created would be at someone else’s expense.

After the Fall, Lucifer elevated Kobal to his current Princedom to counter the might of Yves, the powerful Archangel of Destiny. Dark Humor, thought Lucifer, would provide the perfect foil for the bright futures that Yves sought for humanity. What better way to turn humans away from their destinies and rob them of hope than by portraying life as some cosmic joke that ended only in a cruel punch line? It seemed like a good start.

Kobal accepted his Word and station from Lucifer, smirking at the irony: Laughter turned from joy into mocking scorn, now Dark Humor. His Word mirrored his feelings about humanity’s worth. At first, he reveled in his new freedoms. He



INNOCENT RUMORS: IN THE END . . .

Kobal was once taken into the personal confidence of the Almighty; that's no secret. There is frequent speculation as to what mission Kobal was given, and if he might maintain some link to God. Kobal rarely has more than a smirk and a shrug when some agent of the Media gets up the courage to ask him directly.

That doesn't stop the gossips in Hell, especially in the "anything goes" bazaars of Shal-Mari. One popular rumor is that *Kobal* will sit as judge over all celestial beings if or when any final reckoning occurs, the (dubious) reasoning being that God has a sense of humor.

Others think that Kobal is a double agent, who tricked Lucifer into including him in the rebel army. They say the Prince of Dark Humor is just waiting for God's signal, at which time he will pave the way for the forces of Heaven to extinguish the Lightbringer's revolutionaries.

And still others believe that the story is a complete fabrication, merely a darkly humorous ploy to impress anyone gullible enough to believe it. After all, they only have Kobal's word for it that God gave him a special assignment. So far, God has had no comment.

found many smiles, in the early days, with jokes that destroyed humanity's self-worth rather than building it up. Taking revenge against God's favored creatures was sweet.

While tormenting humans was still fun, Kobal kept an eye out for like-minded demons; he was always interested in new talent. Haagenti, who as a mere Earthly Servitor of Belial delighted in malicious pranks, caught his eye. Soon he realized that Haagenti had great potential, and schemed successfully to win his services away from Fire. In the beginning, he merely thought to amuse himself by introducing the grossly uncouth demon into Hell's elite, and making them accept him in their ranks. However, it didn't take long for Kobal to decide that Haagenti's ambition and energy could provide much more than a cheap joke at the other Princes' expense. The furry little demon even managed to *eat* two Superiors who stood in his way! Kobal was delighted, and continues to support Haagenti, both secretly and openly, so that he can watch as the joke unfolds over the centuries.

But Haagenti's success was not enough to distract Kobal from a growing political problem. Kronos, the Prince of Fate (see p. 73), was amassing more power with each passing day, absorbing the important aspects of Dark Humor, and taking over tasks which Lucifer used to leave to Kobal. The laughing Prince noticed this erosion of his importance and his laughter grew ever more strained.

Engineering Haagenti's rise assuaged Kobal's cynicism and *ennui* for a while, but now he's brooding again, trying to devise the perfect joke to catapult him back to his former prominence. Nothing seems funny any more, and it takes greater and greater suffering and destruction to amuse him. Kobal cannot erase the nagging doubt that fate, or Fate, has once again made him the butt of the joke.

HELLISHLY HOT GOSSIP

Factions

In the aftermath of the events in *The Final Trumpet*, rumors have surfaced about a major Kobalite campaign to repay Malphas for his damage to Kobal's reputation in Hell. Still, to all outward signs, Dark Humor retains its association with Factions. For now.

Cry Havoc

Word is afoot that one of the pro-War Princes is calling in a long-owed debt from the Prince of Dark Humor for a covert operation on Earth. This may have something to do with yet another rumor which some Kobalites have let slip: a relic, which Kobal suddenly seems intent on finding, is lost in the depths of the Lower Hells. There are no details about the relic, except that it supposedly dates back to the Fall.

Amateur Night

All of Shal-Mari is whispering about Kobal's frequent visits to a local comedy club, for demons only, called "Laugh Till It Hurts." Run by an older Word-bound, Thratch, the Demon of Snappy Comebacks You Only Think of After It's Too Late, the club has become a forum for demons who think they might have what it takes to open their own shows in Hell. As with most such spots, a few of the acts are good, but most are very, very bad. No one is quite certain when Kobal will turn up to catch a particular act, or even more mysteriously, *why* he shows up. Thratch doesn't mind the boost in trade, and he certainly knows better than to poke his nose into Kobal's business.



KOBAL'S WORD

Irony, satire, misdirection, and mistaken identity are all aspects of Dark Humor. Though often weary of his Word, Kobal still serves it. All of his plans revolve around it. It is his job to encourage derision, sow seeds of intolerance, and reap hatred from his Word, and he does this with great aplomb, despite his cynical attitude. He's good at it, and even an insincere smile is better than a frown.

PERSONALITY AND OUTLOOK

Kobal does not spread happiness with his laughter; rather, he spreads hatred, scorn, and intolerance with every snicker that he and his Servitors provoke. His is a refined, educated humor, and he takes a sophisticated delight in cunning ploys and subtle schemes. He generally looks on low humor with mildly bemused scorn, although even the lowest gag is acceptable if it furthers his ends. After all, it is the height of irony to use low jokes to achieve high aims.

Kobal holds nothing sacred, not even his Word. Of course, jokes about Dark Humor are only funny coming from *him*. Others mock his Word at their peril . . . unless the jest pleases him. For Kobal, no subject is tasteless, and nothing is beyond his amusement-veiled contempt – except himself. But he often disdains obvious targets for his humor; his contemptuous smile says

that he gets the joke, and has better things to do than point it out to others.

This undemonic restraint and patience, along with his seemingly lightweight Word, make Kobal one of the most underestimated Demon Princes in Lucifer's court. (More than one Prince has learned this to their detriment.) Not only does Kobal have a dangerous native wit; his rapport with the First of the Fallen grants him a degree of freedom unrivaled in Hell. Kobal can get away with actions that his more tangibly powerful peers would never contemplate. Once, to repay a slight, Kobal and a cadre of his most trusted servants randomized the entirety of Asmodeus' files. It took the Prince of the Game years to recover from that prank. The smile on Lucifer's visage, when he heard the news, was fearsome.

In public, Kobal still plays the happy-go-lucky, devil-may-care charmer. Privately, nothing infuriates him more than seeing someone exploit an opening he'd missed, or, worse yet, beat him at his own game. He truly hates the times when he is forced to sit in his Shal-Mari office, grinning and thinking, "I wish I'd thought of that first."

Kobal works indirectly. He does not possess the strength to best Baal, and he has far too much Impudite tact to be as forthright as Beleth. Kobal prefers that his Servitors set up the joke behind the scenes, manipulating the victims into thinking that they brought it on themselves. After all, it is entertaining to corrupt someone; it is hilarious to watch someone corrupt himself.

Kronos

The day that Kronos was given a Princedom was an ugly day in Shal-Mari, and helped to push Kobal into gloomy introspection. Lucifer gave the new Prince the Word of Fate and the job of directly opposing Yves, yanking that important responsibility away from the more senior Prince of Dark Humor. The most galling thing, perhaps, was that Kobal's faithful service in thwarting Yves counted for nothing.

Kronos grew quickly into his position, and has been so effective as Yves' direct foil that Kobal has been unable to reclaim any of his old duties. There has been quiet speculation that perhaps Lucifer meant for this to happen all along, and that if anyone knows what plan God has for Kobal it would be Kronos, or even worse, Yves. Clearly then, they murmur, the Prince of Fate has been right to oppose Kobal, checking him in subtle ways and keeping him away from the reins of Hell's true power.

There has never been enough open hostility between them, however, to cause open warfare in Hell. (The Prince of Dark Humor's animosity toward Asmodeus is far more blatant.) Kobal knows full well that Kronos commands more power than he. Kronos, meanwhile, holds back, but he does not discuss precisely why. This rivalry serves as Hell's own Cold War – and few can be sure just why neither Prince allows the conflict to heat up.

Haagenti

Kobal's greatest project in the past millennium has been to engineer Haagenti's rise in the infernal court. Other Princes see the Demon Prince of Gluttony as a simpleton with a simple Word, easily manipulated into serving as brawn or cannon fodder. Behind Haagenti's back, Kobal assures his peers that the grinning Calabite will never realize he's been a tool since before he was made a Prince. Then Kobal goes back to his office and laughs himself sick.

Kobal has further plans for Haagenti, but as yet, they remain shrouded in mystery. For the time being, though, Dark Humor and Gluttony remain close allies, and appear to trust each other to a degree that amazes the other Princes.



GOALS AND PRIORITIES

When Kronos was elevated to Prince, Kobal's mission to serve as Yves's foil was usurped. As time went on, it was clear Kronos had become a much more powerful and influential being, able to counter Destiny directly. Kobal still had his Word to serve, but his more prestigious job had been taken away. Without that task to occupy him when nothing else seemed funny, he decided upon a new objective: wrap up this constant war between Heaven and Hell!

The War with Heaven has become a bad joke which goes on and on and has a staggeringly boring punch line. Kobal now plans for a Big Joke, some unexpected coup for Lucifer that will garner the Big Laugh which even the other Princes will be forced to participate in. At turns darkly amused and bitterly disappointed by the seemingly ineffective progress of the Hellish legions, Kobal has decided that finesse, not brawn, will end the War. And, although Kobal would never admit it, sometimes he doesn't care who wins the Final Battle – even if it's a flop! – just as long as it's *over*.

Relics, plots, plans, and actions which can affect the balance of power are now his objective – the more dramatic and deadly the better. Kobal has turned from a demonically happy “status quo” Prince to a closet activist, an infernal loose cannon. Still, he's a cautious one. He wants to be able to deny responsibility for his plans if they fail, and take unquestioned credit if they succeed. Not easy, but Kobal is nothing if not clever.

And he is tired of being underestimated. He's spent eons projecting a lightweight image. He'd like a bit more respect, or even a lot more. When he comes up with that Big Joke, he wants it to be *noticed*.

Kobal's fellow Princes haven't yet realized that he's become interested in the War as a whole, rather than merely supporting his Word and playing politics in Hell. They continue to underestimate both him and his Word – something he's spent eons encouraging, but now it's getting boring. He'd like more respect, a lot more. When he comes up with that Big Joke, he wants it to be *noticed*.

His final important goal is to overcome this malaise which seems to have lingered for the last hundred years or so. He knows that it's ironic for the Word of Dark Humor to be bored with life and jests. In his darker moments, he wonders if someone has turned the joke against him. Could Kronos be behind it? But then he tells himself that he's just tired . . . tired of being treated as merely Lucifer's jester, tired of the endless stupid War. When he settles on his Big Joke, things will be better. Then he will be a true Prince, and make his presence felt in Hell and on Earth again.

Conflict

Kobal has a lot of potential enemies. He's played one gag too many on some; others just don't think that he can take anything seriously. Even so, he is a consummate politician. After all, he's an Impudite. He's been a Prince for a long time, and something of a prankster since he was created. He can usually manage to smooth over ruffled feathers, and if he can't, he can make deals for protection. He is not reckless. He has enough sense to distinguish between a dangerously humorous plan and a suicidal one. He schemes mostly in private, seeking alliances when it brings him a particularly desirable benefit or a too-perfect chuckle.

POLITICS

Kobal, by his Band's nature, is a diplomat and a manipulator, though he tends to provoke either love or hate; very few have an indifferent opinion about him. Though his fellow Princes often curse his name, his wiles allow him to avoid permanent enmity, or better still, shift it to some more deserving target. And Shal-Mari makes Kobal one of the most Essence-rich Princes. Essence can't buy friendship, but it can rent a reasonable substitute . . .

You can't make up anything anymore. The world itself is a satire. All you're doing is recording it.

— Art Buchwald

Princely Opinions

Andrealphus: Human lust certainly can be amusing at times, I'll grant you that, but Kobal tends to use it as a one-trick pony. There's a great deal more to the sins of the flesh than slamming doors and hiding in coat-closets, after all. *(It's amusing that someone so obsessed with one sort of contact should be so averse to any other sort of contact: contradictions are part of the best jokes. He produces such delightful comedies of manners and heartbreak, all with the human body as a stage and motivation.)*

Asmodeus: He seems to think that he can play by his own set of rules in the Game. I doubt he quite realizes just how wrong he is about that. When the time comes,

though, I will be there to help him remember the rules in Hell. [pause] I owe him a *special favor*, as well. *(It's almost too easy. He's so full of himself, so puffed up with his own importance that I just have to poke a few holes to deflate him. But then he spoils the game anyway, because he just doesn't get it.)*

Baal: I don't think he's a concern of mine. I stay out of his way, and he'd best know enough to stay out of mine. I deal with serious business daily, and he just laughs. I've no time to waste on foolishness. *(War can be a gas . . . just ask the Germans! Oh, I slay me. But Baal is incapable of appreciating a good joke; he even said the Children's Crusade was pointless! No sense of humor; won't incorporate any of my best ideas into his plans.)*



Beleth: Kobal is a weakling and a buffoon who is far too easy on humanity, causing them to shake with laughter rather than quake with fright. He thinks that his petty malice and jokes mean something. Some day he will understand true fear. *(Well, she's a little spy, you know . . . and I think she wastes the Marches. The potential there is so . . . abhh, but nobody would even get it. I tried once, to work with her. Never again; she said that I was being kind to humanity. And when I was there in her realm . . . she was poking around. No, no fun. None at all.)*

Belial: He's a wet noodle, slimy and soft. He would be consumed in an instant in the bold heat of my plans. Someone should light a fire under him. *(This guy has a burning desire to really cook my goose. I can't understand what inspires him to flame me, but at the same time I'm sympathetic to his combustible personality. I myself at times indulged in insin-diary tactics. Just because I don't necessarily hold a torch for Gabriel doesn't mean I'm not sensitive to the boiling point of Belial's nature. And he does have balls. Fire balls of course — what were you thinking?)*

Haagenti: The only other reason to open my mouth, aside from eating, is to laugh at Kobal's jokes. Once, he made me laugh so hard that French fries came out my nose. Mmmm, French fries. Maybe with chili and cheese and sour cream and [trails off into indistinct gurgling noises]. *(Dear, dear brother Haagenti . . . our brother princes laugh at you, and at me for supporting you. I've worked for centuries to set up this punchline, but it won't be much longer.)*

Kronos: He tried to do my job, and is bitter that I've done it better. He had his chance and couldn't live up to it. When the time is right, he, too, will meet his proper Fate. *(No sense of irony. No sense of real pathos. Just lots of knowledge, the keys to the whole orchestra, and no clue. He doesn't get it. Frankly, he's in the way, an accident waiting to be finished. [Smiles wickedly] That'll be good for a laugh.)*

Lilith: He's always been a free thinker, willing to flit from idea to idea, and I value that. He's not bound by reality; no plan seems too outrageous to him. He also knows how to repay his debts, good or bad. Another admirable quality. *(She's got a sense of humor, sure, but she rarely tells you what's so funny. I think she's laughing on the inside more than she ever lets on. Got to admit, the joke was on Heaven the day they let her get away!)*

Malphas: Kobal has an air of sophistication and intelligence that I sometimes find so lacking in other Princes. Though he doesn't always share my vision, he can sow tiny seeds with his Word that bear bitterly divisive fruit. He and I work well together. *(Oh, yes, he gets the joke – or rather, he provides the butts of the jokes. Every time somebody makes fun of someone else, we're building a new faction, and every time there's a new division, there are new grounds for humor . . . Wall of words, my friend, wall of words.)*

Nybbas: When it comes to chuckles, nobody does it better than Hell's head chucklehead. He's got his Word down to a true art form. It's just too bad so many of his plans end up with a dead lead actor. No sequels then, baby! Major bummer. *(Nybbas shows some promise, but he's far too preoccupied with flash and glitz rather than the dirt and grit where true comedy lives. He's happy to show, rather than do – a serious flaw.)*

Saminga: Kobal told me that death is the last pure form of comedy, but all paths through his humor lead to my realm. He works with me, chuckles occasionally at some trifle, and misses the really important end: death. After all, if they die laughing, they're just as dead. *(The joke is often on him, I fear. But he's got a great sense of fatal irony. Death, pain, fear – comedy is about death, pain, and fear. Saminga sits at the heart of the good stuff, and manages to be pretty funny himself without meaning to.)*

Valefor: Some of my best thefts have been in concert with Kobal. He's got a sense of style I admire, and I appreciate the way that he can steal dignity from humanity in an instant, usually right from under their own noses. That's a **real** theft. *(Useful only as a passing gag. Valefor and his Servitors are about as reliable as Lucifer's promises. Better to take advantage from him than be taken advantage of.)*

Vapula: Kobal is flighty and quirky, and I don't have the patience for his sense of humor. He seems to value my inventions only for his crackpot schemes. His jokes

don't really test the mortals; they just annoy them. Not good enough. We don't need weak Princes. *(Ab. Technology. He gives mortals the power of angels and never realizes the irony; his eyes are blinded by science. But his Word is the wave of the future, and I need him as an ally.)*

Archangelic Opinions

Blandine: Scorn, mockery, ridicule. These are not the things of dreams; they belong more to Beleth than me. Kobal does not understand what his Word does to humanity and for that I cannot forgive him. *(How noble, how grand. Blandine offers more potential for cruel irony than she realizes. I hope she never does.)*

David: A prancing jack-anapes. 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. *(“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.)*

Dominic: He was trusted by God, trusted with a task no Archangel was given. And now, it is lost. And he is lost. *(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?)*

Eli: The guy needs to cut people some slack, man. He never knows when to stop with the cutting comments. I remember when he was one of the good guys, and he was pretty cool then. What the heck happened? *(It’s only a matter of time before the “Archangel” of Creation joins us. He’s already cheerily disillusioned with Heaven . . . given a chance, I’m sure I could finish the job.)*





Gabriel: I will not abide his cruelty. His constant torture of others stokes the fires of my anger. He thinks his comedy grand, but it is really empty of life and vigor. Tired. He should be extinguished. *(How amusing that Fire doesn't catch my spark. No matter, I've a special spot burning just for her . . . Pathetically simple to manipulate – all the better to mock you with, my dear.)*

Janus: His schemes and plots don't amount to much more than breezes through the trees. He's a free thinker; too bad he has such bad jokes. *(Flighty and unpredictable. What his role is in the War, I have yet to determine. By the way . . . have you ever seen Janus and Valefor in the same room together? Me neither.)*

Jean: I am at a loss to understand his concept of humor. This is odd, because I have studied several statistically valid samples of his work. Regardless, he should be avoided when possible. *(If anyone needs a life, it's this sad-sack of an angel. Jean would rather read reports and study electrons than get out and enjoy a decent laugh.)*

Jordi: Kobal and his ilk are the same people who laugh while family pets are run over in the driveway. They

MORTAL PUNCHLINES

As an Impudite, Kobal has rare insight into mortal minds, although he finds far more to be ridiculed than admired. He acknowledges that mortals can sometimes come up with wickedness as funny as his own best jokes. If he can reward these creative souls with eternal damnation, so much the better.

make me sick. *(Sometimes I wonder if Jordi can grasp any human emotion. Anything with fur and more than two legs is good? Yeah. Maybe for dinner with a nice white wine sauce.)*

Laurence: 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. *(So, God's on Generalissimo 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 . . .)*

Marc: Sarcasm and ridicule do not build trust among people. He and his underlings make my job a lot more difficult. Delicate business negotiations and top-level trade meetings can fail because of the wrong word, the wrong gesture. I can hardly find anything amusing about that. *(I think Marc's halo is too tight. Comedy isn't about building anything! Besides, money can't buy you happiness, but it sure is good for a few chuckles.)*

Michael: 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. *(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.)*

Novalis: Caustic words salt the ground of friendship and trust, and even bitter fruit must be a difficult harvest to stomach year after year. He was able to share God's gift once, but is he really lost? *(Sometimes I think the bleeding heart act is a sucker play, but if it is, the Archangel of Flowers is playing a pretty good role. The goody-two-shoes sure make it more fun to play our little reindeer games.)*

Yves: Only God and Kobal know what his special task is about; even I only have an inkling. All will be revealed according to God's wishes, of course, but I can't help feeling Kobal has squandered so much of his potential. A true shame. I miss him. *(Wise as Yves claims to be, he still can't quite manage to figure it all out. Babbling about the greatest Destiny and the highest potential . . . Can't he see that it's all in vain? Such a waste.)*

About Lucifer

Kobal is fortunate that the Lightbringer has a strong and complex sense of humor; it allows him to slip off the hook for things that Lucifer would not forgive in other Princes. After eons, Kobal thinks he has a fair idea what the Morning Star will put up with, and is wisely cautious about pushing those boundaries. Although Kobal

VARIATIONS ON A THEME

Dark Humor can be Hell's comic relief or the despair of all, a loyal (or not) rebel among the rebels or Lucifer's prancing yes-man, or even the ultimate Illuminati mastermind. The role Dark Humor plays can set the entire tone of a campaign . . .

Comedy, Black Like My Soul

This Kobal has lost every trace of compassion and understanding for failure. No target is safe from his scorn or mockery, not even his own Servitors. He uses his underlings as tools, whether they are suitable for the task at hand or not, and if they are destroyed in the process, then so be it. Taking his fleeting moments of contentment from the suffering (preferably death or destruction) of others, he prowls the streets of Shal-Mari to find his next victim, utterly unwilling to venture to Earth. Even Lucifer is starting to have second thoughts about this Kobal's role in Hell.

The Jester

This incarnation of the Prince of Dark Humor has little use for anything but pranks and gags, to the



exclusion nearly everything else – including such trivial things as running his Servitors' organization, fighting the War against Heaven, and keeping Haagenti happy. Whether he remains a Prince or not seems to be of little concern, and it's only Lucifer's previous favor that has kept his rivals from closing in on the apparently whimsically absentminded joker. That flimsy protection alone can't last forever though: sharks patrol these waters, and they smell blood.

depends on the First of the Fallen as his protector, he certainly doesn't think him stronger than God. He privately questions Lucifer's ability to ever best the forces of Heaven: Kobal saw Lucifer cast out of paradise by Michael.

God and the Angels

Kobal considers the angelic Host to be an army of humorless, dull, self-righteous drones. They lack timing, spontaneity, and above all, they really can't fathom the depths of a good prank. Incapable of independent action, most are far too serious about their

"divine" mission. He's sure that the majority of angels couldn't last a day in Shal-Mari unsupervised.

Kobal is as cynical about God as he is about everything else. In his earliest days he was an angelic idealist; as a new-minted Demon Prince he was violent and bitter. These days, Kobal believes God is irrelevant to the affairs of Heaven and Hell; if He does care about what's happening, it doesn't seem to show. However, Kobal's relationship with God is more complicated than just rebellion and faithlessness. God did indeed give the former Angel of Laughter a special mission which remains known to only God and Kobal himself. What might remain of that mission? What does Lucifer know or believe about it? Kobal's Fate (or could it be his Destiny?) remains to be worked out.

Other Opinions

Humanity: The little pieces on our chessboard. Sometimes they're clever. Usually they're stupid, but still more interesting than demons. What can I say? I like playing with my food. But Earth just isn't fun any more, and I don't know why.

My philosophy of life is that the meek shall inherit nothing but debasement, frustration, and ignoble deaths . . .

– Harlan Ellison

THE ESSENCE ADVANTAGE

Kobal caters to so many different tastes that he manages to collect almost as much Essence as Andrealphus and Haagenti combined – in Hell, at least, every damned soul wants a laugh. The extra Essence is vital to his interests on Earth, fueling the creation of vessels for his many demons there; this has become increasingly important as he stopped visiting the corporeal realm, and placed minions there instead. Large reservoirs of power also let him influence decisions among the Princes of Shal-Mari. He doesn't do that *directly*, of course, for few Princes like being threatened, even obliquely. But with that much Essence, Kobal can maintain a large number of informants, agents, saboteurs, and open Servitors in Shal-Mari; he is wealthy in the coin of Hell.

Soldiers of God: Not much more fun than angels. And what do they serve for? Pie in the sky, that's what. Their Halo bosses don't respect them any more than we do.

Hellsworn: Quite useful in some situations, but on the whole they lack the right sense of fun about the whole game we play. At least they usually go quietly, smiling.

Ethereals: Relics and remnants, along with all the other trash in the Marches. When the right time comes, perhaps they may yet prove useful to me. Somehow.

Sorcerers: I laugh my ass off at these guys. They think they're controlling Hell. It's soooo much fun to see how far you can take them and how high you can build them up.

THE MYSTERY GUEST

Kobal has adopted the habit of manifesting in a different guise every time he appears, female as often as male. Most of the time, Kobal prefers refined forms – attractive body, elegant clothes, sophisticated speech – the kind of attributes that lend a certain aura of dignity. This, he feels, is the perfect vantage point from which to make cutting remarks about others.

On occasion, Kobal will mock the form of a well-known mortal: imagine your favorite supermodel with a case of awful acne, or arms of different lengths, or ten months pregnant.

HLL OF HELL IS MY STAGE . . .

BUT HOME IS WHERE YOU HANG YOUR HAT: SHAL-MARI

Kobal founded this realm of Hell when he first became a Prince. Over time, it became a way to build alliances. Kobal welcomed Andrealphus with a wink and nod. Lilith called in a Geas on Kobal to build the Guildhall of Free Lilim (*Heaven and Hell*, p. 100); the joke was that he really wanted her there anyway. Likewise, there was no place in Hell that Kobal would rather have Haagenti than Shal-Mari. Minor Princes who deal in the fleshly pleasures (notably Fleurity, Habbalite Prince of Drugs, and Mammon, Balseraph Prince of Greed) were likewise welcomed.

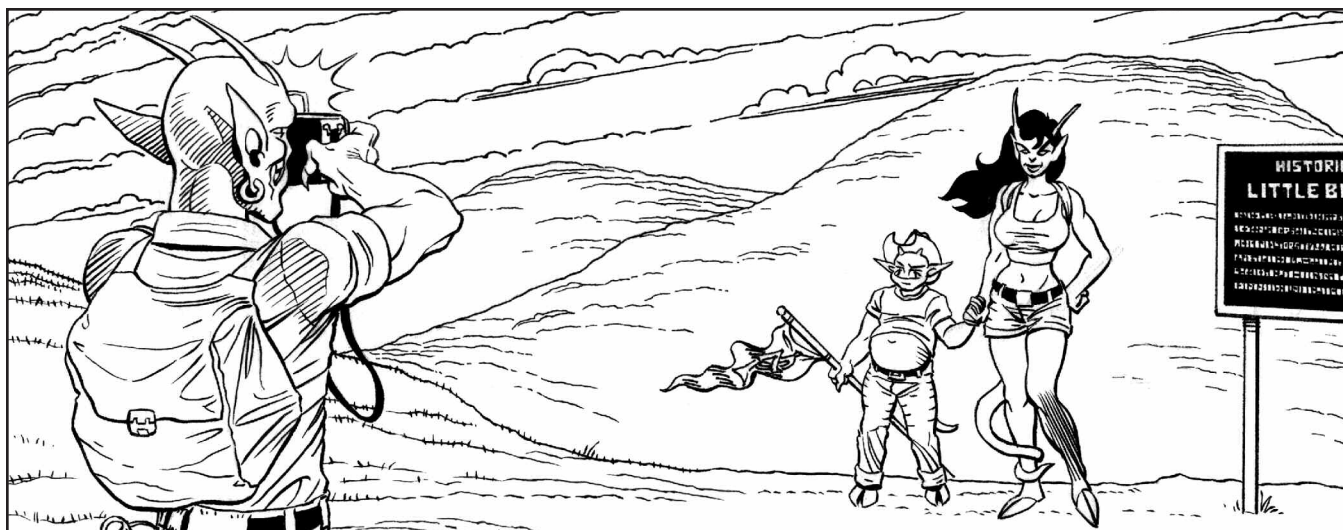
Though Shal-Mari is a Hellish byword for corruption and intrigue, almost all of its ferment takes place at low levels, among the demons and damned souls that flock there. Its rulers have more to gain from cooperation than competition. Most of the time . . .

Before there was Nybbas, there were stages and skits, and Kobal owned them. Even after the Prince of the Media's rise, it is still Dark Humor that holds the lock on cineplexes and theaters in Shal-Mari. Kobal has something for everyone, and places his entertainments where they will be most appreciated. As one nears the boundary between his district and Andrealphus', one tends to find more porn theaters, many running snuff films; Kobal occasionally enjoys the shock value of walking out of one of these establishments. As one moves closer toward Haagenti's district, Kobal tailors his cinemas again to provide a large selection of concessions; amusingly and unsurprisingly, he finds that running four or five animated trailers suggesting a visit to the snack bar before the film does wonders for sales to Gluttons.

Nybbas periodically attempts to slip in a few Media theaters as well; Kobal allows a scant handful of these, and only so long as they're not as popular as his. Generally, they aren't – in Shal-Mari; the damned would rather laugh at the misfortunes of others (at least their lot isn't *that* bad!) than follow the homey sitcoms or glamorous soap operas that the Media specializes in.

Shal-Mari Tower

Kobal's "palace" currently looks like a modern skyscraper. In keeping with Kobal's preference for a facade of dignity, he keeps the building fastidiously plain and sedate,



savoring the irony of the contrast in the building and its occupant. He has the penthouse office, of course, which overlooks the dense sprawl of his realm: all the glittering lights, the buzzing neon, the sounds and the smell. The office itself is tastefully appointed with leather furniture and a very large, very neat, mahogany desk. One of the walls has elegantly framed posters of the more admirable human works of Dark Humor.

In a basement vault, Kobal keeps his Servitors' Hearts, along with his collection of relics (see p. 93). They are watched over by several very powerful Djinn who, unlike most of Kobal's Servitors, aren't easily amused by pranks. They can think of funny things to do with intruders, though . . .

TETHERS

Most of Kobal's Tethers mark a spot which is a special tribute to Dark Humor: something ironic, pathetically funny, or wickedly satirical. He owns one of the few Tethers in Antarctica: the final campsite of Scott's expedition to the South Pole. Other tethers include Stanford University's football stadium, the grave of U.S. President William Henry Harrison, and his namesake high school. More tethers to Kobal are detailed in *Liber Castellorum*, pp. 97-98.

Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument, Montana

"Where'd all those damn Indians come from?"

In June of 1826, General George Custer – as part of the Army campaign to force Sioux and Cheyenne Indians to return to their reservations – found what he apparently thought was a large Indian village. Instead of waiting for

previously arranged backup or investigating the enemy more thoroughly, and despite not knowing the terrain, he ordered his men to divide into three groups so that fewer Indians would escape, and attacked.

The two flanking columns of the attack were routed ignominiously, in part because the attacks were not simultaneous. (That terrain issue.) As for the force that Custer led, directly assaulting the Indians . . . every one of those vastly outnumbered men was killed.

Alone, that massacre would only have inclined the spot to Baal's Word, or Saminga's – but despite his tactical blunders, Custer became a *martyr*, seen as a noble victim slaughtered by the savages instead of a general who led his troops to their doom. And over the years, may come to see the massacre as *funny*.

PREPARE FOR ULTRAVIOLENCE

Deep in the bowels of the Shal-Mari Tower are specially prepared suites, each with a large, seemingly comfortable, adjustable chair, all manner of restraints conveniently placed nearby and the most wickedly infernal A/V equipment yet devised by Vapula. These are Kobal's torture chambers. It may seem harmless the first time a demon watches B-movie favorite like "This Island Earth" or "They Saved Hitler's Brain," but after three or four days of enforced viewing, most demons are begging to admit everything to their grinning inquisitors.

You tellin' me there's some kinda demonic force behind black comedy? Heh. That'd explain my brother-in-law, for sure. You want some mustard, or what, buddy?

– Ed Krueller, hot dog vendor

It's not clear when the site's potential bloomed into a full Tether to Hell, but Kobal was the Prince who claimed it, and the link of irony has only grown with the passing of time. Maybe it was funnier when only Kobal saw the biases and implications, but now that many humans see the joke too, the Essence flows even more.

The Word-bound Seneschal is a Habbalite named Ert, with a Role as a park ranger named Duane Custer (“no

SERVING DARK HUMOR

Servants of Kobal are in for a wild ride. They quickly learn to expect the unexpected. Because Kobal insists on intelligence, his underlings tend to grasp nuance and detail better than most other Princes'. However, it can be difficult to understand how slashing the tires of a local priest's car, while cross-dressed, fits into the grand scheme of things. So, *up to a point*, Kobal and his Dukes will tolerate questioning of their orders. They know that unthinking obedience is a trait of stupidity. If they want smart demons, they can't run their organization like Baal's army, nor do they want to.

Even though Kobal doesn't micromanage, he insists on an accurate, timely information flow to the top. Well-prepared Servitors should plan contingencies in case intelligence reports are lost, intercepted by a competing faction, or captured by the Halos.

Finally, Kobal demands excellence from his demon corps. If you fail, he's likely to decide that you're stupid. Once you're in Kobal's doghouse, it's extremely difficult to put yourself back on the “A-List” of operatives; it's far more likely you'll find yourself selling Essence tickets in a Shal-Mari theater for the next few centuries.

relation”). He enjoys appearing as a friendly older man, gray-haired, with a pair of academic-looking wire-rimmed glasses, an easy smile, and willing to drop tidbits of seemingly useful advice for the tourists in these parts as they shuffle through the National Monument which he helps supervise.

He's also gained a reputation for being almost pre-scient: whether it's a flat tire, empty gas tank, failed brakes, or a drunken driver who's caused a horrible crash, Duane's the one first on the scene.

LAUGH, AND THE WORLD LAUGHS AT YOU: SERVITORS OF DARK HUMOR

JOKERS, JESTERS, COMEDIANS, KOBALITES

Smiling and suave, any Kobalite will assure you that they're just out to poke a little fun at the universe. What harm is there in a good laugh, after all? You say that you're the one being laughed at? What, can't you take a little joke?

ORGANIZATION

Kobal grants his Servitors quite a bit of latitude within the boundaries of his plans. Humor, after all, requires a delicate sense of timing, and you can't get that if you micromanage everything. His Dukes and Counts have very individual styles; none of them are micromanagers, because Kobal won't stand for it, but the details of their organizations vary a lot. In large cities, Kobalites will work in cells of two to three demons to set up complicated jests, but of course there are many solo operatives too.

Occasionally, if it suits his purpose, Kobal will play his demons off one another. And ambitious Servitors know that making fools of the competition is a good way to advance. In any case, Kobal's minions make sure to tip him off whenever some really great gag is about to unfold – nothing helps promotion like making the Boss laugh.

SAMPLE SERVITORS OF KOBAL

ANTERON

Demon of Embarrassing Revelations

Djinn Captain of Dark Humor

Corporeal Forces - 3 Strength 6 Agility 6
 Ethereal Forces - 4 Intelligence 9 Precision 7
 Celestial Forces - 5 Will 10 Perception 10

Suggested Word Forces: 7

Vessel: Human male/3; Charisma +2.

Role: Radio Psychiatrist/4, Status/4.

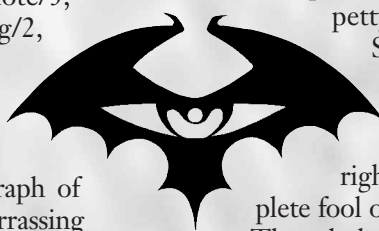
Skills: Detect Lies/3, Driving/1, Emote/3, Knowledge (Psychiatry/3, Radio Engineering/2, Psychology/3).

Songs: Charm (Ethereal/2, Celestial/4), Entropy (Celestial/2), Tongues (Corporeal/3, Ethereal/3).

Attunements: Djinn of Dark Humor, Balseraph of Dark Humor, Rant of Scorn, Demon of Embarrassing Revelations

Special Rite: Making a caller weep for the amusement of his audience.

Special Ability: With 1 Essence and a contest of Wills, Anteron can make himself seem even more trustworthy than his warm voice and psychological skills already allow; if he wins the contest, he may add the check digit to either his Charisma or his Psychology skill, for one round. This is usually long enough to say *just* the right thing to get his victim to open up.



The "Doctor Bob" show comes on every afternoon, promptly at one o'clock, and almost immediately, the toll-free switchboard lights up with plenty of callers asking advice from the soothing voice on the radio. Doctor Bob Collins has a truly uncanny ability to get people to open up – really open up – on the air. He even has two best-selling books (*They're Not Laughing At You*, and *Cream of the Crop: Best Calls and Advice*) and a fiercely loyal fan-base.

He is so friendly, and so helpful, to most of his callers, that the exceptions really stand out. A few times on each show, Doctor Bob soothingly leads the caller on . . . and traps him into admitting something wicked, petty, and hilariously funny.

Sometimes the good doctor reacts sympathetically, and sometimes he turns biting sarcasm.

Either way, it's always exactly right to help the caller make a complete fool of himself on the air.

Though they wouldn't admit it, most of his listeners tune in, not to hear Doctor Bob help people, but to laugh as someone is destroyed in front of a national audience. And Anteron, demon of Dark Humor, laughs too . . .

Anteron is a moderately powerful and very experienced demon, who has steadily pleased Kobal without making too many enemies elsewhere. He is suitable as a foe or supervisor.

Continued on next page . . .

Give Me the Brains!

Kobal values wickedly clever Servitors who can learn his taste in humor. When he creates demons, he creates *smart* ones . . . and when he recruits newly-fledged demonlings, he looks for clever, aggressive ones. Stupidity, to Kobal, is something to mock in other Princes' servants. He needs none of it.

Most Princes distrust cleverness and ambition in their Servitors. Kobal seems unworried. He's confident that his own abilities, and the selfishness of his other Servitors, will unmask anyone who might genuinely seek to betray him. Usually, he's right. In fact, he gets many of his best recruits from Servitors of other Princes who find themselves distrusted merely for their intelligence; Kobal is a much safer master for that type of demon.

Thus, his organization remains far more effective and flexible, demon for demon, than virtually any other faction in Hell. Kobal's demons often try to undercut each other, but they appreciate the latitude their Master gives them, and usually save their caustic ingenuity for other Princes' underlings.

There are, of course, the occasional plots and betrayals. Kobal's usual response, if a high-ranking underling genuinely proves treacherous, is to promote him to Duke! Very temporarily, of course . . . and the new Duke is somehow never able to appreciate the punchline.



Rewards and Punishments

Kobal understands that all-out effort demands recognition, and has developed several interesting rewards for Servitors who perform well. Aside from Words and attunements, Kobal has smaller, but still valued rewards. Typical offers include granting bonus Essence to a Servitor while performing any of Dark Humor's basic Rites or for use with Band resonances. Other rewards might include all-expenses-paid trips through Shal-Mari, use of a vessel that exactly resembles some Earthly celebrity (good for indulging in pleasures of the flesh while embarrassing the original), or allowing an underling to star in one of Dark Humor's theatrical productions (although being famous in Hell isn't always a blessing).

But his punishments are harsh and usually fatal. If a failure might have been due to mere bad luck, the punishment will be a *test* . . . a usually difficult and deniable mission. The Servitor will either survive them, proving his ability, or fail and die. Sometimes Kobal doesn't even bother to make these tests funny.

But should one of his underlings cause Kobal to lose face in some important scheme, or blow the joke by acting early, that unlucky demon will earn retribution.

Those who offended the Prince by carelessness or overenthusiasm may survive the punishment, but until Kobal feels they've learned their lesson, all their assignments will have hidden snappers. A demon might be sent to infiltrate Saminga's forces . . . and find out that setting up his cover will involve a hundred years of counting soul-grubs first.

But if Kobal decides that one of his Servitors is *stupid*, that demon is doomed. Typically, this sort of punishment will initially *seem* like a reward. For example, consider the case of the poor wretch Fulrick. Fulrick was an up and comer, a mover and a shaker in Kobal's organization, until he managed to botch up Dark Humor's plan to lace the London's water supply with extremely powerful hallucinogens, using Vapula's genetically engineered fish. Unusually genial, the Prince took Fulrick aside, assured him that everything would be fine, and that in fact, Kobal

SAMPLE SERVITORS OF KOBAL (CONTINUED)

YOFFA

Balseraph Servitor of Dark Humor

Corporeal Forces - 2 Strength 3 Agility 5
Ethereal Forces - 3 Intelligence 7 Precision 5
Celestial Forces - 4 Will 10 Perception 6

Vessel: Human male/2; Charisma +1

Role: Software Salesman/3, Status/3.

Skills: Computer Operations/2, Detect Lies/2, Dodge/2,

Driving/1, Emote/2, Fast-Talk/2, Knowledge/2 (Sales Techniques).

Songs: Healing (Corporeal/3), Shields (Corporeal/3, Celestial/2), Entropy (Corporeal/2).

Attunements: Balseraph of Dark Humor.

Yoffa goes to work every day with a self-satisfied smile and a heart full of quiet mockery. He considers himself the *totally* modern grandchild of the familiar (if clichéd) Car Salesman from Hell – he's the Computer Salesman From Hell.

With just one little corporate purchase, a thousand human lives can be made utterly miserable.

His strategy is simple, elegant, and relies heavily on his diabolically smooth Balseraph tongue. He can wrap a business manager around his little finger within the first five minutes of an interview, beguiling him with promises of round-the-clock technical support and flawless demonstrations of the new software. Most of his clients decide it's too good to be true.

Unfortunately, it is. The blissful day of installation is followed by a slow purgatory of computer crashes, lost files, network destruction, and (if Yoffa can possibly manage it) an eventual realization that the backup procedures have failed. Naturally, some Vapulans feel that Yoffa is poaching on their territory, but so far he hasn't interfered with their plans or operations – or sold any software to their organizations.

The approach of the year 2000 has inspired him to new heights of deception, and he has been having a wonderful time selling software "guaranteed to fix your Millennium Bug problems . . ."

Yoffa is a balanced starting character.



had recently advanced his name to Lucifer for Word consideration. After being “rewarded” with the Word of Pencil Shavings, Fulrick was dropped into Stygia as a Duke and left to fend for himself. He lasted about a week.

Another time Kobal gathered a group of his failures, handed them a letter and told them that if they could manage to deliver it, all would be well – there might even be promotions involved. The envelope was addressed in neat handwriting to “God, care of Yves.” Apparently, it was a complaint about the appalling lack of air conditioning in Hell. Those Servitors never were heard from again.

The Fallen

Kobal truly enjoys recruiting the Fallen into his ranks. First, it annoys Asmodeus when he takes in these former angels without any screening from the Game, and as far as Kobal’s concerned, making the Game unhappy can never be a bad thing. Second, he really appreciates the celestial irony of a Fallen angel, like himself, coming to his senses. Once recruited, though, former angels aren’t given any special consideration, but neither are they treated as expendable. Kobal brooks no dissent on this point: all of his agents are to be considered worthy until proven stupid.

The Prince of Dark Humor also looks for not-yet-fallen angels with the attributes he prizes: intelligence, deep appreciation for the ironic, the sarcastic, and the satirical – the darker, the better. Once such a candidate is identified, Kobal likes to start spinning a black web around that angel. He has, on occasion, devoted entire squads of demons to provide dangerously alluring opportunities for angelic dissonance. Once the angel is near the point of no return, Kobal himself may provide the final hard sell in person. He often finds the earnest, “I was an angel once, I’ve been there . . .” speech particularly effective, even without using his resonance.

Learning the Ropes: Trainees

Kobal likes his demonlings and new recruits to come up to operational speed quickly. Usually, they’ll spend a few years acclimating themselves to Shal-Mari, learning how to get around in the Prince’s Domain. Those who prove adept at news collection and various intra-Hellish operations generally get a break one day when the Boss calls them into his neat, modern office.

Kobal reassures the demon-in-training that he’s been watched for a long time, and the time has come for him to execute the most crucial phase of one of Kobal’s many campaigns on Earth. Of course, this is a bald-faced lie – it’s merely a test of competence under stress – but it does put the screws on, implying as it does that an important operation rests on the shoulders of an unproven agent.



THE WORD-BOUND OF DARK HUMOR

Kobal has several Word-bound demons in his service. Among the most famous are the demons which represent the most powerful aspects of Dark Humor: Irony, Satire, and Mockery. These demons have been working for Kobal for so long, it's easiest to refer to them by their Words and not their demonic names. These three, along with his four Dukes, form something of an "inner circle" around the Prince. Although

Irony, Satire, and Mockery don't know *everything* Kobal has planned, they generally have an inkling of most of his operations.

Other aspects of Dark Humor have appropriate Word-bound working to spread influence throughout the Symphony. Maigonigal, the Demon of Bad Art, Kizke, the Demon of Internet Comics, and Grackle, the Demon of Overacting, are just a few examples.

In fact, the job is never as important as it seems, and sometimes the whole operation is a sham. Of course, if the demon blows it, he probably won't get another chance for centuries, if ever. If he succeeds, the next test is simple: what happens when he finds out it was a test? He'd better laugh.

But a demon who makes it through the first test will be put to work, and from that point, if he keeps his nose clean, he will have better odds of survival than in most other Princes' organizations.

Do Not Pass Go, Do Not Collect \$200

On the other hand, Kobal is not likely to be much help if his Servitors are caught in an emergency. The Prince expects his demons to be self-reliant to the maximum. The only time he wants to be summoned, especially lately on Earth, is just before the final punchline of a successful operation. For example, if he's called because a couple of his demons are surrounded by Malakim of War, Kobal is just as apt to hand one of his underlings a package of frozen hot dogs, offer a pithy comment about how blood is hard to get out of fabric, and disappear in a puff of brimstone, than actually do something overtly helpful. Even if he does deal with the threat, the final result may not be much better for the whining servants who called him

in the first place. If you expect your Prince to regularly save your bacon, you will probably not enjoy working for Dark Humor.

Humans

To the Prince of Dark Humor, humans are to be scorned, not trusted. After all, didn't they prove themselves unworthy of his Word's gifts when he was an angel? No plan of Kobal's relies on humans, whether Hellsworn or mundane pawns, unless there is no other option. Naturally, his demons are equally contemptuous of the possible talents of even the best mortal agents.

Besides, if a demon screws up, there are so *many* interesting things one can do to punish the miscreant, and over such an amusingly long period of time. Humans are fragile; one good joke in retribution and they're just another of the faceless damned souls, not even worth acquiring from the Soul Yards for anything special.

The only notable exception to this policy is when there are angels around, and it's vital that there be no Symphonic disturbance when things get broken. For that, only a human will serve. But even then, even with the most trained operatives, there's a demonic keeper who'll get the praise if the mission works, and the blame if it doesn't.



BANDS

Of the Bands, Kobal highly approves of his fellow Impudites, appreciating their intuitive grasp of human humor and society. Balseraphs, Lilim, and Shedim also hold favor with the Prince of Dark Humor; many Djinn are too single-minded, and most Calabim too coarse, for Kobal's elitist tastes. He does cherish the Habbalah, habitually greeting them with a cheery, "Still doing the work of God, are we?"

These profiles of each Band in Kobal's service are stereotypical, and hardly the *only* kind of behavior seen – just the most common. Kobal values and rewards flexibility in getting a job done, whatever the cost, and that should be kept in mind.

Balseraphs

The Liars of Dark Humor excel at extinguishing the self-esteem of their victims by convincing them that they're stupid or overly gullible. This tends to be an insidious self-fulfilling prophecy, which is exactly the way Balseraphs like it. As they build their wall of lies, explaining misfortune as a result of the victim's own foolishness, it becomes easier and easier for the subject to accept that explanation as valid. The end result is a self-loathing, easily-manipulated target who readily accepts blame for *everything* that goes wrong. Maybe the cosmic irony is that Balseraphs believe this is the natural order of things.

FREE LILIM IN SERVICE TO DARK HUMOR

Like most Princes, Kobal hires the occasional Free Lilim when he doesn't have a competent Servitor in place to do the job . . . but like most Princes, he also uses them for jobs that have to be completely deniable. The wise Lilim will try to find out what category the job falls into *before* closing the deal.

Leaving aside the implicit irony in a Geased Lilim calling herself "Free" – he's never found one without fetters, no matter what they call themselves – Kobal best appreciates a Daughter who has all the qualities he values in his own Servitors, and who might be persuaded to bind eventually. If she also has attunements from other Princes (*especially* ones Dark Humor is hostile to), he will . . . *cultivate* her. Kobal can be very agreeable when he wants to be, and his wealth of Essence lets him be very generous.



Djinn

These demons plant small seeds of doubt that often bear rich, bitter fruit. Experts at destroying trust through the perverse interpretations of the smallest of actions or denials, they see themselves as an extension of their Band tendency to be uncaring and detached about their actions. As they isolate a victim, severing one by one the threads of trust that bind him to his loved ones, they mold him in their own image.

Calabim

Kobal's Calabim tend to be less brawny and more brainy than other Princes'. Most of Kobal's Destroyers believe the act of destruction to be the basis of comedy. They view destruction more in the abstract; not that they mind *physical* destruction, of course, but they recognize that the act of destruction encompasses more than burning down a building or smashing a videotape to bits. They have learned to destroy information . . . to destroy self-esteem . . . to destroy trust itself.



Habbalah

Kobal's Punishers push their victims across the profoundly thin line between laughter and tears, joy and sorrow. They cause inappropriate outbursts of emotions at precisely the wrong moment. Most Kobalite Habbalah view this as an outgrowth of their mission for God: to root out those weak enough to succumb their base impulses at the worst possible time.

This is an important mission in their minds: to test victims and show their weakness to everyone else. In their view, only those worthy enough will be able to check

themselves against these inexplicable urges. Of course, those who successfully resist need to be tested again and again to find the proper breaking point. Those who fail are weak and deserve the scorn of others.

Lilim

Daughters in service to Dark Humor often find themselves in the most amusing, but most dangerous situations. These Lilim have the unique role of finding opportunities for foolish behavior – the kind found in e-mail with subject lines like “Darwin Award Winner” – and then baiting their victims into actually going through with it. Multi-faceted liars and soothers, they geas their victims to unwitting self-destruction.

Shedim

Kobal's Corruptors often consider themselves under-respected in his organization. They have to be creative, because it's difficult to find a new and more funnier way to demean a host once a couple of weeks have gone by. When other Kobalites work with a Shedite, they usually find themselves waiting with bated breath to find out what new calamity will befall the host *this* day.

For the most part, the Shedim see themselves as merely nurturing their hosts' particular inclinations. Some of them become sanctimonious about their work, claiming that they're out to provide entertainment for everyone (except their host). This can make a talented Shedite fun to work with, but annoying to talk to, as nothing grates quite as much as a demon claiming to be “working for a common good.”

Impudites

Impudites make up the majority of Kobal's forces, and they're perhaps the most cruel Band among all of his servants. Kobal's Takers believe that one man's tragedy is everyone else's comedy, and this is a virtue they embrace wholeheartedly. It takes a lot of work to set up the funniest kind of prank of all: one where death is the inevitable result, and the other Bands, as well as Kobal, know it well.

Impudites prefer Roles where they can be in the thick of humanity. Particularly twisted examples include pharmacy assistants, school bus mechanics or drivers, and high school shop teachers. Impudites of Dark Humor need a lot of potential victims around them – mostly because their pranks turn out so badly for the target.

JOBS

Most of Kobal's forces are on Earth; most of the remainder are in Hell. He generally leaves the Marches

to Beleth. Given Beleth's hostility toward him and his Servitors, he needs a very good reason to send Servitors to the ethereal realm.

Celestial Jobs

The kinds of jobs Kobal runs in Hell mirror the kind he runs on Earth (see below). These are political operations against another Prince, intelligence gathering within Shal-Mari, and intelligence gathering outside of Shal-Mari. Finally, there is the elite demonic cadre known as "The Pranksters" (see box).

While Kobal hardly has the spy network that Asmodeus enjoys, he does well with what he has; his demons are smarter than those of the Game, and spend less time looking over their own shoulders. Since Shal-Mari is linked to many other Principalities, it is easy to coax information out of visitors from all over Hell. Likewise, activities which are specifically targeting Shal-Mari or one of its Princes become easier to trace to their true source. And, although Kobal does not have a Hall of Loyalty, he does have a basement with restraints (p. 79) and endlessly looping tapes of several Earthly politicians' public speeches, as well a couple of wretched B-movie classics like *Manos: The Hands of Fate* – things which most demons don't relish seeing for the 100,000th time.

MODES OF ADDRESS

Kobal is (usually) fairly casual about modes of address. To be certain, he does demand some recognition of his position and authority from his underlings, but it doesn't have to be utter and complete obsequiousness. Something along the lines of "Boss," "the Big K," or "the Headliner" is usually sufficient. Kobal's Word-bound behave in the same way as their Master. Each peer level of demons calls each other and their subordinates by name, while they show some (possibly insincere) form of respect toward those higher in the hierarchy of power.

Among other factions in Hell, servants of Kobal are called Kobalites, Jokers, Jesters, and Comedians, sometimes politely and sometimes not. Sometimes they're just referred to with several foul four-letter words strung together in interesting ways. Kobal himself is sometimes called the Funnyman or Mister Happy, but not to his face.

THE PRANKSTERS

This elite corps of Kobalites carries out the most diabolical celestial jobs for Dark Humor. This is the band of demons, for example, who penetrated Asmodeus' Hall of Records and reorganized it for the Game. Chosen only from the most experienced and talented Servitors, they have, at times, full autonomy from the rest of Kobal's power structure.

Rumor has it that the Pranksters have hatched a new plot to make Lucifer smile. Allegedly, this time the target is Kronos, Prince of Fate. Either it's one Hell of a plan, to make Kobal willing to risk his *détente* with that formidable Prince – or they're trying to keep *something* quiet.

The only other jobs that are available in Hell are those which prove a demon's worthiness to be selected for *Earth* duty – arranging for a Vapulan invention to blow up a building full of Servitors of the Game, for instance.

Ethereal Jobs

Although Kobal leaves the Marches to Beleth, he does not completely ignore them. It's not fear of Beleth that keeps Kobal from a larger operation in the Marches, it's just that he hasn't found any specific *use* for the Marches yet. Except, of course, as a punishment that is also a test.

When a Servitor of Kobal fails in a way that might have been either stupidity or sheer bad luck, that demon is sent on a reconnaissance mission into the Marches. If he's caught by Beleth, Kobal usually claims he must have been a rogue, and lets the Princess of Nightmares have them. If they survive, they have proven themselves smart enough to deserve a second chance.

Corporeal Jobs

Traditionally, Kobal's minions have been dedicated to spreading the influence of his Word throughout Earth. This is still important to the Prince, and a lot of effort is spent toward that end. However, more and more agents of Dark Humor are getting orders to participate more directly in the War against Heaven.

Demons who work for Kobal on Earth are expected to do so in the intelligent, subtle way that Kobal prefers. He has many operations occurring on Earth at any given time, and most of them fall into three categories: efforts for the War; political maneuvers against another Demon Prince; and the final, most whimsical category, "just for the Hell of it."

WHEN DARK HUMOR AND GLUTTONY WORK TOGETHER

Dark Humor and Gluttony often cooperate on jobs, and the Gluttons have come to expect that Kobal's demons will be the ones running the show. The Kobalites, for their part, expect the same thing, so it works out for both sides. Servitors of Kobal may get along well with individual Gluttons, but on the whole they feel that Haagenti is a gross idiot, and his Servitors are good only for taking orders. If the Kobalites have too much trouble with a particular Servitor of Haagenti, they'll usually try to trick him into making a mistake that will get him eaten. On the other hand, if they encounter a *smart* Gobbler, they'll try to co-opt him!

Efforts for the War against Heaven have become more common, and Servitors with a keen eye for trends may have detected that. So far, Kobalites have avoided engaging in *direct* confrontation with the Heavenly Host as, for instance, Baal might. Rather, the Jokers tend to use subversion and guerrilla tactics to accomplish the same end with far fewer losses and, they believe, better and more accountable results. It's too early to say definitely whether or not Kobal's new emphasis is having the desired effect on the War. One thing is certain, and that is Dark Humor will play an expanding role in the fight.

Few Princes grasp the workings of humanity and events on Earth as well as Kobal, and he uses this to his advantage. If his operatives can selectively thwart the operations of other Princely factions and pin the blame

on "those damn humans" then it becomes more than just smart play – it's also funny as Hell.

Occasionally, Kobal is presented with an opportunity which is so singularly striking and comical that he simply cannot pass it up. Operations which fit into this category often serve no direct strategic purpose – they just tickle Kobal's own sense of humor. If an especially self-righteous religious figure is caught in a kinky sexual escapade, and is mocked and destroyed by the media, that might just be business for Kobal. But when two "gangsta" rap stars shoot each other by accident, it's hard to see how it advanced the cause of Hell. It's just *funny*. Nonetheless, these operations are treated as carefully as any other corporeal jobs.

Unusual Jobs

Some of Kobal's Earthly agents have a special job: find promising comedians and ruin their lives. Not enough to make them suicide, and certainly not enough to make them change careers . . . just enough to blacken their outlook forever and turn them into unwitting agents of Dark Humor.

Kobal also has a more or less permanent group of demons who search for prospective servants of Dark Humor and evaluate them. These Jesters tend to work with imps and demonlings throughout Shal-Mari, and occasionally venture into other Principalities to find new Servitors for Kobal. It's a relatively safe job, and well rewarded, so these demons have ample motivation to meet their Boss' exacting standards for potential proteges.





Coping with Job Stress

It's hard work being funny all the time, or, rather, being *intellectually* funny. Slapstick can blow off steam if a Kobalite is on the verge of burnout, but it's more likely to backfire and the Boss doesn't like it.

Some Servitors of Dark Humor "relax" by pulling stunts on each other, or various other demons in the area. Having to make something both amusing and relatively harmless to Role, vessel, or soul can be a suffi-

cient change of pace to stave off boredom. This sort of "private" joking is also a way for Kobalites to play status games. The perfect coup is to prank someone in a way so clever that he'd lose even more face by taking public offense.

But the most popular way for Jesters to unwind is by watching someone *else* be funny. It can be a source of ideas, but best of all, it's superficially supporting their Prince's Word while the Servitor gets to take it easy for a while. Mostly, it's just a night or two, attending some live performance of some kind – preferably comedy.

In fact, one thing that I have noticed . . . is that all of these conspiracy theories depend on the perpetrators being endlessly clever. I think you'll find the facts also work if you assume everyone is endlessly stupid.

– Brian E. Moore

RELATIONS

Naturally, Kobalites get along well with Servitors of Haagenti, though things go best when the Gluttons remember who's in charge. Likewise, they know they need to "play nice" with Servitors of Princes their Master is associated with. And, of course, they'd better not get caught being chummy with minions of Asmodeus, Baal, Kronos, or Valefor. Especially Kronos and Asmodeus. Pulling clever (and deniable) pranks on those is the better course.

*All things in nature are lyrical
in their ideal essence, comic in
their existence and tragic in
their fate.*

– George Santayana

However, a wise Jester knows that Nybbas' people will try to cozy up sometimes, and while Kobal has the stranglehold on Shal-Mari cineplexes, on Earth it's become the other way around. Most of Dark Humor's demons would think little of dropping in on the local Media demons and trying to trade a few minor favors.

Valefor's lot are more confusing, though – they *know* the Thieves aren't people to associate with (or, rather, get caught associating with), but they're often, well, friendly. While most Kobalites simply take the opportunity to pull pranks on such obviously stupid demons, others sometimes get Thief-shy. What *are* they planning, trying to ingratiate themselves to Dark Humor when they know Kobal hates their Prince for some reason?

When working with "friendly" demons in an area, or on a joint mission, Kobalites are happy enough to let the other Servitors think they're running the show. (Rarely, they'll have enough respect for a given demon that they'll *really* let him run things.)

The relationship between the Princes of Factions and Dark Humor has become strained with recent events on Earth. They're still *officially* friendly, but relations are rapidly chilling. Most Kobalites, though, don't quite grasp how delicate the situation may be, and interact with Factions as they have for centuries. The more perceptive ones are careful to make sure that they take credit with their Boss for the successes, and minimize the mention of any Factioners involved. The *most* intelligent and perceptive Jesters already have some elaborate scams in place which will take out some of their Malphan

"friends" as soon as Kobal gives the word. There's a chance matters might improve, but only time will tell.

One Prince who Kobal is attempting to improve relations with is Vapula, the Prince of Technology. Kobal isn't stupid enough to think that just because he got cineplexes in Shal-Mari first, that he can sit on his laurels. If he wants to remain competitive with the Media – and he does, since that's the best way to spread his Word – even if just in Hell, he'll have to keep on top of changing events. And Vapula is the best ally to have in that area. Therefore, Kobal has been volunteering select demons for Vapula to take in and train in the ways of Technology, and has offered favors and Essence in exchange for useful gadgets. So far, the Habbalite Prince hasn't returned the interest enough for a real association to form, but Kobal keeps working on it.



RELATIONSHIPS

Not many sane people will get into a relationship with a dedicated Kobalite. It's not their dissonance condition and the hazards of being a nearby target, it's that dedicated Jesters *really* get into finding funny things to mock in other people – whether they're associates, friends, or bedmates.

Less obsessive Comedians are more likely to find a steady partner, especially if they're looking for someone who won't pick at *them* in the standard Kobalite fashion – i.e., someone who serves another (friendly) Superior. (Even there, the other party had better be good at diverting the Jester's attention for the daily dose of mockery.)

The most "equal" relationships, however, are those between two Servitors of Dark Humor. They know what to expect, and give back as good as they get when it comes to scorn and mockery. There are a very few Jesters (usually both on Earth) who actually rely on each other, having built up enough back-handed respect that they're each sure that the other would protect them from anything – lest one lose the opportunity to *personally* drown the other in a tub of latex.

Naturally, human associates are picked for their later humor value. Nine times out of ten, their "personal friends" end up on the eleven o'clock news saying things like, "I did it all for my boyfriend. I love you, Danny!"

Cross-Word Relationships

Given the tendency of Dark Humor to constantly find fault with their partner, it's difficult to find servants of other Words who are willing to put up with it. Again, it can and does occasionally happen, much to the amusement of the other Kobalites. Most Words which manage to stick together in any kind of relationship are complementary to one another. For example, a servant of Media and Dark Humor would work better as a team than a servant of Theft and Dark Humor might.

A further constraint on cross-Word relationships is the current and shifting political situation in Hell: how the other Demon Prince gets along with Kobal is obviously going to strongly impact the outcome of a given relationship. Carrying on a "forbidden" relationship is going to be a dangerous and perhaps even deadly decision.

Most partners of a relationship involving a Kobalite spend a good deal of time finding ways to focus the servant of Dark Humor's attention away from the relationship *per se*, and on to some other, hopefully more interesting target. If it's a group activity that both partners can share in, so much the better.



DEALING WITH KOBAL

When interacting with their Boss, the Servitors of Kobal may be smiling, even witty, but they will always be respectful. They may not particularly *like* him, but they understand that he's been a Demon Prince this long for a reason. Some underlings occasionally try to showcase a new gag or prank they're working on when Kobal stops by – it had better be truly new and innovative. Nothing is more deflating to the ego than when



the Prince finishes the joke before the Servitor's even halfway done. Typically, he supplies the punchline and offhandedly remarks that he saw the joke in 1528, in a German beerhouse, and it was done better at the time, all the while fiddling with a cufflink. Summarily dismissed in shame is *not* the way you want to face your fellow Kobalites the next day – you'll never live it down.

Conversely, Comedians do feel an equally gratifying sense of accomplishment (with incumbent gain in respect from their peers) if they can wrench a smile out of the increasingly gloomy Demon Prince.

Servitors seeking to gain Kobal's attention generally try to engineer their own sweeping prank on whichever plane they're working: Earth or Hell. If they're successful, the Prince may personally offer a token of appreciation to the lucky demon. If unsuccessful . . . well, it's almost as much fun to mock the failures as to enjoy watching someone else's success. The unlucky demon may also get a personally delivered note. It's one of those twists of irony that Kobal enjoys. "Thank you for failing so spectacularly on Hellwide television . . ."

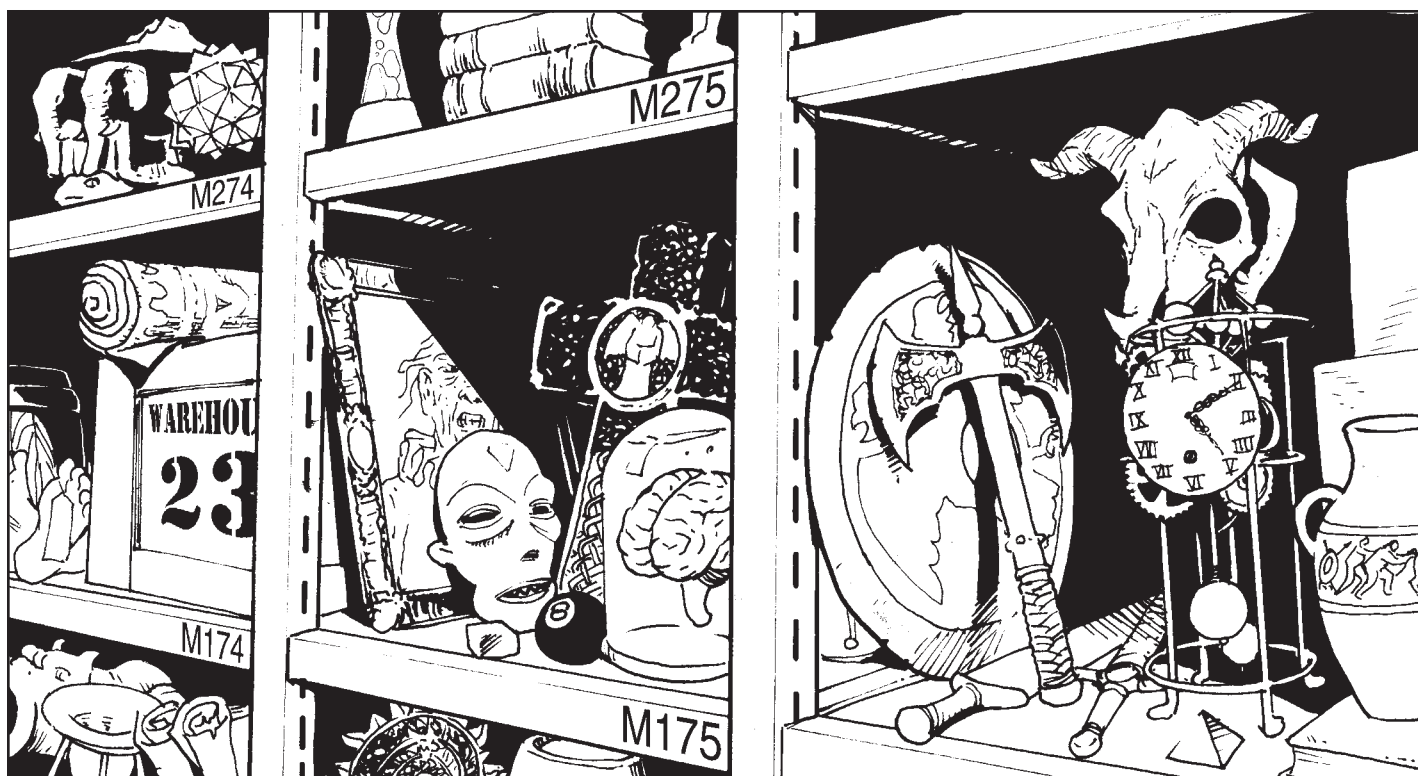
Jokers who want to avoid Kobal's attention can try to keep a low profile. But this can backfire. Those who don't want to stand out rarely enjoy working for Kobal for very long, as opportunities for assignments (and promotions) are parceled out based on past performance. "What have you done for Dark Humor lately?" is the usual way to suggest that a low-profile minion is becoming lazy – and a target.

When Kobal deals with fellow Superiors, he usually tries to present himself as witty but dignified. He'll drop verbal barbs or puns when he can time them correctly. What many Superiors find so irritating is that he always seems to get away with this behavior. Those not the target of the moment may laugh at his jokes, but they know full well that Kobal has no favorites and few fears. One of Kobal's favorite activities is to make hamburger from other Princes' sacred cows.

THY NAME IS DARK HUMOR



Kobal has occasionally seeded bursts of extreme *silliness* in his troops. Usually, no one other than Kobal (and possibly Lucifer) knows why. In one case, he decided to make his Servitors wear fish ties for a week. Ostensibly, Kobal offered the prestige of owning Hell's Worst Tie, a bit of visual humor more usually scorned by the Prince. (In fact, he was giving a harmless but senseless order, just to see how his leaders would handle it.) In Hell, naturally, this led to competition where each Kobalite tried to outdo the others in sheer tacky tie



power. After a near riot in the streets of Shal-Mari, Kobal “reluctantly” rescinded the order, although he was pleased with the results of his experiment.

STRANGE RELICS

Kobal’s Domain is where old relics go to die. Abandoned, forgotten, or unwanted for one reason or another, Kobal has cataloged and collected an impression assortment of seemingly useless enchanted items from all over Hell, the Marches, and Earth. Some of the more esoteric items are an endlessly refilling flask of vomit, a mirror that only reflects back half an image, and a solid iron colander which somehow manages to strain liquid anyway.

A few useful artifacts *are* known to exist in Kobal’s safekeeping. These include the Cornerstone of Lucifer, allegedly a fist-sized hunk of Lucifer’s old Cathedral in Heaven, rumored to warp the notes of the Symphony so perfectly that even Seraphim are unable to detect lies told by its possessor. Another is the Pitcher of Kzath, the long-dead Demon of Hypnosis. Anyone who drinks liquid from the pitcher instantly falls into a suggestive hypnotic state for a period of several *months*.



FUN AND GAMES

Naturally, there is no love lost between Asmodeus and Kobal. Asmodeus is humorless and has no patience for Kobal’s loose rules – or for being a “straight man” to the Impudite Prince’s jokes. This obviously carries over to their minions, but Kobalites are *clever*.

Sometimes, they’re almost suicidally clever, if they think of a prank that will embarrass the Game in such a way that they can’t be arrested without the Asmodeans looking even *more* foolish. On a smaller scale, it’s always been an art form among servants of Dark Humor to weasel out of obligations to the Game; the more inventive the excuses for this, the better.

Over the millennia, Kobal’s demons fancy that they’ve taught the Gamesters to respect them unconsciously, if not overtly. When challenged, they negotiate from a stance of obsequious equality. When this fails spectacularly enough, they can usually manage to go to their executions with a jibe on their lips, which irritates the Game’s minions more than they will ever admit.

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IMPEDITE PRINCE OF THE MEDIA

94

The world is what you think I say it is, half off this one-time sale. Call today!

NYBBAS

Nybbas is the newest major Prince in Hell. In 1884, with several human allies, he invented the television. His immediate crowning by Lucifer was unexpected – Nybbas was a low-ranked servant of Vapula at the time, without even a Word of his own – and caused great controversy on both sides of the celestial front. Television has forever changed the way mankind thinks and dreams. Nybbas' plot to mold the psyches of humanity is working all too well.

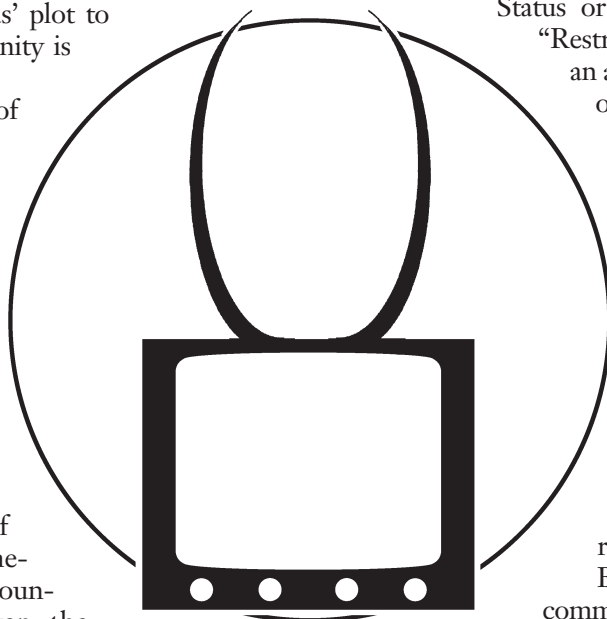
The Hollywood point of view best embodies Nybbas' unrealistic attitudes: to the Prince of the Media, beautiful people are stars, most members of humanity are disposable extras or consumers to exploit, and reality is a script that can be rewritten when it is too boring. His manner and appearance are worse than that of the most horrifying game-show hosts, his grinning countenance terrifying to even the most cheerful Girl Scout troop. He can look good if he wants to, but why bother? He's the studio head. People are supposed to look good for *him*.

He's full of disdain for everyone he manipulates – and he feels, not without reason, that anyone who helps him is his puppet. Although he works very closely with Andrealphus and Vapula, the other Princes of Hell see that he only tolerates them. They fear that he is gearing up for revenge against those who slighted him when he was an underling. The parallels to Haagenti are too great to ignore.

Nybbas doesn't seem to notice the uneasiness he causes among his peers, but who can tell what he's feeling behind those glasses and that perpetual smirk?

DISSONANCE

The machinery of the Media needs endless fodder. Servitors of Nybbas acquire dissonance if they do not spend at least an hour every day contributing to the growth of the world's media. This encompasses everything from writing a newspaper article to creating a Web page. Once caught up, this dissonance vanishes.



BAND ATTUNEMENTS

Nybbas gives each of his Servitors a human servant: a media junkie or other pawn of the media. (In Hell, the lackey is a damned soul.) The servant is worth character points equal to twice the demon's Celestial Forces. The demon can spend points to improve his servant's Status or Resource level, at the usual rate.

"Restricted" attunements may still provide an additional servant of the typical sort – only the resonance-dependant part is not available.

Balseraphs (restricted)

By using his resonance to impose his dark Will upon any medium – typically a television or a magazine, though computers and many other media are also vulnerable – a Liar working for Nybbas can make it read anything he desires while his victim is reading or watching.

Balseraphs of the Media typically command entertainment lawyers, script writers, producers, and other highly paid liars.

Djinn (restricted)

Bouncers and bodyguards, Nybbas' Djinn are found on studio sets, location shoots, and homes of the famous – perfect positions for action, any time. They tend to make friends with humans working at similar jobs, and have at least one vicious servant who'll come when called. As a lucky side effect, these demons are always attuned to their servants, who don't count against their total possible attunements.

Calabim

Nybbas' Calabim create group events which bring people together for insane public displays of violence and mayhem. Put simply, they have sports heroes serving them.

Habbalah

Habbalah of the Media are associated with New-Age metaphysical freaks, who hungrily take credit for the demons' celestial actions. These demons create no disturbance in the Symphony when their doings appear to have been performed by their "psychic friends."

Lilim

Lilim aren't assigned to stars; they *are* stars. For free, each Lilim starts with a Role at a level and Status equal to her Corporeal Forces. Her servant is a faithful fan.

Shedim (restricted)

These demons may inhabit the servants whom Nybbas assigns to them for as long as they like, without making Will rolls as they come and go from their servant hosts. They must still corrupt their hosts, and purchase this attunement more than once for multiple servants, but when a mortal becomes too corrupt to use, their Band Attunement allows them to be assigned a new one.

Impudites

Impudites are the ultimate groupies. They cling relentlessly to their idols, who are actually their servants, sucking the Essence from them as their stars shine more brightly. These demons are generally assigned to humans who excel as entertainers.

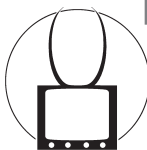
SERVITOR ATTUNEMENTS

Fifteen Minutes of Fame

When this attunement is used, the subject (who need not be the demon controlling it) becomes the target of mass hysteria. People nearby stop what they are doing and pursue the subject, screaming with delight and trying to get an autograph or a piece of clothing. This can be highly disconcerting to someone who is not expecting it, and will most certainly draw the attention of anyone within earshot. The affected people in the crowd don't want to *harm* the target, although they may do so inadvertently in their struggle to get closer.

This effect costs 1 Essence, lasts for 15 minutes and affects people who come within (Corporeal Forces) yards of the target during that time. The target must be visible for the attunement to work, but may be viewed through any live visual media. For each Essence spent, the radius enlarges another (Corporeal Forces) yards, and lasts for another 15 minutes. People beyond the range of the attunement may still be swept up as they react to the atmosphere of excitement.

Fifteen Minutes of Fame cannot be resisted by the target, but has no effect if no one is within range of the target. People affected by the attunement may make a Will roll to resist (celestials add Celestial Forces). GMs may wish to limit Will rolls to PCs and important NPCs, and assume that the rest of the crowd is affected.



Demons of the Media sometimes use Fifteen Minutes of Fame to harass Soldiers of God or angels trying to keep a low profile, but mostly they just enhance the seeming importance of their pet stars.

Green Light

Using this power, Servitors of the Media can make someone temporarily agree to their suggestions. Just as a star actor or director can "green light" a project by lending themselves to it, so can servants of Nybbas make things happen just by mentioning them. The suggestion must be related to the media in some way (GM's discretion). The demon spends 2 Essence, and the next idea he suggests within the next ten minutes will be accepted by the target, who will usually say something like, "Oh, if it's *your* idea, Bob . . ."

Green Light may be used to cause harm, but only if it is in the cause of the Media. ("You know, your ratings would skyrocket if you died a tragic death . . . do you want to live out the rest of your life as a washed-out has-been, or go out in a blaze of glory and be the next James Dean?") The victim should get a bonus to his Will roll against suggestions that would cause physical harm to him or someone he cares for. The size of the bonus depends on the danger of the suggestion (GM's decision).

Green Light may be used once per day, on one target. Targets may negate the effect with a Will roll (celestials add their Celestial Forces). It lasts 24 hours; then the victim reverts to his original opinion, but 24 hours is quite long enough to get some contracts signed . . .

Jingle

A Nybbyte can implant a catchy tune in someone's head. For each point of Essence, the demon can affect 10 people in person, or 5% of the listening audience, through some avenue of the Media (radio, TV, CDs, etc.). Live or recorded, after the song has played once, the Jingle attunement fades away. The demon must choose the song to be implanted when he spends the Essence. Once that song airs, the victims of the attunement won't be able to stop thinking about the chosen tune for 24 hours. It will even invade their dreams. People who cannot hear the song will not be affected.

Demons of the Media can use Jingle to send a message or warning. They pick a tune that has meaning for the recipients, then use the attunement to make sure the message gets through. This is not a very accurate process, though, and usually the targets of the attunement are displeased to have the chosen lyrics stuck in their minds for an entire day.

Soundtrack

It's a loose tie to the Symphony, but better than nothing. For 1 Essence, the demon hears a soundtrack inside his head which reflects the mood of the moment, lasting (10 × Celestial Forces) minutes. For example, if the demon is in trouble, he hears a foreboding theme; if he's in the clear, he hears triumphant crescendos. It's hard to surprise such a demon; if his luck suddenly changes, he knows it a round in advance.

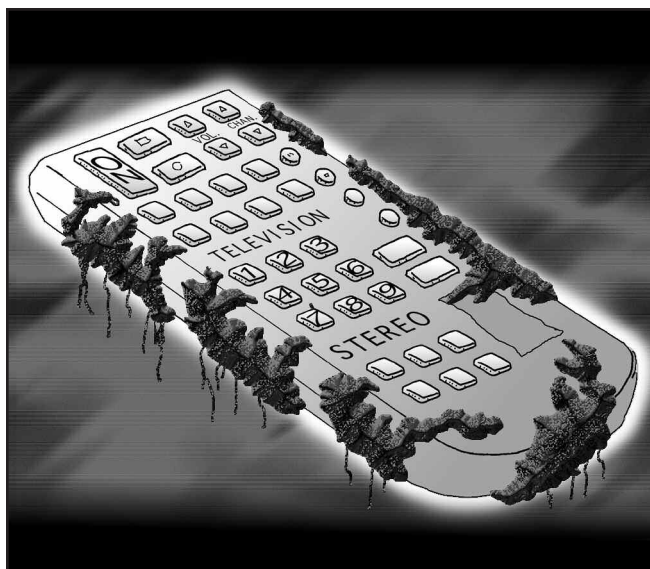
Subliminal

The demon can bind a Song or an attunement into a medium (such as film, art, videotape, or audio recording). This takes twice the power's normal Essence cost, or 1 point for a power that normally requires no Essence.

The embedded power affects the first person to understand the message (with a Perception roll). The GM decides which abilities can be embedded in this fashion.

The person embedding the message must specify any variable effects. For example, when embedding the Celestial Song of Form in a newspaper, the demon must decide what effect it will have on the user's form.

Spending more Essence allows the user to affect multiple people. (For example, a piece of music carrying the Ethereal Song of Projection can affect 1 person for 4 Essence, 2 for 8, or 3 for 12.)



Universal Remote

This attunement allows the wielder to control any media devices (radio, TV set, VCR, DVD, laser-disc player, etc.) within (Celestial Forces) yards. The demon can turn the power on and off, adjust the volume, change channels or stations, and stop, play, fast forward, or

rewind – anything its normal controls could do. He can control the color, shade, brightness, and contrast of any screen. This ability lasts for one hour per point of Essence spent, and confers no supernatural powers upon the affected devices. Computers are affected, but Universal Remote does not allow typing or mouse usage, so it mainly affects the power and monitor.

You'll Never Do Lunch in This Town Again

This is the opposite of the Fifteen Minutes of Fame attunement (see p. 96). When this attunement is used, the subject seems to fade from the attention of those around him. Waiters pass him by, hosts forget to seat him, friends can't remember his name, etc.

This attunement requires 1 Essence, lasts for 15 minutes, and affects anyone who comes within Corporeal Forces yards of the target during that time. The target must be visible for the attunement to work, but may be viewed through any live visual media. For each Essence spent, the radius enlarges another Corporeal Forces yards, and lasts for another 15 minutes. You'll Never Do Lunch in This Town Again cannot be resisted by the target, but has no effect if there are no people within range of the target.

People who know the target can make a Perception roll to remember him (if they wish). The roll is normal for acquaintances, +1 for friends, and +2 for family members. Celestials add their Celestial Forces to their Perception roll.

DISTINCTIONS

Knight of Influence

Demons of this rank have an hour of radio or TV air time per week at their disposal (as newscasters, invited guests, musicians, etc.) in which to inundate the public with strange new media concepts. Each time they successfully put on their show, they regain 3 Essence.

Captain of Swank

Demons of this rank raise their reaction rolls by 3 for people who follow any sort of media (TV, sports, etc.).

Baron of the Fourth Estate

Demons of this rank can use the Subliminal attunement on ten people for the same cost as on one. For example, the Corporeal Song of Charm can affect ten people for 2 Essence, 20 for 4, 30 for 6, etc.

SECRET SONGS

Nybbas has access to some of the Secret Songs that most Princes know, such as Fruition (*Liber Canticorum*, p. 70) and Pestilence (*Liber Canticorum*, pp. 73-74), but being a young Prince, he has none of his own, yet. He'd rather spend his energy on finding and creating artifacts, although if he had a chance to learn up a Secret Song, he'd take it. He's especially interested in the Song of Correspondence (*Liber Canticorum*, p. 66), since he hasn't managed to find a seller for that one since his ascension.

SPECIAL DISTINCTIONS

Nybbas, one of the next generation of Princes (his words), has no use for the musty titles of the old guard. Instead of Dukes or other quaint terms, he has *Agents* and *Moguls*.

Agent

Nybbas' Agents are tough, savvy operators from the top ranks of the Media's organization. They have a proven track record of spotting what could be hot property, and getting a share of it for the Boss. People, activities, things . . . even celestials are scouted and signed to Nybbas' purposes. Most of the time, the people involved don't know who they're dealing with, but Agents also locate potential Soldiers of Hell. Because of their goals, Agents frequently receive support from Servitors of Fate.

Agents are expected to produce quick results and high profits. They accelerate careers, pushing people to use their talent at maximum overdrive until they are used up and burnt out. Those on the way down are dropped for new meat. As Agents like to say, "The star that burns twice as bright, burns half as long – but who cares? There's always another one."

The rank of Agent carries no special abilities, but Agents always have other Distinctions, usually as Captains or Barons (and out-rank a non-Agent who holds the same Distinction). The title is by no means permanent, but Agents have to demonstrate staying power to earn their title in the first place, so they're among the most stable fixtures in the Media hierarchy.

Mogul

This is the highest rank that Nybbas awards. Moguls are the elite of the Media, and there are rarely more than 10 of them at any given time. They are the CEOs of

Nybbas' holdings, and they are responsible for promoting wide aspects of the Word of the Media. There are always Moguls in charge of the following areas: TV, Movies, Music, Print, Radio, Miscellaneous, and Development. Moguls in charge of Computers and the Internet have a notoriously poor track record; no one currently holds these positions.

Miscellaneous and Development are considered the two most challenging posts, because they require the most original thinking. Miscellaneous covers anything that could be tied to the Media but doesn't come under one of the other headings. Mapmaking and telemarketing are two such areas. The Miscellaneous Mogul is expected to constantly discover new avenues for Media exploitation. The Mogul in charge of Development oversees research into new technology and artifacts, and works closely with Vapula.

As with Agents, Moguls do not have special abilities conferred upon them when they take their positions, but they have so much power and so many resources at their disposal, anything more would be overkill.

RELATIONS

Nybbas is the youngest major Prince in Hell, and he inspires strong feelings – either for or against him. He's held his title for only slightly over a century, so his relations with Hell's royalty are not stable yet, and may deteriorate or improve much more rapidly than those between well-established Princes.

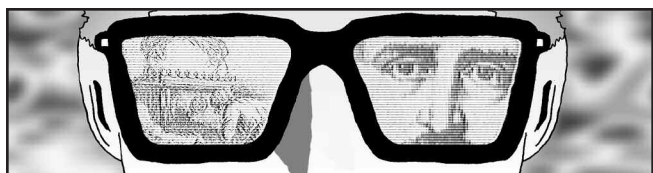
Nybbas is drawn to Princes who are either young (relatively speaking), or who have a very modern style – Andrealphus, Vapula, Haagenti, and Kobal all fit this pattern. Nybbas is only peripherally interested in Factions for the great news footage Malphas create, and because people who are alone often rely on the media to give their lives meaning, but Malphas allies himself with the Media because it easily functions as an extension of his Word. Fate is an ancient concept, but Nybbas works with Kronos because their goals are often parallel. As to the more militant Princes, Nybbas finds their ideology tedious, if not their methods. He didn't Fall, he doesn't have any scores to settle against Heaven. Why can't the others get over it and lighten up?

Allied: *Andrealphus (Andrealphus and Malphas are Allied with Nybbas)*

Associated: *Kobal, Kronos, Vapula (Haagenti, Kronos, Valefor, and Vapula are Associated with Nybbas)*

Hostile: *Baal, Saminga (Asmodeus, Baal, Beleth, and Saminga are Hostile to Nybbas)*

Enemy: *No one*



BASIC RITES

- ✦ Spend three consecutive hours watching television.
- ✦ Spend six consecutive hours listening to the radio.

EXPANDED RITES

Nybbas occasionally offers additional Rites as rewards.

- ✦ Be in the audience of a daytime talk show.
- ✦ Be a guest on a daytime talk show. (+2 Essence)
- ✦ Successfully pitch a film script.
- ✦ Sign a new band to a record label.

CHANCE OF INVOCATION: 4

INVOCATION MODIFIERS

- +1 A color television
- +2 A department store display window
- +3 At the editor's desk of a major newspaper
- +4 On the set of a live television broadcast
- +5 The physical location of a web site in the top ½ percent of hits per month.
- +6 On the set of a live television broadcast being viewed by more than 10,000,000 people.

Nybbytes won't usually kill you. They'll dig into your past, bound your family and friends, and if they can't find some dirt on you, they'll make it up. Who cares if it's true? Once the Five o'Clock News calls you an "alleged" child molester, you might as well emigrate to the Antarctic.

*– Claire Schwartz,
Soldier of God*

NYBBAS. THIS IS YOUR LIFE!

*"The medium is the message."
– Marshall McLuhan*

NAMES, APPEARANCE, AND MANNER

Nybbas. The Boss. The Head Honcho. The Big Cheese. Sir.

Nybbas is called by all these names, and more. Unlike other Superiors, he does not mind being addressed in a casual manner. It goes with his cultivated persona of sleazy game-show host/Hollywood player. As long as the title implies that he's number one, he doesn't care how cheesy it sounds.

In his corporeal form, Nybbas appears as a wiry, medium-sized man in a shockingly tasteless suit and bad glasses. In his celestial form, Nybbas appears as a wiry, medium-sized man in a shockingly tasteless suit and bad glasses – with leather wings and horns. He can change his appearance, and does so on occasion, but he believes the three planes of existence revolve around him, so why should he bother? He doesn't want to look like someone else, he wants to look like *Nybbas*. Because he's the MAN! His look is an instantly recognizable trademark, and that kind of brand recognition doesn't grow on trees, kid.

His energy level is usually somewhere between hyperactive and manic. He paces around, snapping his fingers, spewing ideas, and always checking his audience by saying, "Right? Am I right?" The expected answer is, "Yeah, that's a great idea!" Crassness comes naturally to him. He has an invasive physical manner, using touch to create a false feeling of friendship; he shakes hands a lot, puts his arms around people's shoulders, and pats them on the back. He calls everyone by their first name, or a nickname that he makes up, or sometimes just "baby." Despite this repellantly brash style, his Princely charm is so powerful that most people feel thrilled and honored by his attention.

Occasionally, when he is in the midst of serious negotiations, he will still all the outward signs of his energy and focus it entirely on the person across the table from him. Lowering his voice to a stage whisper, he gathers his opponent into his confidence, and then explains, "This is how it has to be." Few can resist the Prince of the Media when he uses his entire will to get his way.

THE WORD OF THE MEDIA

"In regard to propaganda the early advocates of universal literacy and a free press envisaged only two possibilities: the propaganda might be true, or it might be false. They did not foresee what in fact has happened, above all in our Western capitalistic democracies – the development of a vast mass communications industry, concerned in the main neither with the true nor the false but with the unreal, the more or less totally irrelevant. In a word, they failed to take into account man's almost infinite appetite for distractions."

– Aldous Huxley

The Media is like a drug. It is addictive, expensive, and useless or damaging to the user. Go ahead, try to stop using it . . .

The Media is like a cancer. It grows constantly, remaking what was healthy and productive into its own corrupt image, resistant to any but the most drastic measures to remove it.

The Media is like a machine. It is merciless, inhuman, unstoppable, spewing out whatever garbage is put into it without thought.

*Whom the gods would destroy,
they first give television.*

– Arthur C. Clarke

The Media is all these things, and more. Its mutability and lack of form or substance are what defines it. As in the story *Roshamon*, or the famous proverb of the blind men and the elephant, the media is capable of being many things at the same time, many of them contradictory, and all of them (somewhat) true. The media is not about truth or falsehood, although it frequently claims to be, but about *point of view*. Humans see the same object or scene and remember different things about it. Demons, disconnected as they are from the Symphony, also cling to their personal view of the world. This is why the Media is so compatible with Factions, and why angels, so close to the Truth, find both the Media and humanity disturbingly fickle.

The Word of the Media is perfectly suited to its Impudite Prince: It's all about taking, in the guise of giving. It purports to give entertainment, but what it really offers is distraction. In return, it gobbles up people's time, money, emotions, creativity, individuality, and even

their lives, if they allow it. It is the new opiate of the masses; the more that people interact with the Media, the more they crave it. The Media has nothing to do with using technology for expression, communication, or enlightenment. Make people too self-sufficient and they won't need news magazines and disease-of-the-week movies. Far better to make them dependant on its endless stream of titillation and trivia.

The Media began when the technology was created to support it, and has been intertwined with technology ever since. Technology is sometimes put to good use – educating people, connecting people, opening up new vistas for the human race. These are unfortunate side-effects, in Nybbas' view, but he's certainly not above turning truly creative enterprises into Essence factories. That is one of the Media's strengths – even positive uses of the media feed Nybbas' Word.

On the surface (a term used frequently when discussing the Media), the Word is liberal and permissive. But that is just the appearance that it gives by always stooping to the lowest common denominator. Nybbas is an equal opportunity employer; he'll employ hacks and geniuses right alongside one another. This usually frustrates both the hack and the genius into an early grave. Nybbas will bring together those of different class, race, religion, and politics, as long as the result is a (photogenic) heated argument, preferably with security guards involved.

Trying to destroy the Media is like killing a hydra; for every head you cut off, two grow in its place, and on top of that, it isn't even real. Attacking any one person or organization in the Media does not hurt the Media. They'll just send people to film the fracas, and put it on the news.

The Media is also autovivorous – in other words, it feeds on itself. A TV show can become a movie, which spawns a book, which is hyped on a talk-show. A band can be in a video directed by someone who won an award for directing commercials. The award show was televised, and simulcast on the Internet. If nothing at all happened in the real world one day, the Media might not even notice.

However, despite its strengths, the Media has an enormous weakness. Since it has no substance, it must be continually reinvented. People get tired of distractions, and they need new ones constantly or they'll find something else to do. Those who serve the Media can never rest. The moment they take a break, somewhere a viewer is turning off his TV and going for a walk. Nybbas has no tolerance for loss of ratings. If he could go straight from a nobody to a Prince, his Servitors should at least be able to produce a 100% audience share every hour of every day. That's no greater miracle. Now go! Get moving! Make some *magic*, people!

INTRUSIVE USES OF TECHNOLOGY

"All phone calls are obscene."

— Karen Elizabeth Gordon

Nybbas likes to take a very broad view of his Word. He believes that all intrusive uses of information technology fall under his jurisdiction. Although telephones are not what most people think of as a media outlet, Nybbas thinks they are. After all, they're a way to invade people's homes with information about a myriad of

wonderful products they never knew they needed. Voice mail and answering machines have thwarted him somewhat, but people still answer ringing telephones like a pack of Pavlov's dogs. The Prince of the Media thinks this is good obedience training for the masses, and has encouraged the use of pagers and cell phones, portraying them as a sign of status, rather than an annoyance and an encumbrance. After all, people ought to have a link to the Media wherever they go.

HISTORY

"The liar's paradox in logic derives from the fact that the statement 'I am lying' is true if and only if it's false. The celebrity's paradox derives from the fact that the statement 'I am famous' is true if and only if it's heard by a sufficient number of people."

— John Allen Paulos

No one can say with accuracy exactly when Nybbas came into being, because at the time, no one cared enough to notice. He was just yet another Impudite of Technology running around in a lab coat. If he showed more than the average amount of ambition and political acumen, most higher-ranking demons didn't think they had to worry until he had a Distinction, if not a Word. But Nybbas was already looking at life as though he was the leading man in a high drama; he felt instinctively that his rise would be meteoric. He had no idea how this would come about, but he worked incessantly, trying to invent something spectacular that would launch his career.

Like most Vapulan Impudites, Nybbas had a pair of Essence-sensing glasses, which he wore at all times. Nobody seems to remember seeing him without them, but of course at the time, he wasn't very memorable. No one cared if a non-Word-bound demon had a minor quirk. He affected a mirrored finish on them, obscuring his eyes and reflecting the viewer's own appearance back at them. If eyes are windows to the soul, then Nybbas had his shutters closed.

As an Impudite, he was drawn to humans, and appreciated their ability to imagine things no demon would think of. In the mid-1800s, he began to do his research and experimentation exclusively on Earth, with human partners. The idea of live, remote images fascinated him; being able to project his charm into people's homes, to draw Essence from thousands, maybe millions of people at a time . . . This was the project he was looking for.

Then, in 1884, Nybbas and his human research team succeeded in inventing a proto-television, or as it was called at the time, "electrical telescope."

Vapula took notice of his Servitor's achievement and saw its potential, although not with Nybbas' burning vision. The Prince of Technology planned to make Nybbas a Knight, and petitioned Lucifer to give the young demon the Word of the Media. Vapula believed that he was advancing a powerful new servant of Technology, and was completely unprepared for what happened.

The Dark Lord appeared to Nybbas and observed the new invention. Then he turned to the nervous Impudite and said,

"You have created the light that will bring the darkness. I give you the Word of the Media."

"Thank you, Lightbringer," said Nybbas.

"And you're a Prince."

"... Thank you, Lightbringer . . ." breathed the astonished Superior. And with that, Lucifer was gone.



THE INVENTION OF THE TELEVISION

Most mundanes associate television's invention with James Logie Baird, who gave the first demonstration of actual, working TV by electrically transmitting pictures in 1926. But television goes back to at least Paul Nipkow's 1884 patent, in Germany, on an actual television system. Nybbas claims that he and his people were the ones who funded the research and taught humanity about television, and that his 1884 invention was more advanced than Nipkow's. Some of his detractors mutter that humans were getting to it on their own. Cornering a Servitor of Lightning to ask *him* about the subject – was TV demonic influence, or human ingenuity? – just gets a bleak stare . . . and often a bit of Symphonic disturbance if his questioners are demons.

The first thing the Impudite thought of was Essence. He knew the other Princes would rip him apart if he didn't consolidate his position quickly, and he needed Essence to defend and enlarge his meager empire. But how was he to generate it? The electrical telescope had gained him a Princedom, but it was far too early in its

development to reach the masses, and wasn't going to fulfill its promise for years. However, there were other ways of reaching out to humanity, making them like him, and then tearing the Essence from their souls. He just needed to think BIG! Forget conservative, forget tasteful, he wanted a reaction, and he wanted it *now*! After all, he was a *Prince*, wasn't he? He hadn't had to wait for millennia to get his big break, he'd *earned* it on the fast-track, and he was never going to wait for anything again.

Despite this hyperbolic attitude, the young Prince knew he needed more protection than he could provide for himself, so he turned to his former master, Vapula, and the two of them made a deal. Not even the other Princes claim to know exactly what passed between them, but it seems obvious that Nybbas couldn't have survived his "adolescence" on his own. Vapula never did anything overt to help him, but there was an uncommon amount of cooperation between the two, and at the time no Prince was bold enough, or cared enough, to test the extent of Vapula's patronage. Of course, some of them may have been cautious because they didn't know why Lucifer chose Nybbas, and didn't want to take action that might attract the Dark Lord's negative attention.

As word spread of Nybbas' rise, the Media attracted hordes of young demons who wanted to get to the top quickly, all of them inspired by their Prince's incredible

YELLOW JOURNALISM

"Nothing can now be believed which is seen in a newspaper. Truth itself becomes suspicious by being put into that polluted vehicle. The real extent of this state of misinformation is known only to those who are in situations to confront facts within their knowledge with the lies of the day. I really look with commiseration over the great body of my fellow citizens, who, reading newspapers, live and die in the belief that they have known something of what has been passing in the world in their time."

– Thomas Jefferson

In the 1890s, Joseph Pulitzer and William Randolph Hearst became the first practitioners of "yellow" journalism. The term came from a popular comic strip, *The Yellow Kid*, which appeared in both men's newspapers at one time or another. This new style of journalism was brash, flashy, and audacious, and proclaimed itself to be journalism for the masses.

However, just as in the modern media, the yellow journalists twisted and sensationalized their stories in order to sell more newspapers, caring little for providing real information. They took advantage of the nation's growing literacy and desire for news by feeding them hyperbole and falsehoods. William Randolph Hearst even went so far as to invent a war to cover (the Spanish-American War). Ironically, even though modern journalists scorn the practice of yellow journalism, it has only created more fuel for the media: there's a book on the subject – *Citizen Hearst*, by W. A. Swanberg.

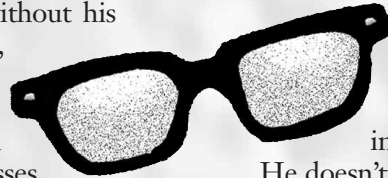
Nybbas immediately saw the potential for the yellow journalistic style to help him wring Essence from humanity. Although newspapers lost much of their popularity to TV, the influence of Hearst and Pulitzer can still be seen in TV news programs, newsmagazines, and daytime talk shows.

NYBBAS' GLASSES

Nybbas has a pair of Vapulan Essence-sensing glasses, which he has seemingly worn all of his life. They look like normal glasses with thick black frames, the type that were embarrassingly prevalent in 1950s year-book pictures, except they have reflective lenses (which might be a sensible precaution for anyone who might interact with Lilim). Now they are a relic of immense power. In any form, he is never without his glasses. No one, not even Vapula, has seen his eyes since he became a Prince.

When the first screen lit up with the first television signal, his glasses caught the flicker of movement, and they have seemed to dance with that man-made light ever since. Now they often seem like TV screens themselves, white with static. When that happens, his Servitors say, he is looking through a television someplace on Earth or in Hell.

Not only do his glasses allow him to see the Essence in everyone around him, they also display everything a Prince of the Media might need to know about those he is looking at, in the form of demographics and statistics. Nybbas can see people's age group, sex, race,



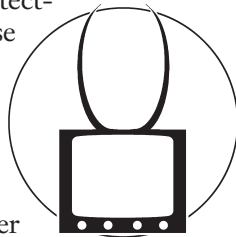
and religion, what forms of the Media they enjoy (TV shows, magazines, CD-ROMs, movies, etc.), and any number of other statistics that the Media might consider important (political affiliation, sexual orientation, favorite dishwashing liquid . . .).

Being a tool of the Media, however, the glasses have a drawback. They provide the information that a person would give about himself, whether it's true or not. Nybbas gets all the statistics he asks for (people who wouldn't fill out a questionnaire are not immune), but their veracity is questionable. He doesn't seem to mind.

There is a rumor that Nybbas wouldn't be able to see without his glasses (see *The Eyes of the Media*, p. 105). However, no demon below the level of Prince would be foolish enough to hold the glasses ransom, should they ever be separated from their owner. Several Princes would love to get their hands on the glasses, for various reasons, but no one *knows* that this would weaken Nybbas, so no real attempts have been made to steal them. Valefor might take on the challenge, if properly motivated.

promotion. Nybbas smiled and let them climb over each other to win his approval and rise in the ranks. He'd had to do it, why shouldn't they? Their efforts at one-upmanship boosted his Word at an incredible rate and netted him the Essence he needed to entrench himself, though it would be decades before he would challenge any of the other major Princes. He let them see him as they wanted to, a weak young upstart, possibly a joke of Lucifer's. That illusion protected him until he had no further use for it.

On Earth, the Media used newspapers as its mainstay in the early days, thriving on yellow journalism and supported by the Media's first big shots – newspaper barons (see *Yellow Journalism*, p. 102). Screaming newsies were one of the first noticeable intrusions of the Media into the Corporeal realm. Journalism was also the first arena in which Nybbas realized his power to promote or weaken Words. In the early 1900s, Nybbas turned his energies to phono-



graphs, movies, and radio as the technology improved enough to reach the masses.

As his strength grew, the Prince of the Media wanted a larger presence in the corporeal realm. He had already carved out his niche in Perdition, but the Impudite Prince wanted a base of operations on Earth, and found it in Hollywood. It was perfect; a barren wasteland with a down-and-out population that he could remake into his own vision of a Media wonderland, covering the reality with glitz, power, and scandal. The rise of Hollywood's importance in the minds of the humans signaled Nybbas' rise from minor Prince to major Prince, and he hasn't looked back since.

It would be the 1950s before television started to come into its own, but from then on, the Media exploded in power and magnitude, invited into people's homes and worshipped like nothing before it. The Media became a religion unto itself, with Nybbas as its very accessible god.

TV has definitely lived up to Hell's highest expectations, but Nybbas isn't through with it yet . . .

NYBBAS' EYES

If the story about Nybbas' Eyes (p. 105) is true (and we're not saying it is), this is what they might be like as a relic.

The Eyes look like regular eyeballs, still slimy and each dangling a severed optical nerve. They resist getting dirty, so rolling them along the ground won't seem to affect them.

The Eyes can be inserted into the eye sockets of a human or a vessel, but only after the original eyes are removed. Nybbas' Eyes will attach themselves to their new location, and the host will be able to see through them. Now his problems have just begun...

Looking through Nybbas' Eyes shows the viewer reality. Unfiltered, unadulterated, uncontrollable reality. Like a hearing aid that doesn't allow the user to filter out background noise, someone wearing Nybbas' Eyes will not be able to ignore anything he sees. The dead bird in the gutter, the crying child with a bruise on her cheek, the homeless person begging for change, the

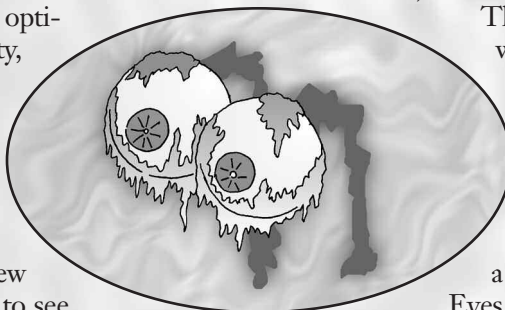
water dripping off a leaf; all of these images impact the user's brain with equal priority and clarity. Peripheral vision is no longer peripheral, but as immediate as objects in direct line of sight.

The Eyes will drive a human insane if worn for longer than a day. Celestials fare better, but usually can't stand them for more than three days.

The user must constantly roll his Perception to be able to focus on specific objects. On a failed Perception roll, the user must make a Will roll to keep from ripping the

Eyes out of his head. Once removed, the host is blind, unless powerful regenerative healing is available (as with the Song of Healing). Celestials may change vessels to recover their sight.

The exceptions to the rules above are Balseraphs and Seraphim. Balseraphs cannot stand the reality, and must make a Will roll every hour to keep from removing the Eyes. Seraphim, conversely, have no problem looking through them indefinitely, but none would use them if they were aware of the source of the relic.



SCANDAL, LIBEL, AND RUMOR

As with anything regarding the Media, these stories may be true, or they may be false. They may even be both. Tune in to the news at 11 for an update!

Garbage In, Garbage Out

Nybbas' failure to capitalize on the Internet is one of his biggest disappointments to date. To many people, and to many celestials, the Media seems to have a thriving presence on the Internet, but Nybbas had almost nothing to do with that. The Media has been playing catch-up with humanity ever since the Internet came into being, and hasn't actually caught up yet. All of the media sites and media-related lists are flattering for Nybbytes to read, and they certainly net Essence, but every time Nybbas tries to manipulate the Internet, the human users just flow around him and go their own way. Vapula has made some snide remarks about this, but even he thinks that Nybbas has some measure of influence over cyberspace. The ex-Servitor of Technology is not about to disabuse his former master.

Give My Regards to Broadway

The modern phenomena that is Broadway is one of Nybbas' most recent successes. What was once a forum for plays by Tennessee Williams, Lillian Hellman, and other master playwrights, is now a bloated economy devoted to staging the musicals of corporate kiddie cartoons. Not that the older Broadway was devoid of money-making impulses and rotten, patronizing scripts, but any play had a chance, be it drama, comedy, musical, tragedy, or some combination thereof. Its eclecticism was the very root of its appeal. Anyone could afford the standing-room price.

These days, Broadway makes its profit at the expense of variety. Controversial plays are too risky to stage. The theater owners must pander to the lowest common denominator in order to make a run pay off. The result is a string of plays that rival Hollywood blockbusters for blandness and box office. Even Off-Broadway theaters, formerly the haven of the avant-garde, must now bow to the bottom line. This is a serious blow to Eli's Servitors, and they are fighting the change as best they can.

The Eyes of the Media

Since no one has ever seen Nybbas' eyes (at least, no one who's talking), rumors have naturally sprung up around them. The most popular rumor is that upon seeing television for the first time, and envisioning what it would become, Nybbas tore out his eyes, vowing from then on never to look though anything that was not a channel for the Media. A different version of this rumor has Lucifer ripping Nybbas' eyes out as he bestows upon him the Word of the Media. Either way, Nybbas' eyes are supposed to be powerful relics, hidden away in some secret location known only to Nybbas and the Lightbringer.

Very occasionally, when Nybbas is displeased, he reaches for his glasses, and sometimes he seems about to remove them. The gesture strikes fear into his Servitors, because they have no idea what would happen if he actually took them off . . . but they know it *wouldn't be good*.

Eli

Nybbas has plans for Eli. Of all the Archangels, Eli is the only one with whom he would like to collaborate. Nybbas sees Eli's intense revulsion as playing hard-to-get. After all, he's a Big Wheel, so naturally he wants a big payoff. The more Eli resists, the more Nybbas values him. The Prince believes that a partnership between them would give the Media endless material, and give Eli an escape from his critics up in Heaven. So far, Eli has spurned any overtures from the Media, but Nybbas can be very persuasive when he's trying to get his way . . .

A Media Nightmare

Beleth, with her innate ability to perceive people's fears, senses Nybbas' paranoia (see below). She knows that he dreads isolation from his audience, and though she has no way of making his fears a reality, she doesn't really need to. She gets plenty of enjoyment from dropping hints and tormenting him with uncertainty. Malphas would probably catch on, too, if Nybbas wasn't so useful to him.

PERSONALITY AND OUTLOOK

Like the Media, Nybbas is full of contradictions and false fronts. Many of his feelings and opinions seem mutually exclusive, but they exist within him just as Rush Limbaugh and Howard Stern share the airwaves.

Nybbas' behavior is ruled by two major beliefs, which he holds simultaneously: First, that he is the center of the universe and the center of attention, and second, that he is on the edge of oblivion, ready to disappear at the click of an off button.

The Prince of the Media is the ultimate Cinderella

story in Hell. Every demon dreams of pulling off such a great victory that Lucifer appears and makes them a Prince on the spot. Nybbas actually lived that dream, but it turned into a nightmare for him. Despite his outward egotism, in his heart, he feels that he is a fake. He had no idea that television would net him a Princedom, and he still doesn't understand why Lucifer honored him so prominently. Because of this, he feels compelled to create new Cinderella stories, new miraculous successes. If he's hard on his Servitors for their failings, he's an order of magnitude harder on himself.

The Prince of the Media is afraid. Desperately afraid. He lives in a fear so complete that there is little else at the core of his being. He is afraid that he won't be able to keep coming up with overnight successes. He is afraid that if he doesn't, Lucifer will revoke his premature Princedom. Since he doesn't know why the Lightbringer chose him for such an overwhelming gift, he lives in constant fear that someone will see what a fraud he is and expose him.

But what he really fears above all else is that he will lose

Don't you wish there were a knob on the TV to turn up the intelligence? There's one marked "Brightness," but it doesn't work.

— George Carlin

his audience. In a Prince-level enhancement of the Impudite desire for adoration, Nybbas truly believes that things are only important when people are paying attention to them. Who cares if a tree falls in the forest when no one is around? This belief is what binds him to his Word, and so Nybbas would rather be reviled than ignored. He imagines that if he ever starts to slide in popularity and success, it will gain momentum until he literally becomes a nobody, fading away into nothing.

The Media, as an extension of his self, functions as his proxy. Wherever someone is watching *Baywatch*, Nybbas, the Media, is being watched. There is safety in quantity, and so the demons of Perdition keep pumping it out, for the glory and safety of their Boss.

This desire to be watched is also why he manifests on TV screens or other extensions of the Media; what could be more interesting and important than something on TV?

Nybbas' fears drive his personality. His motivation is

not to seduce – such a time-consuming process – but to push Push PUSH! The Media itself can be seductive or gluttonous, but those are only facets of the whole, which is a way of life (at least according to Nybbas). It's not what he tells people that's important to him, only that they accept *everything* he tells them, or if they can't accept it, react to it. That's why, although he sees their usefulness, Andrealphus and Haagenti are ultimately only tools to him.

Before Nybbas consolidated his power, he used his incredible charm and boundless energy to disarm, deceive, or distract his opponents. Now his smiles and calculated *bonhomie* are backed by formidable strength, but the habit remains. In reality, he may be out to ruin someone, but on the surface it's just friendly competition.

Some say that Nybbas isn't really in charge of the Media any longer, that it has grown out of his control. If it's true, he doesn't care. As long as it keeps growing, he keeps growing, whether it helps some people along the way or not. After all, the whole world works for him, doesn't it?

The Prince of the Media makes a bad enemy. He wields such control over humanity's perceptions and Essence expenditure that he can weaken a Prince's Word, and outright eradicate the Words of lesser demons. This is also how he keeps ethereals in line. Nybbas doesn't often invite trouble by actively suppressing another Prince's Word, but every once and a while he'll flex his Media muscle, just to let the others know that he *can*.

More often, he will use subtle means to get his way. For such an apparently tactless being, Nybbas ranks up there with Lilith and Asmodeus when it comes to information gathering, and he is just as skilled at using the information to get what he wants. He understands the wisdom of letting an opponent think he's won when, in fact, Nybbas arranged the outcome in his own favor. He only operates overtly when he's making an object lesson of his victim.

The main weakness of the youngest major Prince is his disdain for all things ancient. Ancient as in yesterday. To someone like Baal, a century or two is just a drop in the bucket, but Nybbas has only been *alive* for a few centuries. This gives him a far lower tolerance for plans that stretch out over years. It also means that anything that happened before he was created is ancient history. He has no particular feelings about the Fall, has no interest in going to Heaven – which he has never seen – and has no respect for Superiors whom he believes are stuck in the old days. He likes Andrealphus, Vapula, Haagenti, and others of their ilk because they are hip and happening, no matter what age they are. He dislikes the more militant Superiors because they seem stuck on the Fall, and can't get over it and live in the now.

Priorities

The Media first, the rest nowhere.

Nybbas supports the Media above all else, above Lucifer, God, and the War. His main goal is to grow the Media on Earth until nothing remains untouched by its influence. Secondary to this is creating new technology and new media to carry his message.

Losing the prototype Nybbas Computer (*Liber Reliquarum*, pp. 111-112) was a huge blow, but Nybbas not only has minions hunting for it, he has Servitors back in Vapula's labs trying to reverse engineer it from what is known about the prototypes.

Nybbas would like to find a way to harness the Internet, and in the absence of a working Nybbas Computer, he is looking around for other possibilities. Servitors who can provide such an alternative would be greatly rewarded.

He uses us, as he uses everyone, but we can use him, too. Where there is the Media, there is Essence. When he brings attention to us, humans worship again. Just don't cross him.

– Amaterasu,
Shinto Goddess

The Religion of the Media

Nybbas has been working to give rise to a new religion, a modern belief system for those ready to turn their backs on the past and look to the future; a way of striving for all the beautiful, fun, and entertaining things in life and rising above the hardships of reality; a path leading from the struggle for independent thought to the comfort of mindless conformity; and a guiding light for the flock that is humanity.

Andrealphus is working with him closely, tempting the resisters, encouraging selfishness, and numbing people's consciences so that each step toward submission and acceptance gets easier. *Give in*, he whispers, *it feels good to give in. We can give you everything you want. Just worship us, that's all we ask . . .*

Partnership with Lust or not, the Religion of the Media is the culmination of all Nybbas' work among humanity, and the ultimate expression of his Word. He cares about it more than any of his other schemes, because he really *believes* in it. It's a religion based on himself, after all. How can a god not believe in his own religion?

He sets the groundwork for his cult every day, by simplifying religion into easy symbols and metaphors, hope into a petulant desire for a happy ending, and faith into a slavish adherence to the Media's dictates. "Thou shalt be young, be beautiful, be funny, be popular, be cool. If thou can't not be any of these things, then thou art a sinner, and thou must watch them on TV, read about them in magazines, and admire them on billboards until thou art purified."

Since Nybbas sees only the surface of things, he has plagiarized the trappings of many human religions – whichever ones appealed to the widest demographic – without incorporating any of the deeper meanings. If it looks like religion, it must be religion, right? TVs and movie screens are like altars, the chairs are like pews, and the consumption of merchandise is like eating the body of the Media, which dies and is reborn with the flick of a switch. Add a few fancy robes, elaborate hats, and abstract scepter designs, and who could tell the difference? It's no coincidence that Nybbas named his son "Rex" – *King*. If he had to sacrifice his son to spread the Word of the Media, he would do it in a heartbeat, and then film the execution and show it on Pay Per View.

His ultimate goal is to have everyone turn to the Media to be told what to think, what to wear, what to do, and what to say. What he wants, and can't admit even to himself, is to make both God and Lucifer obsolete. In the minds of hundreds of millions of humans, he has already succeeded.

Views on the War

The Revolution *will* be broadcast . . .

Nybbas likes the War just the way it is – balanced between two massive opponents, tension rampant, with occasional sensationally violent flareups. It's a summer blockbuster! Good guys, bad guys, brooding anti-heroes, crowds of human extras – what could be better?

To Nybbas, the end of the War would spell The End to his career. Oh sure, demons like to be entertained, but it's just not the same without humanity. If Heaven wins, Hell won't have humans to kick around any more. If Hell wins, all the humans will be damned souls, and damned souls just aren't much fun. They're so *yesterday*.

The War gives him plenty of material, and aside from his own selfish reasons for prolonging the conflict, Nybbas couldn't care less who wins and who loses. He really doesn't see Heaven as the adversary to his very being; they're just the competition. Ultimately, it's all for his entertainment.

Views on Lucifer

As he does to most intelligent beings, Lucifer makes Nybbas very nervous. The Prince of the Media owes his spectacular rise to the Lightbringer, and knows very well that Lucifer could change his mind and recall the Princedom at any time, although that isn't very likely.

But the real problem with Lucifer is that Nybbas can't get an angle on him. The Impudite Prince needs to be necessary, but he can't pinpoint Lucifer's needs, and therefore he can't manipulate him successfully. Any other power of Hell can be worked, cajoled, flattered, or bullied according to their agenda, but just as Nybbas thinks he's spotted a pattern in the Dark Lord's behavior, Lucifer changes his demographics.

Lucifer doesn't need the Media at all, not in the sense of a watcher or consumer. Nybbas doesn't know what to do about this, and fears that if the spotlight of the Lightbringer's attention ever moves away from him, his fifteen minutes of fame will be over.



REX

Demon of Cool

Balseraph Baron of the Media

Corporeal Forces - 6 Strength 12 Agility 12
Ethereal Forces - 3 Intelligence 6 Precision 6
Celestial Forces - 6 Will 12 Perception 12

Suggested Word Forces: 14

Vessel: Human male/5, Charisma +3

Skills: Dodge/3, Driving/5, Fighting/5, Knowledge/6 (What's Currently Cool), Savoir-Faire/6, Seduction/6

Songs: Attraction (Ethereal/6), Charm (Corporeal/5, Ethereal/4, Celestial/5), Form (Celestial/6), Light (Corporeal/6), Opening (Ethereal/3)

Attunements: Balseraph of the Media, Baron of the Fourth Estate, Balseraph of Lust, Balseraph of Dark Humor, Dark Desire, *all* of Nybbas' Servitor Attunements, the Demon of Cool

Special Rite: Rex gains 1 Essence every time he starts a trend.

Special Ability: The Demon of Cool can *create* cool – or at least make people think that whatever he is doing or saying is cool. In person, he can affect ten people for each point of Essence he spends, making them believe that one thing he has said or done is cool. However, the real power of this attunement works through visual media. When he is seen on screen (TV, movies, photographs, etc.), his attunement affects ten percent of his audience per point of Essence spent. Either in the flesh or seen through a lens, his victims may make a Will roll to resist him; celestials add their Celestial Forces to the roll.

Rex is simply the embodiment of all that is cool. He always seems to be doing, wearing, or smoking the latest thing, just before everyone else discovers it. He makes James Bond look like a bum.

The Demon of Cool can get people to emulate any sort of behavior just by connecting it to his Word. He wields peer pressure on an international scale. He enjoys seeing what extreme or unhealthy act he can persuade humanity to undertake just because it has his stamp of approval on it. Smoking, drinking to excess, one night stands, stealing; Rex has successfully promoted all of these activities as cool.

Kobal gets along with him extremely well. After all, Kobal thrives on laughter at others' expense, and Rex makes everyone around him look ridiculous by comparison. Sometimes Kobal will dare him to popularize some hair-brained idea that no human in his right mind would try. Decorative branding is the result of the latest bet between them. Kobal paid up, quite willingly, by giving Rex the Balseraph of Dark Humor attunement.

However, Rex's favorite Prince (aside from his father, of course) is Andrealphus. They enjoy being around each other almost as much as they enjoy being around themselves. Over the years, Rex has done as much to promote the Word of Lust as his own Word, considering them to be inseparable. Andrealphus has rewarded him with a couple of attunements, and in other ways which neither of them will discuss.

Rex's personality and appearance are as changeable as fashion. One minute he's brooding around in a leather jacket, the next he's raving in a polyester shirt and tattoos. He learned the Corporeal Song of Light for the sole purpose of keeping himself in the spotlight, and the Celestial Song of Form so that he could change his body type as easily as he changes his clothes. His servants (and he has many of them) are his fawning, sycophantic hangers-on.

Whenever Nybbas wants Rex to perform a specific task, he teams him up with a very organized Servitor. Nybbas is aware of the necessity for both great ideas and detailed planning, the latter not being Rex's strong suit. He has the attention span of a teenager on eXtasy.

There is some speculation in Hell about whether Nybbas is Rex's only parent. It's possible that more than one demon willingly contributed personal Forces in order to give him life, although there is no real reason why they should. However, it remains a matter of minor interest for Nybbites to gossip about, especially those with a romantic disposition or overactive imagination.

Rex has easy access to any Media resources he requests. This includes personnel. In a light campaign, characters could be assigned to work for him, with the understanding that they are also "babysitters." Nybbas will be *most* displeased if anything happens to his scatterbrained son.



THE MEDIA'S IDIOT SON

"It's summer, so people want to think about being cold. And what do you want to do when it's cold? Have sex! I'm telling you dad . . . ouch! . . . I mean, Sir."

Just as visual media gave birth to the image of cool, the Prince of the Media gave life to Rex, the Demon of Cool, with several of his *personal* Forces – and Nybbas is a very proud parent. Not surprisingly, Rex's Word goes hand in hand with his father's. Cool would be nowhere without the media, but the media would have far less influence without the attraction of being hip.

Rex is usually referred to as "Nybbas' idiot son," both behind Nybbas' back by low-level demons, and to his face by other Superiors. Rex is actually fairly smart by human standards, but functions almost as an idiot savant. In all matters pertaining to Cool, he is the undisputed expert. His instincts are gold, and his influence over humans – and thus over Words – is legendary. In all other matters, he's hopeless. Whether or not he *could* focus on the uncool may never be known, because he never does.

Nybbas is perfectly happy with him the way he is. Good managers are a dime a dozen in the Media hierarchy. Good instincts are priceless.

POLITICS

"What did television ever do to you?"

"It destroyed the electoral process."

– Wag the Dog

People who like politics and television shouldn't watch either one being made. In the case of the Media, they are usually made at the same time, and are twice as revolting as a result.

Nybbas enjoys politics because they are entertaining, and he has much more political acumen than his former master. Often, Vapula lets him handle the Princely political struggles while he stays in the lab. This suits both of them.

Nybbas has specialists gathering information on each Prince and briefing him before meetings, which allows him to cultivate an all-knowing aura. It's very hard to surprise him.



Princely Opinions

This is how the other Princes view Nybbas (and how he views them).

Andrealphus: Nybbas is a delightfully useful ally, and an example of what an Impudite Prince should be – exploitative, progressive, and hungry for more. Together, we will lead humanity into pleasure – and into our waiting arms. *(All right! Me and Andre have a definite arrangement. He provides the faces, I make them famous. Now this is a guy with a real head for business, a real understanding of what the man in the street wants. It's all in the selling, and boy, can his people sell it. We are going to drag Hell into a whole new era, kicking and screaming if we have to.)*

Asmodeus: Frivolous and immature, but he does promote Hell on Earth. He has had too much easy success, and grows too independent. I don't underestimate his power, though, just his judgment; his support of Vapula makes them both too strong. I plan to change that. *(Hey, games are boffo! Bread and Circuses sell to the masses like nobody's business, but you have to make sure the Game is a spectacle for people to watch! Cheerleaders, lighted scoreboards, jump cuts to the extreme! Nobody wants to watch a guy play solitaire behind a screen of smoke. Strictly C-SPAN.)*

Baal: He'd rather create a false world than live in the real one. I despise the fantasy that he spins and the fat slugs who swallow it. The end of the War will see him gone. *(War is great when shot from the right angle. It's got explosions, heroes, mindless violence . . . everything the audience wants! But let too much reality seep in and people just turn off their sets. Why do you think I dropped Chechnya? Baal is in it for the long haul. He never goes to his trailer. I don't know why he can't live in the now. The Fall is old news, and it gets older every time he shoves it in my face.)*

Beleth: No horror movie he can create matches the least of my nightmares. His work is a pale imitation. I know what he fears, though, and some day I'll show him what horror really means. *(Nightmares . . . if we could give mankind a way to watch them, now that would be worth putting our resources into. Think of that! Tuning into the 24-hour Nightmare Network, standing witness in the privacy of your own living room to the personal, intimate terror of your neighbors . . . Oh, yes! Must ask Vapula to get to work on that. But as they stand, Nightmares don't sell ads, don't sell tickets and don't push the product. Passé.)*

VAPULA AND NYBBAS

The Demon Prince of the Media is very clearly a product of Technology. He believes in it, more than any other Prince besides Vapula; he experiments with it, pursues it, and relies on it to support his Word. It gave him his Word. Without Technology, there would be no Media.

But Nybbas found his calling in supporting the social side effects of a scientific achievement, and it is here that he and Vapula separate. Both of them approach technology according to the mindset of their Bands. As a Habbalite, Vapula wants to reach perfection through technology; he pays little attention to the social ramifications of his advances. Nybbas, the Impudite, uses technology as a tool to shape society to his liking, and drain it of Essence. It's a means to an end.

And yet they maintain a close relationship – not friendly, but close – despite the young Impudite's unexpected rise to Princedom. That should be enough to drive a wedge between any two demons (just look at Haagenti and Belial). The secret is, Nybbas has a healthy respect for technology, which makes Vapula happy; and Vapula doesn't try to meddle in Media affairs, which makes Nybbas happy. Of course, they're both Demon Princes, so they aren't *chums*, but they are definitely *cohorts*, and have a better understanding of one another than almost any other Prince in Hell.

Belial: He's kind of wimpy, but he sure does make me look good! I can watch stuff blow up over and over; in slow motion, from an aerial view, whatever. Rewind, and it blows up again. Cool, but still not as good as the real thing. (BOOM! Hell says "YES." Tremendous market share when he's on his game, something of a wet firecracker when he's not. I mean, you can only stare at a fire for so long, right? But when he's cookin', he's cookin'. I keep trying to keep up with this guy, the newsies are seriously hot for him – they love what he does. He's a wandering Action Copter News Event, wherever he goes. He'd better play ball with us in the future, though – we don't want to have to run those Elle MacPherson fire-prevention spots – *beb heb*, that should put a dent in his Word if he gets out of hand. Just like everybody, he's a resource to be managed, a star to be worked.)

Haagenti: Yeah! He's helping me get the message out to all those people – eat eat eat! He's got an eye and a mouth in every house, and I want them all talking Gluttony. (He gets people in the right mood for buying what

I'm selling: excess. They don't call them consumers for nothing! The little furball makes them swallow anything and come back for more. That's the kind of viewers I want. And he's so cute, I'm thinking of licensing his image for plush toys.)

Kobal: Nybbas shows some promise, but he's far too preoccupied with flash and the glitz rather than the dirt and grit where true comedy lives. He's happy to *show* rather than *do*; a serious flaw. (When it comes to chuckles, nobody does it better than Hell's head chucklehead. He's got his Word down to a true art form. It's just too bad so many of his plans end up with a dead lead actor. No sequels then, baby!)

Kronos: The Media aids Fate on so many levels. It glorifies evil and laughs at good. It tempts people to sell their soul for a chance at stardom. And it chronicles their inevitable downfall for the entertainment of the slaving masses. Beautiful. (He's a gas. The others need to lighten up about him. He brings us the sound bites, baby! **Think** about it for a minute. Fate makes the headlines! Talented Physician Turns Child Molester! That packs the house!)

Lilith: Someday he's going to turn around and *understand* how much he Needs his audience. Then he's going to see who's been watching him since he got his Word. And just maybe he'll realize that his glasses don't stop *me*. Till then . . . at least it keeps some of the girls gainfully employed. He pays me well for them. (Definitely star quality, her **and** her Daughters! We don't even have a PR problem here — everybody likes freedom! Hates anybody but her sitting in the director's chair, though; a real prima donna. Still, nothing controls the audience better than beautiful freedom.)

Malphas: The Media is the perfect tool to drive wedges between people, from countries down to individuals. It isolates people in dark rooms, watching fake friends on a glass screen. It allows people to hate each other from a distance, without ever getting to know each other. Nybbas is the wave of the future. (Oh, baby, arguments are prime footage, you *capisce*? I don't care what he does, I don't care who he does it to, I just want my cameras on the spot!)

*Television is a medium of
entertainment which permits
millions of people to listen to
the same joke at the same time,
and yet remain lonesome.*

– T.S. Eliot



Saminga: His pretty stars all look the same after a year underground. He is meaningless. (*Death sells, sure, if it's packaged right, but Sammy's just the wrong package! That Word could be a gold mine, and we've got some stupid B-Movie prop running it? Freak shows don't sell tickets these days, baby – death needs style, and it needs to be sexy. Sammy's a flop.*)

Valefor: Nybbas has done a lot to make stealing look good. Robin Hood, Jesse James, and oh, the laws they break on those detective shows! The Media even steals from itself. What a great organization. (*He's a great plot book. Daring thefts! Hunky burglars and hot babes! Intrigue, passion, treachery, murder, revenge! I get a film and a mini-series every time he tells me how his day went. He's the archetypical Man of Mystery. Some day, I'll do an exposé on him and blow my ratings sky high!*)

Vapula: A waste of a promising research career. But he's strong and he remembers his debts, and some of the ideas he brings me are marvelous. (*Technology is hip. It's sexy. It's trendy. The old man is too wound up to make much of the political possibilities, which is why we work so well together. I can handle that side and leave him to his beloved labs.*)

Archangelic Opinions

Nybbas' constant fakery rubs most angels the wrong way, including the heavenly Superiors. They can't decide whether he's more frightening for thinking that real things are fake, or that fake things are real. Despite his

youth, most Archangels view Nybbas as a major threat. Of course, since most of them are so *old* (by his lights), he regards them with a wary contempt – much like his opinions of his fellow Princes, but with less enthusiasm for the promotional spin-offs.

Blandine: He corrupts people's dreams, making them cheap and tawdry, and ultimately empty. His influence rots away at people's souls a little bit at a time, until they have nothing left, and they don't even notice what he took from them. (*She's a living chick movie. I can sell that syrupy hope crap to dull-witted housewives, but you wouldn't catch me watching it. My dreams are much more entertaining than what plays in her theaters.*)

David: 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. (*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.*)

Dominic: He is more insidious in his contamination of humanity than many others – and he is all the more dangerous. (*Oh, baby, talk about lousy ratings! At least the Game televises its executions, but Judgment? Man, nobody wants to watch a bunch of cloaked Seraphim play talking heads.*)

Eli: He recycles and mass produces entertainment, encourages hacks, sends his parasites to drain and discard the truly talented. The Media is a blight to creativity, abusing people's desire to see imagination in action. And it's such a waste of what he could be! *(He provides me with some of my best people! All I have to do is find out who Eli's scouting, and offer them a better deal. The Essence just comes rolling in! He's a fun guy, too, better than the stuffed shirts still up in Dullsville. If I could get him into my organization, there'd be no stopping us.)*

Gabriel: Pathetic worm. He has no inspiration. One touch of my fire would burn him to ashes. *(Insane chicks do win Oscars, but her performance got old centuries ago. If I need pyrotechnics, I've got Belial. Now, if she would agree to some full frontal, her act could make a comeback . . .)*

The only thing worse than being talked about is not being talked about.

— Oscar Wilde

Janus: He pretends to promote change, but he causes people's minds to stagnate. He's part of the Establishment, and I'll sweep him away, along with the rest. *(For an Archangel, this guy's pretty happening. His people are walking news stories. Did I say walking? I meant blazing! If you can catch them, they'll get you the ratings. They're the best answer to a slow news day next to Belial.)*

Jean: He's a product of Vapula, and it shows. Flawed thinking, reprehensible goals. Unfortunately, the Media and Technology feed off each other. If something were to break up that partnership . . . that would be useful. *(Stuffy, but he knows his work. Of course, I have better uses for it. Jean's got no imagination when it comes to applications, not like the old man. Napalm sticks to kids! Virtual lives for folks without real ones! The list is endless! The best thing about Jean is that he's a remote control for the old man. All I have to do is mention Lightning's latest toy, and he'll go into the lab and make anything I want . . .)*

Jordi: He has no regard for the wilderness, except to exploit it. He encourages people to consume what is not theirs to consume. Some day, I will consume him. *(Boooorn free! As free as the wiiiind bloooows! You know what they say about animals and children — but that's a joke for another time! Cute, cuddly animals get ratings. Ferocious wild animal attacks on videotape get ratings. But Jordi is worse than the ASPCA. So what if we kill some fleabags during a*

shoot? The stunt came out great! And then there's the whole fur coat thing. What's a star without a fur coat and a leather-trimmed Mercedes?)

Laurence: 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. *(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.)*

Marc: Nybbas pretends to give something for nothing, when actually, he is the one getting something for nothing. He misleads consumers while pretending to educate them. He is a cipher, and the antithesis of trade. *(Caveat emptor, baby. Like it's my responsibility to look after gullible idiots. If they want to buy, let 'em buy! That's my kind of freedom. Marc's dictates just protect the weak and bring everybody down. He can get a 'fair trade' from me the day he wrings it from my scattered Forces.)*

Michael: Of all the frauds and fakeries in Hell, he's done the most to damage the traditional values of heroism with his propaganda and feel-good 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. *(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.)*

Novalis: He may seem one of the least dangerous Princes, but he's the antithesis of nurturing. He makes souls wither instead of grow. If his huge resources and influence could be turned to good, I think the War would be nearly won. *(Love hippie chick. That was cool in the '60s, but now she's old news. The best thing about her is that her people aren't likely to damage my people, and they always fall for a sob story.)*

Yves: His alliance with Kronos is a dangerous one. He allows Fate to reach out further than it ever could before. Nybbas is a key figure in the War, and will have more to do with its conclusion than many will admit. *(Destiny makes a nice plot, but in real life, it's a load of crap. You get to the top on your own, and you stay there by standing on the dead bodies of your rivals. Yves is a senile old fool with his mind in the Dark Ages. Kronos can handle him.)*

Humans and Others

Etherials: These guys are a great source of material! Not to mention a cure for writer's block. If one of my writers can't produce, I give him an all-expenses-paid visit to the Marches. If he lives through it, he's always stocked with *fabulous* ideas! And they are so easy to control. When they get difficult, I make their names disappear from the world. After a few years, they're ready to play ball.

Humanity: I love these people! Really! They're the greatest! So much more fun than snotty angels and idiot demons. I could just pick them up and hug them to death, every one of them! And they love me back! I don't know what I'd do without them . . .

Sorcerers: I like these crazy funsters. They've got a real sense of the theatrical, and they're always good for a news exposé: "Satanic Cult Brainwashes Schoolchildren at Track Meet!" Beautiful!



Soldiers of Hell: Hellsworn are my "Man on the Street!" They're in the know, and they play the game as well as demons, sometimes better. And that name; "Hellsworn" . . . it's just so cool! I think I smell a pilot coming on.

Soldiers of God: A bunch of uptight crybabies. "We don't like evil! We like angels and kittycats! The Media is bad!" The Media is *fun*, baby. And more important, the Media *is*, baby! If you can't groove to the scene like every other human being, then shut up and get out of the way.

Undead: These guys have no star quality, but sometimes the monster can be the best part of the picture. They definitely save on the special effects budget; no latex needed! Just don't invite them to the cast party.

What we need are some new clichés.

– Samuel Goldwyn

VARIATIONS ON A THEME

Like the Media, Nybbas has many aspects, and he can present a different face to each person who interacts with him. Some are darker, some are lighter. Which is correct? Maybe all of them . . .

The Sociopath

Nybbas is the most heartless Prince in Hell. People are ratings. Ratings are Essence. Nybbas thinks humanity is his Essence battery, and he'll do anything that pulls that Essence away from them. They aren't real to him, just numbers to manipulate. Need a news story? Crash an airplane. Should this government fall? Why not, it would get ratings! What would make them go to war? How about starvation, rape, and torture? Great! Send somebody from security to take care of that.

If he can't fake propaganda, he'll make it real, until he provokes a response and the humans take it from there. Then he sits in his office and smiles as the audience share grows. This version is suitable for a dark campaign, where Hell may just win the War by attrition.

The Studio Head

Nybbas isn't really *evil*, just sleazy and amoral. He appears in his bad suit, stepping out of a stretch limo with a starlet on one side and a yes-man on the other. He'll lie, manipulate, and rob people blind, but never actually hurt them. His organization is like a stereotypical movie studio, with Lilim bombshells, snarling Djinn security guards, and unctuous Balseraph producers. No cliché is too obvious! This version would work well in a light or cartoonish campaign.

The Trickster

Nybbas is the embodiment of the Trickster; shaking hands as he picks your pocket. He lives to get the upper hand in a deal; if people buy Soapy Flakes just because he says so, they only get what they deserve. This version of Nybbas cannot affect someone who refuses to play his games, and he respects those who are on to him. But he is so charming, it's hard to resist him. There's the off switch. You can use it any time . . .

NYBBAS' TETHERS

Nybbas has a weakness for Tethers which are eye-catching, "in" hot-spots. He'll drop in personally as long as a Tether holds the public's attention. Unfortunately, no place stays "in" for long, so he has many nigh-abandoned Tethers which lost his interest, their Seneschals languishing and trying desperately to attract his attention again.

He is fully aware that the Media needs backstage, utilitarian support, and many of his most stable Tethers fall into this category; printers, TV stations, costume shops, talent agencies, and any other place that contributes to the media. He'd like to have more Tethers related to the Internet, but even when one appears that can be linked to his Word, he still has to fight Jean and Vapula for those, and that pair are much more experienced in Tether-capture.



Despite the fact that Nybbas has a large and growing number of Tethers, especially for a Prince of his age, his Tethers tend to burst into the world as major conduits to Hell, then lose strength almost immediately as people move on to the next Big Thing. He has very few that retain their full power over time. Worse, it seems to take more and more to make a Media Tether these days – since the Tether-boom first part of the 20th century, new Nybbasian Tethers have been (relatively) rare.

THE HOME OFFICE

Nybbas carved out his niche in Perdition, making the boring wasteland of Meserach (Prince of Sloth, and Haagenti's first Princely dish) into a Media playground.

THE SUBURBS

The damned souls dwell in the "suburbs," perpetually enslaved to some form of mindless stimulation. They sit in the same spot, watching, feeling, smelling, or listening to the same stimulus, and they'll do anything to keep it coming. They're the stable base of Essence that supports the Media, even when Essence from Earth fluctuates wildly.

As the suburbs get closer to the city, they evolve from a wilderness of idiots and tone junkies to wide expanses of identical tract housing. The inhabitants of these dwellings (souls deemed slightly more valuable than the stimulus-addicts) are constantly trying to stand out from their neighbors by buying the latest thing they see on TV or read in a magazine, but there's no way to win. Everyone buys the same things at the same time, and so all they manage to do is regiment themselves more deeply into identical ranks of consumers.

Occasionally, one does manage to stand out just enough to be noticed by a demon – who either quashes the upstart, or has him assigned as a servant.

Feeding the Beast

Also in the outskirts of Nybbas' empire are the writing farms, where hapless demons churn out the low-level mind-rot that feeds the Media's constant craving. Working in one of these places is considered a punishment, but better than being sent to the mail room, because it's just possible that something written by a slaving demon will impress a higher-up in the Media, and the hack will head to a penthouse. At least that's the rumor.

Part of each writing farm is devoted to slush piles the size of small foothills. Reading through this mountain of mediocrity is another punishment for disgraced Nybbytes. Many Fakers would rather tell Asmodeus that they're thinking of redeeming than be assigned to the slush piles.

THE CITY

If you took away every redeeming feature of Hollywood and Los Angeles, what's left over would be Nybbasland. In the center is a sprawling complex, designed by derivative hack architects following the latest trends, whether or not the trends have any artistic merit.

SAMPLE TETHER: CAERNAVON PLATTERS

Caernavon Platters started off as one of those mail-order companies which sell memorabilia of film stars – in particular, plates with pictures of the film stars. Desperately searching for novelty in a crowded market, the firm started issuing plates portraying film stars receiving presidential honors, or crowned as royalty – and made them collectible editions. The mad rush of obsessive fans buying china and stockpiling it pushed Caernavon Platters into solvency, then into fame, and created the potential for a Tether.

Tamor, an inquisitive Impudite, tracked the firm to its headquarters – a small factory near Boston, still operating as a “family business,” even though its owner was as hard-nosed as any Fortune 500 CEO. Awestruck by the ability of humans to spend their money on useless mementos of events that never happened, featuring people who were only important because they’d appeared on a movie screen, and sensing the Tether-Potential, he contacted Nybbas and was made

Seneschal. He then got a job as foreman and labor relations expert at the factory, where he’s been steadily assisting in its expansion ever since. (He plans to run an Ed Wood series of plates for the Millennium.)

The factory is an obscure but useful Tether for Nybbas – few people would suspect that the quiet, steady, reliable place is actually a link to Hell on Earth. It’s run quite beneficially for the owners, as Tamor doesn’t want to disrupt the plate-production process, or draw possible angelic attention. He has John Carren (the owner of the business) well under his control by this time, having hired a Lilim to seduce the (married) man and arrange a nice set of blackmail photographs. Tamor would like to use the Tether as a base for other demons to come and go in the area, but is balancing this against Nybbas’ wrath if the Tether is actually betrayed to the angels. In the meantime, Caernavon Platters is still selling plenty of plates . . .

Any time a style gets too passé, the offending building is torn down and replaced. If that style comes in again, as most of them do, the buildings are rebuilt and artificially distressed to look old (*Heaven and Hell*, p. 97).

There are mirrored skyscrapers, studio lots, recording studios, printing presses, art colleges . . . a building for every sort of media that the Media is interested in. In addition, there are mansions for the stars and players of Hell. Most of them are away in the corporeal realm, but who are you if you don’t have more than one house? A servant, that’s who.

As the systems for propagating information and speeding it around the globe are becoming ever more sophisticated, so do the opportunities to manipulate information.

– John le Carré

Nybbas’ Office Building

Nybbas’ offices are always changing. First of all, he moves from one building to another about once a week. But even within the same building, the floorplan seems to change upon every visit, or even while a visitor is still inside. The only constancy is the lobby and the penthouse office belonging to the Boss himself. People who work in the building seem to know their way around, but outsiders will need a guide.

Nybbas has the classic penthouse office, with a patio and pool, a large desk for brainstorming meetings, any sort of audio-visual equipment ever invented, and babes in bikinis.

There is always a door to another room, where nobody goes but the Boss. Rumors abound regarding the contents of the room, but they are all wrong. There is nothing in the room. Nothing at all. It is a sensory deprivation chamber. Once inside, he can’t hear, touch, taste, smell, or see anything. He floats, unmoving, amidst the utter lack of stimulus.

If his Servitors ever found out, they would be horrified. Sensory deprivation is worse to a Media-demon than the off switch; it’s the *big* off switch. Nybbas undergoes this masochistic exercise when he is on the verge of losing his mind from all of the input he receives. He finds the chamber as frightening as his underlings, however, and never stays in it more than five minutes at a time.

LET'S GO LUNCH: SERVITORS OF THE MEDIA

FAKERS, NYBBYTES, NYBBASIANS

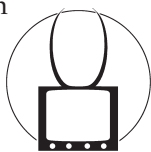
It isn't easy serving the Media. False steps are punished severely; luck is lavishly rewarded, until it runs out. But who would want to be in any other business? This is Show Business, honey! Nybbasians would rather sweep the floor of a movie studio than be CEO of a commodities firm. The Media is where it's at.

No matter what their Band, everyone working for Nybbas functions as a Taker (it's more than coincidence that this rhymes with their nickname, "Fakers"). Like their Superior, they view the Word of the Media as all about taking, rather than giving. They have an Impudite outlook on the War: "Make them like you, then take all they've got. If you can't make them like you, then make them react to you." The reaction yields the Essence, and the Essence is what it's all about.

Nybbytes are reflexively nice. The logic goes, "someday, this person may have something I want, and I'm not burning my bridges." Usually, the demon forgets the person he's talking to within seconds after they part, or even while they're still speaking. However, if a demon of the Media wants to get something from you, he won't think of anything *but* you until he's accomplished his goal. He'll be your best friend, right up until he slides the blade between your ribs, and then he'll keep smiling, trying to make you think it was an accident so that he can pull the same trick again. After all, Recycling Is Good.

When servants of Nybbas do burn their bridges, they burn them to the ground. If they have a real falling out with someone, that someone becomes a nonentity to them. The only acknowledgement they make to that person's continued existence is to whisper damaging rumors about them in the right ears.

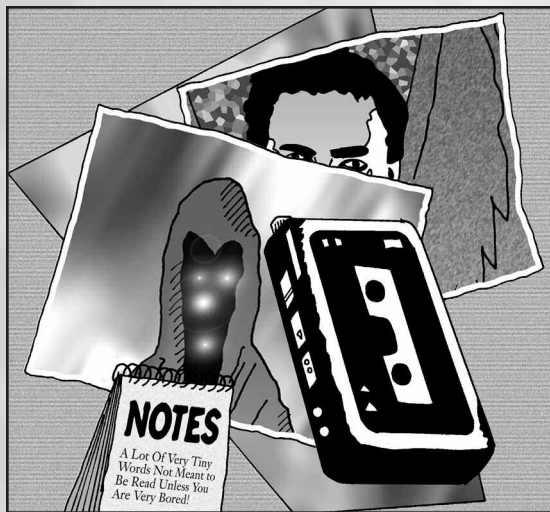
All Fakers love their Boss. He sets the example they all aspire to emulate: Get ahead fast by luck and subterfuge, then smile at the little people as you sign their pink slips. Nybbytes work like crazy to get to the top, where they think they can relax. Once there, they realize that they can *never* relax, and take it out on those beneath them.



NYBBYTES AND TECHNOLOGY

Demons working for Nybbas are almost always technically savvy, although only a portion of them are interested in research. None of them want to seem behind the times. They are knowledgeable about artifacts, as well as mundane devices.

His Servitors almost always have a recording device of some kind, from a simple pen and paper to spy equipment that would make James Bond jealous. If a demon of the Media is present when something newsworthy occurs, he'd better have a story about it at least, if not pictures and video tape. Failure to capture an event is severely punished.



Because of this, many Nybbasians favor making gadgets such as camcorders, palm computers, hand-held TVs, and cell phones into talismans or artifacts (*Liber Reliquarum*, p. 39 and 49).

The Media is also responsible for inventing many new relics, including the Vox Populi (*Liber Reliquarum*, p. 79-80), Hula-Hoops of Hell (*Liber Reliquarum*, p. 64), Magic Eight-Balls (*Liber Reliquarum*, p. 65), and the Idiot Box (*Liber Reliquarum*, p. 109). These are only a few of the things from Nybbas' labs, and many more are currently in the planning or testing phase.

BANDS

In keeping with the Media tradition of nicknaming everything, each Band serving the Media has an alternate appellation, which many *insist* be used in their presence in preference to the usual alternate Band titles.

Balseraphs

Balseraphs who serve Nybbas are Spin Doctors, even if that's not their specific job! They're always finding ways to slant information, either positively or negatively, depending on what image they want to portray. Hyperbole comes naturally to them, like breathing.

Balseraphs usually hold the highest positions in the Media hierarchy, for several reasons: they're good at political climbing, they love creating the fakery that feeds the info-starved masses, and the Word of the Media is such an artificial construct, it resonates in harmony with their very being. The Media is all about making fake things "real," and sometimes Balseraphs seem better suited to the Media than even Impudites.

Nybbasian Liars prefer jobs that allow them to share their world-view with the masses. They gravitate toward certain stereotypical positions, such as agent, producer, entertainment lawyer, public relations, newscaster, politician – any high-profile job where lying is not only allowed, but *expected*. They love the opportunity to infect groups of people with their personal symphonies – it supports their delusions to have large numbers of gullible humans accept their word as the "truth." Their servants tend to be underlings in the same line of work they are.

Other Balseraphs eschew the spotlight in favor of behind-the-scenes manipulation. They become writers – speechwriters, playwrights, journalists, educational writers, script writers – the vector is unimportant as long as the disease is spread. Or for even more subtle influence, they become editors; change a word here, a sentence there, and the meaning becomes entirely different. Often, these shadowy operators cause more damage by their insidious influence than their more public brethren. They can be found in places that most Nybbites would find dreadfully dull – university publishing houses, national educational testing companies, research laboratories, not-for-profit organizations, and polling companies. Information flows through their hands, and back out again, changed to agree with their warped outlook on life. Their servants may actually be their *bosses*, the better to control the approval process for altered facts.

Djinn

Behind their backs, Djinn in the service of Nybbas are sometimes mockingly called "Gofers," but more prudent servitors of the Media refer to them as Security, Bouncers, or (less commonly) Roadies. Unlike Impudites, who attach themselves to their stars as fawning sycophants, Djinn make themselves "useful" to their star servants in blunt, unsophisticated, and usually violent ways.

Djinn relish the position of "hired muscle," especially when backed up by a suitably supporting Role. Nybbas' Djinn encourage their stars to estrange themselves from "the masses" by developing an "us-versus-them" mentality, reinforced by their Djinn's casual disdain for humanity and over-protectiveness against any other "stalkers." The stars' selfish, aloof attitudes are then held up by other Media servitors as something "ordinary people" should admire and covet.

Hollywood is a place where they'll pay you a thousand dollars for a kiss and fifty cents for your soul.

– Marilyn Monroe

Calabim

The Calabim of Nybbas are variously called Sharks, Hooligans, Promoters, or other similar nicknames, reflecting not only their usual Roles, but the means by which they serve the Media: sports. They are beloved of Nybbas for their ability to gather thousands of humans and then goad them into howling, mindless violence.

Since time immemorial, humanity has had a need to take sides in every conflict, friendly or not. Nybbas' Calabim have taken this tendency, found ways to exaggerate and warp it using the sports figures they groom, and turned it into a tool by which huge groups of humans can be manipulated with the simplest – and crudest – of images and emotions. This being one of the great goals of the Media, as well as a much-desired tool in other areas besides sports, the Calabim are accorded much more status within Nybbas' hierarchy than one might expect. Their servants, not surprisingly, are sports stars or sports promoters.

WORD-BOUND SERVITORS

Like many things under Nybbas' control, the power of his Word-Bound tends to fluctuate drastically, since their Words are frequently related to trends. Infomercials, Tabloids, and Shock Radio are all Words held by Nybbasians, and none of them are expected to be popular for long. However, there are some timeless aspects of the Media which appeal to base human nature: the Demons of Pretentiousness, Morbid Fascination, and Invasion of Privacy have all found enduring Words to support, as has the Demon of Writer's Block.

Then there is Rex, the Demon of Cool (see p. 108), who has built his very nature out of the fickleness of humanity. No matter what fad is in style, he'll gain Essence from it. Nybbas often wishes that more of his Word-Bound could concoct a scheme like that.

Habbalah

The Media's Habbalah are known as Contacts, Totems, and Spirit Guides, in honor of the parts they've played since the height of Spiritualism in the 19th Century. Since that time, they've been laying the groundwork for Nybbas' (and Andrealphus') great project, the Media Religion. The Punishers influence gullible charismatics and feed them a watered-down mix of Eastern philosophy, pantheism, and woolly-headed wishful thinking. The Habbalite provides "miracles," both to support the "star's" beliefs, and to attract and encourage followers.

No few of these "psychics" become public figures, although almost none are true "stars" – yet. Nybbas' Habbalah seek to set them up as prophets and media icons, all but worshiped themselves, as a test of humanity's gullibility and strength of will. Few of them are surprised that the vast majority of humanity fails.

Another niche that Habbalah fill is that of spiritual advisor to important media figures. These include TV and movie stars, but also politicians and other people in the public eye. A Habbalite advisor uses his "client" as a mouthpiece to promote whatever specious collection of pseudo-religious dreck the demon wants to push. In addition, when viewers see a famous person deferring to a spiritual advisor, they become convinced that they need someone to advise them. Instead of turning to family and friends, they call a psychic stranger for \$2.50 per minute. And, very likely, a Habbalite answers the phone, or owns the company!

Are You Looking For *Love?*



MEDIA-SPEAK

The Media is infamous for bastardizing language into 1984-style double-speak. It tramples grammar, punctuation, spelling, and common sense in the name of being catchy. Media Servitors not only write silly ads, banal news commentary, and vapid sit-coms, they actually talk that way. They do this to make the language theirs – to control it and manipulate it to their purposes. There are even unofficial classes in this, where Hell-based editors drum the “Three M’s” into their underlings’ pre-fledged heads in Perdition newspaper offices.

Misquoting

Here is the first paragraph of this box, as quoted by a Nybbyte:

The Media is . . . catchy. Media Servitors . . . write . . . ads, . . . news commentary, and . . . sit-coms. They . . . make the language theirs!

Misspelling

A NU CAR 4 U? CALL NOW!
LARD LITE! QWIK AND E-Z!

Misdirection

The brave factions fighting for their very survival ask for little in return. After bombing a butcher shop in protest over unfair food prices, the rebels retreated to the hills bearing cooked meat to feed their families. “We couldn’t let it go to waste,” said one frugal partisan, “and besides, I don’t think any of it is from the butcher himself.”

The leader of the group could not be reached for comment, since he was fleeing the harassing government forces in his modest Lear jet. “Our prayers are with him,” sobbed a young woman, watching the skies with hope and tears in her eyes.

Habbalah play a very important role in proselytizing the Cult of the Media (p. 106), which is Nybbas’ favorite project at the moment. A great many of Nybbas’ Habbalah already believe the Truth will be revealed through the media; they see it as the voice of God, and think that if one is completely open to all media input, and can believe *everything* one is told, then enlightenment is within reach. It’s no surprise that all Habbalah Fakers work their scams using the instruments of the media.

Lilim

Called Bombshells, Starlets, or simply “the Talent,” Nybbas’ Lilim are the Prince’s homegrown stars. Their Roles range from porn starlets to divas of Hollywood and Broadway, but each one actively epitomizes one or more specific goals of the Media. Whether she is a self-centered “serious actress” or a silicone-enhanced bimbo with no acting skills and million-dollar contracts, a Lilim of the Media draws the eye and influences all who see her, generating responses from envy and covetousness to despair at the essential unfairness of life.

A very few Lilim of the Media are selected for a particularly special assignment. No two are exactly alike; they may have the Role of a talented young newcomer, or be an established leading lady, but they are always popular, even beloved. Their assignment is to die, and die tragically. Following in the footsteps of Marilyn Monroe, Rebecca Schaeffer, Savannah, and Selina, they

are senselessly killed by unbalanced fans, or commit suicide. An orgy of media coverage then follows, aimed at convincing humans of the essential senselessness of existence and inviting them to follow their idols. (Most of these “suicides” are clever swaps, where the Lilim never risks Trauma or even breaking a nail – if she actually *does* have to die, she’s always provided with a Body Bag (*Liber Reliquarum*, p. 53) containing a new vessel. Nybbas doesn’t want to risk one of these stars without a good reason.)

THE FALLEN

Nybbas always likes new blood. A Fallen angel means a new sob story which can be turned into a mini-series, or parlayed into a chick movie. The Boss’ biggest problem is getting enough grist for the Media mill, so he’ll be well disposed toward Fallen who want to enter his organization. He’ll even put a promising one (such as an ex-Creationer) into a position of minor power. But woe betide any new addition who doesn’t learn to hustle. He’ll end up fetching coffee for eternity, or worse; Nybbas might just strip his Forces and use them for a more interesting project.

HUMANS

*"Imagination is the one weapon in the war against reality."
— Jules de Gaultier*

The Media would be nowhere without humans. To the Impudite Prince, humanity is his entertainment, his delight, his strength, and his food. He particularly loves them for their weaknesses, which he exploits mercilessly, but he needs them for their imagination, without which the Media would not be as powerful as it is today.

Nybbas has thousands of humans working for him. The Media's own hype makes humans flock to it in droves. The majority of them are not Hellsworn, but simply greedy, grasping, gorgeous, or gullible. (Or any

combination thereof.) Soldiers of the Media are used at the highest levels of the Media's Corporeal holdings, and are put in positions superior to demons more than any other Prince's Hellsworn. Nybbas knows that humans have that certain *je ne sais quoi* that adds extra zip and ratings to his enterprises, and he has no compunctions about using them to his best advantage. And the Media is one of the few organizations where demons don't feel ashamed for acting subordinate to a human.

The best thing about humans is that they are an unlimited resource. Sets and props can be irreplaceable, but if you break a human, there's always another one.

Shedim

Nybbas' Shedim are known as Stunt Doubles more for the irony than for anything they specifically do with or to their hosts. Given the image-consciousness of the Media, these Shedim rarely incite their hosts to acts of obvious or *ugly* depravity, but self-destructive and selfish behaviors are so common among show business people as to be clichés. It doesn't take much to lead a host to a despicable act that can at least be covered up socially, if not actually flaunted and admired.

in the studio and in the office, who need to be taken under their wings and shown the way the world of the Media works.

Shedim may be assigned servants from any area of the Media empire. They have the widest range of servant types of any Band working for Nybbas.

Impudites

The Media's Takers are nicknamed the Players and Face Men, but are sometimes disparagingly called Groupies. Their relationships with their stars are designed to inflate the stars' egos and enflame their self-centeredness even as the Impudite drains their Essence. Like the Djinn, Media's Impudites seek to nudge their charges into models of selfishness for their fans to emulate. Where the Djinn work by lowering the star's opinion of other people, the Impudites work by raising their pawn's opinion of himself.

In the presence of their star, Nybbasian Impudites are invariably toadying and sycophantic.

They actually enjoy catering to the star's every need, and often worm their way so deeply into their lives that the Impudite ends up controlling their household; this is especially true in the case of older stars, where the demon may even end up a spouse in a May-December Hollywood marriage . . .

The media portrays us in a cheap and tawdry fashion, when it portrays is at all. Either we are insane exploiters of adolescents, or cardboard boogymen, or buffoons. This is satisfactory to us. Let them think what they like, so long as it is not the truth.

— Warburton, Sorcerer

Given this propensity of their hosts, Shedim of the Media are among the most relaxed and easy-going of their Band. They rarely have to work hard at guiding their hosts into damnation, and unlike most of their brethren, they typically body-hop through circles of remarkable comfort and affluence. They are not complacent, though; there are always new up-and-comers, both

JOBS

The demons of the Media are some of the hardest-working beings in Hell. They all have jobs to do, and slacking is punished with the same severity as failure.

Celestial Jobs

One of the most consistent celestial duties is that of maintaining the bureaucracy of the Media – papers must be shuffled, projects must be assigned (or stolen from a demon's enemies), and resources must be allocated (or denied). This is a haven for those demons who don't have any vestiges of creativity or ambition (at the lower levels) and a position of power for those older demons who hold the true authority. ("Sorry, babe, can't release the new cameras . . . hey, don't holler at me, or you won't get old cameras, either.") Another task that doesn't require *true* imagination is that of producing the regular propaganda for Hell. Demons condemned to slave in this way are given copies of previous files, and told to "make this the same, but different." These poor hacks spend their days chained to their desks – sometimes literally – altering names and slotting in new stock situations. Almost all demons who were demonlings in Perdition came up through these channels.

Tasks which actually need original thought are those of producing new entertainment, and altering history. Young Servitors of the Media often get their start by providing something new to the demons and the damned in Hell, before being assigned to corporeal duties.

On the question of history, Nybbas prides himself on being able to provide the facts to prove *anything*. Demonic clerks struggle (like Winston Smith in 1984) to alter Hell's records to suit the needs of the moment. Names of traitors are removed, or slanted to display how they were always treacherous, and forecasts are adjusted to reflect the current reality. (Kronos merely smiles, and includes *all* records in his Archive – both the true and the false. *All* versions of the false.)

Ethereal Jobs

If people didn't dream of fame just for fame's sake, or as the only route to happiness, then where would the Media be? Nybbas has demons who inspire such dreams, though they're obliged to flee both angels of Dreams (as such visions tend to take the dreamer to Blandine's side of the Marches eventually) and demons of Nightmares (who object to the humans being treated so *kindly*). There's also the need to protect humans who are currently media darlings, in case they become the subject of angelic or demonic attention.

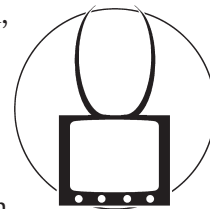
Other dealings in the Marches are less public. Nybbas must negotiate and maintain his alliances with certain marketable groups of ethereals, such as the Japanese *kami*. The recent rise in *anime* and *manga* worldwide has been very profitable to both sides in this arrangement. (Even Andrealphus admires the teenage girls in battle bikinis and thigh-high boots, not to mention what the animators can do with tentacles!) Responsible, high-level demons (and their entourages) are sent to engage in negotiations and cut further deals. Otherwise, the Marches occasionally serves as a source of new ideas for truly desperate or pathetic Servitors of the Media. They creep into dreams, avoiding angels or other demons, and *especially* avoiding other Nybbasians, in a weak attempt to bolster their lack of creativity.

Corporeal Jobs

The corporeal plane is where Fakers really shine. Forget about damned souls and pathetic old gods; humanity is where the action is. Most demons of the Media want to end up on Earth. Fortunately, that's where Nybbas wants them.

No Servitor of the Media will even consider working outside his Master's Word; whether they are in the public eye as a star or producer, or behind the scenes as a secretary, companion, or casting agent, Nybbas *always* support the Media – and not just because it's dissonance not to. There are tasks for those demons who want to stand in the warmth of the spotlight and savor the admiration of the masses; those who want to promote the *concept* of the Media, making it vital to every living soul on Earth; and those who just want to keep it running from day to day. No one is wasted. No one is left out. The Media wants them all, and the Media is hungry for them all. The most pitiful, groveling demon can know that he's part of something which is changing the world – which will control the world – which may even already control the world.

Even the humble Djinn who find jobs as bouncers and bodyguards can bask in reflected glory, and know that they're serving their Prince. Lilim enjoy their positions as stars, while Balseraphs manipulate others as agents and producers; Calabim, Habbalah and Shedim give the odd exploitative shove where necessary, and Impudites spread the Media among the humanity which they love so dearly. Although they may compete among themselves to push their particular media darlings or projects, it all ultimately serves the Media itself.



CHANGING SUPERIORS

Nybbas doesn't have a big problem with Servitors who want to switch Superiors. People come, people go . . . However, he wouldn't want to lose a servant with a head full of secrets. He'll recruit demons (not in person, but through his Agents) who he thinks will benefit his organization. He sometimes gets rid of Servitors with

poor performance by trading them to other, less lenient Princes, but he prefers to use them as fodder for entertaining the masses. Executions and death-matches are very popular in Hell, where everyone wants to see someone doing even worse than they are.

Unusual Jobs

Absolute control of information means that all who use the information are controlled *through* it. If everything in the world is described in the Media in some way, then he who controls the Media controls the world . . . and Nybbas *is* the Media. All that he requires is that everything be described in the Media. He therefore sponsors such works as geographical projects designed to map every inch of the world, putting works of literature onto computers where they can be easily adjusted, compiling archives of news and documentation . . . when he controls everything that his subjects read, watch, or hear, he will control *them*.

The Prince of the Media also engages in scientific research. After all, useful as Vapula is, he can't be relied on for everything – especially such vital areas of knowledge as subliminal processing. Some of Nybbas' more studious Servitors work in this area, or persuade humans to do the work for them.

REWARDS AND PUNISHMENTS

*I want the credit. I want the credit. I want the **credit**!*

– Wag the Dog

Rewards

Demons of the Media are award-happy, just like members of Earth's media. The easiest way to reward a Nybbyte is to give him an award with a silly name, that he can flaunt before other Media Servitors. The awards mean nothing to demons who serve other Words, unless they're extremely gullible.

As stated on p. 121, a favorite reward for any Servitor of the Media is to go to Earth. (Indeed, almost all demons want to go to Earth; this is one reward that *will* impress other demons in Hell.) Nybbas thinks Earth is important, so demons who go there are important. Once corporeal, demons can be rewarded with cars, houses, money; anything that worshippers of the Media see as a sign of status.

THE TWO MINUTES

Nybbas is one of the more accessible Princes. He likes to mingle with his people. However, he's always busy, and under normal circumstances, a demon has to be pretty far up in the hierarchy to get an appointment with the Boss. There is one exception to this rule: He'll *always* let someone pitch an idea to him. It's called "The Two Minutes." Any Servitor of the Media – in fact, any demon at all – may approach Nybbas at any time and request an audience with him, which he'll grant unless he's dealing with a major crisis.

Within a few hours, a day at most, the demon will get two minutes to sell his concept. As with most interactions with Nybbas, the best advice is "be

prompt, be amusing, be brief, begone." If the Boss likes what he hears, he'll ask for details. If not, two minutes is more than long enough to be irritating a busy Prince.

The catch is that each demon gets only one failure. If he fails to interest his Prince during the Two Minutes, he'll have to make an appointment through regular channels next time, and the waiting list is months long at *best*. If a demon really bores Nybbas, the waiting list for his next appointment could be infinitely long, assuming he lives through his Two Minutes in the first place. Conversely, demons who pitch successful ideas are welcomed back with open arms, until they make their first mistake . . .

Underlings are another popular reward – popular for those put in charge, not for the underlings themselves. Anybody who is anybody in the Media has at least a personal assistant *besides* the human servant their Band Attunement grants them. Really important Nybbytes have a full entourage, from masseuses to chefs, gardeners, and Vice-Presidents in Charge of Production. Those who serve the Media keep tabs on each other's careers by comparing numbers of subordinates. Of course, demonic underlings are more prestigious than human ones.

Punishments

The first level of punishment is the boring level. It includes such chores as reading through screenplay slushpiles, working on one of the many writing farms that churn out an endless stream of dreck to keep the Media going, or working in the mail room. Needless to say, none of this takes place on Earth, which is punishment on its own for a previously corporeal demon.

The next level involves active cruelty. Victims are made to work for those they stepped upon on the way up the ladder of success, or thrown into the Far Marches to do an "Investigative Report." Demons might also be punished by appearing on one of the sadistic game shows that Nybbas airs in Hell.

The final level of "official" punishment is the off switch. This is usually reserved for the worst crime of them all: being boring.

But it could be worse. It is so terrifying to servants of the Media that they don't like to talk about it, but some say that Nybbas has sealed away his worst troublemakers in coffin-like cells of complete sensory deprivation.

DEALING WITH OUTSIDERS

"When they tell you 'Film is a collaborative medium,' what they really mean is, 'Film is a collaborative medium, bend over.'"

– David Mamet

Fakers are always friendly to those outside of the Media, or at least those important enough to be worth their attention. The lower they are in status, the more

A lie told often enough becomes the truth.

– Lenin

LIFE IN THE MEDIA SPOTLIGHT

Hustle. Push. Grasp. Climb. Sell. Don't stop, don't rest, or the next thing you know, your assistant will be sitting in your chair, sticking out his Italian shoe for you to lick.

Outsiders usually think working for the Media is a cushy job, but it's one of the most ruthless Words to serve. Every day you have to prove yourself anew. Old successes are just that: old. If you remind the Boss of past achievements, it will just make him notice that you haven't done anything for him *today*. The higher you are in the organization, the bigger each triumph must be. You know there's always plenty of room in the mail room or the writing farm for those who disappoint.

So you act like you own the place, because if you show fear, the sharks will get you. At the same time, you're looking for the next score, trying to decide if going with an unknown makes you look hip or desperate. You want the Boss to show up and notice, but you don't, too, because he could hate what you're doing and send you to tap-dance in Shal-Mari.

If you're smart, you'll stay in the middle; not high enough to attract attention, not low enough to be stepped on. You'll carry a recording device everywhere, just in case a bus full of schoolchildren crashes into a speeding cop car right in front of you. And you'll keep your lips limber, so the butt-kissing doesn't wear you out.

people Nybbytes are nice to. Even the very important ones habitually say "thanks, babe!" to waitresses and doormen. That smarmy camaraderie is as fake as a politician's smile, though. It's a knee-jerk reaction, stemming from the early, less powerful days of the Media.

When working with servants of other Words, Nybbytes will defer to the outsider, and then arrange things behind the scenes to suit themselves. If the outsider complains, the Media demon will make a big scene. "Carlos, did you blow up the wrong car? I don't believe it. You're fired! I swear, they join a union and then they think they own you. I'm so sorry. Really. It will never happen again." Later, he'll pull Carlos aside and say, "Thanks for playing along. Of course you aren't fired. You know how the Game is. I had to show him what he wanted to see. Here's a twenty. Go get yourself a latté."

SAMPLE SERVITORS

HARRISHEE

Demon of Sensationalism

Balseraph Knight of the Media

Corporeal Forces - 3 Strength 4 Agility 8
 Ethereal Forces - 4 Intelligence 8 Precision 8
 Celestial Forces - 5 Will 9 Perception 11

Suggested Word Forces: 6

Vessel: Human Female/2, Charisma +3

Role: "Catherine Riley," Reporter/3, Status/3

Skills: Detect Lies/6, Dodge/2, Driving/1, Emote/3, Fast-Talk/6, Knowledge/4 (Journalism), Ranged Weapon/2 (Gun), Seduction/3.

Songs: Attraction (Celestial/2), Charm (Celestial/5), Form (Ethereal/3, Celestial/5), Shields (All/2), Tongues (Corporeal/4)

Attunements: Balseraph of the Media, Subliminal, Knight of Influence, Demon of Sensationalism

Special Ability: Harrishee can pick one erroneous or exaggerated statement or quote in each article she writes, which *will* survive the editing process and be printed intact. Anyone doing proofing or fact-checking simply doesn't notice it until it's too late.

Special Rite: Raising the circulation of a newspaper because of a manipulated or false story (1 Essence).

Harrishee gained her Word early in Nybbas' reign. She was one of the bright hot-shots who dropped their old Prince (Malphas, in her case) for a chance at a fast promotion. When she joined the Media, yellow journalism was on the upswing, and she decided it was her ticket to the big time. In an all-male profession, she chose to stay in a female vessel and use her wiles (and Songs) to extract information from her targets. When necessary, she could put on a helpless act, but behind the act she was knowing, tough, and aggressive.

She also had real talent as a reporter. She could smell a story miles away, and being a typically paranoid Balseraph herself, lies and liars were easy to spot. However, she wasn't in the business to bring justice and expose wrongdoing – not unless it would sell papers. Harrishee wanted the most sensational story, period. If that meant using what she knew to



make the innocent seem guilty and the guilty, innocent, that was life in the big city.

Her nose for skeletons in people's closets helped her climb the ladder of success. Harrishee's method worked thusly: "Print my story, as is, or I tell everyone about your (mistress, criminal record, dealings with the mayor, fondness for boys)."

She didn't work exclusively for one paper, but had articles published in all of the important rags of the day. As the turn of the century came and went, she moved through a succession of vessels, building up her list of "contacts" until she even managed to debut in some foreign newspapers. No story was too lurid or sensational. As a former Servitor of Malphas, she delighted when her words drove groups toward mutual suspicion and violence.

Harrishee's biggest triumph came during World War I. She had worked hard to stir up America's fear of German immigrants, and finally published a series of "exposés" which resulted in hysteria, mass arrests of innocent citizens with Germanic ancestry, and two lynchings. The Boss smiled, and gave her a Knighthood.

Continued on next page . . .

SAMPLE SERVITORS (CONTINUED)

She was well on her way to another Distinction during the 1930s, using the same methods to feed the paranoia of the masses as the Depression sucked their hope away. She loved the era, loved the fear that was so rampant and easy to manipulate. People wanted someone to blame for all the bad things happening to them, and wanted to know that others had it worse than them. She was happy to give them what they wanted. More women were working, and Harrishee didn't have to fight so hard to be accepted as a reporter. Things were looking up.

Then Malphas caught up with her. He had been biding his time, planning which of his AWOL Servitors he would use for an object lesson. Her promotion made up his mind. She was hard to catch, but eventually his gang of hand-picked Djinn and Calabim – with a relic that could drag a celestial back with the holder – tracked her down and cornered her. Her Essence exhausted, every escape blocked, Harrishee opted to go to Limbo of her own free will to evade the punishment awaiting her.

Harrishee just got out of Limbo, and she has some serious catching up to do. When she went in in the mid-1930s, newspapers were still the main source of information for many people, since radios were expensive and some places didn't even receive broadcast signals. Now newspapers compete with radio, TV, and the Internet, and many have lost out to the competition. While Harrishee, or Catherine Riley (as her Role is known), is willing to adapt, she has to educate herself first. She is currently an anachronism, as is her style of dress, her way of speaking, and her reporting skills.

Many Nybbytes think she's hopelessly out of date, and discount her as anyone of importance. They are wrong. She has the drive and intelligence to catch up, and more importantly, she still has a nose for news and a good, strong backstabbing arm. She'll get back on top if she has to walk on a pile of dead babies. However, Malphas knows she isn't dead, and if she makes herself visible, he may just correct that error.

Catherine Riley seems to have stepped straight out of the movie *Girl Friday*. She wears modern clothes, but chooses them so that she looks like a '30s career

girl. When working, she always wears a suit, hat, purse, and gloves. Her glib tongue moves at the speed of sound, as she wisecracks and uses out-of-date terms like "kiddo," "heater," "skirt," and "23 skiddoo." She smokes like a chimney.



MATTEO

Shedite of the Media

Corporeal Forces - 2 Strength 5 Agility 3
Ethereal Forces - 4 Intelligence 10 Precision 6
Celestial Forces - 3 Will 8 Perception 5
Skills: Computer Operation/2, Detect Lies/4, Dodge/1, Driving/4, Emote/3, Fast-Talk/2, Fighting/2, Lying/3.
Songs: Healing (Corporeal/4), Tongues (Celestial/3).

Attunements: Shedite of the Media, Soundtrack

Matteo – along with his servant and favorite host, Peter Vens – roams the country as a traveling radio reporter. It's easy for him to connect up with the local radio station (professional or ham radio) and start delivering the news. (And if there isn't any news in the area, then he'll create some.) Audiences across the country are familiar with Peter's rapid, Boston-accented delivery, snapping off descriptions of local scandals and disasters.

Continued on next page . . .

SAMPLE SERVITORS (CONTINUED)

As a Shedite, Matteo finds his traveling lifestyle invaluable in avoiding dissonance. He can easily take hosts from among those who Peter Vens meets, and drive them into depravity. Why, it even serves the word of Media by giving Peter more to report! He has vague plans of possessing a roving television reporter some day, in a similar way, if only he can find a suitable host with a good budget. As far as he's concerned, the greatest pleasure in the world is *knowing* that he has an audience's attention as he reports another tragic catastrophe. A young and inexperienced Shedite, he hasn't yet tried to assert significant authority over other demons on Earth, and he fails to recognize how important his skills and position could make him to demons of Factions, or others. Encounters with angels have – fortunately for him – been brief, and have passed without the angels realizing his true identity.

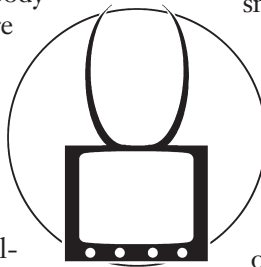
Peter Vens himself is only concerned by his self-importance. He loves the delicious feeling of being adored by panting phone-in callers – and being loathed by other reporters who are a step behind him with the news. Matteo has managed to persuade Peter that the Shedite is merely a subconscious manifestation of Peter's nose for news, and that urges to do a particular thing – or go in a particular direction – should be obeyed automatically. Peter has a good radio manner, and is a reasonable reporter, but wouldn't run into as many newsworthy stories without the Shedite's help (especially the ones which Matteo *creates*). He's in his thirties, with short, fluffy, dark hair, gray eyes, and an average build. The sparkle in his eyes when he sees a ghastly crime scene is vital, seductive – and only partly due to Matteo. Even without the Shedite, Peter would have served the Media dutifully.

(Matteo is a balanced starting character.)

ASSOCIATIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS

The Scene-Setters

Not all places are suitably telegenic, sad to say. A location may have been the scene of a tragic murder, or a ghastly car wreck, or a horrifying exposé – but if it doesn't *look* appalling enough, the audience (trained by the Media) just won't believe it. This group of demons provides appropriate special effects or stage-dressing to make any story believable. They'll obtain body parts (there's always someone who can spare them), blood, pyrotechnics, hysterical mobs; whatever's necessary to make the story perfect. These demons are perfectionists, and while they may have ambitions to rise in the bureaucracy or obtain greater personal power, they prefer to work behind the scenes rather than in front of a camera. Some are so specialized that they'll never climb to a higher position, and don't want to. Others take their passion for manipulation to the highest levels of the Media's organization – and many Earth organizations as well.



The Worshippers of News

These somewhat bizarre enthusiasts are considered insane by outsiders, and tend to keep their activities secret. They are mostly Habbalah, but other Bands are represented by a few pathetic demons, unbalanced by Discord. They venerate the “spirit of news” as a living thing, praying to icons of former celebrities or photos of famous disasters, and sanctifying cameras or microphones as lucky charms. Nybbas himself disregards their activities (though he will rarely promote one to a position of high authority) but many of his other Servitors sneer at demons who believe such fantasies. It's so unhip!

The Worshippers develop followings of deluded, fanatical humans. Luckily, the cult is into receiving the spirit of the news, not bringing it forcefully to other people, although there are occasional attempts to blow up newspapers that aren't “pure” enough, or cause a really newsworthy disaster.

(Rumors that some sort of incarnate “spirit of news” has in fact been created in the Marches remain merely rumors – for now.)

The business of the journalist is to destroy the truth, to lie outright, to pervert, to vilify, to fawn at the feet of mammon, and to sell his country and his race for his daily bread. You know it and I know it, and what folly is this toasting an independent press?

*– apocryphal toast of John Swinton, Chief of Staff
of the New York Times, at the New York Press Club in 1953*

GUEST STARS: FREE LILIM IN SERVICE TO NYBBAS

Nybbas treasures his Lilim – even the ones who aren't bound to him, but are only “temping.” (Though naturally *his* Tempters get the best goodies.) More than just being good-looking and good box-office, they *understand*. They *get it*. The purpose of the Media is to exploit people's desires, then give them desires that they didn't even know they had, and exploit those. Get a handle on what the consumer wants, then manipulate him to do your bidding.

Nybbas finds the appellation “Free” to be just another word. He manipulates Lilim by playing on their desire to manipulate others, and finds them easier to control than many demons who never considered themselves to be free.



All-Star Club

Once demons of the Media (at least, those who have a public role or are well-known in Hell) reach a certain level of status, they become “honorary” members of the All-Star Club. This association commands immediate respect among low-grade Servitors and seething envy among those of mediocre status. However, those demons of the Media with real power know what this organization *really* is – a convenient way of grouping medium-power demons who are potential tools or threatening newcomers. Belonging to the All-Star Club may be a mark of status, but it also makes up-and-coming Nybbytes a target for their elders.

Kandid Kamera

Naturally Nybbas has a secret service of his own – no Prince would be without one! Demons enrolled in it are trained in two main areas; surveillance and enforcement. Perhaps not surprisingly, Kandid Kamera's ability to obtain audiovisual evidence – evidence of *anything* – is unequalled in Hell, even by the Game. (The accuracy of such evidence is dubious, but it makes wonderful television!)

The organization is reasonably efficient, and rarely short of victims. However, due to the fact that everybody knows much of the evidence is faked, there *must* be personal or physical evidence to convict demons of high rank. (Servitors of low rank . . . well, call it an incentive to rise, and a good reason to have a friend in Kandid Kamera.)

Kandid Kamera is most effective in the corporeal realm, where the evidence they procure is not scrutinized so carefully. There's an entire branch devoted to getting dirt on powerful humans, and then using it to control them in the Media's interest.

**"I BET YOU'RE WONDERING WHY
I GATHERED YOU HERE TODAY . . ."**



The demons sitting at the boardroom table were not wondering this at all, but they produced tight smiles in response to their Prince's clichéd opening. Each one knew that his importance, and maybe his existence, hinged on the results of this meeting. They were here to brainstorm a new "season" of the Media on Earth.

They plunged in, vying for attention, putting forth the best ideas that they had concocted since the last meeting. Underlings rushed around, updating a fiendishly complex scheduling board that took up one entire wall of the room. Failed schemes were cancelled. Thousands of new plots took their place, most of them recycled and destined to fall by the wayside, but as their Prince always said, "quantity is better than quality. With quantity, you'll always turn up a few gems, but you can win with crap, too."

The assembled demons were the most high-powered and successful in Nybbas' organization, but the older ones sweated and scrabbled to show that they hadn't lost their edge, and the younger ones fought to show that they could run with the big dogs. None could be sure if the Boss' gaze was upon them, so like most Servitors of the Media, they

assumed they were being watched at all times and gave the best performance they could.

Nybbas sat at the head of the table, his usual energy under wraps as he drank in the fervor of those around him, his chin resting on top of his folded fingers. When the meeting had begun, he had been nodding, speaking, directing the growth of the wall chart, but he hadn't responded to anyone for several minutes, and the fear in the room was palpable. The din rose as the demons babbled harebrained schemes at him, trying to rouse his interest.

With no fanfare, he reached into his jacket, pulled out a remote control, and aimed it at a demon halfway down the table, who was pitching, "a new show about an alien living with an earth family, should hit across several demographics . . ."

"Boorrr-ing!" said the Dark Lord, as he clicked the "off" button. The demon winked out of existence.

Nybbas put away the remote and smiled at the now silent assemblage. "Ah, that's a breath of fresh air. Let's talk some more about the mass corruption of humanity, and then break for lunch. I know a great little place . . ."

Fashion Victims

Those who have fallen out of fashion, and aren't flexible enough to move on, sometimes cluster together, forming a vague and undefined group in self-defense. Still wearing their beehive hairdos, bell-bottom jeans, or paisley shirts, they dream of regaining their former fame while they help each other back toward stardom again – after all, one rediscovered style often brings a host of others along with it. Naturally, if any of them *did* manage to become fashionable, he would ruthlessly step on all the others. The Media is the Media, baby. Don't call us, we'll call you.

DEALING WITH THE GAME

Just as with any other outsiders (p. 123), Fakers are very polite to servants of the Game. They have good reason to be. The Prince of the Game is looking for any weakness in the Media so that he can sunder the close ties between Nybbas and Vapula. (Why? Because Princes who are too close are potentially dangerous allies. Especially these two Hellborn, who seemingly care more for their own schemes than about the War against Heaven.) Nybbas has made it clear that he doesn't want any close scrutiny by Asmodeus, and any Nybbyte who attracts the Game's attention will be *lucky* to wind up combing the slush pile for eternity.

Demons of the Game always want information, so that's the bribe of choice for Nybbasians, who have information coming out their ears. The Asmodeans know that much of this data is suspect, but they have uses for carefully documented lies – usually to incriminate someone they want to question.

MODES OF ADDRESS

Nybbytes are a casual group, on the whole. As casual as sharks waiting for the scent of blood. The higher up they go in the hierarchy, the more casual they like to appear. A Nybbasian who wants to be called Mister is stuck in middle-management, and probably will be for life. Real players, even the Word-bound, go by their first name in a sort of reverse snobbery.

Low-level demons call Nybbas "Sir." All others call him "Boss" or, for Captains and above, just a suitably respectful and enthusiastic "Nybbas." Demons who are very high up in the Media organization are even allowed to call him "babe," as in, "hey, babe, good to see ya." Using this appellation carelessly can, however, be bad for a demon's health and career.

The most often heard farewell among Fakers is, "Ciao, babe. I'll have my people call your people. We'll do lunch." This is actually a demonic phrase which translates to, "When I see you next, I'll grind you under my heel and eat your liver." The Nybbytes repeated it in the hearing of humans, and it seems to have caught on with a certain set.

Nybbas has no desire to turn disciplinary problems over to the Game. He's got plenty of ways to handle demons who get out of line. However, his servants have a great deal of autonomy while on Earth, and this just increases Asmodeus' concern.



ADVENTURE

SEEDS



130

ADVENTURE SEEDS

BUDDY, CAN YOU SPARE A DEMONLING?

It all started when one of Nybbas' people proposed a way to get more Essence from demons – film a movie on location in Shal-Mari. Fueled by curiosity about the filming, many demons would line up and pay Essence to see what it was all about. (This would help the Media get a few more inches of foot into the door of Shal-Mari cineplexes, currently virtually monopolized by Dark Humor.)

For the movie, many, *many* extras will be needed. The director-demon, a Balseraph who goes by the name of “Director Fazio,” intends to draw his extras from the denizens of the jointly-owned Principality. Demonlings are the most economical extras, but they have to be able to act, so he's sent minions out to scout for talented imps and gremlins of 5 or 6 Forces. Technically, the actors are to be “hired.” However, the minions would be well-advised to think of themselves as a press gang.

Unfortunately, Haagenti has taken it into his head that he wants to feast on roast demonling this week. Lots and lots of roast demonling. Haagenti isn't restricting *his* procurers to creatures of 5 or 6 Forces, but while the weaker ones will be easier to catch, the procurers do have quotas to fill. (I.e., they have to fill up platters, either with lots of small roasts, or fewer large ones.)

And then there's Lust's little project. Andrealphus, in one of his whims, has decreed that he intends to have an orgy where all the “entertainers” will be 6-Force imps and gremlins. Preferably well-trained, and definitely attractive. Cue more “recruiters.”

With all these things going on, naturally Kobal has smirked and sent *his* servants out into Shal-Mari – to find demonlings and bring them back to a warehouse near his office tower. What happens to them after they're captured is likely to be . . . funny.

Needless to say, the demonling population of Shal-Mari doesn't have a score card to tell the various factions apart, and since one of the fates is certain death (mmm, roast demonling), and another is uncertain (if likely to be darkly humorous), all the ones who have an Ethereal Force to their name are *not* interested in being recruited. For anything. Even the small, stupid ones have caught the general unease and are skittish and hard to catch.

So they've hidden themselves anywhere they can. Or they've sworn their services as familiars and servants to bigger demons (who would be loath to lose their new minions). Some have done both.



Other complications can be added as the GM desires . . . Is some enterprising Free Lilim starting to auction off demonlings? Has a Servitor of Factions decided to add to the chaos? Are a group of Valefor's Thieves trying to steal demonlings away from the recruiting groups, just for the fun of it?

(Characters may be “recruiters” for any or all of the Princes, Servitors of other Princes, or even demonlings trying to save their grubby little necks.)

SEEDS OF LUST

TURF WAR

To Hell with the solidarity of Princes (if such a thing ever existed) – Andrealphus *likes* destroying Saminga's Tethers. However, he prefers to do it without large-scale open aggression. No problem – Andrealphites are subtle, aren't they?

A particular Tether has been identified in the middle of a large city. It's a back alley, the site of a particularly brutal gang fight ten years ago in which all the captive survivors from the losing side were mutilated and then killed. It's a small Tether, but conveniently placed for entrance to the city, and the Seneschal (a Djinn) is moderately powerful in himself, and commands half a dozen Hellsworn. Andrealphus wants it *removed*, preferably without encouraging angelic attention. Even if he doesn't establish a Tether of his own in its place, his demons will have more freedom to maneuver in the city once it's gone. (He may have ongoing plans for the city, but that information hasn't been given to the characters.)



As they've been ordered not to destroy the area violently (and, indeed, such a thing might even strengthen a Tether of Death) the characters will have to weaken the Tether by encouraging connections to things *other* than Death in the area. Lust is a good choice, but other potential options are life, sunlight, growing things, health, craftsmanship, hopes and dreams, and other living concepts. The humans must be led into such behavior without being forced to do so by demonic powers, either, if it's to affect the Symphony properly. Much as it may pain the Andrealphites to get out there and do "social work," their Prince will not be amused by failure. Fortunately for the characters, the demon who gives them their briefing has some helpful suggestions . . .

Open A Birthing Center And Orphanage: Or, rather, encourage some local humans to open one. It should be a symbol of birth, and encourage happy children in the area. (Their superior likes this suggestion, because it would also be a convenient source of juveniles later – which he can take credit for. However, procuring children from it while trying to destroy the Death-Tether would run the risk of attracting angelic attention while the situation is fluid, and should be avoided for the moment.)

For this to work, the demons will need a large property close to the Tether-site (several are possible), all the necessary permissions, staff, pregnant mothers, and orphans. Clever Andrealphites may even persuade or trick local *angels* into helping out there. Really clever Andrealphans can try to make the angels think that subverting the Death-Tether is their own idea. (The cleverest Lusties don't let the angels discover their own identities either, of course.) This is a long-term plan, but can be put into action while working on other, short-term plans as well; the Prince hasn't stipulated a definite time limit, after all.

Orgy: The good old-fashioned methods are the best. A really thorough orgy or party that encompasses a whole house – or block of apartments – or the entire street . . . It's likely to attract attention from half the city,

and to be rather obviously the work of demons of Lust, but it might work. Alternatively, it might provide a distraction while other plans are carried out.

Urban Renewal: Get out the greenery and start all sorts of civic pride projects. Make a memorial to the teenagers who died there, and open a hospital in their names. Alternatively, try to remove the whole matter from popular memory. Hold craft fairs (and seduce the crafters). Persuade Servitors of Gluttony to lead cookery classes. Get the local populace active and enthusiastic. Most importantly, stop the gangs (who are still around the area) from *more* killings. Again, local angels might be tricked into helping out . . .

Kill the Seneschal: Another all-time favorite. Killing the Seneschal will definitely help matters, but unless the Tether's been somehow destabilized first, it's unlikely to produce any lasting effects. There's also the fact that Servitors of Lust are unlikely to be able to walk into a Death-Tether unopposed . . . Another job to trick local angels – or demons – into?

Anything Else: There are plenty of other things which enthusiastic characters could try. This whole seed serves more as background material, which demons of Lust can work on while also carrying out short-term tasks. Needless to say, any angels finding out about this will be *extremely* dubious about the Andrealphite intentions, and certainly won't want Lust keeping any influence in the area! Other demons may approve or disapprove, but, either way, will want a piece of the action . . .

PARTY TIME

A Tether of Lust is about reach its first anniversary, and there's a rumor that the Beautiful Prince himself may turn up for the celebratory party. Hoping that this will indeed happen (and for recognition), the Seneschal has ordered local Andrealphites to help arrange the evening, and to collect "party favors." However, they're to take care not to attract any undue attention to the Tether from other local celestials.

Demons may be ordered to look for particular people or items, which can range from the easily findable to the near-impossible. (A supply of whipped cream, two blonde teenage twins, a cuddly plush toy version of a local cartoon or card-game fad, a nine-month pregnant woman, a tasteful bathroom towel set, a particular breed of dog, “anything you think might amuse the Prince . . .”) However, as local angels (and other demons) know the Tether’s there, smuggling stuff in and out is going to be difficult. Making it obvious that they’re holding a big party is just *asking* for trouble – enemies may launch an attack on the place, or strike elsewhere while they’re distracted. Angels may also object, in a narrow-minded way, to some of the living “party favors” whom the Servitors of Lust want to invite in for the evening (and who may also need training or conditioning). And someone’s just phoned in a bomb warning . . .

BODYGUARD DUTY

The Prince of Lust has a new toy from the Far Marches. While he’s in the mood to please her, he’s ordered that local Servitors of Lust guard a Tether to her pantheon that happens to be in the vicinity. Of course, the Andrealphites aren’t told *why* – though they may be able to make a few guesses. Of course, they’re under orders to keep this all secret. Unfortunately, this coincides with a visit from some demons of Nightmares, who want to make the ethereals an offer they can’t refuse: serve Beleth or lose the Tether.

The whole situation is complicated by the fact that the Game’s in town, and are far more likely to side with Nightmares than Lust in any disputes. Finally, disturbance is likely to draw the attention of local angels (of *course* there are angels!) who will meddle in an unhelpful way. While the Prince *will* lose interest in his plaything sooner or later, at which point the Tether can safely be abandoned, he hasn’t done so yet . . .

POPULAR OPINION

Dr. Philip Michaels is a well-known physician, with a number of very well-publicized theories about the importance of regular exercise. He’s managed to feature in some general health magazines, discussing the importance of an energetic sex life in staying fit. (Without mentioning such concepts as love or affection, though he has been generally in favor of marriage.) Although he hasn’t been influenced by Lust, and has no known contacts with the War, his work has been generally useful to Andrealphites.

However, his latest article has spoken out in favor of moderation and emotional connection between partners. This sudden change in tune concerns the characters’ supe-

riors. Has Heaven managed to “corrupt” him? Is this some devious ploy by Creation, or the Sword, or Destiny? Are demons at the nearby Technology-Tether trying to launch a power-play against Lust? Does the fact that his daughter is a devout Muslim have any connection? And can the doctor be persuaded to change his mind again – one way or another?

VITAL ORGANS

Ador, a Calabite of Lust, can be seen gloating at some location where other demons hang out, on Hell or Earth. When asked the reason for his good mood, he’ll explain that he was recently Summoned by an attractive sorceress, who spent most of the evening having sex with him. This young woman (who was intelligent enough not to give her true name) is apparently interested in summoning more demons, especially Servitors of Lust, and will (Ador hints) be very useful material for any demon who needs a servant. In fact, if any demons present will give their names, he’ll pass on their details . . .



The Calabite is lying in an attempt to save his own skin, and his more vital personal organs. While the sorceress is as good in bed as he’s bragged, she’s also interested in Alchemy, and has a recipe in one of her books for eternal youth and beauty. It only requires the genitals of seven demons of Lust – or possibly demons from other Princes. She’s managed to bind the Calabite, and agreed to let him go temporarily so that he can lure more demons back to her. The sorceress also has several well-armed human servants at her disposal, and a high Will. The resulting fracas may involve demons of Fate or Lust, victims lured by the Calabite, angels investigating reports of Symphonic disturbances, and human authorities who are disturbed by the corpses (human sacrifices) that have been found locally.

GET THEE TO A NUNNERY . . .

Andreaphus, contrary to certain opinions, does remember some of his more amusing Servitors and occasionally, nostalgically, summons them back to his bed. Or, more often, has his minions do that for him. A case in point is a little Impudite named Alonsa, who once danced attendance upon the Beautiful Prince (along with half of the brothel she was working at, at the time).

The local Servitors of Lust (including one of the PCs) have been notified by one of Lust’s Barons that Alonsa was last seen in their area, and they’re to find her and notify her that she’s to report to the Bordello in Shal-Mari. Pronto.

This should be a simple task. The problem is that Alonsa isn't at any of her old hangouts, or walking the street, or apparently *anywhere*. If the demons ask around, they'll hear that she left with those missionaries who came by a few months ago. They may be able to track the missionaries, or they may simply slip down to Shal-Mari to check Alonsa's Heart. Either way, things look bad.

Alonsa is, purely and simply, in a convent. In the robes of someone yet to take her vows. Apparently under a vow of silence, and also apparently *not* managing to corrupt the nuns around her.

Naturally, this is something that should be handled before (Lucifer forbid!) the Game finds out. Even notifying the PFD (p. 30) might have problematic results, if they decide to blame the loss of Alonsa on the PCs when Andre finally shows up at the Bordello where she's supposed to be waiting for him. The best result, clearly, is to break Alonsa out and deliver her in chains, with an explanation. That way, they've both recovered a Renegade *and* accomplished the mission.

This is easier planned than done, however. The Impudite herself is wearing a Discord Bracelet that inflicts the Bound Discord (*Liber Reliquarum*, p. 56), in the form of a thin belt under her robes. The convent, though not a Tether, *is* under the protection of two angels of the Sword, a young Cherub and an older Kyriotate. The Cherub is attuned to Alonsa, and the Kyriotate is watching for demonic infiltrators. A few of the nuns are aware of the reality of angels and demons, and at least one of the younger novices is a Soldier of God, with a relic sword.

And Alonsa? Alonsa wants to *escape*. The Cherub mistakenly attuned to her (thinking she was a simple hooker in need of rescue), and then discovered her nature. The Impudite quickly lied her head off, and convinced the angel that she was a Renegade, and wanted to learn about Heaven and redemption. The idealistic Cherub insisted on bringing her back to the convent, where the other angel – less credulous – had the relic put on her. Both angels are working hard to convince Alonsa to redeem (i.e., brainwashing, in the demon's opinion), and she's almost frantic to escape both that and the chastity they're enforcing upon her. However, she doesn't want to *show* that too much, lest the Domination attack her despite the Cherub's attunement, or the Cherub de-attune entirely. So even if confronted with demonic "rescuers," she'll try to act ambiguous if she thinks any of the Heaven lot are watching. From the outside, she's a perfect . . . angel.



SEEDS OF GLUTTONY

ADD TO POT AND STIR

A historical recreation festival has been scheduled to coincide with a large cookery conference, and a number of the cooks are planning to attend both. One of these cooks is Charles Beaumains, who also happens to be Charcutis, an Impudite of Gluttony, holder of the Word of Venison Sausages. He's known among other cooks as a pleasant coworker, and a particular expert in preparing and serving venison dishes.

Unfortunately, certain rumors have been going round about Charcutis. He's suspected of being too interested in his cookery, and not interested enough in the influence of Gluttony. The Fangs (p. 62) have been alerted, and would swoop on the spot – if it wasn't for the fact that Charcutis is the favorite of Louis, a Shedite Baron of Gluttony. They don't wish to annoy Louis without definite proof of Charcutis' treason; on the other hand, this event may be just the occasion to get such proof . . .

This is resulting in *two* separate sets of demons of Gluttony attending the events – one from the Fangs, the other an independent set sent by Louis to discreetly guard Charcutis. Louis doesn't want to publicly cross the Fangs, but he's aware that Charcutis is under suspicion; he orders his own group of demons to make sure that any little accidents to the Fangs can't be traced back to him.

The action occurs throughout the large hotel where the cookery conference is being held, and the historical recreation festival taking place very close to it. Both are running from Friday to Monday, over the weekend. Cooks who have any interest in historical recipes will be visiting the festival, and may give open-air demonstrations. The whole area will be filled with a mob of enthusiastic participants and visitors – those at the conference will at least be dressed for the twentieth century, but at the festival, anything goes.

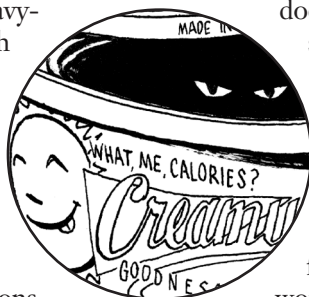
The demons of Gluttony won't be the only celestials present, either. A couple of angels of Laurence are giving demonstrations of fencing at the festival, in the hopes of encouraging popular interest in the skill. A Servitor of the Media is hanging around the cookery conference, looking for a new sensation that he can build into a television series. Three Creationers in service to the Wind are due to arrive soon, though they won't be there at first, and will be doing their best to encourage *everything* that's going on. Finally, there's an Ofanite of Judgment roaming the whole area, watching out for any angels corrupted by corporeal temptations. He has the phone number of a nearby triad, and he also knows the Laurencians . . .

Charcutis himself is interested in being able to cook without having to cater to his eternal duty of spreading Gluttony. He *is* a redemption candidate, though only barely; he's neither particularly selfish nor selfless, but he is creative in his chosen craft, and isn't cruel to others. Only the power of his Word (such as it is) and his patrons have kept him at liberty so far, and even that may not last very much longer. He's short and pudgy, heavy-jowled but always meticulously shaven, with thinning blond hair and tiny hands, and prefers to dress neatly. When in the kitchen, he always wears a huge apron. He's managed to pick up some Fear (of the Game) Discord, due to aggravated dissonance problems – he was too busy cooking to encourage humans to Consume.

(PCs can be drawn from either team of Gluttons, any of the other Servitor groups listed, or simply caught in the crossfire.)

CREAMY GOODNESS

A new product on Earth is hitting the food shelves – it claims to be a substitute for cream, but with hardly any calories. Totally healthy, totally there, totally twice the taste! Naturally, it's being a big hit among anybody who wants to cut down on calories, as it *does* taste like cream.



Angels of Lightning haven't noticed it yet, and the human safety checks haven't demonstrated any problems with the substance.

The substance *does* come from a human Soldier of Technology, but there's nothing harmful about it. There's nothing good about it either. The cream-substitute is a completely neutral substance, which tastes good, and does *nothing* for the body – it certainly won't serve as nourishment at all. Some intelligent Servitors of Haagenti saw its true potential; gluttons can gorge on it without fear of weight gain, and will do so. (Which, in the long run, encourages them to *gorge*, period!) The Haagentians are now promoting it, with the Media's help, and own the main factory that produces it. The substance is a wonderful way to practice the sin of Gluttony without any physical consequences (except that the eaters will start growing malnourished if they eat too much of it at the expense of other foods).

Other Gluttons are needed to protect the factory, assist the Media-Servitors, persuade celebrities to eat the stuff, and generally push the product. A thorough investigation by angels or opposing demons, or even humans, possibly coupled with faked evidence of health problems, will probably dispose of the substance for the moment – until the next great taste hits the shelves . . .



BLOOD AND CHOCOLATE

There is *one* local candy store, which serves all the children; partly because the prices are low and the quality is good, but mostly because they've always gone there, and so did their parents before them. It's the ideal area for a Servitor of Gluttony to infiltrate – but a passing Lilim has managed to ascertain that the candy store owner is a Saint of Eli, under the identity of a nice elderly woman. However, given Eli's current meanderings, it's possible that the Saint could be removed without the Archangel or any of his organization finding out about it for a while. Perhaps she could even be corrupted!

It's an interesting opportunity for Haagentians. If they can't corrupt or compromise the Saint, then they can just kill or kidnap her, and somehow claim title to the shop. Of course, once that's done, they have access to all the local children, and can start educating them in proper habits of Gluttony. The Saint isn't known to local angels, tending to keep to herself and work with humans, but *can* contact some Creationers if given time and warning. The Gluttons will have to be careful, or quick – or both.

CAN'T BE TOO CAREFUL

People have the right to take care of themselves, don't they? And it never hurts to be prepared, does it? With these rallying cries, a Balseraph of Gluttony (using his Role as a well-known local doctor, and helpfully televised by some Media friends) has caused an epidemic of hypochondria to hit the area. The local pharmacists are regularly having their shelves swept clear of bandages, disinfectant, cough syrups, painkillers, and everything that doesn't actually require a prescription. Families have their medicine cupboards stuffed full of their purchases, and seize on any excuse to use them – then buy more.

Unfortunately, the Balseraph has *overdone* matters. People have also started healthy exercise, and worse,

healthy dieting . . . A Habbalite enemy of the Balseraph has carried word of this to Haagenti's ears, and the Prince has ordered somebody to "fix things." The characters are sent in to investigate, and get people back to eating to excess. They haven't any definite orders to kill the Balseraph – then again, they haven't any definite orders *not* to. Naturally, if they leave him alive and things get fixed, he'll take full credit for it. Local angels are another problem, especially as some of them seem to like all these fitness schemes. Worst of all, the best Italian restaurant in town has just gone out of business . . .

HOT TIME IN THE OLD TOWN TONIGHT

A Renegade Djinn of Haagenti has made an unholy alliance with an Outcast Seraph of Creation – and together they're running the best Szechuan restaurant in town. Unfortunately, a couple of Servitors of Belial control the local gangs, and have tried to shake the pair down for protection money. Still more unfortunately, one of the demonic Servitors of Fire has recognized the Djinn as a Glutton – though he doesn't know that the Djinn has gone Renegade. The Belialites are planning to do something very unpleasant to the Haagentian, and to his unknown companion. There's a triad of Judgment hunting for the Outcast Seraph, and close on his trail. Finally, a couple of out-of-town Triads

(the criminal kind) are about to hold a meeting in the restaurant to discuss turf boundaries – and each Triad has plenty of heavily armed bodyguards. Anyone who eats at the restaurant tonight is in for a big surprise as all these forces converge.





SEEDS OF DARK HUMOR

JOKERS TO THE LEFT, JOKERS TO THE RIGHT . . .

One element of Dark Humor is finding ways to turn your enemies into your unwitting tools. It's even better if you can make your enemies' enemy your unwitting dupes as well.

Two Servitors of Fate, Borubis, a Balseraph and his partner Wurzzt, a Habbalite, have been working for two months in an important political retreat (such as Oslo or Geneva) trying to break up the work of peace negotiators — thereby preventing these humans from achieving their destinies. To complicate matters, a Mercurian of Flowers, Henna, and a Cherub of Destiny, Oriel, have been trying to thwart the demonic plans.

The PCs have been contacted by a member of the Pranksters group (p. 87) to assist with the Kobalite campaign against Kronos. Tipped off about the delicate political negotiations going on in this location, as well as the operatives of Fate, their Roles, and their angelic counterparts, the group is supplied with two bracelet-artifacts. These bracelets — thin, unadorned gold bands — have the property of twisting the victim's personality and demeanor to their opposites. Once a bracelet has been put on, it can only come off after its wearer earns a note of dissonance. Used on servants of Fate, for example, it would cause the demons to assist humans in meeting their destinies rather than their fates (conversely, used on an angel of Destiny, it would twist his personality to its opposite).

The PCs' primary mission is to get the bracelets on the agents of Fate or the angels — or both. To make things more interesting, whichever force "turns," appropriate investigatory forces should be notified covertly: Judgment, if the angels fall into play, the Game if the demons are turned. Once all the pieces are present and

trying to find some answers, the PCs should try to continue the ruse as much as possible, for as long as possible. If they can, the Kobalites should also prevent the negotiations from concluding successfully. They can then take credit for their hard, yet amusing, work, and smirk that they have cast doubt and scorn upon the disgraced forces of Fate or Heaven; discrediting both factions would be truly sweet.

DO NOT MEDDLE IN THE AFFAIRS OF DEMON PRINCES . . .

One of Kobal's more intermittent side projects on Earth has been to educate sorcerers on the true hazards of playing with demons. In particular, every century or two, some annoying mortal pops up and spoils a joke — and thus earns the Prince's ire. Naturally, he doesn't simply *ignore* the irritating little monkeys when this happens.

Gnarled wizard Quill has been using the power of "magick" (his term for sorcery) to bind demons for several hundred years, using his Alchemy skill (*Corporeal Player's Guide*, p. 46) to brew up life-extending potions. By now, he's pretty certain he knows it all. Everything from a raging Calabite, to a meek imp, Quill's seen or heard about it.

Fortunately for him — or not — a few demons of Fate consider that he's entirely under their thumb. (Indeed, one might almost suspect that *they* let slip some names of Kobalites so he could summon them at inopportune times, thus foiling Humorous schemes.) The demons' secret patronage of Quill (he's quite sure that *he's* the master of all the beings he summons) has let him get away with more audacious rituals than he'd otherwise be able to survive. This has only contributed to his ego.

Deciding that the time is right, he's attracted several new apprentices to try their hands at this arcane, black art. Founding a school in an abandoned warehouse, his class meets once a week to discern the ins and outs of demon summoning and control.

Kobal has other ideas, though. Seeing this as a perfect chance to set up an object lesson in why magick is never a sure thing, he's created an artifact with which basically guarantees the PCs will be summoned by this little wizard cadre. (The PCs can be a select team who are entrusted with the plans, or simply a group the Prince thinks will raise mayhem whether they know what's going on or not.) Kobal's objective: something daringly appropriate, that these people will never forget, and other sorcerers may think about before they proceed with any other plans of theirs.

Unknown to Kobal, Quill has been working for Beleth for the past seven months. She's promised him certain powers for his assistance with a scheme to spread demons of Nightmare further throughout Earth. Quill has recruited these novice spell casters to become dream conduits to Earth in an ancient and incredibly ornate ritual. These junior magicians think all the chanting and candlelight is pretty cool – very postmodern. Naturally, Beleth has helpfully provided some demonic “assistants” to make sure her plans are successful. Therefore, when the PCs arrive, the scene will be quite complicated . . .

Can the PCs impress their Boss? Or will they risk the wrath of Beleth and her minions? Or will they simply wind up sitting in a pentagram, being stared at by the junior sorcerers?

NATIONAL DEMON-CRATIC CONVENTION

Success comes in so many ways. Sometimes you have to fail in your demonic goals to succeed.

Three Servitors of Factions have been working overtime for the past three days to cause a major rift in a large and important Earthly political party, whose convention happens to be near (or in!) the PCs' campaign city. The characters should be at least peripherally aware that the convention is going on; midway through it, the group receives a visit from the Big K himself.

Just as Factions is on the verge of splitting the party along ideological lines, Kobal wants this objective of Factions to fail. Publicly. Loudly. In fact, the PCs' job is unite the political party through whatever convenient means possible: lies, guile, bribery. Heck, maybe even the truth! By the end of the convention, Malphas' group should be absolutely fuming, perhaps trying to make that one final push for tactical victory . . . just in time for the conventioners to take a scenic sea cliff tour on buses with (whoops!) no brakes. (Thus resulting in a lot of wasted effort on the Malphas' part, if not the destruction of their own vessels; Calabim of Kobal should take note of the opportunity to gain Essence.)

Naturally, the characters must take pains not to let their allegiance to Dark Humor become known to the Factioners – or at least not let the Malphas realize that *they* are the ones running interference. (The characters may not know why Kobal has ordered them to foil the

plans of his nominal “ally” – this plot is one that would follow the embarrassing failure of *The Final Trumpet*.)

To add an extra level of complexity, a small group of angels could be working toward the same (initial) goal as the PCs. Can the PCs keep them off the track long enough to make the punchline work? Will the angels perhaps decide to work with Malphas' demons? Can the angels be manipulated to “take care” of the other demonic group one way or another?

DEMON CAT

“We’re so sorry, Angela, honey, but Fluffy’s gone to a better place . . .”

Angela, the sweet twelve-year-old daughter of an important human antagonist in a campaign, has just experienced the passing of her beloved cat Fluffy. But there's still hope for a young girl's happiness! With the help of a revivification powder and a little demonic guile, soon Fluffy will be back with the family he loves so much.



Angela's parent should be someone who's meddled in the PCs' plans before, or is doing so in a current mission (theirs or a group of “off-screen” Kobalites). Once back in the home, the cat will quite literally be the zombified embodiment of a homicidal demon cat.

The tricky part is getting the powder. If the demons do enough leg work, they'll turn up a lead – they then need to help out by obtaining the powder from somewhere: maybe an angelic location, quite possibly from Abaddon or a “Evidence Locker” in Hades, but definitely somewhere unpleasant. Once they have the powder, they need to administer it and give the cat a helpful push home.

Whatever happens, the powder only brings the cat back to life – it does not fix the effect of decay, either visually or in an olfactory sense. Once the cat's home, it might be a chore to keep up the illusion of domestic pet bliss.

IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE

Kobal has decided it's time to remake the classic Christmas movie, with a little more *realism* – Frank Capra meets *America's Funniest Home Videos*. A group of his Servitors is tasked with the job of managing the production.

The Top Banana provides a script outline, which includes some basic scenes and the punch line; the production crew is expected to handle casting, and improvise the remaining details. The “star” should be a person with many friends, but plagued by bad luck. Preferably, he should be moderately religious, and have been praying for help. The Prince of Dark Humor – or his Servitors – will answer his prayers . . .

The protagonist's life suddenly takes a turn for the better. He wins the lottery. And then does it again for the next three weeks. A multimillionaire in the city dies, and leaves the star all his money “for everything you did for me,” even though there's no evidence they ever met. A well-known actress runs into him in the supermarket, and falls in love with him. He guest stars on *Oprah* as “The World's Luckiest Man,” and tells America how prayer turned his life around. He becomes so popular that major political parties suggest he might consider running for President. All this should happen in less than a month – preferably leading up to Christmas.

Of course, there are a few problems lurking under the surface. The Gaming Commission will be investigating just *how* someone could win the lottery so many times in a row. The IRS will want to scrutinize the star's taxes. Muckraking political and entertainment reporters will start looking for dirt . . . and will find that his actress fiancée is sleeping with the local mob chief. The millionaire's relatives contest the will, and the police find evidence of foul play in his death. All of these groups should descend on the star, just as he's getting ready for the media circus of his wedding.

The final scene has the star standing on a bridge, getting ready to jump to his death, when one of his old friends comes by . . . and shoots him, over jealousy of his success. Film at 11.

Besides the problems inherent in trying to organize reality to follow Kobal's script – which will likely require gaining aid from Media, at least – all the hoopla and implausibility surrounding the star are sure to draw the

attention of Destiny Servitors. These will want to interfere in the plot, and may also try to redeem any susceptible demons in the crew. (If the GM wants to be particularly cruel, have one of them keep ringing a small bell in the face of the redemption candidate . . .)

Kobal will be particularly displeased if the plot works perfectly fine up to the final scene, only to have the old friend talk the star out of suicide, rather than shooting him. And if that gets captured by the waiting TV crew, the production crew is going to be starring in documentaries about Sheol.

HEY! THAT'S MY LINE, PAL!

Kobal gets pretty cocky, sometimes. Thinks he knows everything about everyone. But sometimes he's wrong.

Someone has been running jobs as “Dark Humor,” except they're doing it badly. Kobal wants the damage to his reputation in Hell and on Earth to end, so he assigns a squad of troubleshooter demons (the PCs) to investigate and end the poorly conceived and executed operations in his name.

Who's really behind these maneuvers in the dark? None other than the Prince of the Game and his agent provocateurs. Their goal: to offer Kobal a richly deserved taste of his own medicine. Expecting an investigation from the Impudite Prince, they've taken measures to lead the demons down some false

paths – planted Hellsworn agents as “witnesses,” obvious clues that lead to red herrings (annoying Gluttons, mortal dupes, Soldiers of God, angels . . .). The Gamester's goal is to keep the troubleshooters so busy chasing leads, they miss catching the Game in the midst of their bungling.

Newbies at Dark Humor's game, the Gamesters definitely don't really know how to pull and execute a big prank like Kobal, but they

do know how to cover their tracks. They also know how to harass and hinder the PCs at every step, using the power of their inquisitor status to stop the group as much as they're able.

Word finally reaches the PCs, from whatever source, that these impersonators have settled on a final objective: the destruction of a major Tether to Nybbas. Can the Kobalites stop the plan and keep the Tether intact? (And is it even the *real* plan? Not that they can afford to ignore it . . .)



SEEDS OF THE MEDIA

MUZAK FOR THE MASSES

Elevator music is an artistic medium, isn't it? Well, Nybbas says it is – which makes it the up-and-coming possibility for all those young artistic demons out there. From Perdition to Earth, composers are being sought (and kidnapped, and blackmailed, and plagiarized) to produce new variants of muzak, and engineers are trying to find new ways to pipe it into the ears of their customers. It could be everywhere. In art shows, as background music for every news program out there, on the streets, in the White House, in university lectures, in army camps . . . everywhere.

Some of the more technically minded demons of the Media are also looking for ways to combine the new muzak and jingles with carefully judged subliminals. Nothing too *dangerous*, of course. Heart-warming, soul-stirring, socially virtuous themes. *Write The Next Great American Novel* is a favorite, as is *Drinka Canna Coka Day*, though old-fashioned Servitors are holding out for *Only The Thin And Beautiful Deserve To Get Laid* and *Acne Is The Eighth Deadly Sin*. The backstabbing is already starting. One thing is certain: *something* has to go on the air . . .

THE PERILS OF SANITIZATION

There's been a recent run of television series based on mythological characters, suitably cleaned up and ethically adjusted to suit the taste of Middle America. One bright young Balseraph of the Media has decided to profit from this – he's ransacking Celtic literature for stories of Finn Mac Cool and the Fianna, the Sidhe and the Fomorians, and anything else he can find. However, being significantly devoid of talent, he has persuaded a local writer to help write script outlines and back the project, and is setting up the filming of a small-scale pilot.

Who would have thought that the ethereals in question would actually be annoyed? It seems that certain Celtic heroes (such as Finn Mac Cool himself, and a number of his loyal warriors) are utterly offended at the sanitization which their reputation is undergoing. So far their tactics have been restricted to visiting the dreams of some of the actors and sending threatening satiric poetry. However, they *do* have some vessels of their own, a fondness for cracking skulls, and are fast learners . . . Some Media bodyguards are required, at *once*, to protect the filming of this possible blockbuster. The whole mat-

ter is complicated by a couple of local angels of Creation, who have an interest in the local writer who the Balseraph suborned.

PRINCESS ADORABLE

It's a show, it's an event, it's a new television milestone for the centuries! Actually, it's yet another pageant for little Beauty Queens, attempting to be multicultural and multiethnic. The sweet little darlings will be televised across America while performing "traditional ethnic dances" and working on "traditional ethnic crafts." This is all planned to coincide with *Princess Adorable* t-shirts and swimming costumes in the shops, *Princess Adorable* trading cards for little girls to collect, and many other instances of utter tackiness. It should be a howling success.

There's a need for demons of the Media to organize this, to help with the merchandising, and to cover up any awkward publicity (the drug-taking, the underage sex,



the vote-fixing, the criminal convictions of certain people involved . . .). Malphas has a couple of Servitors on the spot, on two *separate* missions, each ordered to support a different candidate and to try to whip up racial hatred. A purely human organization, Concerned Mothers For The Millennium, is protesting the entire event (and needs to be kept happy). Finally, Laurence has sent in a deep-cover team to try and expose as many of the dubious aspects as possible – three of his angels, with little-girl vessels, and Soldiers of God posing as their mothers. Though the Media doesn't realize this yet . . .

IF IT AIN'T ON THE PAGE, IT AIN'T ON THE STAGE

Economy is the major weakness of Nybbytes. Just as movie studios save money by constructing only the façades of buildings, and theaters don't create sets for action offstage, so demons of the Media use only the resources necessary to their plans. Woe betide the demon who runs over budget without producing a blockbuster! That means if the script goes awry – as often happens when dealing with humans – the Nybbasians may not be prepared. However, to balance this, they're good at improvisation. After all, "The Show Must Go On!"

In this adventure, a group of angels (or even demons serving other Words) stumble across the "backstage entrance" to a Media operation, where the bare bones of the set are visible. The demons running the operation requested some extra help, but the paperwork went awry. When the interlopers show up, they are taken for stagehands and actors, and expected to help out! Once they figure out what is happening, they have an invaluable opportunity to spy quietly on the Media, or blow the top off the scam. Kobalites might particularly enjoy the chance to make mischief.

(PCs may be the interlopers, the *real* extra help (after the paperwork sifts through), or the overworked demons who requested the assistance in the first place . . .)

SWEEPS WEEK

The Prince of the Media is always watching his Servitors' ratings, but occasionally he'll declare a "sweeps week," when his Servitors – *all* of his Servitors – are judged on *nothing but* ratings. Their performance during this crucial week will determine their budgets until the next sweeps week. This also has the bonus effect of culling the weak members of his organization, because the competition is literally cut-throat.

Sweeps week makes Nybbytes distracted and vulnerable. Anyone who wants to confound a Servitor of the Media will make their move during this time, because if the demon is seen to fail, he'll be back in the mail room until he can claw his way out again. Naturally, sensible Nybbasians know this is when all their enemies are going to be crawling out of the woodwork – but what can they do? Besides carry cameras to get their enemies on film, of course. There's always a chance that something *note-worthy* will happen . . .

REELING IN ELI

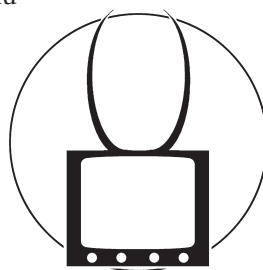
Nybbas has long wanted to forge an alliance with Eli – in other words, make him Fall. Now, an opportunity has presented itself for some Servitors of the Media to insinuate themselves into a Creationer project. (If not one of the few mysterios tasks that Eli sets his Servitors from time to time, then a mission which at least involves angels of Creation in service to other Words.) Nybbas hopes to lull the angels into thinking the Fakers are "not such bad guys" by sending in some of his most diplomatic Servitors. His long term plan is to convince servants of Creation, and eventually Eli himself, that working with the Media isn't so bad.

As an additional precaution, he isn't telling his people the reason for their assignment, so that stray Seraphim won't pick up on it. All he will say is that they're to be inconspicuous, and that they'll get a great reward if they make friends with the Halos. The Nybbytes don't have to lie about being demons, since the angels are supposed to find out eventually, but they probably shouldn't go spreading the news until they've established a relationship.

Of course, the angels aren't totally gullible. Even if the nature of the plan doesn't leak out or get deduced, nearly all angels of Creation are still of the opinion that a "good" demon is a *redeemed* demon. One of the Servitors of Eli decides to pull a reversal, and try to get the *Fakers* to switch sides. She'll do her best to introduce them to the rewards of true creativity, deep caring, and (if she's very lucky) honest love – instead of

"that tacky, glitzy stuff" that they've known all their lives.

Unbeknownst to both sides, a demon of the Game has been assigned to monitor Nybbas' little scheme. Asmodeus would love to get some damaging evidence about servants of the Media collaborating with angels. He might even be able to use it to drive a wedge between Nybbas and Vapula, at last.





THE DEATH OF COOL

The Fashion Victims (p. 129) aren't usually cohesive enough to be a threat. However, a powerful Impudite who was once a contender for the Word of Big Hair has recently come out of Trauma, into a world that *laughs* at her. This is intolerable, of course, and she has set out to make her dreams come true – it works in the movies, after all!

With a contingent of recruits who are fellow Fashion Victims – in bell bottoms, mutton-chop sideburns, and far too many gold chains – the Impudite has put together a daring plan to kidnap Rex, the Demon of Cool (p. 108), and persuade him to make Big Hair (and all her cohorts' favorite fads, of course) popular again. And if he won't . . . well, she's at the bottom of the heap anyway. If they can *frame* Rex and hand him over to the Game for treason, maybe she can go play Mata Hari in Hades. (Of course, the other Fashion Victims would get it all on camera, to divert Nybbas' wrath!)

While it's not too hard to make off with the flighty Demon of Cool, and even keep him stoned enough to stay put, the second half of the plan would never work – if it weren't for one thing. One of his recent human playmates, shortly after being discarded along the way, was rescued by angels. Now, while the real mortal is several states

away, an angel in a look-alike vessel has taken her place. Rex has, in his idiot savant way, spotted the change and ignored it, but he'll babble about it cheerfully. If the terrorist Fashion Victims can take advantage of this stroke of luck to convince the Game that Rex was associating with an angel all along . . .

They'll have to move fast, though, because eventually "Dad," or possibly Andrealphus, will wonder where Rex's gotten off to *this* time, and send minions after him.

WE'RE NOT IN KANSAS ANYMORE . . .

The party comes across a remote control, which doesn't seem to belong to a TV. They could find it in a spooky junk shop, or left behind after some large-scale Media operation. They could even find it lying around in Hell. The remote doesn't do anything when it is not on the corporeal plane, but will be identifiable as a reliquary and a relic.

If it is used on Earth, the user and anyone within about 2 yards (GMs are encouraged to adjust this for their convenience) suddenly find themselves in black and white, in an era somewhere between the '30s and the '50s.

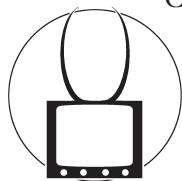
Did they actually time travel? Are they in a movie? Are they in a TV show? Are they in the Marches? Are they in the middle of a Media hoax? These are questions for the GM to decide, and the players may be kept in doubt for as long as he likes. This scenario could be played as a *Twilight Zone* episode, with the celestials as pawns in a Media plot. It could be played like *Pleasantville* or *The Purple Rose of Cairo*; the characters arrive in an obvious TV or movie setting and are required to either change something or prevent things from changing (in this case, they would show up properly attired for the period). Or it could be played as downright silly, for a break in a long-running campaign. Demons are gangsters in pinstripe suits, angels are the Feds, Lilim slink around Hollywood mansions, and imps of the Media hawk the latest paper on the street corner. No cliché too obvious. People freely use terms such as "cheese it, it's the cops," "hoosegow," "gumshoe," and "pardon me, boy, is that the Chatanooga choo choo?"

Getting back to the present should be the goal of the adventure. The time travelers might have to find the remote, which was stolen or disappeared when they arrived back in time. Or it might be broken, and they have to find either a human or a demon (or an angel!) to repair it. The level of difficulty depends on how long the GM wants the adventure to last.

When the victims of the remote finally get home, perhaps their adventures in the past had some effect on the present . . .

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THE DEVIL MADE ME DO IT . . .

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