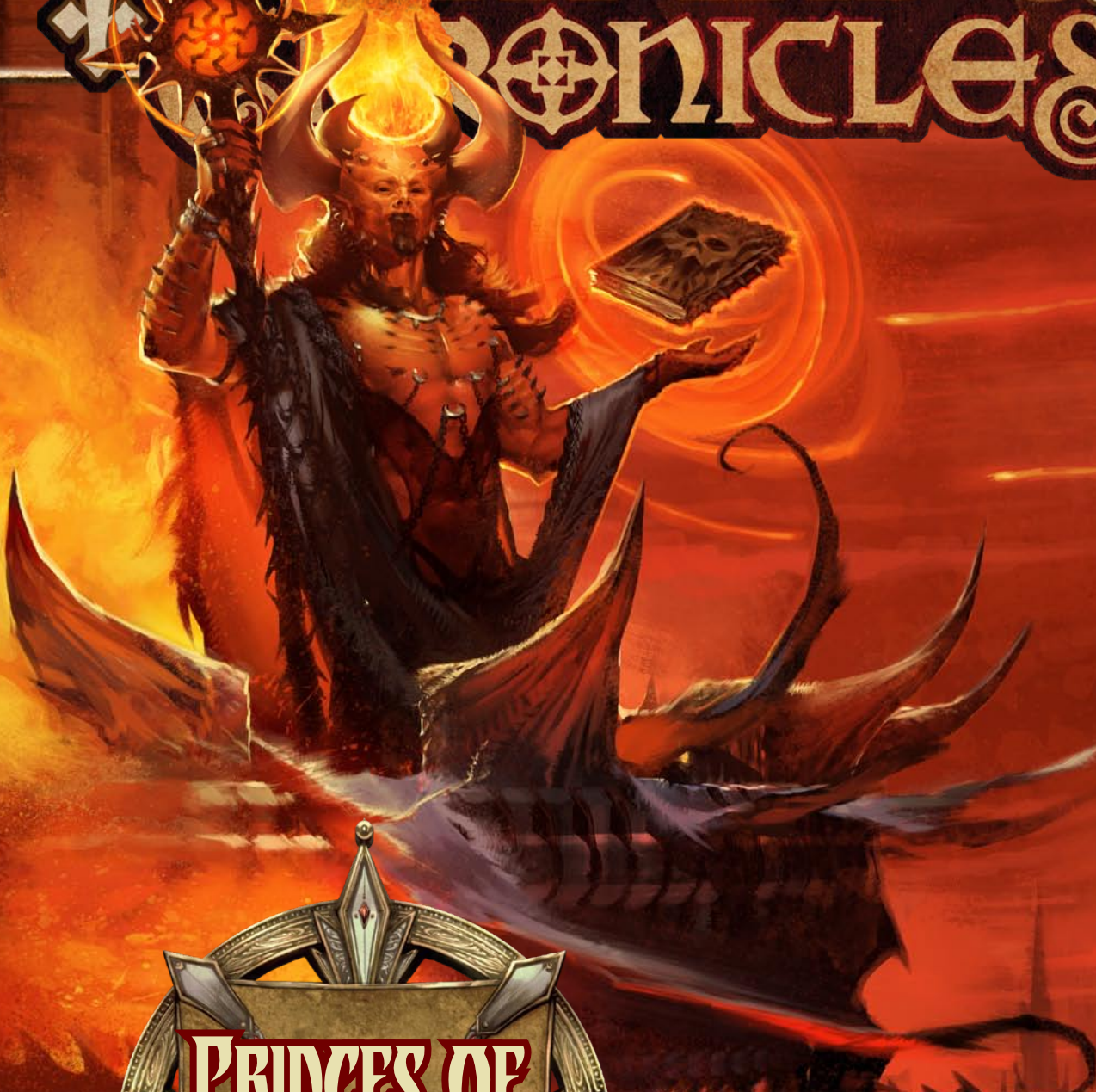


Book of the Damned Vol. 1

PATHFINDER CHRONICLES



By F. Wesley Schneider

Dispater



Mammon



Barbatos



Belial



Mephistopheles



Geryon



Baalzebul



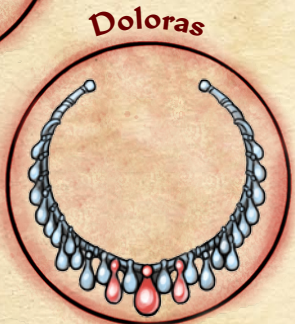
Moloch



Mahathallah



Ardad Lili



Doloras



Infernal Dukes



Eiseth

PRINCES OF DARKNESS

BOOK OF THE DAMNED VOL. I

A Pathfinder Chronicles Supplement

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Gleaned through the tales of the most ancient, communion with the beyond, and that lore of Hell extant before the advent of blasphemies and lies, these pages summarize the chronicle of the being Asmodeus, known as the Prince of Darkness, the God-Fiend, and—in an age before reason—the First.

Before

The first feeble glimmer of light stirred here, and reality has been aflame ever since.

What was, we know from it; what is, grew from that root; and what will be—our inevitable dissolution—burns amid its fires. The seal is called many things, for it is the beginning and end of all.

Nothingness begat nothingness, and so it was throughout the time before time. Our realm is not the place of wonders that gods and other manipulative things would have us believe. All comes from somewhere, be it natural or arcane, and all of creation knows its boundaries.

But such is not the case with the seal. From whence it came or how it fell unto our world, none—not even its first children—can say. It is that it is, and that is all we, with our feeble minds and intervals, can ever know.

A shining beacon in the endless, starless night of oblivion, the seal's glow lit the darkness, revealing its infinite possibilities. Eons passed like drops in a river, and the first light never flickered nor diminished, nor did any spark or whisper join it in the darkness. And so the moment came and went without thought, and reality entered a new age as the seal was joined by twin radiant motes of its own creation, barely perceptible candle flames amid its great brilliance.

In a way of understanding, these were the first lives, fundamental essences learning for the first time what it was to live. Through ages untold, these motes slowly came to know motion, playing over the surface of the seal even as they drew sustenance from its power. Countless millennia saw these flickers wander and dance, little more than sparks upon the sun, beautiful but trivial. Their endless, unthinking lives knew only the simplest of sensations, and reveled in the cold of the void and the warmth of their seal.

Then it happened again, and the motes were joined. A slight puff of life expelled dozens of new motes forth to orbit the seal, and the First discovered that they had grown. Larger and faster than these new lives, the First collected and consumed their siblings, and grew greater. Slowly they discovered control of their forms, and the first deliberate shapes began to appear amid the seal's radiance. Perhaps in response, the seal unleashed more and more of its motes, until there were too many for the First to hunt and consume.

Gradually these new motes began to grow as their elder siblings, and life spread across the seal.

From The Book of the Damned

In the name of the hosts and the seven mounting steps of Heaven, from which springs the good and the right. In the name of the Orders, Powers, Thrones, and Choirs, who witness all above and below. In the name of the Lords of the Empyrean, who measure all knowledge and see through lies. And in the name of the first great Lord, he who was taken and whose people know sorrow for him still, I swear that what follows are the visions of my travels, the thoughts of souls and the soulless, the nature of creation, and the truth unto all things.

—Tabris, from the introduction to the Book of the Damned

Thus, a distinct progression began in the time before time. There was the seal, those newly created, and the First, who braved each new and evolving state of being. Through the epochs, the children of the seal grew in size and complexity and ability. The motes began to take on favored forms and gradually

became as great animals, wandering and feeding, exploring and interacting. The First, as the oldest and most powerful, became leaders and predators, adding the ever-advancing essences of their lesser brethren to their own, and in so doing growing always greater. Life was as a spiritual wilderness in this prehistory, and the first impressions of emotion—of companionship, and fear, and wonder—came to form. And what followed in pursuit and avoidance of these sensations was thought.

Having spent untold eons together, what were once motes and the first of the seal's creations became brothers and the greatest of its children. With minds came power, and as they realized their needs the First unwittingly reshaped the power of the seal to provide. Painting new wonders in the ancient light for unknowable spans, one of the First happened upon a strange sigil, and meaning came into being. Symbols and meaning emerged through the following age, the First spinning across the seal, journeying among their lesser kin, and venturing as far from the light as they dared in discovery of new concepts.

Eventually, as its brother had discovered the power of symbols, the other made its own discovery, reshaping itself and uttering the first intelligent sound. With speech came the potential for new knowledge, and the words of the First rang through an eternity that could no longer be called empty. Reaching into the depths of itself, the being that had once been nothing more than a mote crafted the first word, a name for itself, and came to be called Ihs. And for his brother, who had been his companion for all that he knew, he lovingly crafted a second name—Asmodeus.

Curator's Note

Numerous formerly reputable antiquarians assert these pages come from the legendary Book of the Damned—called myth by some and said by others to have been destroyed. While we have no way of proving the veracity of such claims, nor the authenticity of these unquestionably ancient pages, such allegations—and the dramatic warnings of those same scholars—remain under debate. As a student of the past, I cannot understate the fascination and curiosity that the revelations of the following pages represent. Yet, as a mortal, with a life and fate guarded dearly, I must add my own dire recommendation to the ravings of my predecessors: What follows stands beyond the writings of madmen and heretics and, if you do not care to risk your immortal soul, do not read on. May the gods have mercy upon you and us all.

—Djavin Vhrest, Curator of
Apocrypha Forae Logos, Absalom





Chapter One

HELL AND THE ARCHDEVILS

Here order reigns absolute. Here the Wicked face swift and unflinching punishment. Here beings ancient, magnificent, and Wise contemplate the greatest secrets of reality. Here Works and Wonders that will never be known upon the mortal plane take awesome shape. And here a resident god considers the acts of every servant, castigating and rewarding each in turn, preparing even the least deserving for his role in an unimaginable future. Here is Hell.

—From the Book of the Damned, "The Triumph of Hell"

Hell is a grim mirror image of Heaven, a reconsideration of all that is holy and good, were the moralities of the age skewed but an iota. In this vision of reality, the powerful are served by the weak, sentimentality is trampled by discipline, and order is absolute. Hell is not as Abaddon or the Outer Rifts, where lies, torments, and horrors are wantonly inflicted by willful or primal things. Rather, here they are tools, methods utilized by fearsome and zealous legions ready to reshape all existence to a divine vision. Although nearly all faiths decry the sufferings of Hell and seek to guard their flocks from damnation, still souls endlessly stream into the infernal plane, ever increasing the might of the fearsome princes there. It is as though the beings of the mortal plane secretly crave the order of Hell yet prove too meek in life to admit such awesome truth. The order of Hell is infallible, and it offers its absolute peace and ironclad harmony to all with the resolve to embrace its merciless perfection.

Hell occupies an immeasurable realm within the Outer Sphere. Metaphysically shaped like strata filling a vast gulf, nine layers of Hell bore into the depths of reality, each bordered by the endless fury of the Maelstrom. The topography of these terrifying and varied layers reflect the sins of the souls damned to suffer upon them, the whims of powerful devils, and the natural might of the foul plane itself. Over each of these nine realms rule terrifying governors, the archdevils, Asmodeus's personal lieutenants, advisors, and greatest warriors. Beneath these tyrants scheme vast courts of infernal nobility, unique fiends that work the will of their dreaded lords and command untold diabolical legions. Hell functions in perfect order in the grips of this vast, semi-martial hierarchy, as most devils fanatically support the multiversal vision Asmodeus holds for the planes, while non-fiends merely fear what torments might be concocted for even the suggestion of disobedience.

Although the layers of Hell prove vast and varied, most share a number of profane features.

Hellfire: More than simply a mortal expression, many of the flames of Hell burn not just with heat, but with rage and a will to destroy. Hellfire takes many forms, most stinking of sulfur and possessing a furious crimson or soulless green cast. As it requires no fuel, any land, air, or water might burn with this deadly flame. The foulest of these profane energies shed no light, their deep purple or even black tongues howling like a cacophony of endlessly burning souls. Hellfire is most commonly encountered in Phlegethon, Malebolge, Cocytus, Caina, and Nessus. (See the Hellfire sidebar for more details.)

Hellmouths: Living orifices in the unbounded body of Hell itself, these strange portals appear as bizarre diabolical faces, yawning maws, or more repulsive openings. While the majority lead to deeper layers of Hell, an exceedingly rare few slip the bounds of the Pit to connect with other planes, most notably layers of the Abyss, the sewers of Axis, or occasionally a mortal world. While the fortresses of infernal dukes guard

The Flames of Hell

Spoken of widely in tales of damnation and eternal punishment, the fires of Hell are said to burn hotter than a pyre's flames and take fuel from mortal sins. More than the metaphors of zealous priests, the flames of Hell do indeed burn stronger than those found nearly anywhere else on the planes, their hungry light fed by torment and inspired by absolute corruption. Common to almost every level of the Pit, this hellfire has all the powers and properties of normal flame, but is profane to the point that it sears untainted flesh and can consume righteous souls. Hellfire largely appears, spreads, and behaves as normal fire, though it has been known to lash out toward the virtuous as if possessing a cruel mind of its own.

Hellfire (CR 3): Hellfire is treated as normal fire, but deals half fire damage and half damage from unholy energy. Damage dealt by hellfire is known as hellfire damage. Evil-aligned creatures and creatures with the evil subtype take no damage from the unholy energy, but good-aligned beings and those with the good subtype take double the normal damage from it. Creatures under the effects of spells like *protection from evil* are unaffected by this unholy energy, though they may still take fire damage.

A typical gout of hellfire, which might spring forth from the plains of Avernus, the pits of Phlegethon, or countless other searing vents throughout the Pit, typically deals 6d6 points of hellfire damage. Aside from such gouts, whole lakes, burning clouds, pyroclastic flows, burning rock, and endlessly smoldering structures flickering with hellfire are known to burn amid the depths of the Pit.

most hellmouths, well-hidden or entirely new passages might lie unprotected, though rarely for long.

The River Styx: The river of forgetfulness is born from Avernus and wends its way through several layers of Hell, via portals, drowned hellmouths, and metaphysical cascades in the plane itself in an endless course. Within float, swim, and sail innumerable thought-wiped souls, aquatic fiends, foul planar traders, and beasts better left unknown. In its passage through Hell, the Styx begins in Avernus, winds through the channels of Dis, oozes through the sewers of Erebus, creeps through murky flows of Stygia, fills several bolgias of Malebolge before flooding into Cocytus, then briefly cascades into Caina before plummeting into the Outer Rifts and continuing beyond. This planar thoroughfare takes several forms in its passages through Hell. While usually recognizable by its sickly green waters, the stench of ammonia, and the discorporating souls trapped within, through mired realms like Stygia the river might be little more than a slow-moving creep of sludge, while in aquatic layers like Cocytus it runs as a single, swift current that refuses to freeze.



Avernus

A plain of endless sorrows and confused terror, Avernus is the gateway to Hell. Here souls receive their first taste of eternal damnation. The endless, terrified masses of the newly dead tread a vast volcanic desert of pitted iron and molten rock, pleading for salvation from deities they lacked the foresight to embrace during life. The terrifying citadels of infernal warlords rise here, their armies mustered in eternal readiness while their hunters scour the plane for souls to enslave and shuffle off to torments upon Hell's lower layers. And above it all soars the floating demesne of Barbatos, the Iron Wilderness's ruler: the sickened paradise known ironically as the Promised Land.

Black, rugged, and hopeless—in Avernus there is no escape, only potential for greater torment. Those who find themselves trapped upon the first layer of Hell might travel in any direction, finding nothing but countless miles of splintered iron, fallen souls, and the shattered bones of eons' worth of failed invaders. Jagged metal, black rust, and molten tracts comprise the majority of the landscape, the layer's skin rough and violent toward all flesh. Little grows from the plains of pitted iron, and nothing edible, only weeds more akin to barbed chains sprouting from the corpses of fallen wanderers, dead behemoths, and rusted scars in the pocked wasteland. Lakes and seas of molten metal make the land for miles around unbearable from their deadly heat, all the while belching forth deadly ejecta and clouds of poisonous gasses. Breaking the expanses of the rancorous deserts rise mountains of shearing blades, impaling a sky aflame with a perpetual apocalyptic dusk. In some rare spots, jagged scars mark sites where powerful magic, deadly weapons, or the death throes of unfathomable creatures once rent the callous land. Some of these wounds stretch so deep as to reveal the meat of the layer itself, a pumping, oozing morass of titanic veins and livid fat that occasionally reaches forth with invasive tendrils and rapacious organs never meant for release upon the realms above.

Souls appear upon Avernus at random, eddies in the planar winds violently scattering the damned across the layer. While many wander the iron wastes alone and terrified, some form frightened caravans or vulnerable refugees as they attempt to rationalize their dismal situations. Few souls remain free for long, though. Either in roaming press-gangs or mounted upon nightmares or giant stymphalides, barbazus and other lesser devils scour the wastes hunting for the newly arrived. While occasionally the spirits of particular individuals bear special bounties offered by infernal lords, most are forced into slave caravans and marched to the iron fortresses of their slavers' diabolical lieges. Usually only the souls of suicides are left to their wandering, forsaken and forever lost. Hundreds of infernal

*Upon the plains of rust and
tears the damned raise
a chorus of wails, their
heads lifted to heavens
that no longer care, their
pleas for forgiveness that
will never come.*

dukes, each a powerful lesser noble in Hell's fiendish hierarchy, dwell upon Avernus, sculpting terrifying fortresses from the iron wastelands. These dreaded citadels serve as chthonian counting houses, barracks for diabolical armies, and impregnable chokepoints guarding hellmouths serving as gates to Hell's lower layers and, in rare cases, other planes. The infernal dukes keep careful track of how many souls pass through their fortress gates and on to the layers below, each charged with capturing souls in vast quotas in return for unspeakable boons and command of even deadlier legions.

Several terrifying locations stand out upon and above the Iron Wilderness of Avernus.

Eridanos: Much of that which dies within the Maelstrom simply drifts away to be consumed by chaos. Yet still, countless foul arteries of strange fluids join in a single cascade that washes a portion of the multiverse's dross to Hell. The cascade that thunders endlessly into Avernus forms the ocean-sized marsh of Eridanos. Mingling with the souls of the damned, the refuse of the Maelstrom, and the eroded sediments of Hell, this noxious mixture forms the headwaters of the infamous River Styx, which from here flows on its winding tour of the planes.

The Forked Pyre: The iron fortress of Duke Furas straddles a powerful cascade of roaring lava. Three spiked black towers pierce the layer's poisoned clouds, one home to the burning armories of Furas himself, another housing the barracks of his 20 legions, and the third a dungeon packed with ages' worth of tormented rivals and useful souls. On an island upon the lava flow, guarded at the heart of the duke's palace, rests the six-eyed, chortling hellmouth called Gissiclis, its bowels stretching to the Garden of Heresies in Dis.

The Promised Land: From a distance, through Avernus's noxious haze, the eerie cloud of the Promised Land actually bears a resemblance to the paradise its name implies. Those who light upon its lofty shores, though, find it a country of abominations. While vast fields and forests of tall plants, crystalline rivers, bountiful animals, and light-hearted revelers fill the domain of Avernus's ruler, none are as they should be. Each of the land's features is perverted and malformed, seemingly created by a blind sculptor. The plants quiver and whisper, the rivers roil with hunger of their own, the beasts scream and skitter upon weird appendages, and the inhabitants wear white gowns and would scream, if only they had mouths. Even the land is perverted, as it is not rock nor metal as the plains below, but a nation-sized knot of pallid worms that endlessly rain upon whatever land they drift above. All things in the Promised Land obey Barbatos's whim, and those who would find the Bearded Lord must seek him as he wanders his repugnant nation.

Barbatos

Few dare speak Barbatos's name, as legend says he is the most likely of Hell's archfiends to hear. Of Asmodeus's lieutenants, the mysterious lord of Avernus has held his station for the shortest time, a term measured in millennia, but still a tenure too short for Hell's elite to embrace the newcomer. Yet the aloofness of the other archfiends stems not entirely from Barbatos's relatively short reign, nor his competency or cunning—as he has proven time and time again defending Avernus's gates—but rather from his fundamental nature, as he is not a devil at all. In fact, Barbatos's true nature remains one of Hell's greatest mysteries, a secret supposedly known by Asmodeus alone, and some say not even by him.

Barbatos appears as an ancient humanoid man wrapped in filthy robes made from wrinkled skins flensed from the souls of long-dead travelers. From the sleeves of his leathery rags stretch withered, seven-fingered hands, each digit bearing an extra joint and gnarled claw. Although a veil of gloom perpetually hides his features, three points of bilious yellow light pierce the shadows of his hood, forming an inverted pyramid of luminous, alien eyes. From beneath these strange orbs spills the archdevil's most recognizable feature, a beard of thin, greasy tendrils that fall in a squirming cascade like the diseased roots of some subterranean fungus. In one hand he ever clutches a tall staff made from yew studded with blinking animalistic eyes, while in the other he carries a black orb that reveals the location, crimes, and deepest secrets of every soul in Avernus. Deliberate in every motion and hunched as if incredible age threatens to crush him, Barbatos presents an unassuming foil to the proud forms of the other archfiends. Only the doomed ever see Barbatos's true face, just moments before being consumed by whatever undulates beneath his repulsive robes.

Mysterious and subtle, Barbatos cloaks his aspirations. Neither a direct ally nor overt enemy to any of the other archfiends, he appears content with his current dominion. This alone serves to further unsettle the

other lords of Hell, as none of their agents have ever uncovered what must be the Lord of the First's greater ambitions. In council with Asmodeus and the other tyrants of Hell, Barbatos arrives in Nessus without pomp and on foot. He rarely speaks and addresses each of his peers cordially, showing absolute deference to the Prince of Darkness. When his counsel is called upon, his words are plain and wise, often referring to unusual planar conjunctions, events of prehistory, and other obscure wisdom he has no apparent right to know.

As the Lord of the First, Barbatos holds the least enviable duties of any of the archfiends, charged with the dual Sisyphean tasks of disseminating the endless tides of accursed souls to

their appropriate damnations and guarding Hell's shores against incursion. In his duties the Bearded Lord employs numerous dukes who defend key domains and oversee the passage of countless souls. He rules with a light hand, but brooks no disobedience, swiftly revealing any plot to oppose him. Those who repeatedly prove themselves untrustworthy are sapped of their vitality and hung upon the Penitent Cross, a massive, bleeding willow tree at the heart of his floating paradise of worms, the Promised Land. As Barbatos possesses uncanny knowledge of seemingly all that happens within his realm, legends tell of mortals who venture to Avernus to treat with him for the release of loved ones' souls. Often the Lord of the First consents, but never without seeking a damning price, and rarely is what the archfiend releases not returned to him multiple fold.

It is said that Barbatos can see into the Material Plane through any representation of his sigil, can hear 21 words spoken after his name, and knows the languages of all beasts. When called upon by desperate souls, he delights in sending servants to offer just enough lore or out-of-context information for a mortal to make her situation all the more hopeless. When he appears on the mortal realm he typically takes the shape of a heavily cloaked hermit or a woodland creature with a long, strange beard. In any guise he always retains some vestige of his natural form, by which the wary might recognize him.

The Bearded Lord holds open the gate to Hell. He is suitor to Witches and father to Worms. And in his thrice-fold gaze lies the beginning, the end, and the eternity of all.





Dis

The gates of Dis, the Infernal City, stand open to all who would dare to enter. Leaving is another matter, though, as the second layer of Hell serves as prison to the souls of liars, false counselors, usurpers, parasites, and any who used the laws of their society to prey upon their brethren. Yet as the most urbane layer of Hell, more than just souls flock to Dis. Traders from across the multiverse barter with devils, diabolists, night hags, and ferryman upon the Styx for safe passage to the bazaars of Hell, some trading their souls for just a glimpse of the endless wonders of the archdevil Dispaten's city.

Four distinct regions divide the second layer of Hell: the Outlands, the Ghettos, the Oppidan Maze, and the Iron Heart.

Gray hills of cracked, barren earth stretch away from the city in all directions, forming the bleak, worthless landscape of the Outlands. Broken roads wind through this vast, dusty realm, winding aimlessly, doubling back upon themselves, and ultimately leading nowhere. The souls of the slothful wander these paths, endlessly seeking comforts they're doomed to never experience again. The only features to break the rolling landscape are the garrison cities of Dis's armies, fortresses of martial torments where the layer's legions train for battle and construct terrible machines of war.

Those who near Dis first come upon the city's Ghetto of Outcasts, where the arrogant and privileged evil want endlessly in the shadow of all infinity's wonders. Bleak, gray, and blasted by the gritty winds of the Outlands, the hopeless shelters of the damned shudder in Dis's sight, facing inevitable destruction as the city's walls expand and bold new constructions call for the violent repurposing of stone and soul alike. At this frontier rise the outermost walls of Dis, moaning barriers soaring to the heights of small mountains and in places nearly half a mile thick, their bulk formed by massive blocks and the gray flesh of violently reshaped yet still living souls. These grotesque walls undergo endless expansions, with legions of devils adding new bodies to the ramparts daily and magically coercing the barriers to expand outward, providing ever more room to the swelling city within.

Those who think of Dis typically envision the largest of its regions, the Oppidan Maze. Here rise the city's impossible towers of iron, marble, and quivering soul flesh, many constructed to dimensions ludicrous even to the nightmares of the most daring mortal architect. While the Maze is perfectly ordered and split by the great avenues that fan out unbendingly from the Iron Heart, few mortals can comprehend its elaborate order, thus its fallacious name. Monuments, palaces, theaters, and plazas defy all physical boundaries, some hovering high above the city, others interconnected by bridges reaching miles and

All the wonders of Hell collect within the Infernal City, where every desire has a price and the damned wear the faces of angels.

bearing vast structures of their own. The architectures of all the planes and countless mortal worlds meld here, creating structures both fantastic and profane. Two systems of canals wind through the Maze: the Andramal, alive with fire and plied only by the diabolical elite; and the Lethe, which guides the deadly waters of the Styx through the city. Upon these canals and through the city's grand avenues and shadowed alleys tread all the countless races of the multiverse. Although the diabolical natives—particularly erinyes—

outnumber all visitors, the fiends walk boldly among legions of planar traders, undead porters, brazen mortals, and the servants of lesser deities who make their divine homes within the city.

At the center of Dis, the genesis and terminus of all its paths, beats the Iron Heart. Only greater devils and those with special allowances from Dispaten or the city's dukes may tread the gardens, courts, and parade grounds of the city's elite. From the heart of this dark utopia of gigantic burning monuments, magnificent gardens, and soaring palaces rises one of the largest structures in existence, the Iron Scepter, the several-miles-tall cathedral-like court-palace of Dispaten, Father of Dis.

Of the countless fascinating locations spread across Dis, only a sampling of the most wondrous might be noted here.

Ghaunapthal: Smoke rises endlessly from the foundries of this oil-encrusted Outlands fortress city. Ruled over by Ose, Duke of Claws, the city's 30 diabolical legions crew the rolling, crawling, and slithering war machines created by the duke's armies of enslaved souls. Rumors say his newest creation is a titanic automaton that harnesses an ancient protean relic with the power to drive any mortal viewer insane.

The Iron Scepter: Incredible and ornate, the sanctum of the Lord of the Second stands taller than any mountain upon the mortal plane. Scenes of torment and countless gargoyles—some exceedingly massive—cover the impossible tower as it stabs into Dis's sanguine sky. Within, Dispaten presides over his expansive court and judges disputes between devils throughout Hell. It is said one can see all of the other layers of Hell from the Scepter's peak, and that whispers spoken there reach the walls of Heaven.

The Market of Breaths: Occupying the uppermost portico of a floating tower crafted entirely of pitch and living tongues, the mysterious hooded merchants who gather here sell, trade, and buy years of life. How such vital commodities are bartered—whether as gems, strands of hair, or strange elixirs—few can say, but hags, liches, evil mages, and other desperate buyers pay fortunes even just to learn of the life brokers' existence, and much more to actually purchase their wares.

Dispater

The outcast, the forlorn, the forsaken—all need but to call upon Dispater to have the path home revealed. Known as the Iron Lord, the Father of Dis, and the First King, Dispater welcomes all to his perfect city. Among the most active and cunning of Hell's rulers, he directly oversees the administration and constant expansion of his vast metropolis, entertains dispossessed souls and the envoys of powerful lords from throughout the planes, and judges those who would flout infernal law. One of Asmodeus's oldest and most loyal allies, Dispater holds a favored place in the hierarchy of Hell and serves his lord by creating a city of such dark perfection as to surpass all godly imagining.

An ancient being, Dispater takes the form of a muscular humanoid with rust-colored skin and an elaborate crown of iron horns. As a symbol of his rule and devotion, he ever bears the Eclipsing Eye, a sunburst-shaped staff of black metal that bears a blinking ruby at its top, through which Asmodeus might witness all. He often wears treasures drawn from Dis's vast vaults, lordly regalia eclipsing the wealth of whole worlds. A master of illusions and a being of malleable form, he regularly alters his appearance to intimidate or put at ease those in his presence, depending on his current mood and plots.

Calm, creative, and wise, Dispater is also unforgiving, manipulative, and arrogant, blending the traits of the perfect ruler with those of the archfiend he is. He places great value on the concepts of rank and station, as well as the intricacies of courtly manners and lordly right. Despite his interest in conduct and enjoyment of deriding the uncouth, the Lord of the Second quickly dismisses such decorum to further his schemes, often confessing his boredom with Hell's formalities to those he seeks to influence. Dispater stands out among the archfiends by holding respect for the concept of courtly love. Thrice during his rule has the Iron Lord taken a queen. His first bride was a fallen angel, though none, not even Dispater, can recall her face, name, or fate—a condition that greatly vexes the archfiend. His second, Feronia, was a demigoddess from the Plane of Fire, and after a tryst lasting but a few centuries, she left the First King—somewhat congenially—taking with her the babe who would become the empyreal lord Ragathiel. His current wife, the beauteous Erecura, was once mortal, but her gift of fateful visions allowed her to slip the bonds of death. The pair share a cordial romance, and

she is one of Dispater's closest advisors, revealing her visions to him in exchange for mysterious gifts.

Dispater rarely travels from his city, except when summoned by the Prince of Darkness. When he does depart, examples of Dis's greatest wonders follow, the lord ordering the uprooting of whole gardens, menageries, markets, and theaters to follow him on his trek. The greatest of his armies travel to guard him as well, as the veteran archfiend knows that in Hell there is no such place as friendly ground. The Iron Lord never travels to the Material Plane, neither in physical form nor in aspect, finding the mortal realm base and demeaning. Rather, for any business there, he sends an erinyes servant or a member of his court, depending on the importance he places on the matter.

From a throne of iron,
the First King reigns.
Emperors number among
his subjects and paupers
seek his rule, for the
Father of Dis is lord
over all.





Erebus

The denizens of Hell jealously guard their treasures, forbidding even light from looking upon what is theirs. In the eternal darkness hide countless vaults and incredible wealth: vast troves of coins minted upon a thousand worlds, magical artifacts ancient when the stars were young, and souls worth their weight in diamonds. Here every gem peers through the darkness and each gleaming statue is a slave, for Mammon the Countless, Lord of the Third, possesses the wealth of his realm in the most fundamental way imaginable. As the souls of the avaricious and selfish endlessly learn, even a copper from Hell's coffers bears a curse, and nothing claimed by Erebus ever truly escapes.

No sickly sun or dying stars glare down upon the catacombs of Erebus. Vaulted ceilings, sometimes rising dozens of stories high, replace the heavens, their unseen stones dripping chill condensation and reeking seepage from on high. Huge blocks of gray stone comprise the entire layer, with even the most able burrowers finding only endless expanses of the dense rock even when other chambers should lie just beyond. Pillars as thick and towering as the Material Plane's most massive trees fill halls with chiseled forests, their surfaces covered in grotesque sculptures and the still, patient hamatualas and barbazus that guard the layer's treasures. Sewer-like channels wind their way through Erebus, channeling the filth of Dis above. Kingly ransoms litter the floor even in the most revolting of these passages, while in greater halls lie treasures whose splendor could blind, were but a spark cast upon their glory. Great barriers of stone and iron, hungry bestial flesh, and dark magic protect the layer's greatest storerooms, forcing even the infernal elite to carry dozens of keys and talismans with them as they travel. The souls of the plane prove far less mobile, a timid, skittish lot lost in darkness, rightfully fearful of any sound or light that might attract the attention of the layer's fiends or typhlipedes—many-winged creatures also known as “eye biters,” said to feed upon lights and those who bear them. Through mazes of treasure halls, each larger and more incredible than the last, travelers find themselves in the depths of Erebus, where lie Hell's most incredible riches. Within these so-called Dawn Vaults rest whole strange mountain ranges and bottled seas waiting for worlds yet to be formed, fetal god-things and incredible temple-cities dedicated to their blasphemous worship, and the only lights in Erebus, faint sparks containing the souls of beings deemed too valuable for damnation, together arranged in constellations of terrifying portentousness.

The majority of treasures claimed by Hell's legions or offered to Asmodeus and his archfiends in praise find their way to Erebus. While blind souls keep fickle inventory of

*The tenebrous death
of hope and greed, the
coffers of Hell lock
away treasures beyond
imagining, and the
dreams and desires of
squandered souls.*

riches they'll never see, martial lesser devils stand vigil over hoards of particular note. Scores of such devils pass through Erebus daily, arming themselves from the layer's vaults, which serve as the resting places of many of the armaments forged upon Phlegethon. Intrinsicly tied to every bent coin or flake of gemstone that enters his realm, Mammon holds little fear of thieves, knowing that no devil and only the most foolish of the layer's unlikely intruders would seek to steal from what is essentially his vast body.

Numerous chambers of note lie within the umbral vaults of Erebus, a sampling of which follow.

The Argent Prince: The throne of Mammon lies within a many-pillared vault piled with mirrors, crystalline statues, and floating bubbles encrusted with impossibly delicate gems. Upon one ornate wall hangs the Argent Prince, a glorious silver and titan-sized statue the Lord of the Third possesses when his realm's few visitors seek audiences with him. A great glass pulpit rises from the chamber's center, allowing petitions to address the archdevil from a height near the statue's waist level, and well within reach of its gleaming, many-ton hands.

Mammon's Bier: The heart of Erebus, it was from this vault, once a mere crypt beneath Dis's Iron Heart, that Asmodeus grew the entire layer. Inside, sheltered within a coffin of diamond, lies the Maelstrom-wasted remains of Mammon's once stunning angelic form. Also entombed within the coffin lie seven rubies, each said to be a drop of blood from the original seven archfiends offered in mourning for their fallen brother. Filling the rest of the vault are the treasures that brought Mammon to his end, 13,001 chests filled with gems of every imagining, their burdens now all fused into hypnotizing jeweled composites ever crackling with the fury of the Maelstrom.

Othrys Vault: Within this unnaturally warm cave, giant iron spikes pin numerous terrible beings upon the walls. These beasts, most gigantic and terrifying in form, are the corpses of several dozen legendary monstrosities—Sinphaynethon Hydra King, Ixyxi the Brood, and the Wheel of Ember Skulls to note but a few—each slain upon untold mortal worlds. Here the masters of Hell have spirited their bodies, storing them in death until they prove useful and worth resurrecting.

The Watch of Arocard: From this fortress carved from a single vast pillar, Duke Malthus oversees the passage of many of the arms delivered from Phlegethon to Erebus. The five-beaked duke and his 26 legions of master archers guard the winding ramps leading to and from the prominent, lamprey-like hellmouth called Cinokikade. Rumors tell that Malthus favors magical bows and powerful artillery and might grant passage into or out of Erebus for those who bring him such gifts, but such is a lie of his own devising.

Mammon

In all greed rings the voice of Mammon. For centuries after the Exodus, the battles between Hell and the celestial realm raged vast and destructive. Countless scores were annihilated in battles throughout the multiverse, but noteworthy among these conflicts was the Battle of the Triune Star, where the hosts of Sarenrae surprised Asmodeus's emissary, the beautiful fallen angel Mammon, as he attempted to turn the newly discovered proteans against the Prince of Darkness's foes. Proud Mammon and his hordes fought fiercely, but in the end the archfiend was cut down. Falling upon the vast treasure the archfiend had brought to coerce the proteans' aid, the fallen angel died that day, his body left to drift within the primal chaos.

Centuries passed before Mammon's body and lost treasure were recovered by agents of Mephistopheles and returned to Hell. At Asmodeus's order, Mammon was carried to vaults beneath the city of Dis, where the archfiends laid their comrade's striking corpse to rest amid vast riches. Yet, as the infernal lords departed, a voice from within stopped them. Somehow, the magical trove he floated upon for ages, the fury of the Maelstrom, and the power of Hell served to remake Mammon amid the gems and riches of his burial treasures. Now little more than an animating spirit, Mammon collected the riches of his tomb, creating from them a gleaming and infinitely changeable new form. Intrigued by this strange resurrection, Asmodeus supplied Mammon with vast wealth from the depths of Nessus, and remade his crypt into a new realm, the Hellish vault of Erebus.

Having spent countless ages in his current state, Mammon has adapted and now delights in his unique form. The vaults of Erebus have grown vast over the millennia, treasures of every imagining filling his realm and thus contributing to his body. Although he can take any form comprised of his domain's treasures, at the heart of Erebus hangs the Argent Prince, a fiendishly beautiful, silvery representation of Mammon's once angelic form. When attending councils with his peers, the archfiend has a contingent of servants convey an ark filled with specially

chosen riches to Nessus, allowing him to create exceptionally majestic forms before his peers.

Known throughout the planes as the Countless, the Grasping One, and the Open Palm, none could be better suited to the duty of Hell's treasurer and vault keeper, as Mammon's senses extend through every copper of Erebus's impossibly vast horde. His form having made him something of a mathematical genius, the Grasping One can give an instantly accurate accounting of the wealth he guards, items of particular significance, and the total value of Hell's riches—an amount measured by a number mortal scholars have yet to discover. Mammon only discloses full reports of his realm's riches to Asmodeus, but might reveal

The devil within silver and the father of want, the Argent Prince haunts every coin and craving, paving a golden path to Hell's inescapable vaults.

the location of a particular item to any who offer him a replacement of greater beauty or value.

Both the greedy and the poor typically entreat Mammon for aid, calling out to the Open Palm for wealth, station, or other comforts. Typically the archdevil answers

the most debased or pathetic requests by assuring that the mortal discovers a coin taken from Erebus. Whispering through such a "lucky copper," Mammon encourages acts of greater and greater depravity to attain what they desire.

Unbeknownst to all but Mammon, the Lord of the Third is incomplete. Some treasure vital to the archfiend's form was lost to the depths of the Maelstrom during his centuries drifting through the chaos. Although he can sense the surroundings of all his pieces, this mighty gem—which he considers his heart—floats in a place of total darkness. Mammon regularly sends servants to search for his missing treasure, though he dares not reveal its true importance out of fear of appearing weak or vulnerable in front of Hell's other lords.





Phlegethon

The Burning Legions of Phlegethon recreate the dichotomy between Heaven and Hell in hopeless miniature, a realm of physical affronts both violent and degrading. A massive open mine in the flesh of a blasted, mountainous expanse, the whole layer skews downward in slopes ever worn away by the marching of devils and the scraping of exhausted souls. At the base of the miles-deep excavation rise the layer's suffocating forge citadels and the gilded cage of Idolisque, the web-like pleasure palace of the archdevil Belial. The Lord of the Fourth stands as both liberator and jailor of his tortured realm. In his capricious hands he extends the choice between subjugation and violation, and as throughout Hell, death is no longer an option.

Any path in Phlegethon is either a struggle up a crumbling ascent of jagged flints and sheer escarpments, or a battle to maintain one's footing in the slide toward the layer's smoking heart. A slip in either direction means a hopeless tumble down slopes of flensing rock and rusty foliage, and little identifiable as the soul or fiend survives to reach the realm's bottom. At this ash-darkened depth, the layer's forges and Belial's palace form the axis from which the rest of the realm hopelessly spirals. The size of several mortal kingdoms, the forges of Phlegethon bore like massive iron screws into the molten wound of the layer's core. Here, upon scaffolds and buttresses like the legs of gigantic leaden spiders, the choking infernal foundries transform the grist of the surrounding realm into weapons of vicious design. Both the base armaments of Hell's legions and the impossible conceptions of the archfiends are crafted here, the greatest of which are forged of both metal and souls, creating alloys fundamentally infused with immortal suffering. Amid the smoke and screams of the forges rises the airy, twisting frame of the Idolisque, a place of seemingly placid reprieve rising above the heat and clangorous madness below, though little could be farther from the truth.

Upon the slopes of Phlegethon, the souls of betrayers and the spiteful scrape defiant metal from the broken rock with raw, bleeding fingers. The useless flecks worn forth by countless scrabbling souls amounts to an endless stream of earth and metal rolling down the layer's slopes, starting as barely breaths of dust and culminating in metallic avalanches that tear into the ranks of the hopeless and pessimistic souls who sort the debris far below. In places, deep mines prone to collapse wind into the rock, home to the souls of wicked misanthropes and rolling, antlion-like Ixion worms—essence-draining parasites that lull their victims with strange and idyllic hallucinations. Also scattered throughout the layer, jutting from worked cliffs and eerily shaped rock formations, rise the shale fortresses of infernal

Pain and pleasure lie in stark contrast amid the Burning Legions, though none among the damned can tell the difference.

dukes. These sadistic rulers oversee the dispersal of the layer's arms throughout the rest of Hell, and also command legions of slave drivers and diabolical torturers quick to invent new torments for the layer's pathetic souls.

From its mountainous rim to its burning depths, myriad foul visions fill the layer of Phlegethon.

Idolisque: Belial's deceptive paradise rings with the screams of his victims and lovers—creatures often one and the same. The archfiend's bloated diabolical viziers

look down upon the Burning Legions from on high, seeking the most comely souls to satisfy their lord's lecherous whims. To these desperate slaves an offer is extended: spend eternity scraping among the dust, or join the archfiend's favored above the smoke and tears. Within the twisting, skeletal palace, Belial's courts, harems, and surgeries are all one, and those who seek to escape their torments find themselves thrust into a new and arguably even more terrible Hell from which there is never any offer of escape.

The Prototypes: A huge warehouse-bastion situated upon metal stilts like centipede legs, the workshop of duke Sabnach endlessly pounds with the dull sound of hammers on flesh. Here the designs of diabolical minds take shape, 50 legions of hamatula smiths giving form to innumerable new weapons, deadly vehicles, lethal traps, and whole ingenious fortresses. Rather than wasting Phlegethon's valuable ore, though, the devils work not in metal, but in the flesh of souls found in endless supply. Even the greatest of these squirming creations are but drafts, though, and are inevitably released to wreak havoc upon the layer's slopes once completed.

Rithayn: Some millennia ago, a soul discovered a curve of dark steel amid the shale of Phlegethon's slopes. As centuries passed, the excavation slowly revealed the spiked surface of some gigantic pyramid-like shape. One scrape at a time, the souls are unearthing the ruins of a mysterious structure that seems to predate the devils' arrival in Hell. Although he doesn't care to rush his slaves' discovery, Belial visits the site occasionally to ponder its possibilities and implications.

The Task: This deep, rounded furrow runs from the heart of Phlegethon to the base of a gigantic horned spire at the layer's rim. Legends say this mile-deep gash was carved by the efforts of one of the first beings damned to hell, the bones of this titan lying at the furrow's top, where they support a massive iron boulder. Numerous times has this mountain-sized weight slipped, crushing countless souls in its thundering charge to Phlegethon's heart, where it does significant damage to the forges there. Regardless, each time Belial has commanded armies of millions of souls to push the boulder back up the slopes, a herculean torment that takes the damned centuries to complete.

Belial

Do what you will: such is all that impassioned Belial demands of his followers. Along with the titles given him by mortals—the Pale Kiss, the Thorned Caress, the Father of Whores—the Lord of the Fourth goes by a number of aliases, most commonly Belhor, Jouvart, and Mechembuchus. His variety of names merely suggests the diversity of his form, as few beings in the multiverse can match Belial as a shapeshifter, seducer, creator, and deceiver. All of these skills he uses to spread Hell's infernal seed and indulge his unquenchable lust.

Before the Exodus, Asmodeus sought to create the perfect being, an attempt to create a beauteous figure to outshine all others in existence. Wisely understanding that no individual could be all things to all creatures, he granted his creation complete malleability of form, a body that shifted in response to the deepest desires of all who looked upon it. The result was terrible and insane, a thing of heaving flesh, golden hair, and luminous eruptions, which Asmodeus locked away for all time. In his second attempt, he withheld the boon of subjective transformation, granting his creation control over its shape along with a silver tongue so it might learn what those around it found most appealing and so become those things. This being he called Belial.

Over the ages Belial has taken the shape of every race in the multiverse and more, his form being subject only to his infernal imagination. When dealing with other creatures, he takes on aspects he suspects them to find most alluring, delighting in flustering even the most disciplined. In council with his peers, though, he adopts a split form, his right half darkly fiendish, the left mockingly angelic.

Possessing one of the most incredible imaginations in Hell, Belial commands the respect and envy of the infernal elite. Aside from assuring continued excitement through millennia of hedonism, his creativity has spawned numerous deadly infernal weapons, perverse magic, and entire new races of devils. Although he possesses an unrestrained flair for the dramatic, he cares little for what he creates, his attention and interests as quick to change as his fluid form. While he serves as forgemaster of Phlegethon, he holds little interest in such coarse work. In recent centuries the Lord of the Fourth has become increasingly intrigued by the method of his genesis, seeking to recreate whatever powerful magic brought him into being. When he privately entreated Asmodeus for this secret, the Prince of Darkness rebuffed him, telling him not to concern himself with the dominion of the gods. Undeterred, Belial experiments with the creation and modification of mortal life in what he believes to be secret, though Asmodeus has long known of the archfiend's disobedience and merely has yet to castigate his servant.

Jilted lovers, the forlorn, and both the ugly and the beautiful beseech Belial. The scarred beg for comforts of the flesh, while aging beauties offer the youth of others to retain their own. The Lord of the Fourth takes special note of sacrifices offered during carnal acts and humors stolen from unwilling lovers. Inconstant in his interest in the Material Plane, Belial is as likely to answer a summons by sending an emissary as by sending an aspect of himself in some ravishing shape. When he does travel to the mortal plane, he coerces mortals into indulging their basest desires, encouraging them toward acts of self-destructive gratification and unspeakable pleasures. On any visit to the Material Plane, Belial leaves a part of himself behind, likely being the sire of more half-fiends than any other devil in the multiverse.

*Despoiler of all that is chaste
and pure, the Pale Kiss
works his lust into mortal
hearts, siring evils ever more
glorious and profane.*





Stygia

Every lie spoken throughout the planes condenses as a drop of poison to flood Stygia, the fifth layer of Hell. Amid the tangled swamps and fetid jungles rise moldy ruins, mired temples to false deities, and whole blasphemous cities. The waters of the Styx mix with the layer's venomous bogs, creating noxious moors before flowing into vast black seas. And within a kingdom constructed from the despoiled holy places of fallen divinities writhes Geryon the Serpent, the ancient source of all heresies and end of all faiths.

The most virulent vegetation from throughout the planes infests the swamps of Stygia, terrible weeds with hungers and cravings no mere plants should possess. Serpents great and small teem throughout the layer as well, many grown gargantuan and bloated in their centuries-long hunts. In many of the infernal jungles the distinction between vine and viper blurs, the wildernesses of Stygia proving ravenous beyond even the greatest beast. Dilapidated avenues paved with cracked stones—remnants of empires that never were—cut through these dense bogs, regularly succumbing to unexpected floods of stagnant water. Travelers who brave the paths or manage to fight their way through the swamps for long enough inevitably discover examples of the layer's countless ruins, overgrown temples and cathedrals, disparate crumbling monuments, and fortresses upturned as if flung by gigantic and careless hands. Most of these decrepit structures—drawn in their entirety from innumerable mortal worlds—still bear artifacts and artistry from forgotten epochs, typically idols and icons of deities and divine forces unknown to even the longest-lived inhabitants of the multiverse. Although many of these once supposedly sacred sites are utter lies, shrines to false gods and arrogant fiends, several serve as monuments to nascent deities corrupted, abandoned, and forgotten due to the heretical lies and slanders of Geryon and his servants. None can say how many true faiths the Serpent has destroyed or corrupted, but in Stygia their sanctuaries lie as his trophies.

Amid the deafening buzzing of flies, bitten by snakes and beset by poisons, the souls of false holy men, heretics, and malicious liars lie trapped in marshes of powerful quicksand or hung from trees where serpents and vultures feast upon their bowels. Osluths hunt these wilds, tearing souls from their torments to learn what they can, torturing the damned and others foolish enough to pass through the layer, seeking secrets of power or inspirations for lies to torment the living. The greatest of the bone devils' discoveries are carried to one of the vast Academies of Lies, temple-libraries that rise from the swampland upon rare, dry bluffs, forming ominous acropolises above the deadly waters. Within, scholarly fiends gather the most learned of Hell's damned, stretching their bodies into

Every secret that should
never be known molds
amid Hell's flooded wilds,
corrupting water into the
poison of mortal souls.

tortured living scrolls upon which these dead luminaries' greatest and most profane discoveries are scribed for all to see. Here some of Hell's most nefarious minds make blasphemous discoveries and cultivate profane philosophies, which they then whisper across the multiverse to the desperate, the sensitive, and the hellbound.

Snarled within the choking vines of Stygia lie any number of blasphemous sites, several of which are noted here.

The Drowned Empire: This nation-sized “city” of ruined temples and crushed cathedrals

lies under fathoms of murky, monster-haunted swamp-sea. Created through the eons by Geryon himself, these innumerable ruins form a drowned graveyard of monuments to dead and never-were divinities. Although the powers that once presided over these sanctuaries have long since passed on, the treasures and artifacts of their worshipers lie trapped within the depths, some bearing magic and lore lost to time or yet to be discovered. Geryon the Serpent dwells alone within this blasphemous metropolis, endlessly scouring his collection for reasons he alone knows.

The Library of Oaths: One of the Academies of Lies, in this mountainous scriptorium diabolical clerks record every mortal oath with a damning consequence. These records prove binding, and those who break their words are damned to eternity in Stygia for as long as their vows remain within the library vault. The greatest of the academy's treasures is the distended soul of Ligai Fei—the first mortal inventor of the crossbow, whose designs for the mechanisms were crafted after he vowed to his wife never to create another weapon. His betrayal damned him to Stygia, where his jailors spread inspirations for similar weapons throughout the multiverse, his broken oath ultimately costing countless lives on untold thousands of planes and worlds.

Ithysig: From a stagnant pool of crimson algae rises this ominous, white stone monolith. No mold creeps upon its surface and no stain mars its pristine ivory surface. The only marks upon the unfathomably ancient stone are the letters: “I-H-Y-S-S-I-G-E.” Any who look upon the letters understands them clearly, regardless of the languages they know.

The Palace of Delusion: A vast villa flooded by a parasite-infested bog, Duke Crocell, the Soothing Sin, has converted this ruin into a strange sort of gallery. Here the scale-winged duke collects texts in languages no one has ever spoken and art depicting nightmare scenes, believing that some mysterious pattern lies within the dementias of mortals. Centuries of his studies have given Crocell a baffling, metaphor-laden manner of speech, though those devils of his 48 legions have no trouble understanding. These minions endlessly seek new additions for the repository and mortals for Crocell to further study.

Geryon

All lies spill from Geryon's three mouths. As he is among the most physically dominating of the archfiends, those ignorant of the Lord of the Fifth's cunning might easily mistake him for but some terrible guardian or Hellspawn giant of Stygia's endless morass. While the impression bears true, such is but a facet of the menace posed by he who is known as the Serpent, the Source of Lies, and the Wild Beast. Geryon's mere existence profanes the will of the multiverse, and he reigns as lord of all heresies and impossible knowledge.

A titan of living blasphemy, Geryon rises taller than any other archfiend, a mountain of bestial muscle and chimerical features. From the waist down undulate the coils of a tremendous python, their envenomed scales capable of crushing legions within their lethal embrace. Above, the archfiend's body splits in three, the torsos of a trio of indomitable warriors rising forth, each wielding a deadly infernal weapon, an archaic shield, or the *Horn of Lies*, the instrument by which Geryon spreads new heresies throughout the multiverse. Although often shielded by elaborate helms, at least one of Geryon's heads always remains unarmored, revealing his angular, snake-like features, reptilian eyes, and maw of venomous fangs.

A being of terrifying contradictions, Geryon possesses the cunning and intelligence to craft flawlessly elaborate lies, along with a body capable of bringing whole nations to ruin. Although he spends most of his time pondering the depths of Stygia's sunken cities and torturing the souls of long-dead scholars, little delights him more than crushing the structures of mossy columns and rib-like buttresses that litter his domain. Frequently, the Wild Beast enters a kind of oracular torpor. During these times, he surrounds himself with his favored scribes, charging them with committing his every hiss and murmur to record, his trances revealing perfect lies capable of ruining whole lands and blasphemies of devastating potential. Although the Lord of the Fifth claims these heretical insights as his own, this is a lie even to himself, as in his black heart he believes he may be but a conduit for the infernal whispers of Hell itself.

For all of his trickery, though, few things in the multiverse prove more ironclad than the rarely given word of Geryon, for the Source of Lies knows without truth there can be no deception. To this end, the Lord of the Fifth commands legions of osyluths, ordering them to scour Hell and the mortal plane for the greatest secrets they can find. Considering the reports of each, he warps the fulcrum of the most fascinating secrets and, upon the deafening whispers of the *Horn of Lies*, releases them back to the proper minds, finding that hidden truths serve as soil for the most convincing deceit.

Foolishly, those who seek the truth most often call upon Geryon, for the Source of Lies knows his work and can recognize any deception. Although he often provides those who entreat him with insights that bear the taste of truth, rarely are the whispers or visions he bestows anything more than illusions reinforcing blind hopes or suspicions. When abjured, he taints the focuses of divination methods black to show his influence.

In cases he considers interesting, he might send a sentient fiendish serpent or osyluth to advise. Offerings that employ tongues, preferably from sentient creatures, and divinations employing serpents—snake organs for extispicy, burning snakes for pyromancy, or even casting snakes as a form of rhabdromancy—all aid in attracting the attention of one of his three heads. In the end, though, those who call upon Geryon risk their souls in order to be lied to, and even his greatest servants rarely know whether they are the Wild Beast's generals or pawns.

The twisted Horn of Lies
blares across the planes,
calling deluded scholars
and philosophers of
deceit to the Serpent's
crushing embrace.





Malebolge

Ash falls endlessly upon Malebolge, one flake for every violent death suffered upon the mortal plane. Those who come upon the sixth layer of Hell are often shocked by the place's grim beauty, the charred snow coating dense forests in silent gray drifts. But soon one notices the walls and comes to realize the truth: Malebolge is no mere wilderness, but a bastille beyond all measuring. Dense forests, harsh wastelands, and craggy mountains all cover the layer in a geographical checkerboard, each country-sized cell edged by a gigantic spiked fortification. Together these borders form vast curtains, all radiating outward from a titanic central structure, impenetrable wings of the tyrannical archdevil Moloch's layer-spanning horned citadel. Two realms exist within Malebolge: Moloch's immeasurable fortress, the Citadel Ba'al; and the layer's vast bolgias, the courtyards, pits, and prison realms that stand divided by the citadel's endless walls.

The impossible metal castle of Citadel Ba'al sprawls across the plane in a jagged web or vast sunburst pattern, dividing the layer into thousands of miniature dominions. Upon these walls stalk armies of lesser devils, whole legions participating in endless sentry marches or adjusting forces in preparation for deadlier infernal incursions. Below, upon the walls themselves, hang the souls of the wrathful and violent, their bodies impaled dozens deep upon the unbreakable adamantine spikes. Where these great parapets meet rise the lairs of the layer's infernal dukes, border fortresses and gigantic watchtowers home to some of the most sadistic and militaristic fiends of Hell's foul nobility. At the layer's heart, near Moloch's dreaded Melqart Keep, these terrifying citadels cluster in ranks so close that in places soaring bridges connect their towers. At the realm's farthest-flung reaches, the grim fastnesses together known as the Vanguard Watch enforce law upon the layer's largest bolgias and viciously guard against incursions from realms beyond.

It is said that only Asmodeus and Moloch know exactly how many bolgias exist across the sixth layer of Hell. These ash-smothered realms vary wildly in size, the innermost spanning mere acres while those under the auspices of the Vanguard Watches might contain whole mortal worlds. The environments of the varying bolgias differ wildly, with many containing dense forests, winding rivers, and other seemingly natural features. Some, however, are wildly inhospitable to mortals, containing only seas of boiling tar, plains of monstrous serpents, or yawning bottomless pits. Within each of these regions, souls are punished for a vast array of sins, typically relating to various breeds of deception or affronts to the multiverse.

Throughout Malebolge, the armies of Hell train for war. Under the fierce discipline of Moloch, the General of Hell,

A million torments lurk amid the ramparts of Hell, where the armies of the damned stand ready to lay siege upon all creation.

these strictly organized armies of devils collect within fortress garrisons or upon the vast fields of various bolgias. These throngs rarely stand idle, as Moloch subjects his troops to vigorous and near-constant exercises, outlandish trials, and whole mock wars, ever testing their skills and discipline. In many cases, the ordeals of the archfiend's legions exceed the torments suffered by many of Malebolge's souls. Moloch saves his most harrowing tests for his favored troops: his elite wings of cornugons. Some devils do find reprieve,

though, as the vast majority of fiends summoned to the Material Plane come from this layer.

Disparate in its torments and horrors, just a sampling of Malebolge's bleak vistas are noted here.

Melqart Keep: The heart of Citadel Ba'al, and thus of Malebolge itself, the mounting fortifications of Moloch's iron bastion rise seemingly endlessly, disappearing into the haze of falling ash. Within, untold legions of cornugons guard vast parade grounds, military libraries, and innumerable strategy halls—one for each world a devil has ever set foot upon, and housing Moloch's meticulous plans to conquer each. Titanic siege weapons and soul-annihilating traps defend the fortress, constant additions striving to meet the archdevil's unattainable definition of "impregnability." At the keep's center, perhaps the best-guarded point in all the planes, lies a vast magical representation of Hell's nine layers: the Eye of Ba'al. Using this incredible chamber, Moloch oversees all of Hell's legions within the Pit and on countless other worlds. Here he can command any of Hell's forces anywhere, from the largest diabolical army to the lowliest lemur. Were the Eye of Ba'al to fall, all of Hell's wars and countless others throughout the multiverse would be instantly interrupted. Thus, there are few greater objectives for Heaven's forces to capture—and Hell's legions to protect—than the heart of Citadel Ba'al.

The Revenant Court: In ancient catacombs beneath a bolgia filled with open graves lies the Hellish kingdom of the vampires. Here dream the eldest of vampire-kind, attended in their centuries-long sleeps by slavish ministers and far-scheming but honor-bound scions. Among the sleepers' blood crypts numbers the vault of Ruithvein, the withered Blood Emperor, third of all vampires.

Vholhars: One of the fortresses of the Vanguard Watch, the bladed keep of the slaughter-loving Duke Caacrinolaas borders three realms: a bolgia of impaled souls and burning holy books, a bolgia of dense coniferous forests, and the Maelstrom. The duke delights in riding out from his keep with the commanders of his 36 legions to hunt the damned. Numerous wings of cornugons are stationed near Vholhars, having Moloch's orders to assure that no flake of ash ever touches the ground of Caacrinolaas's realms.

Moloch

All who burn join the armies of Moloch. A being of seething wrath, the Lord of the Sixth embodies both absolute discipline and directed destructive force. General of Hell's armies, Moloch endlessly trains his infernal legions to be the greatest martial force in the multiverse—a claim few can realistically dispute. Known as the Ashen Bull and the God of Fires, he expects absolute obedience from those who follow him, rewarding the skilled and ruining the weak, though none, even the greatest of warriors, survive the General of Hell's command.

The General of Hell is an embodiment of the most devastating, inhuman aspects of war, a creature of fearsome spiked armor encrusted with the blood of countless opponents. His helm is shaped like a powerful bull skull, bearing a pair of bladed horns. Upon his chest he wears the severed wings of the angel Imopheil, who once sought to harrow Hell, and with his clawed gauntlets he exerts the strength of a titan to heft the thorned sword *Ramithaine* and the wicked battleaxe *Goreletch*. He never removes his armor, and on the rare occasions where it has become damaged, nothing lies beneath but flames and the suggestion of fire-charred bones.

The Lord of the Sixth is the most dutiful soldier in Hell's armies. Knowing that to falter means annihilation at the hands of the weak but massive armies of the celestial realm, Moloch drives those under his command in endless drills and elaborate mock wars. Not one to forego an advantage, his armies consist of souls, devils, other natives of Hell, and beings courted into his ranks from across the multiverse. Through legions of subordinates and militaristic dukes, the God of Fires keeps vigorous control over his vast legions—both on Malebolge and throughout Hell—his mastery of the tyrant's arts allowing him to recount the dispositions and particulars of each army and commander in his service. The archfiend is quick to punish even the slightest hint of insurrection or disobedience with impossibly cruel and fiery torments.

In addition to being one of the most abjectly destructive powers in Hell, Moloch is also perhaps the most likely archfiend to answer the mundane requests of mortal supplicants. In numerous lands, the cult of Moloch holds wide acceptance, as its members might call upon their master's power in times of need. When the Lord of

the Sixth acts upon the mortal plane, he prefers to manifest his power directly. Whether his people require rain to water their crops, walls to shield their villages, or brides to bear their young, Moloch provides—for a price. Hell's General exacts his wage in two forms. First, while the Ashen Bull's initial boons often come without obvious tolls, his true devotees must make sacrifices of flesh. In great kilns that bear his name—molochs—the Lord of the Sixth's servants perform the “passage through fire,” burning provisions and beasts along with their own young, committing their offspring's souls

to their lord's infernal legions. The greater this sacrifice, the greater the God of Fires' boon. Moloch's second price proves far subtler. In the fiery burial rites of his followers, their souls are committed to the archfiend, not to find rest, but to fill his legions or to face annihilation as fuel for his war machines. The followers of the God of Fires point to their lord's favors as proof of his superiority over all other deities, but such claims are mere delusion, as the tolls he collects are worse than any mortal hardship.

*Within every ember burns
the God of Fires, the
General of Hell, whose
axe and blade seek to
recast all life in flame.*





Cocytus

Bitterness to freeze the heart and sicken the soul floods Cocytus, the seventh layer of Hell. Here nothing is as it seems; the ruins of the multiverse's greatest calamities and most glorious disappointments lie frozen in seas of anguish and glaciers of absolute despair. Amid the ice shudder the souls of betrayers and the cruelly ambitious, either living tormented lives or hopelessly trapped for all time. Even the layer's ruler, ancient Baalzebul, has succumbed to the dejection of his realm, a deluded prince for whom truth holds the ultimate suffering.

Harsh environs beyond all mortal reasoning and any natural extreme typify the seventh layer of Hell. The majority of the layer lies frozen, some regions perpetually trapped in a deadly mortal winter, while other realms lie in the grip of such absolute cold that adamantium becomes brittle, words freeze as they are spoken, and flesh shatters. No true land exists in Cocytus, the domain covered in bleak, continent-sized glaciers adrift on an icy black ocean. Incongruously, mountains of ice march across the realm, their peaks coming to slick, razor-sharp points. Even volcanoes regularly rise amid these summits, some spewing magma, others brimming with the opposite—roiling pools of fluids so cold that they violently freeze anything that comes near. While unquestionably deadly, these volcanoes allow for much of the mortal life on the layer, their heat forging endurable valleys and their lava flows forming temporary passages through regions of unbearable cold. Huddled in countless dales lie shuddering communities of disappointed souls, camps of elite diabolical soldiers, and whole frozen citadels and cities drawn from the Material Plane—wondrous places now eternally silent and sterile. Petty laws of mortal physicality hold little sway on the seventh layer of Hell, vast icicle islands floating above the glacial land, sometimes colliding and shattering in jagged splinters and castle-sized hail. Blizzards of flensing ice splinters and winds capable of sweeping giants into the steel gray sky also rage across the realm, grounding any attempt at flight or hope for an escape from the freezing plains.

Yet Cocytus is not a realm devoid of life. One need look no further than the ice beneath their feet to find the souls of the merciless and destructively ambitious, endless plains made prisons for the frozen damned. Wisagatcak—swift and spidery, six-limbed fiends—hide amid icy crags and ruins, whispering lies and despair into the ears of travelers. And beneath the glacial expanses roil mad leviathans, gigantic horrors spoken of only in diabolical lore, though every few centuries one might witness a mountainous crest shattering an entire frozen city or glimpse an unblinking eye like a hurricane deep in the ice. Some of the deadliest devils in Hell congregate

No sin can escape the prison of rime, where even souls freeze and horrors forgotten by forever lie trapped within the ice.

upon Cocytus. Those cornugons who prove themselves on Malebolge, Moloch exiles here, where small troupes continue their training for another thousand years, the survivors rising to the rank of malbranche. The incredible frozen hermitages of the gelugons—insidious strategists of the infernal armies—also lie amid the realm's peaks and floating glaciers, merciless wombs where some of the most nefarious plots in the multiverse are conceived. While few infernal dukes lair upon the land—

due more to Baalzebul's often tempestuous rule than the harsh environs—those who do are among the cruelest, most radical, and most unconventional masterminds in all of Hell.

Although little survives amid the blizzards and ice sheets of Cocytus, the seventh layer of Hell is far from empty.

Betzebul: The “Lofty House” of archdevil Baalzebul rises from an acropolis of ice floating above a vast plain of ash-black snow and moaning, half-frozen souls. Baalzebul considers this place the center of his realm and, to prevent his palace from moving, has the entire hovering city-citadel shackled to the ice below by massive frozen chains. Those who seek an audience with the Lord of the Flies must scale these titanic and treacherous bonds. Atop the soaring glacier sprawls a grim paradise of columned walls, mounting cloisters, and monumental altars, all bound within a perpetual magical autumn. The pristine halls and lavish sanctuaries of Baalzebul's court are dedicated to his profane glory, perverted visions of a grand cathedral that hide shrines filled with fly-ridden sacrifices and cesspit-like chevets. Within the heights of Betzebul's central spire lies the throne room of the archfiend. Here, more than half dead, hangs the suspended and shackled corpse of the forgotten god Azhia, endlessly fed upon by the innumerable flies that make up Baalzebul's verminous form.

The Forest of Pillars: Covering a vast plain and several icy mountainsides rises a forest of upward-growing icicles. Within each frozen pillar floats an infamous mortal betrayer or saboteur—villains whose sins deprived the mortal plane of untold wonders. At the edge of this field of terrible monuments rises a tower of frozen blood, the ichorous demesne of Duke Vassago and his 26 legions. The dragon-like duke can see the past and future in blood and often speaks in riddles to those who call upon him.

Tichaim: A village of damned souls and trapped travelers, the ice hovels and crude huts of this pitiful community do little to shelter the residents from the merciless cold. The residents live a harsh but mostly peaceful life, yet remain constantly in fear of a nearby camp of cornugons. Once per year the devils march to the town and demand a sacrifice, taking 10 souls if the populace can't decide.

Baalzebul

Few in Hell's armies loathe the Heavens more than Baalzebul. A being of tarnished glory and wounded pride, the Lord of the Seventh was once a creature of luminous form and Asmodeus's undisputed favorite. Though he is still among the most powerful figures in Hell, millennia of violence and disappointment have warped him into a creature of vicious jealousy and absolute arrogance. Known as the Lord of the Flies, Hell's Angel, and the White Son, Baalzebul revels in hollow victories, enviously eyeing the gifts of others as he seeks a birthright that was never his.

One of the first beings created by the newly rising gods, Baalzebul was for a time held as the son of Asmodeus and called Lord of That Which Flies—possibly being the first creature to bear what is now recognized as angelic form. When war came to the gods, Baalzebul's allegiance was unquestioned, and it was he who led his master's legions and trained the newly made generals Belial, Dispat, Moloch, and Nybbas. As Asmodeus's champion, he won his lord countless victories and, when the time came for Exodus, he led those who followed in the Prince of Darkness's path. In Hell, he expected to rule at his creator's side, but such was not to be. The creation of Mephistopheles and distribution of Hell's rule among all the archfiends infuriated Baalzebul, who had long awaited a far greater reward for his service. Forgetting himself, the Lord of That Which Flies railed against his maker, demanding a realm far greater than those who were created after him. Bemused, Asmodeus asked why he should be granted these things, to which the great warrior recounted the innumerable feats he had performed in his lord's name. Unstirred, the Prince of Darkness responded, "You are as I made you and have done only as I will. Yet, if you imagine yourself lord of the multitudes, so be it." With that, Asmodeus stripped Baalzebul of his magnificent form, fusing him instead with millions of biting flies. Horrified but cowed, Baalzebul fled back to

his newly granted realm of Cocytus, taking his throne as Lord of the Flies.

Although Asmodeus transformed him untold millennia ago, Baalzebul still mourns the beautiful form of his creation. His relationship to the Prince of Darkness is complex but one-sided, simultaneously loathing Asmodeus even as he seeks to prove himself as the Lord of Hell's greatest creation. For Asmodeus's part, he knows of his minion's conflict and watches Baalzebul closely, but cares not for the archdevil's endlessly imagined vengeance and brazen attempts to curry his favor—though the Lord of the Flies's impetuosity often leads to developments far more interesting than those of his more stable servants.

Baalzebul rules Cocytus not as the realm it is but as the realm he believes it should be, his every gesture and edict surrounded by mock ceremony and magniloquence. Although the Lord of the Flies holds no schemes to overtly usurp any of the other archfiends—knowing that such an act would enrage Asmodeus—he grants them no favors. All of the archfiends have been stung by Baalzebul's conflictive nature, none relish the thought of opposing the Lord of the Seventh. Such deliberation stems not from any ancient debt, but from wariness of his storied prowess and fear of any fundamental weakness he might have gleaned during their instruction.

As Baalzebul possesses great knowledge of the ways of magic, many who seek to improve their fortunes through arcane means beseech him for aid, as do lords seeking greater power and any who seek revenge. Entreating the White Son requires petitioners to navigate a labyrinth of formalities and flattery, convincing Baalzebul that they revere him honestly and absolutely, without garnering his suspicion or inadvertently sparking his petty envy. When Baalzebul does choose to act upon the mortal plane, he typically sends a single fly to whisper secrets of dark magic or tyrannical advice. Occasionally he sends a gelugon or even a manifestation of himself—either in his true shape or in that of a gigantic fiendish fly—to properly awe those who would serve him. Ultimately, though, Baalzebul serves only himself.

If ever the crown of Hell should fall, the White Son, the bitter scion of the Arch Fiend, stands ready to rule a kingdom of delusion and lies.



Caina

All of Caina falls away beneath a burning night. A realm of barren pillars rising amid an endless expanse of bottomless graves, Caina is a glorious abyss crossed by miles of rusting bridges and titanic chains. From these scabrous expanses, cages and whole dangling prisons sway and groan amid howling, ash-choked winds, their metallic complaints drowning out the cries of those souls most rightfully damned. Here, within a fortress-like knot of chains, nails, and fantastic spires, rises the winged throne of the archfiend Mephistopheles, a being who is in every sense a child of Hell itself.

Scouring winds blow endlessly across Caina, hot gales seemingly swept from some vast but unseen fire. These burning siroccos sweep waves of burning ash and jagged rust over the layer's little amount of land and stretch anemic black clouds rimmed in embers across the sky. Below, a vast expanse of stone monoliths rises from the yawning, inescapable blackness. Some call these the bones of Hell. On each of these precarious spits of ground rises an unknowably tall pillar, the largest reaching more than a quarter mile across, while the smallest barely have room enough for the single, lonely souls trapped upon their tips. Chains dangle between the gulfs, some eroded, time-pocked and dangling limply into the dark, while others grip link to desperate link in miles-long reaches. In still other places, ancient bridges of failing steel brave the emptiness, their framework skeletons home to desperately clinging souls and monstrous wraiths. And ever below waits the darkness, an impossible depth that seems to roil and move and even breathe as though it were some terrible and incomprehensible living thing. The damned souls of Caina know that the endless vistas of shackled spikes are Hell, but fear that what lurks hidden below might be worse.

Few lesser devils find their way to Caina, those who do being in direct service to the layer's infernal nobility. Rather, lone gelugons and wings of cornugons patrol the abysses, seeking to glean secrets from the realm's oft-ingenuous prisoners and return escapees to their proper torments. The dukes who make their homes upon the layer devotedly serve Mephistopheles, creating bastions less like the fortresses of Hell's other layers and more akin to vast prisons, sometimes spanning numerous stony pillars, sometimes dangling from ageless chains, and sometimes in the forms of vast bridges. These structures are built to the archdevil's exacting specifications, as the Crimson Son is an obsessive and unyielding perfectionist.

While the majority of archdevils and their layers share relationships similar to those of mortal tyrants and the lands over which they hold dominion, such is not the case with Mephistopheles and Caina. The Crimson Son shares a strange sort of empathy with the eighth layer, seeming to know all who

*Within a web of chains
and rust, the Bones of Hell
rise tall, each the palace
of a villain prince, who
sears the endless fall.*

trod upon its chains and defy its winds. Great pillars rise and fall at the archdevil's gesture, winds turn to hurricanes at his whim, and chains crumble to flakes of rust. Yet his role is not that of master. Frequently, Mephistopheles spends days upon his throne, meditating upon the whims of his realm, a place that is more brother than slave. Few, even Asmodeus, claim to understand what connection lingers between the Lord of the Eighth and his realm—perhaps even all of Hell's layers—but his insights into the plane's powers and

occasional changes prove too valuable to dismiss.

Amid the endless chains of Caina hide countless prisons, both for the souls of the damned and for some of the foulest creations known to the multiverse.

The Dustbringer: An ingenious creation forged by some of the most cunning minds of daemonkind, this monstrous living war machine holds the power to sunder nations and violently warp the supposedly unshakable fetters of time. The titanic, cyclops-like abomination was used once upon the mortal plane, reducing a vast empire to the rubble of its inevitable future far before its proper time. That the laws of the multiverse had been disregarded thus so enraged Asmodeus that he personally threw the Dustbringer and its daemon legions into the pits of Caina. The apocalyptic vessel did not fall, though, becoming entangled in the chains of the layer. And so the Dustbringer has lain for ages, unfathomably deadly and dangling upon the brink of oblivion.

The Hellfire Testament: Mephistopheles' fortress and throne are one and the same. Forgoing a lavish palace, the Crimson Son surveys his realm from this mountainous spire, a monument of chains and cages standing proud and terrible against the winds of Caina. Numerous pit fiend advisors and guardians rend lavish metal caverns from the column. Hordes of foul warlords, mass murderers, and genocidal inventors lie imprisoned within the spire, endlessly lamenting their evil lives. And at the great spike's pinnacle rises a throne of burning wings and sagacious skulls, a peak amid an endless flaming maelstrom from which Mephistopheles claims to hear the sighs and screams of Hell itself.

Lasraspan: The prison fortress of Duke Haborym stretches nearly 8 miles in length, a covered iron thoroughfare lined with the cells of beings both evil and gigantic. The three-headed duke prides himself on restraining the spirits of some of the largest, most powerful, and most vicious beings who ever lived—the souls of the frost giant legend Iggrid Icejaw, the fecund Troll Mother, the shrewd titan Rhysphano, and the pallid rebel Hellmouth Khyedkhyed all lie shackled within his prison. Duke Haborym's 26 legions of bone devil inquisitors maintain constant vigil over the prisoners, binding them with both heavy shackles and words of fathomless despair.

Mephistopheles

Mephistopheles offers the world to those willing to pay his price. Seneschal of Hell and ally of man, the Lord of the Eighth promises anything, possessing the magic and resources to grant nearly any boon a mortal might imagine. Amid one's greatest desires Mephistopheles plants the seeds of damnation, sealing each of his contracts in mortal blood and ending every deal richer in souls. He is called the Devil King, the Crimson Son, and the Merchant of Souls, and few can deny the deadly temptations and fiery rhetoric of Hell's most fervent apostle.

Upon Asmodeus's arrival in Hell, he sought to learn what manner of land he had come to claim. As he explored the domains that would become Hell's layers, he stripped the scorched skin of the land, molding it into a being of ashes and hellfire, and called it Mephistopheles. The primogenial devil, Mephistopheles knew the will of the Pit and that it welcomed Asmodeus and his hordes, revealing to him the secrets that would make his empire the ordered and unconquerable dominion he envisioned. Countless ages later, the Crimson Son continues to serve his creator obediently, his insight into all of Hell's domains allowing him to presage changes in the planar terrain, the genesis of new diabolical breeds, and even more cultic whims of the infernal realm.

Forceful and proud, Mephistopheles oozes charisma and can charm with a gesture. His skin the color of embers over Hell's scarred plains, he bears a triune of elaborate horns and wings like some infernal solar. Donning fantastic jewels and the robes of an exotic prince—his garb stripped from mortals unable to fulfill their bargains—he looks very much the part of an emissary of some decadent and darkly fantastic empire, which is true after a fashion. Never far from the Merchant of Souls' hand is his adamantite quill, *Visineir*, said to have been scratched from the pit of Nessus by the dragon god Dahak himself.

Mephistopheles puts all other con artists and mountebanks to shame. Although he rarely levels a harsh word, he delights in insulting the dull-witted to their faces and cloaking pointed insults behind complimentary veils. In congress with Hell's other archfiends, Mephistopheles plays a sly political game. While he counts Dispaten as an ally and often finds Barbatos's and Geryon's words strangely wise, he relishes his chances to deride Moloch and Baalzebul. Though he would never act against any of his fellow lords, his petty jabs have earned swift rebukes from Asmodeus on more than one occasion—only his eloquence and dramatic apologies saving him from more dire punishments. Regardless of Mephistopheles' cruel

mischievousness, Asmodeus values him as a barometer of Hell's mysterious whims and, as perhaps the only being in existence who knows when the Devil King is lying, sees past his gilded flattery to the cunning advice beneath.

Mephistopheles loathes the inhabitants of the Material Plane. Seeing mortals only as fuel for the infernal realm, he endlessly seeks souls to satisfy both his master Asmodeus and his mother, Hell. Taking pride in his sly and divisive words, Mephistopheles is the creator of the infernal contract. While the living inevitably believe they can elude such damning agreements, few souls have ever won their freedom. In truth, not only do mortals rarely have any hope of escape, but the boons of a contract often damn

the bargainer's soul long before Mephistopheles or his brethren must collect. In any case, even an entire lifetime of service means little to a patient, immortal being like Mephistopheles, and in the end stands as but a fraction of the time a damned soul will languish in the pits of Hell.

The Word of the Crimson Son is the promise of Hell, and with his every silken assurance the multitudes amass to free themselves of their souls.





Nessus

The Heart of Hell and the throne-layer of Asmodeus, no realm more epitomizes and contradicts the truths of the infernal realms than Nessus. In the temple court of the Prince of Darkness, no sun or clouds reign over the cracked, volcano-blasted stone, only a vast, depthless night home to three lonely, ruby stars. While the outer reaches of the layer hold the skeletal frames of vast and incomplete temples and cathedrals, most of Nessus stands as a monument to Asmodeus's glory.

The sweeping fortress-palaces of the layer reshape volcanoes into burning temples and abysses into unholy oubliettes, yet untold layers hide within the "deepest" of Hell's depths, for below, in sanctuaries unfathomable and awe-inspiring to even immortal eyes, lie the courts of Asmodeus, where one of the most evil beings in the multiverse manipulates the courses of worlds and readies for his time to come once again.

Nessus is a double hell. Much of the layer's surface appears as an Elysian realm torn in the wake of some terrible holocaust. Foreboding forests of ashes hide lakes and seas of poison. Volcanoes endlessly erupt upon the horizon, spewing lava that never falls from the lifeless heavens. Deep fissures split the land, their depths emanating sickening crimson light. Here silence grips all things, a depth of despair so palpable as to muffle all noise and make even the slightest whisper ring like a scream. Beyond these corrupted natural features stand the works of devils and the damned. Roads paved in the skulls of fallen princes lead between vast palaces, connected either underground or by reaching cloisters. Little differentiates between terrain and temple in Nessus, armies of enslaved souls having sculpted vast tracts and whole mountain chains with elaborate and terrifying statuary, facades, spires, and shallow shrines, all raised in the Archfiend's name. Monuments in a thousand different styles pierce the sky—many created from squirming mountains of soulwrought flesh—their tableaux revealing grim lies of Asmodeus's past and foul promises of a hopeless future.

Below, like the ancient catacombs of some vast profane cathedral, lie the courts of Asmodeus. Columned halls filled with fearful sculptures and blatant images of things no mortal should know dig deep into the bowels of Hell. Here, Asmodeus's pet infernal dukes forgo the grandeur of the layers above, toiling amid armies of servants in some of the most elaborate and perverse workhouses in the multiverse, places of unholy industry, part scriptorium and library, part arcane laboratory, and part vast altar. While some of these dukes and their gelugon and pit fiend conspirators manipulate nation-damning plots and the corruption of immortal realms, others have more focused goals, manipulating the visions of seers

The temple-heart of Hell is home and monument to the Prince of Darkness, a blasphemous paradise of lofty corruption and eternal despair.

and dreams of madmen. Numerous imps swoop through Nessus in terrible flocks, eager to carry the words of their masters to the ears of mortals waiting upon the Material Plane. Here too walk fallen angels, black-winged erinyes, and greater harbingers who have renounced the heavens, realizing the truth of Asmodeus's vision.

Relatively few souls make their way to Nessus, and few devils pay the damned of the layer any mind. Those who do face eternity at the bottom of the Pit are those who most satisfy and interest the Archfiend himself.

While the greatest of Asmodeus's mortal servants might be allowed to live as anchorites amid personal monasteries or endless cathedrals, most of the Prince of Darkness's followers are found lacking and are granted to the archdevils to do with as they will. The other souls damned to Nessus epitomize Asmodeus's loathing of mortality and prove the most vile examples of all living beings. These are the souls of failed and disgraced heroes, of kings who became tyrants, of valorous leaders who were tested and found lacking, and of false luminaries. These souls wander the wilds, a despondent lot, most immersed in their own self-contained suffering and preyed upon by personal demons.

The Catafalque: If Hell has a true heart, it is the Catafalque, the personal sanctuary, shrine, and throne of Asmodeus. Endless rumors and tales tell of this vast extradimensional hall, though no creature aside from the lord of Hell himself, has ever peered within. Some say it is a vast, spherical realm, where Asmodeus has created a perfect paradise for himself alone. Several of the archfiends whisper that their lord holds the radiant bones of his murdered sibling Ilys eternally in state there. And still others fear that it is where the Prince of Darkness works his ultimate evil, the greatest sin propagated upon the multiverse, and that were the other deities to discover it, all creatures of reality would rise up against him. Any conjecture proves fruitless, though, for if any being excels at keeping secrets—especially his own—it is Asmodeus.

The Synod Eye: When Asmodeus calls upon his archdevils, it is within this vault of dark statuary that a council of the multiverse's foulest beings assemble. Eight thrones of salt and an island of glass orbit Asmodeus's massive Hellfire Throne. Beneath the flaming sigils of the diabolical elite falls a depthless gulf, a pit of absolute darkness that seethes with the barely restrained malice of Hell itself. From this pit, Asmodeus can conjure any view or illusion he wishes, or any bit of knowledge picked from the mind of any one of his countless followers. Those few who come to speak before Asmodeus's court and survive also tell of a vision called the Eye of Hell, something primal and alien seething within the impossible pit below.

Asmodeus

Asmodeus reigns as the unquestioned lord of Hell, the emperor and god of the damned. He is the most powerful entity to reside within the infernal realm, and even the other deities who make their home within the Pit do so at the Prince of Darkness's allowance. All of Hell is his fortress, each layer serving as a nefarious rampart between Nessus, his sinister keep, and a multiverse that screams for order. He is the most dreaded enemy to the freedom and spirit of the multiverse's people, yet the surest route to a grim but eternal peace.

Asmodeus may take any form he chooses, yet in the depictions of his faith and visions of his worshipers he appears as a tall, muscular man with red skin, dark hair, short black horns, arrogant features, and hooved feet. Whether this is the Archfiend's true form or merely a guise he adopts so his mortal servants can conceive of him, none can say. Some legends tell that he has another form, one that bears a great, endlessly bleeding wound suffered during his final battle with the deity Ithys, but if any soul has ever witnessed this shape, they have never been allowed to leave Nessus. Once every 13 years, and whenever dark fate or his desires cause him to wish it, Asmodeus calls together his eight archdevil champions. He is rarely seen without his symbol of rule, the *Archstar*, an artifact forged before the Exodus that bears his symbol and often takes the form of a burning ruby mace, rod, or staff.

Asmodeus is beyond patient, beyond doubt, and beyond arrogant. He knows that, eventually, the tide of the multiverse will turn, the young deities that hold such appeal to the souls of the mortal world will perish or move on, and moralities will shift, elevating him to a place of righteousness. So it was, so it will be once more. He is known for his devastating bouts of wrath, yet his ire

is but a tool to inspire fear, for few things in the last millennia have truly enraged him. None know the face of the Prince of Darkness's true fury, his discipline being unfathomable, but those who cross him come to know suffering in their lives and beyond like nothing imaginable. With his archfiends and other powerful minions he is a cold but reasonable emperor. As he is a being of impossible age and intelligence, even what seem to be split decisions

undergo deliberation and consideration from countless angles. Once his commands are spoken few can hope to change his mind to their favor. He demands order, yet as a being of vast intellect, he can often perceive patterns and reasons where none seem present—tales say that he had a hand in arranging the places of the stars, the architecture of living forms, and the laws of physical existence. All of his cunning, genius, and passion Asmodeus teams with a deft tongue and disarming charm. Even the most benevolent deities have, at times, sought out Asmodeus's council, and afterward, have shuddered to realize that the Ruler of Hell is no monster, but a charismatic, sane, and wise being opposed to all they believe, yet nonetheless deserving of their awe.

For all the powers and boons he grants the creatures of the Material Plane, Asmodeus loathes mortals. Certainly his worshipers prove useful in exacting his whims upon the planes, but he bears not even the greatest of them an iota of love. With their creation, mortals ruined the perfect order of the early multiverse; they sow chaos and disorder throughout the planes, and they nourish the most destructive forces of reality. They were the gods' first and greatest mistake, and these rampant souls will be a blight upon existence until they can be wiped out or fundamentally revised. Fortunately, Asmodeus cultivates numerous plans to bring about such ends, stratagems that have been in motion for centuries beyond counting—and that are working.

All Hell bends to his will,
all devils do his whim, all
souls fear his gaze; he is
the Prince of Darkness,
and his time is nigh.



The Iron Heart of Dis

There is Hell, and there is Dis, a beautiful burning ember in the darkest night. Dominating the layer of the same name, the greatest of Hell's cities rises tall and towered as both punishment and paradise to those who would endure the infernal realm. It is a tyranny of a thousand tyrants, and all who look upon its ash-rung steeples and walk its searing streets tread in fear of the irrefutable commandments of the damned. Horned spires constructed upon foundations of whimpering souls, burning monuments that dwarf the largest mountains of the mortal plane, feats of architecture both soul-wrenching and awe-inspiring—Dis knows no limit of wonder and terror. Upon minarets stretching miles into the sky hang souls endlessly picked over by winged, infernal carrion beasts; labyrinthine canals of fire and corruption carry souls, fiends, and worse things through the city's shadowed underbelly; terrible citadels of beings with minds to conquer worlds and souls to unmake sanity float across holocaust horizons; and over it all rises the scepter of the realm's Iron Lord, the miles-high bastion of First King Dispater, which stretches from the depths of the Pit like a spear poised to pierce the very heart of Heaven.

The Broken Chains: A mountain of chains, massive enough to bind an army of titans, forms the many-towered kyton citadel-embassy in Dis. Consul Chayte, an oitos kyton with a skeleton of gold amid his fleshy robes, rules the Chains as proxy of the lords of Xovaikain on the Plane of Shadow, bartering for the mercenary efforts of whole legions of his fellows. Although the residents of Dis know Chayte as the most potent of his kin in the city, instances of unexplained grinding speech emanating from the depths of the consulate have caused rumors to spread that the entire fortress is actually an ephialtes kyton with a chained frame of incredible proportions.

The Demagogue: This horrid place is a half-living museum, created from the tortured bodies of some of the mortal plane's most infamous tyrants and leaders, bound by a mortar of gore into walls of flesh and muscle. Against the expectations of all infernal lords, eons ago a single gigantic eye manifested upon the palace's grotesque dome. It is said this terrifying, vein-webbed orb sheds one colossal, bloody tear once every century, though none can say why.

The Fallen Fastness: Where the sins of all men are cataloged and untold armies of scholarly devils endlessly toil. Said to be the greatest library in Hell, this thorn pierces as deeply into Hell's flesh as it rises into its burning heavens and is said to grow by several floors in both directions every year.

The Pyrite Vault: Built in mockery of the First Vault of Axis, here heresies and cursed treasures infamous throughout the spheres lie in state, tended to by the white-gauntleted ayngavhaults of Vapula. Any devil that wishes to claim the baleful treasures housed here might do so, should they possess the need and potency to avoid becoming victims themselves.

Widow's Cry: Hung with the bodies of history's proudest chauvinists, the aerie of Whore Queen Eiseth rises as a mountain of iron and brass blades and serves as home to Hell's largest legion of erinyes. Its summit is said to echo with the screams of all mothers and maidens ever wronged, a terrible cacophony that casts mortal women into an incurable deafened rage and instantly slays any mortal man.

From The Book of the Damned

And from the heart of that Pit rises a spear of iron, and around it bleeds a city of sorrows. A disease of dark metal and darker souls, veined in fire and the corruption of all the spheres, here the spirit of dark majesty rises to exultation. Here god and mortal, saint and fiend, walk shoulder to shoulder, blinded by desire and desperation in their march through the labyrinth of damnation. Here gather the efforts of ages, the histories of sin, and all that is valued in vice. Here sprawl the markets of flesh and of shadows, where nightmares are bartered as dreams and sobs supplant the chime of coins. And all that is terror and wonder bears a single title, a name that makes old men tremble and causes angels to weep in selfish regret: Dis, awful and awesome, the throne-city of Hell.

—From the Book of the Damned, "On Dis"



Dis,
Capital of Hell



Chapter Two

DEVILKIND

She woke him then, an angel in crimson, a seraph robed in the blazing sun. Weak, he looked upon her, trembling and afraid to behold such beauty. At her touch his fear burned away, at her caress it was replaced by a fire he had never known. As she bent to him, away fell her robe of burning tongues, and, feasting in her flesh, away fell all that he was. So passed a summer in passion, yet inevitably came the smoldering fall. Weeping he took her hand, and tremulous but obedient he departed with her, walking into the fire that was once the sky.

—From the Book of the Damned, "A Season of Hell"



Beings of absolute, merciless order and obedience, devils know nothing of morality, compassion, or free will. Their foul existences—from the most revolting lure to the deadliest infernal duke—serve but a single unified purpose: the execution of Hell's law across all the planes. Where they succeed, whole worlds become blasted slave empires, prison-slaughterhouses where mortal souls fuel the infernal war machine and praise the grim majesty of the God Fiend. Where they fail, subtle corruptions and blasphemous subversions wrap the tendrils of temptation about weak mortal minds, paving a path of damnation for the restless armies of Hell.

Within the Pit, all is the way the eldest truths of the multiverse dictate and the way the will of Asmodeus demands. Wheels within wheels and castes within hierarchies assure that all the servants of the Prince of Darkness know their place and the duties their dread lords command. Although vast expanses of Hell appear to be little more than horrifying chaos, realms where foul beasts teem and the damned wail their sorrows to the deaf heavens, all follows an order. Chaos breeds suffering, change spawns fear, upheaval breaks the soul; all are tools of Hell's tortures. Thus, all follows the great plans of Hell's rulers, for while they gauntlet their fists in cold tyranny, they deny themselves no weapons, even the scourges of the Abyss, the spears of Heaven, or the fires of the Maelstrom.

While the lords of the Pit do as they will, such is not the fate of their servants. The hellspawn mind knows precision and expertise, having been birthed to excel within the duties their masters require. Hamatula sentinels, osyluth inquisitors, and gelugon strategists—all have been sculpted for their roles by the hands of Hell, and in these tasks devils know few peers. Yet infernal minds do not create weapons for but a single goal, and the spawn of the Pit are far from automatons. Even the basest fiends exhibit cruel cleverness and the ability to learn and refine skills outside the edicts of their creation. A barbazou legionnaire might come to excel at infiltration, while an erinyes might become a deadly seductress, each fiend's skills growing and becoming more refined as their experiences and the needs of their masters shape them. And when their time comes to walk upon the Material Plane, all devils that, through their individual skills, they have but one goal: to damn the souls of mortals however they see fit.

The Hierarchy of Hell

The devils of Hell are legion, their ranks endlessly bolstered by damned souls, other natives of the infernal plane, and horrors forged in the multiverse's darkest pits. Yet, among their own, devils form one of the largest and most stringent social orders in all the planes, rivaled only by the choirs of Heaven and the castes of axiomites in their racial law.

All devils are created to fill a gap or expand the ranks of Hell's rigid hierarchy, a pyramidal organization typified by grim echelons of control similar to the rankings of an

impossibly vast and complex military. At the height of this order Asmodeus sits enthroned, unquestioned and invincible lord over all beneath him, while at the base roil repulsive oceans of lemures and all the potential evils and terrifying shapes they embody. Between these extremes march untold varieties of diabolical life, from deadly foot soldiers to elite warriors to beings of living warfare. Such fiends hold rankings based foremost on infernal breed, but also on accomplishment and the recognition of their masters. Hell is strict and ordered, but not blind to exceptions that offer advantages.

The racial ranks of Hell select first and foremost for prowess, though the definition of such skill varies. Typically, this implies physical strength in battle, barbazus being inferior to more powerful levalochs who are, in turn, lessers to stronger osyluths. Yet exceptions exist in terms of cunning. One of the rare phistophiluses, for example, bears greater rank than a hamatula, while insidious gelugons preside over legions of cornugons. While a gelugon might pose far less of a threat to a mortal warrior in hand-to-hand combat, the pitiless minds of these villains prove such that whole nations might fall victim to their subtle temptations before one even recognizes its threat.

Although diabolical race means much within the castes of Hell, physical form alone does not correspond to a specific rank or authority. The lords of the Pit are ever watchful for exceptional skill and capable servants. Whether a warrior that slaughters hundreds more enemies than his brethren or a strategist whose machinations cause the fall of an entire empire, Hell seeks such prodigies. As devils are born from that which was once mortal, many believe certain former souls prove predisposed to certain exceptional talents and might carry those skills through millennia of torments to create prodigious fiends. The soul of a peerless mortal warrior might eventually make a skilled erinyes, while a murderous inquisitor might reprise his merciless passion as an osyluth. Yet, while the lords of Hell seek out such souls, the process of creating lemures from the damned rests largely in the unknowable workings of the infernal plane itself, making direct transformations impossible—not that this stops many diabolical lords from seeking methods to more effectively utilize such souls. When such skilled devils do rise above their brethren, though, they are rewarded with authority. Thus, a particularly deadly barbazou might excel in skill to a point where he can best and be promoted to lead a host of erinyes, while a keen osyluth might join the ranks of watchful hamatulas. These subjective ranks within Hell's hierarchies are not obvious to most non-devils—beyond the scars of veteran warriors or occasional trappings of the favored—yet all devils recognize the place of their kindred immediately, and obey or command as their station allows. But for those who seek them, or have them forced upon them by their masters, there do exist methods of physical advancement for those willing to endure the suffering.



Diabolical Advancement

The breeds of devilkind are not stagnant. In the same way the greatest of infernal kind might recreate lemures into useful, sentient shapes, so too might other devils be lifted from the rank-caste implied by their form. In a process little understood outside of Hell but known to be one of the most excruciating tortures exacted upon the multiverse's beings, a devil might be reshaped into a greater form. Such promotion can only be meted out by one of the lords of Hell, a fiend with the standing of an infernal duke or greater. Recognized as a minion of worth, the devil is subjected to a lengthy and terrifying torment befitting its would-be new incarnation. Should the creature survive this torture—a fate that is never assured—it emerges transformed into a new being, a member of a greater diabolical breed with all the rights and standing of that form. Procession through Hell's infernal castes is not a direct path, as devils of any type might be promoted into a variety of forms. Typically, though, a fiend advances by small degrees, joining a slightly more powerful rank, and never is a lesser devil promoted to a greater devil without the careful consideration of its lord.



These diabolical transformations typically take place on a case-by-case basis, though the archdevils occasionally remake whole legions as suit their needs. Such advancement can also be reversed, and failed fiends might be cast into torments that strip away their forms, reducing them in station. Such a fate is perhaps the worst insult a devil can suffer, one all of these prideful fiends dread.

Although numerous methods of diabolical advancement are well documented, no devil can engage in this process without the allowance of the infernal nobility. Even those brazen enough to try it without permission gain no benefit, just years of torment endured to no advantageous outcome. What infernal processes or right the lords of Hell bring to these tortures—what spark finally imbues their minions with greater blasphemous forms—is unknown, though diabolists throughout the multiverse have long sought the secrets of these diabolical powers. These torturous advancements are also not the only way devils of great standing are formed, as the creations of Asmodeus and those beings that spring whole-formed from the depths of Hell are many and obey infernal laws few can comprehend.

Noted here are several of the agonies the most common diabolical breeds are known to suffer in their advancement through Hell's profane hierarchy. While others with the same or similar results are doubtlessly known, the lords of the Pit rarely share their secrets.

Imps: Typically sculpted by a powerful devil from a single lemure, imps are usually created for a specific purpose. An infernal lord can create an imp in moments, often treating these fiends as disposable couriers, accounting for the great numbers of them throughout most layers of Hell.

Barbaz: Raised en masse from mobs of lemures, these fiends are impaled upon the glaives of the devils they would become for 50 years or more, their transformations being complete when they develop the will and control to extract their weapons from their bodies.

Erinyes: Most erinyes are specially chosen by the archfiends, warped from the forms of fallen or corrupted celestial beings. Lesser devils are rarely promoted to become erinyes unless an infernal lord gleans some spark of corrupted divinity or past piousness within their essences. Those that would be transformed into erinyes are impaled upon the loftiest tower spikes of Dis and left to be flensed by the vicious winds and fed upon by the city's revolting avian hosts for 150 years.

Osyluth: Although rising fully formed from the depths of Stygia itself, osyluths may also be promoted from the ranks of the most manipulative erinyes. Buried, drowned, and picked over by the swarms of fetid Stygia for 200 years, what emerges has lost all hint of beauty, a horrifying new osyluth.

Hamatula: Infernal lords in need of sentinels typically create hamatulas from brooding erinyes and subtle osyluths. These devils are cast into the loneliest, darkest vaults of Erebus for 333 years. Those who neither go insane



nor try to escape find, upon their release, that the darkness has granted them new powers and forms.

Gelugon: Typically raised from the ranks of the most cunning hamatulas and osyluths, would-be gelugons are cast into the icy wastes of Cocytus. Those with the wisdom to survive a realm deadly even to devils for 500 years grow the hoary carapaces of gelugons.

Cornugon: The most skilled martial devils endure the wars of Malebolge. Through untold millennia these fiends endure mock warfare and torturous training, the ever-increasing mercilessness and prowess of the deadliest fiends gradually taking physical form, warping them into cornugons.

Pit Fiend: Ingenious and merciless devils, typically gelugons and cornugons, are caged within the hellfire volcanoes of Nessus. Here they suffer and burn for 666 years. Should the devil survive, it emerges as one of the most powerful forms of devilkind.

The Roll of Hell

Only fools claim to know the secrets of Hell and the innumerable beings that lurk within its ninefold depths. Although certainly some creatures prove more pervasive among the Pit's layers, to say that these beings are all that exists within the infernal realm speaks of ignorance and the hopeful delusion of limited mortal minds. Detailed here are the devils best documented by diabolists, as well as several supposedly secret methods of summoning known to dark-souled mortal spellcasters.

Lemures

Barely devils—barely any manner of creature at all—lemures boil forth from the deepest cracks and crevices of Hell, the filth of the multiverse's foulest pit given terrible life. Yet, through purification by cruelty and ablution by wrath, these repulsive protoforms bear the seed of all diabolical life. Little more than manic and fundamentally evil souls given flesh, lemures are blank slates, their minds existent but empty, ready for the whims of powerful infernal entities to shape them into whatever their would-be masters desire. Until such time, they roil in vast seas of churning flesh, lashing out murderously but mindlessly at one another and whatever damned souls prove foolish or unfortunate enough to happen by.

Infernal Sacrifice: Although too mindless to have individual desires, lemures can be better tempted by diabolists who offer them remembrances of indulgences long lost to them. Sacrifices of alcohol, warm food, or pornographic illustrations grant a caster a +2 bonus on Charisma checks to summon a lemure.

Imps

Masters of underestimation, imps throughout the multiverse have an infamous reputation for being craven, pandering, sadistic weaklings that fearfully obey any creature larger and stronger than themselves. While unquestionably true, imps know the stories and expectations of those who call upon

them and go to great lengths to play such roles. Beneath their cowardly and toadying natures lie calculating minds. Patiently and humbly they serve even the most unfit, eagerly whispering advice and subtly manipulating those who think themselves masters. In the end, imps quickly turn on those they've served even for centuries, trusting in their decades-long machinations to eternally damn their foul former masters.

The process of summoning imps as familiars has burgeoned widely through the planes, largely spread by devils and imps. Delighting in tempting their masters down the path of diabolism, imps gradually dole forth their knowledge of Hell's powers on a quid pro quo basis, revealing their familiarity with the Pit in exchange for small acts of depravity. While the details of such exchanges are rarely truthful, few spellcasters who would summon a devilish familiar balk at the increasingly depraved acts their servants require in payment.

Infernal Sacrifice: As a placation to their tiny egos, imps favor small, bloody sacrifices that suggest their summoner's willingness to do evil. Those who offer a heart cut from the breast of a still-living dove gain a +2 bonus on Charisma checks made to summon an imp.

Barbazus

One of the most pervasive breeds of Hell's rank-and-file legionnaires, barbazus know only battle and obedience. Far from the most cunning inhabitants of the Pit and poor tempters of mortal souls, what these murderous fiends lack in guile they make up for in versatility and reliability. Barbazus are among the most dogged of devils, unquestioningly obeying their lords and superiors in whatever travail is put before them. These devils form the ironclad backbone of hellish armies, mustering and training in preparation for infernal campaigns. When finally unleashed upon the mortal plane, the cruelty and effectiveness of their slaughter mark them as true embodiments of the unflinching discipline of Hell.

Barbazus summoned away from Hell initially balk at serving non-infernal lords, and struggle to resist whatever magic compels them. In the face of skilled diabolists, though, these bearded devils might come to serve their new masters nearly as devotedly as their commanders in Hell. Regardless of their willingness, all barbazus show a penchant for murderousness and bloodshed, often lashing out with their deadly saw-toothed glaives when even the simplest word would suffice. These devils also sometimes possess minor insights into the ways of the infernal dukes they serve, the topography of Hell's first layer, Avernus, or the worship of Barbato, the archfiend to whom all bearded devils offer some degree of veneration.

Infernal Sacrifice: Those who seek to indulge a barbazus's bloodlust by offering a restrained victim—whether man or beast—for the devil to murder gain a +2 bonus on Charisma checks made to summon a bearded devil.



Erinyes

Known as “fury devils” to some and as fallen angels to others, erinyes veil depravity within Heavenly bodies. While these devils can be raised from the ranks of lemures by lords of the infernal realm, few come into being in this manner. Instead, the majority are corrupted from angelic spirits, tempted away from the path of righteousness by infernal machinations. Few know through what process such noble souls of the divine are turned, but the most fundamental requirement of such betrayals seems to rely upon the angel’s willingness.

Once accepted into Hell and perverted into devils, erinyes serve as some of the most valued warriors in the infernal armies. The lords of the Pit value these devils for their varied skills, as few can match their rage in battle and prowess that draws upon techniques learned amid the heights of Heaven and within the depths of Hell. Their magically animated ropes also reflect their roles as ensnarers of mortal souls. While one might expect these beauteous creatures to rely upon their comeliness to tempt mortals to depravity, erinyes harbor intense hatred for mortals—often stemming from their ages of service to such beings. Most use their misleading forms to draw close to and ambush mortals—sometimes even posing as angels or messengers of the gods. Little satisfies erinyes more than the confused cries of mortals murdered or dragged bodily to Hell by those they mistook for emissaries of their divine lords.

Infernal Sacrifice: Embittered against the divine, erinyes revel in destroying holy icons. Those who offer the devil a significant divine item or figure to despoil, either a piece of religious artwork worth more than 100 gp or even a living cleric of a good-aligned deity, gain a +2 bonus on Charisma checks made to summon an erinyes.

Osyluths

Insectile inquisitors of the infernal realm, diabolists claim that the verminous forms of osyluths imply the pervasiveness of Hell’s servants, the eyes of the Pit lurking even in the meanest and most invasive creatures. Bone devils are anything but subtle, though, serving as their brothers’ keepers, assuring that even the most powerful devils adhere to the laws of the Pit. The temptations of chaos are everywhere, even in Hell, and so it falls to osyluths to root out and destroy both infiltrators from the Abyss and other hostile planes, and those infernal natives that would leave the Pit vulnerable to such depredations. Diabolical warriors who sow discord, guardians who shirk their duties, and infernal lords who cultivate their own goals at the cost of their noble brethren, all face the investigation of these prying spies. When they discover disloyalty among their kind, their options are twofold. Those weaker than osyluths are dragged to the bone devils’ revolting hive-like lairs where their secrets and confederates are tortuously stripped from them. Those more powerful than the devils are exposed, with the word of an osyluth being a fearful condemnation while actual proof of infernal impropriety can see a devil stripped to a lesser form.

Those who would summon osyluths typically do so to learn secrets of the infernal realm or gain power over other devils. For mortals who embody the ruthless rules of Hell, an osyluth might serve congenially, willingly providing such an exemplar with secrets that might spread diabolical law. For most summoners, though—those less than the hellish ideal—osyluths provide the information demanded of them, but seek to pervert their masters’ will, providing them with secrets beyond their power to command or that can only lead to a painful and eternal damnation.

Infernal Sacrifice: Osyluths eagerly respond to offerings of infernal lore or blasphemous secrets. Summoners who sacrifice tomes of hellish secrets or evidence of secret mortal vices—especially committed by influential figures or rulers—gain a +2 bonus on Charisma checks made to summon osyluths.

Hamatulas

Diabolical sentinels, hamatulas lurk within the shadows of Hell, guarding the treasures of the Pit, whether they be tangible riches or—that dream most coveted by the damned—paths of infernal escape. Deadly warriors of fearsome form, these fiends haunt the nightmares of mortals, their deadly forms, mastery of flames, and immortal patience marking them as icons of devilkind. Infernal lords favor hamatula for their vicious loyalty. Dwelling in the greatest numbers within the prison-vaults of Erebus, hamatulas care nothing for their wards; they know only their duty to their masters and eager murderousness toward those who would steal that which they protect. Few devils seem to take more delight in slowly stalking prey than hamatulas, who relish drawing out the hunt until the point when a foe is impaled in fatal intimacy upon its barbs, then roasted in hellfire.

When called to serve outside of Hell, hamatulas prove highly irritable and dangerous, especially those who are drawn away from protecting a post for an infernal lord. Some barbed devils prove inconsolable, making them among the deadliest of lesser devils to summon as they attempt to murderously pervert even the least of their summoners’ whims. Others, though, might be placated with promises of exotic and blasphemous treasures in exchange for temporary services. Left to their own devices, hamatulas seek ways to return to Hell. In the interim, though, most gather troves of riches that they intend to carry with them, as well as mortal prisoners upon which their infernal lords might place especial value.

Infernal Sacrifice: Hamatulas despise being summoned away from their duties in Hell for any reason. A diabolist who offers a hamatula rare treasures and exotic gems valued at more than 2,000 gp gains a +2 bonus on all Charisma checks made to compel the barbed devil into service, but only if the task takes less than 24 hours to complete. Those who try to compel hamatulas to longer terms of service, whatever that service might be, take a –2 penalty on their Charisma checks.



Cornugons

Forged and reformed in the flames of Malebolge and the winds of Cocytus, cornugons are the elite of Hell's armies. Girded in scales harder than iron and with wings that grant them mastery over hellish skies, they are the perfect products of the infernal war machine. As such, the lords of Hell value each cornugon as a legion of lesser devils. While hosts of these horned devils train upon Malebolge, their drills overseen by infernal dukes, the most promising face the soul-freezing torments of Cocytus, where the strongest strive to become malebranche—the warlord champions of Hell.

Enduring centuries of training and mock warfare, these devils relish any order that takes them from Hell. Most find themselves leading whole legions of lesser devils as field commanders in massive skirmishes against the hordes of the Maelstrom and the Abyss. Others face more subtle tasks—such as infiltrating a bastion of the divine. Still others might act as the vanguard of Hell's armies, being sent to the Material Plane to prepare a mortal realm for conquering.

Infernal Sacrifice: Existing to crush Hell's enemies and feel the blood spray of war, cornugons endlessly yearn to improve their battle prowess. As such, any summoner who offers one of these devils an intimidating magical weapon with a +2 or greater enhancement bonus gains a +2 bonus on all Charisma checks made to summon a cornugon.

Gelugons

The term “ice devil” refers to far more than these fiends' control over cold and penchant for lairing in Hell's most frigid reaches; it also describes the workings of their infernally logical minds and the impenetrably icy state of their hearts. Known as the masterminds of Hell, gelugons are among the most cunning of devilkind, their great intellects making them far deadlier than their considerable physical prowess might already imply. While lesser devils spend the centuries devising cunning heresies and developing cruel weapons of corruption, gelugons put the tools of damnation to use. Looking out across the planes from alien hermitages of iron and ice, these inscrutable strategists seek the weak points in Heavenly defenses, the exploitable gamuts of demon lords, and the tides of mortal sentiment that make whole worlds ready for damnation. Should ever a devil—from the lowliest imp to the most bloodthirsty cornugon—seek to infiltrate a mortal court or tempt the soul of a fateful individual, they likely do so at the direction of a gelugon mastermind manipulating the present for some unforeseen future stratagem.

Gelugons prefer solitude, creating chilling alien lairs amid the lowest of Hell's layers, though most prefer the floating glacier islands of Cocytus or the dangling chain hives within Caina. From these depths they meditate upon the multiverse, seeking opportunities to spread Hell's influence. If forcibly called away from Hell, emotionless gelugons accept their fate with cool detachment, searching for opportunities to weave

their summoners' plots into their own. Few dare call upon ice devils, though, as their ingenious minds are quick to embroil those they encounter in elaborate infernal plots few mortal souls can hope to weather. Also, while emotionless, gelugons are not above revisiting their summoners, their perfect memories recounting the names and talents of mortals even decades after brief encounters. Thus, any interaction with a gelugon might curse an individual, or even his descendants, with the infernal attentions of Hell's most sinister manipulators.

Infernal Sacrifice: Gelugons can prove notoriously difficult to summon, as little might tempt them away from their ongoing machinations. Those who offer an exchange of services, a promise to enact the fiend's will, whatever it might be, gain a +2 bonus on Charisma checks made to summon an ice devil. Should a summoner try to go back on his word to perform a task for a gelugon, though, the devil might dedicate a portion of its resources to painfully force the diabolist to keep his word.

Pit Fiends

The pinnacle of devilkind and among the most feared of all Hell's inhabitants, pit fiends rule as unquestioned generals of the infernal realm. The most powerful breed of devils, only the unique infernal dukes and other nobles of Hell command greater authority than these diabolical princes—and most of them were once pit fiends themselves. Physically indomitable and even more cunning than gelugons, these brooding warlords can be found throughout Hell, going where their varied machinations demand, though most are found either upon Avernus and Malebolge commanding vast diabolical armies, or within Dis or Nessus conducting more subtle plots. Should an archdevil have business upon the planes, a pit fiend ambassador might conduct such dealings, and when the infernal lords seek to work their most damning machinations, their plots are forged amid a crucible of pit fiend councilors. Unspeakably shrewd and deadly, these diabolical princes possess varied personalities and passions, though nearly all share the aspiration to join the ranks of true diabolical nobility.

Pit fiends rarely journey alone outside of Hell, most traveling from the Pit amid legions of diabolical warriors. Known princes of the infernal realms, countless parties throughout the planes seek to ensnare pit fiends, either for the blasphemous wisdom all possess or to employ their seemingly endless unholy might. Exceedingly proud, little enrages a pit fiend more than the thought of being forced to serve a weaker creature, especially with goals antithetical to the order of Hell. Only the most evil mortals—and typically only those specifically favored by an infernal duke, archdevil, or Asmodeus himself—might hope to command a pit fiend without fear of an endless painful retribution. Those who stumble across these awesome fiends should also know fear, for pit fiends are nothing if not the active hands of Hell, and where they go the full evil sword of the infernal realm is soon to fall.



Infernal Sacrifice: Nothing but the most blasphemous of offerings can tempt a pit fiend to service. Only the sacrifice of a powerful good-aligned cleric or noteworthy angel, the destruction of a significant holy relic, or the offering of a powerful tool of evil might aid a summoner in coaxing a pit fiend from the infernal realm. Any such sacrifice grants the diabolist a +2 Charisma bonus on checks made to summon such lords of devilkind.

Infernal Nobility

Beneath Asmodeus and his archdevils rule the unknowably vast ranks of hellish nobility. Infernal dukes, whore queens, malebranche, pit fiends, greater devils, and other merciless lords of devilkind, all obey and are obeyed, exacting the whims of Hell's rulers and their own nefarious plots with steely efficiency. The greatest of these fiends are worshiped as deities, for indeed they possess the power and unbridled malevolence of lesser gods, while the least are still powers capable of bringing damnation to entire mortal realms. Described here are numerous members of Hell's nobility, though doubtlessly untold hundreds more exist in the vast infernal realms. (Those capable of bestowing spells as deities are noted on the inside cover.)

Infernal Dukes

The Lords of Hell, the Dukes of Perdition, the Princes of Damnation, are the infamous nobility of the Pit, the captains of Hell's armies, and the architects of unknowable strife. From among the endless armies of the Pit occasionally rise devils of exceptional evil, creatures that embody aspects of Hell's nature, be it force, corruption, discipline, misery, or any of countless other vices. Forged through millennia of dutiful service, these fiends claw their ways to the ranks of greater devils, the apparent peak of devilkind. Yet, by some act of masterful corruption, these fiends garner the notice of the archdevils, and are recognized with a rare promotion in form and standing. At the hands of these greatest of devils such champions are reshaped into unique new forms and granted powers and authority beyond even greater devils. From that moment on they are among Hell's masters, the elite of devilkind, the infernal dukes.

Possessing autonomy beyond even that of greater devils and answerable only to the archfiends and Asmodeus himself, each infernal duke is given orders upon its creation that inspire its actions for ages. While some might be assigned to manage the souls of Avernus, others might be sent to corrupt mortals, while still others might be employed to raise armies to lead against other planes or to serve in Hell's defense. Occasionally, infernal dukes are ordered to undertake even more obscure or unusual tasks, such as the hunting down of a specific soul, the creation of some new profanity, or the discovery of some wayward bit of blasphemous lore. Regardless of their goals, these infernal adepts possess absolute freedom to pursue their

tasks however they please—though osyluths and the watchful eyes of the archfiends constantly mind even them for signs of dissension. The ways of most infernal dukes are subtle, as they possess endless time and resources to exact their terrible wills, to say nothing of profane powers exclusive to each. And where the attentions of Asmodeus and his archdevils span the planes, the goals of infernal lords often prove much more precise, as theirs are the burning eyes most likely to turn upon specific mortal worlds, countries, or even individuals in their quests to increase both the might of Hell and themselves.

To aid them in their conquests and perversions, many infernal dukes cultivate their own followings among mortals, bartering the power of Hell for absolute service and ultimate corruption. Those who implore and sacrifice to these demigod-like creatures gain access to a variety of profane magic, but also assure their inevitable damnation.

The Whore Queens

An unrepentant misogynist, Asmodeus thinks little of what he refers to as the “second gender.” Yet, although his hierarchy of diabolical lords holds no room for women, four powerful and ancient female devils hold special respect among the infernal dukes. Each a former angel who renounced her oppressive liege to join Asmodeus's Exodus, these fallen celestials failed to anticipate that Hell would not be the triumph they once expected. In the millennia since their betrayals, they have not become the empresses of well-reasoned utopias, but rather second-class nobles among the most perverse souls of the multiverse. Embittered and deadly, these fallen angels now embrace a title spread by their former celestial brethren and their infernal rivals, their machinations through the eons having proven them easily as pitiless and ingenious as their male—and other-gendered or genderless—counterparts. While their rank in Hell is no greater than that of the other infernal dukes, the feminine virtues of these so-called whore queens have won them great notoriety throughout the multiverse, making their cults second in size only to those of the archdevils and Asmodeus himself.

Ardad Lili: The End of Innocence, Ardad Lili delights in manipulating men and exposing the dull-wittedness of that gender. Appearing as a healthy, plainly beautiful girl just waxing into womanhood, only her wings made of snake tails expose her diabolical nature. The expression that a boy is “made into a man” upon his first sexual encounter directly references the depredations of Ardad Lili and was once synonymous with the term “being made a fool of.”

Doloras: Our Lady of Pain is a beauteous horror, with eyes like blank ebony, skin of iron, and fingers like daggers. Her once angelic wings now bristle with needles and a crown of tears rings her bald head. She offers sadistic comforts to those who would abandon their mortal feelings, and offers adherents an ironclad gospel of inviolability through indifference and salvation through emotionlessness.



Eiseth: Said to be the first fallen celestial, the Erinyes Queen is an angel of Hell, striking, yet as intimidating and fearsome as her former divine brethren are serene. Consumed by hatred for all things celestial, she surrounds herself with other erinyes and often personally leads skirmishes against divine realms. Some of the longest-lived beings in the multiverse claim that Eiseth was once an empyreal lord of righteous wrath and kin to Ragathiel (though perhaps not literally), but if this is true, neither devils nor angels speak of such things.

Mahathallah: Once a handmaiden of Pharamasma, the Dowager of Illusions understands the temporary nature of all things better than most beings. It was said that she once begged her mistress to witness the moment of her own death and was granted her wish, fleeing to Asmodeus's side in hopes of avoiding her fate. Now Mahathallah begins every morning as the beautiful celestial she once was, but ages throughout the day until she is little more than a repulsive skeleton. She cloaks herself in layers of illusion so as to never be reminded of the fate she has supposedly avoided.

The Malebranche

The elite of the elite, the lords of the cornugon, the invaders—the malebranche lead the march of Hell throughout the planes, and where they tread the legions of devilkind follow. Exceedingly rare, only once every 5,000 years does a cornugon manifest the

proress to be promoted to the status of malebranche, their excruciating transformations granting them the forms of unique and terrifying beings. Similar to infernal dukes yet of lesser station, malebranche emerge for one reason alone, to conquer a mortal world or a planar realm in Hell's name.

Malebranche dedicate their existences to spreading Hell's law. Rarely do they travel at the heads of diabolical armies, though. Rather, most journey to their targeted lands alone, and through guile, temptation, and lies sow discord and raise their own legions of native beings. They are the subverters and false saviors, and only when the hour of redemption is too late do they sound the horn of Hell and open the gates for the armies of the damned.

Powerful to the point that they occasionally gain cults of mortal followers, malebranche can grant spells to worshipers in a degree similar to infernal dukes. As these diabolical warlords spend millennia sowing their machinations across the worlds they would rule, they often attain places as figures of myth and divine legend, sometimes across multiple realms. Even if worshiped by beings not of their world, they hear prayers and grant spells, corrupting mortals and aiding their diabolical brethren in whatever even small ways they can.

Twelve malebranche are known to the peoples of Golarion: one for that world, nine for the worlds seen amid the night's stars, and, some say, two for the ones that once were.



Order

Ihys and Asmodeus created the foundation of reality. sculpting and inventing from the light of their world, the seal became as a fountain of creation. The First learned to make all that they wished and wanted by drawing on its limitless power, and wonders never before imagined took shape as elements, islands of reality, and creatures shaped from lesser motes.

The First were not alone during this age, though, for while they were the first, others followed their paths. From the ranks of the younger motes grew vital forces synchronous to the things Ihys and Asmodeus created, majestic and wild beast spirits, and new personalities akin to the First. These beings gathered upon the islands the brothers created, the greatest of them even learning to shape the power of the seal themselves.

The brothers created wide and recklessly, and destroyed with whimsy. Although this satisfied them for a time, both began to favor their own playgrounds and types of creations, making and remaking the same forms, refining and developing shapes as they pleased. Slowly an order to things emerged and creations began to take on uniform characteristics that pleased their makers and made them worthy of names. In this

time the scaffolding of the first stars and planets was formed and the First knew pride in their work.

Then clever Ihys made a discovery that would forever shatter the serenity of these early epochs. He created a new life.

Having sought only to make a minute and simple creation move, Ihys channeled a portion of himself into his creation. Wondrously, the thing did indeed begin to move, but without its creator's command began to explore and root about of its own accord. Curious, Ihys long watched over his creation, delighting in its discoveries and feeling its joys and fears. After a time, learning all he cared to, Ihys destroyed

the thing. From it rose a flicker or light, a mote not unlike that which the First once were themselves, which darted back to join with its creator's being. Fascinated and excited by his innovation, Ihys shared his knowledge with his brother and lesser kin.

Creation took on a new vigor in the age after the First learned how to create new life. Countless creatures were molded and abandoned or destroyed, while whole races rose and were obliterated at the whims of their makers. Islands of reality were sculpted as menageries where new beings could live, thrive, and—eventually—reproduce on their own. Sanctuaries of life came to radiate far from the seal—which slowly began to be lost amid the wonders it had produced—and the First, and indeed all their kin, knew the pride of parents and masters.

Yet soon invaders came, and the First discovered that theirs was not the only reality. Slipping through gaps in existence came the primeval fiends, the lords of Chaos, and the masters of the elements, each discovering the worlds orbiting the seal and seeking to claim the potential and power there. Other visitors came to explore the realms of the First as well, beings claiming origins similar to Ihys and Asmodeus's younger brethren. These travelers brought knowledge with them of spheres beyond the seal, strange and wondrous realms filled with primal beings and more frightening dangers. Yet the First had little interest in leaving the seal, though many of their kin wandered out onto the planes, most of whom were never seen again.

Even in the light of such revelations, eons continued to pass, and the First created and watched over their worlds. Upon their islands, the beings progressed—either by slow natural changes or outside intervention—until they, too, became thinking things and came to know awe for their creators. In this age, the children of the seal first came to know the adoration of lesser beings and came to be known as gods, mantles which they would wear for all time after.

As the gods created whole races of obedient servants and knowledge of the First and their kindred spread from world to world, reverence and soon true worship spread between the islands. This adoration meant little to the gods, though, as their creations were in truth nothing more than pets and playthings,

From the Book of the Damned

Wherein the primal understanding of reality and the laws of existence are set forth, new life comes to the seal, those from outside make themselves known, and the first act of dissension taints the multiverse for all time.

diversions that, upon their ends, returned their borrowed notes of spiritual life back to their creators. Yet, after eons of creation and ages of coming to know the hearts and minds of his works through their prayers, the efforts Ihs had himself begun came to trouble him.

seeking out his brother's counsel, Ihs shared his concerns. Asmodeus smiled, comforting his twin, and explained that such was the way things were and had always been. They alone were the inheritors of the seal's power, and the wonders they created were theirs to do with as they pleased. Life flowed from the seal, and from it to them, and from them to others—such was the order of reality, the order they had known for all time. Thus, they should no more regret the insignificant nature of their creations than they should mourn over the light cast by the seal or the might of their own fabulous powers. They were the First, and all others were less.

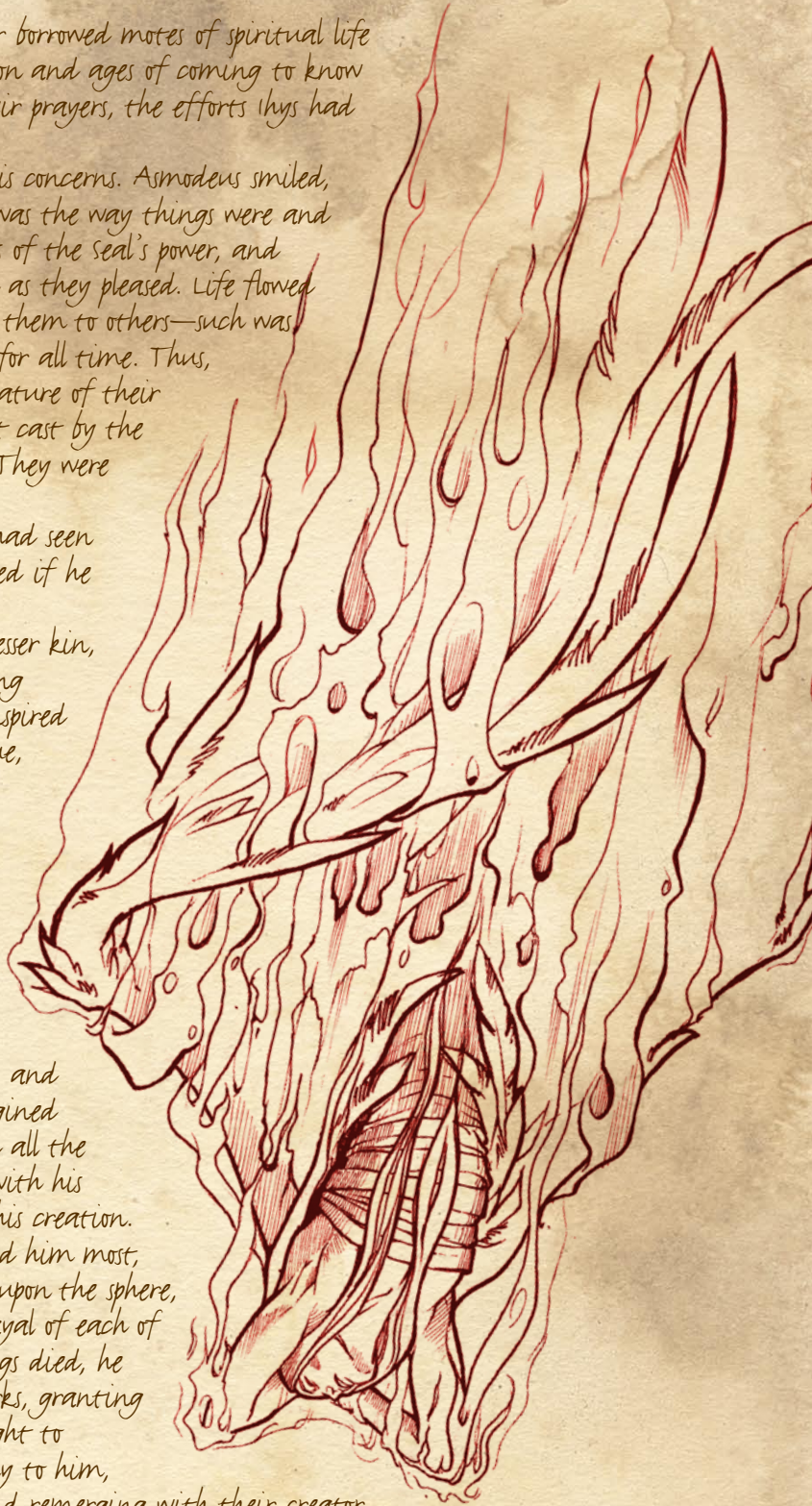
slowly and reluctantly, Ihs agreed, but he had seen change in his countless centuries, and wondered if he might again.

Thus, the First shared his concerns with his lesser kin, most of whom agreed with Asmodeus. But among them too were those who shared his sympathy. Inspired to know his thoughts were not, this time, unique, Ihs visited his favorite world. There he looked over those works that had long pleased him the most, and saw the wonders that were both his and not his, the creations of his creations. He saw the progressions of shapes he had imagined in countless ages past come to living form, and evidence of his briefest musings transformed into foundations of ideas he had yet to conceive. He knew compassion, and pride, and wonder at his work, feelings he had scarce imagined before. Reaching out with his being, he touched all the creatures of his first world and warmed them with his pleasure and gratification. Then he shattered his creation. In a moment he annihilated that which pleased him most, destroying every one of the thousands of beings upon the sphere, and in so doing felt the pain, terror, and betrayal of each of his countless children. And as the minute things died, he spiritually cast off his possession of their life sparks, granting them a choice they had never before even thought to possess. Doves of these tiny flames returned bodily to him, accepting the unknowable wisdom of his act and reemerging with their creator.

But there were others, and in them Ihs witnessed a miracle, a truth of existence which he had refused to even dream. Hundreds of the essences of the First's children scattered among the spheres of creation, some joining with his brother, other seeking out his myriad other kin, and still others drifting away into the dark to find their own paths.

Warmed by the essences of his creations who truly revered him, and full of pride for those who had sought to be more than his slaves, Ihs knew a delight like none he had experienced before, and journeyed to proselytize the truth of their work to his brother and all their brethren.

And so a schism split the gods—one that would never heal.





Chapter Three

DIABOLATRY

All praise to the Wiseman of the Wilds and the King of Iron, who are masters over souls and the paths to Hell. Long to know the Spirit in Gold, who rules in greed and compels the acts of men. Adore the Duke of Many Forms, who knows the desires of mortals better than themselves. Harken to the Serpent's Words, for its kiss reveals the truth you would be denied. Obey the God of Fire, as he alone rewards the deserving. Kneel before the Black Son, for he was the first and most holy, and the Crimson Son, for he is Hell. And kneel with your lords before the Prince, foremost among the gods, who was your master always and will be forever.

—From the Book of the Damned, "The Prayer of All Praises"



The power of Hell lies in order, temptation, and mortal weakness and whim. The lords of the Pit care not for howls in the night and mad rampages, for wasted blood and beastly deeds. Rather, their ways are subtle and suggestive, and to all things there are rules and methods. The masters of the infernal realm know the capriciousness of mortals and the weaknesses of their hearts. Their vision stretches beyond the boundaries of lives and centuries, their offers promising pleasures as varied and vast as Hell's myriad torments and the fulfillment of every petty dream. Yet for all such things there is a price, which is always the same: an eternity of service to Hell's dark prince. None can doubt that such payment is steep, but endlessly mortals believe themselves canner than their fiendish benefactors or shortsighted enough to confuse a boon of centuries with eternity. Their patience is long and their evil immortal, easily weathering ages of service. And in time, every infernal miracle inevitably reveals itself for the trap it is, and no mortal deception can outwit the infernal cunning of Hell.

The temptations of devilkind are many, such being their greatest menace. Few devils appear in smoke and brimstone offering contracts written in blood—rarely do mortals require such brazen direction to the gates of Avernus. Often, a whisper of doubt or a single jealous vision can undo a lifetime of piety. In other cases, some mortals need but the means to damn themselves, requiring only the proper knowledge, the necessary tool, or an advantageous opportunity. Thus, from the Pit flows an endless stream of lies, evil truths, blasphemies, and instruments of subtle corruption, weapons searching for wielders who would use them upon themselves. In such cases, few even realize that their acts jeopardize their very souls. Yet, for all the schemes of devilkind, few methods satisfy the powers of Hell more than the mortal who is damned not by temptation or ensnarement, but by his own strident desire to serve.

Devil Worship

Many of the most powerful figures in Hell hold a degree of foul divine power they use to tempt mortals into paying them worship. Aside from the actual deities who hold domains within the Pit, numerous infernal powers garner the adoration of cruel mortals. These lords of Hell encourage both unscrupulous individuals and whole cults to seek their favor, and in return for praises and sacrifices reward their followers with access to unholy magic and the kinship of devils. While the infernal elite hold power over narrow portfolios, they are treated in all ways as normal deities. Many cultists who foreswear themselves to a diabolical lord are evil or amoral clerics. The most fanatical, though—those who would devote themselves body and soul to the goals of Hell—become diabolists, channelers of Hell's secrets and fury. (See the inside cover of this tome for details on devils capable of rewarding worship.)

Those who revere devils face near-universal hostility and revilement. While devil-worshippers are less destructive than other fiend-worshippers, few distinguish the servants of devils from the minions of deadlier entities. Many societies bear taboos if not laws against the worship of fiends, with such infernal devotees facing pursuit and punishments akin to the fates of witches in many lands. Thus, the majority of devil worshippers keep their faith private or hidden among small congregations, meeting only rarely or on blasphemous holidays. Rather than gathering to participate in cruel rites or raucous orgies, most cults of devil worshippers follow strict traditions or bylaws, affording their members opportunities to entreat their infernal lords for what they desire and making personal or elaborate group sacrifices. Knowing the fear and prejudice against their faith, many devil cults disguise themselves as exclusive clubs, ancient societies, or congregations of enlightened thinkers. New members are typically promised access to elite social circles, libraries of exotic lore, great wealth, decadences, or other secrets barred to the unworthy. One might join such a cult and participate on the fringes for years without ever realizing the greater blasphemies practiced by the group's inner circle. By the time such initiates do learn the truth, they're often too engaged in or addicted to the cult's activities to escape.

Although often overlooked or distinguished from those who praise the lesser powers of Hell, the pervasive church of Asmodeus is, by definition, an entire religion of devil worshippers, their faith aligned with the most powerful of all devilkind. Veneration of the Prince of Darkness is distinguished from those of lesser devils by its general acceptance and high profile in many lands, and by Asmodeus's station as a true god. While the religions of good-aligned deities might revile and oppose Asmodeus's faith, few would be so brazen as to openly crusade against such a powerful religion—easier instead to set their eyes upon the lesser nobles of Hell and assure that their influences never spread as far as their those devils' master.

Separate from yet similar to the worship of devils is the philosophy of diabolism, which looks to the order of Hell as an example of a perfect society. Although these teachings do not provide adherents with access to divine powers, they do encourage the promulgation of many infernal tenants: hierarchical obedience, the suppression of free will, the virtues of slavery, the authority of tyrants, and unyielding law. Many might be philosophically convinced of diabolism's merits—especially those in particularly chaotic realms or who stand to take control—giving these beliefs greater social acceptance in many lands than open devil worship. Numerous students of diabolism gradually progress into full infernal devotees, though, provoking numerous faiths and countries to condemn such teachings as the path to open heresy. Yet still such philosophies spread, taking root in minds that would abjectly reject the worship of devils, leading many to wonder if the teachings of diabolism were spawned by mortal musings, or are a cunning contrivance of the Prince of Darkness himself.



Infernal Contracts

The best known and most direct form of diabolical corruption, infernal contracts form a binding tie between a devil and a mortal. Such contracts take a variety of forms, parodying the laws and terminology of the mortal contractee's society. An infernal contract takes the form of an offer, usually for extravagant goods or seemingly impossible services, typically presented by a devil to one who has summoned it for exactly such a purpose. These contracts are exceptionally powerful and can alter lives, even reality, in diverse ways for those who agree to sign such hellish documents. In return for fulfilling the terms of the contract, the devil receives the mortal's soul when the signer dies or at whatever time the contract specifies. While a mortal's soul is nearly always the target of such contracts, oftentimes devils occlude their desires, either within confusing legalese, sub-articles, and addendums, or by tailoring their fulfillment of the contract to provide the contractee with the means to damn himself. Thus, some infernal contracts are simple accounts of a blasphemous exchange, while others are rambling documents cloaking diabolical intentions. Typically, more complex agreements are better at hiding a devil's desires, yet at the same time might offer clever mortals opportunities to escape damnation.

While any greater devil might draw up an infernal contract—either for himself or lesser devils to enact—some, like the cunning phistophiluses, prove particularly adept at crafting lengthy and misleading agreements. Certain types of devils prefer to enter into specific types of infernal contracts. For example, many lesser devils, such as barbazus and erinyes, might agree to serve a mortal for an extended term, while hamatulas regularly offer wealth and treasures from the vaults of Hell. Other devils prove more cunning in the terms of their agreements. Specifically, imps—knowing that few mortals would face damnation for their minor service—and osyluths regularly trade infernal or arcane wisdom for secrets mortals possess, later using such information to gain power over their former masters. In the cases of more powerful devils, more radical boons might be bestowed, such as the fulfillment of wishes, granting of infernal powers, or a blessing of long life. In such cases, though, only the mortal's pledge of eternal fealty to Hell satisfies these contracts' terms.

A mortal can only ever enter into a single infernal contract. All devils can sense souls forsworn to Hell, and thus refuse to bargain with those who have nothing to offer them. To this end, those who are already worshipers of Asmodeus or his archfiends have little bargaining power with devilkind. Occasionally a mortal might offer something other than his soul to tempt a devil into a contract, but such bargains are uncommon and are rarely accepted from those with viable souls still to offer.

Entering into an Infernal Contract

To take part in an infernal contract, one must first find a devil willing to offer Hell's terms. While occasionally a corruptive

fiend might offer a mortal great a boon in exchange for its soul, more often it is a mortal, inspired by tales of dark bargains and incredible rewards, who seeks out a diabolical contractor. This typically requires the use of spells such as *planar ally* or *planar binding* to summon a devil. Such spells cannot coerce the outsider to enter into the terms of an unfavorable contract or bestow the benefits of a contract without payment. These spells do, however, keep a devil's attentions so it might hear what its summoner wishes. If the devil finds its summoner's wishes possible and reasonable, it typically returns to Hell to scribe the contract's specifics (or, in the case of lesser devils, have them written), though some might be able to forge the contract instantly. In most cases, though, this means the would-be contractee must summon the devil back, typically after 1d4+1 weeks for lesser devils or 1d4+1 days for greater devils (devils of deity-level power can manifest an infernal contract instantly). On this second summoning, the devil returns with an individualized infernal contract for the mortal to sign. Upon signing, the mortal gains the agreed upon boon, but also assurances that, at the time of his death, his soul will be damned and sent immediately to Hell—irretrievable by any sort of resurrection or restorative magic short of divine intervention.

Handling Infernal Contracts

Infernal contracts are boons a character might gain by entering into a blasphemous agreement with a devil. Entering into an infernal contract is an unforgivably evil act, which might alter a character's alignment, blocks divine spellcasters from receiving spells from good-aligned deities, and prevents resurrection. Be sure that characters understand the ramifications of entering into an infernal contract before signing such agreements.

As such, diabolical agreements offer the potential for characters to attain powers long before their levels would allow, or even potent abilities no PC is meant to possess. What infernal contracts can offer and how they are handled might vary from one GM to another. GMs may choose or alter any of these options to suit their games and the desires of the contractees. Utilizing these suggestions as a springboard to more elaborate or specific effects is also encouraged, as the most tempting infernal contracts are those customized to an individual character or that furthers some diabolical agenda. Alternatively, GMs who don't wish to deal with such heretical agreements in their games may simply ignore devils' abilities to forge such agreements or make such pacts incredibly rare.

Probably the simplest method of handling an infernal contract's effects is to treat it as a *wish* spell. While a contract can grant any of the benefits noted by the spell, GMs are encouraged not to limit these diabolical documents to exact recreations of *wish*, as doing so undervalues the potency and unique effects these pacts can produce. An infernal contract should be able to permanently grant a mortal nearly any boon he wishes, though the diabolical contractor scoffs at outlandish demands. In general, *wish* might be looked to for the

least of what an infernal contract can grant, with the best only feeling slightly more powerful. Particularly powerful mortals might even barter for several wishes within the terms of a single contract, although a devil will never grant a wish that would undo the binding nature of its agreement.

Outside of the abilities suggested by the spell, an infernal contract granting a wish might grant any of the following desires: a permanent transformation of creature type (to outsider, undead, and so on); the application of a template; the ability to cast a spell of 2nd level or lower at will; the ability to cast a spell of 3rd level or lower once per day; an increase in natural armor bonus up to +4; a permanent +2 profane bonus to all skills tied to one ability score; the addition of a single feat. These possibilities are meant to be suggestions and are in no way comprehensive. Again, GMs are encouraged to make each infernal contract unique to their characters and campaigns.

Escaping an Infernal Contract

Once signed, an infernal contract proves nearly impossible to escape without satisfying the agreed-upon terms. Such contracts are always written in duplicate, an identical copy being provided to the signer while the original is carried to one of Hell's many vaults or libraries—most commonly Dis's vast library of laws, the Fallen Fastness, or one of the mired repositories of Stygia. For as long as even one of these copies exists, the terms of the contract remain in effect. While the destruction of both documents can annul an infernal contract, such typically requires a journey into the depths of Hell itself.

Alternatively, one might petition a devil to adopt the terms of someone else's contract. A contract can only be revised if both the mortal adopter and the fiend agree to the revision of their own accords. Convincing a devil to revise its agreement often proves difficult, the fiends proving exceptionally paranoid of mortal trickery. However, should a devil be convinced that the soul attempting to adopt the contract is of greater value than the original contractee, the contract might be revised. Devils always favor good-aligned souls and those in service to righteous deities over those of others. Character level also plays in to a soul's value, as a powerful mortal makes a potent slave in Hell. Some arbitrariness also exists concerning which spirits devils consider more valuable, as they better understand the flow of fate than mortals. Regardless of how much value devils place on a soul, they often demand those who would take on the terms of another's contract to prove themselves, usually by enacting some difficult task. Only once this task is completed will the devil revise his contract.

Despite the difficulties devils place on mortals who would revise infernal contracts, most have few qualms about actually doing so. Not only does a revision typically mean trading up for a more valuable prize, but any mortal who made a contract with a devil once is likely to find some new path to damnation before his days end.

MATERIAL PLANE, Being the FOURTH incarnation of the THIRD Cycle of Mortality, on file in Fallen Fastness 9485785,68863,2141,70036233.

This is a lawful contract between

hereinafter called "COVENANTER" and

hereinafter called "COSIGNATORY."

Their names used for this pact only.

HERETOFORE shall the efforts of the COVENANTER be bound to the COSIGNATORY to the effect of the following terms.

1) The indenturing of an agent of the COVENANTER, of no potency less than a single imp, bound to service and obedience to the COSIGNATORY. This agent's term of service to continue into perpetuity or upon the complete fulfillment of this pact.

2) The boon of a single mortal wish, affected immediately upon the signing of this document, meted out forthwith with the full ability and potency of the COVENANTER and specifically without intent to harm or confound.

In recompense, upon the cessation of mortal continuation, the COSIGNATORY binds all personal efforts, agendas, service, and attendance to the COVENANTER, to employ or dispose of as individually deemed fit, or at the demand of masters whose names are struck from this contract yet known by the foresigned to be the ones whose hands guide these words.

In code 9485784, 3728.7845, 9888451. Subject to the veto of the Nine, honor to their names and Asmodeus most high.

Signed in blood and bound by soul.



Devil Talismans

By bargains and magic some mortals dare to think themselves masters of even a fraction of Hell's power, and the lords of the infernal realm encourage such delusion. Through gaps in the multiverse's fetters these fiends smuggle tokens of their might, items of power meant to tempt and encourage mortals with fervid aspirations and depraved vices. Lore tells that such devil talismans are cultic shackles that bind devils as slaves to mortal masters. In truth, though, the offerings of Hell never prove so charitable or plain, and few realize that in exchange for a devil's service they trade their immortal souls.

A devil talisman is a type of magic item typically created by infernal lords, but also potentially crafted by diabolical mortal magic-users. These ugly but ultimately unassuming trinkets typically allow knowledgeable users to summon a subservient devil, a fiend bound to follow the talisman bearer's orders—if not his exact intentions. Such devils serve but also seek to pervert, playing the roles of obedient and awed slaves while offering their masters knowledge of foul secrets, profane treasures, and diabolical wisdom to further taint the soul.

Devil Talisman Traits

The denizens of Hell claim the crafting of devil talismans as one of their most closely guarded secrets. But in truth, knowledge of such methods is withheld only to whet mortal desires, a feint to hasten a diabolist's willing damnation. Ultimately, any spellcaster can create a devil talisman through the use of the Craft Wondrous Item feat and *planar binding*. As an additional prerequisite to the creation of any type of devil talisman, the creator must summon a devil and bargain with it to be bound within the talisman. Most devils prove resistant to the idea of being trapped within a magic item, but might acquiesce to a particularly convincing summoner. A devil summoned via *planar binding* and coerced into being bound within a devil talisman gains a +10 bonus on its opposed Charisma check. Once convinced, the devil infuses the already prepared devil talisman, completing the profane item.

The various types of devil talismans each possess unique powers and thus require different methods of creation or specific types of bound devils to activate them.

Sanguine Talisman: In actuality a broad type of devil talisman, these blasphemous sanguine baubles offer diabolical protection and might summon any type of devil, from the lowliest lemure to a potent greater devil. The power of a *sanguine talisman* hinges on the force of will possessed by the devil bound within, granting

the wearer infernal protection, advice, and an occasional ally. The talisman grants the wearer a profane bonus to his Armor Class equal to 1 plus an additional +1 for every 5 Hit Dice the devil has. In addition, the wearer of a *sanguine talisman* shares a *telepathic bond* with the bound devil for as long as he wears the magic item.

A bound devil can sense its surroundings through the talisman and can advise its wearer as it pleases. The devil is under no compulsion to obey the wearer or speak the truth to him—though some devils might lie and tell the wearer they are. Finally, once per day the talisman wearer can make an opposed Charisma check against the bound fiend to summon the devil. If the wearer succeeds at this opposed check, the devil is brought forth and serves the caster as per the spell *summon monster* for a duration appropriate to the talisman's caster level. If the wearer fails this check, the devil refuses to be called forth and another check to summon it again cannot be made until the next day.

The price of a *sanguine talisman* varies depending on the might of the devil bound within, equaling the bound devil's

CR × 13,500 gp. Thus, a devil talisman

with a CR 1 lemure bound inside costs 13,500 gp, while a talisman binding a CR 9 osyluth is worth 121,500 gp. As the spell *planar binding* is required to create a *sanguine talisman*, the creator must be of a caster level high enough to summon the devil he wishes to bind using that spell.

Melancholic Talisman: With the power to summon a hellmouth—a monstrous, semi-living portal connecting two regions of Hell (see page 5)—*melancholic talismans* rely on the power of a greater devil. These talismans grant the wearer no communication with or power over the devil bound within. Each talisman summons only a specific hellmouth. As each end of these worm-like creatures connects to a different layer of Hell, the summoner may call upon either end. Summoned hellmouths are treated as 10-foot-square portals, like those created by the spell *gate*, connecting to one of two layers of Hell (with the two layers fixed when the item is created). While the creator of a *melancholic talisman* can choose which end of a hellmouth he wishes to summon, and thus, which one of two layers of Hell he wishes to open a portal to, the specific location where each end leads is the same every time (and determined by the GM upon the portal's first use). The talisman's wearer can summon the hellmouth once per day, using it to travel or call creatures through as per the spell *gate*. The hellmouth remains open for up to 10 minutes or until the talisman's wearer dismisses it. The hellmouth only connects to Hell, so should the talisman wearer pass through the gate and linger in Hell for more than 10 minutes, the hellmouth





closes behind him, trapping him in Hell. All *melancholic talismans* cost 50,000 gp.

Bilious Talisman: Called Seeds of Hell by those who know of and rightly fear them, these devil talismans have the power to physically and permanently transplant whole regions of other planes into Hell. Drawing on the power of a bound infernal duke, such a talisman encourages its wearer to feats of selfish glory and grand delusions, culminating in the release of the talisman's power and damnation for both the wearer and those unfortunate enough to be caught in his wake. *Bilious talismans* are artifacts requiring the willing binding of a member of the infernal elite and thus can only be crafted by a supremely powerful diabolist or unique devil.

Typically, these talismans are treated as intelligent magical items with an ego of 20, which grant the wearer a +4 Charisma bonus and the constant effects of the spell *foresight*. In addition, once per day the wearer can call on the bound devil as a free action, for the effects of the spell *commune*, *find the path*, *legend lore*, or *true strike*. The devil within the talisman usually portrays itself subtly as a benevolent spirit seeking to aid the wearer in achieving some great feat, such as vanquishing a great evil, bringing peace to a land, or ruling a kingdom. The talisman ever seeks to increase its wearer's influence, even that of a wearer with an alignment opposed to its own, planting the seed of corruption in the form of arrogance, envy, and a sense of predestination.

When finally the wearer has reached what the talisman deems his pinnacle of power, and is surrounded by followers and fawning devotees, it offers to reveal its greatest power as a reward to its wearer. Should the wearer accept, he and all lands and things within 1,000 feet are ripped from whatever land they occupy and transported physically and permanently to a random layer of Hell. There, the talisman shatters and the unique devil within is released. What follows is often a massive slaughter and the damnation of dozens of souls. Should the wearer reject the offer, it attempts to use its Ego score to dominate him into accepting. If the talisman ever faces destruction, it can teleport itself once per day—though it is prevented from doing this in areas affected by the *hallow spell* or similar areas of great goodness.

Sample Devil Talismans

Presented here are three sample devil talismans: a common variety of *sanguine talisman* and the best-known *melancholic* and *bilious talismans*.

SANGUINE TALISMAN

Aura strong conjuration; **CL** 8th

Slot neck; **Price** 67,500 gp; **Weight** —

DESCRIPTION

This blood-red devil talisman binds a barbaz. Wearing the talisman grants you a +3 profane bonus to your Armor Class and grants you a *telepathic bond* with the devil bound within.

Once per day, you can make an opposed Charisma check against the barbaz's +0 modifier to summon him forth for 8 rounds, as per the spell *summon monster*.

The barbaz bound within this *sanguine talisman* is known as Kalvaddas the Strangler. He is a blunt sadist with a love of hand-to-hand brawls and strangling elves. He knows much of liars and might use his Sense Motive skill to aid a master he favors.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item; *planar binding*, ability to conjure and bind a barbaz; **Cost** 33,750 gp

MELANCHOLIC TALISMAN

Aura strong conjuration; **CL** 18th

Slot neck; **Price** 50,000 gp; **Weight** —

DESCRIPTION

This sickly yellow devil talisman summons a hellmouth that connects to the Hellish layers of Dis and Malebolge. Once per day you can open a 10-foot portal to either of these layers. This portal remains open for 10 minutes (or until you dismiss it) and functions as the spell *gate*.

The hellmouth summoned by this talisman is an amphisbaenic being known as Alksomasic, each of its two portal-heads appearing as a massive snake with three gigantic fly-like eyes. His maws connect to a shadowy alley in the city of Dis known as the Walk of Wayward Skins and to an outlying bolgia of Malebolge where monstrous worms slither through a waist-deep sea of ash.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item; *gate*, *greater planar binding*, ability to conjure and bind a greater devil; **Cost** 25,000 gp

BILIOUS TALISMAN (ARTIFACT)

Aura overwhelming conjuration; **CL** 21st

Slot neck; **Price** artifact; **Weight** —

DESCRIPTION

This putrid green devil talisman grants you a *telepathic link* with an insidious lawful evil intelligence bound within. While wearing this talisman you gain a +4 Charisma bonus and are constantly under the effects of the spell *foresight*. Once per day as a free action, you may use *commune*, *find the path*, *legend lore*, and *true strike*.

The devil bound within this talisman is a 45 HD pit fiend known as Aasdravox, a fiend both cunning and mighty. He speaks with a voice like grinding stones and tells the wearers of his talisman that they are destined to become great heroes and champions beloved by whole nations. Optimally, he seeks to release his power at the culmination of some festive triumph or ceremony held in his talisman wearer's honor.

DESTRUCTION

This *bilious talisman* can be destroyed by being immersed in holy water for a week in an area under the effects of the spell *hallow* and then smashed with a +3 *holy warhammer* (or a bludgeoning weapon of similar or greater power). While this destroys the talisman, it also frees the potent infernal noble bound within.





True Names and Infernal Sigils

Upon being lifted from the ranks of lemures, all devils take a true name, an esoteric word or phrase that verbalizes the foulness of each fiend's quintessence. This true name etches itself upon the devil's anima as both sound and form, allowing the infernal-born to be named and catalogued in the ledgers of Hell as an inimitable glyph or sigil unique to it alone. The true name and sigil hold great power over the devil, for they form an abbreviation of the fiend's being, a vital summation most closely resembling a mortal and its soul.

Knowledge of a devil's true name or the ability to inscribe its sigil grants significant power over the fiend. In the case of the spell *planar binding*, when a devil's true name is used to conjure a specific fiend, the target devil takes a –5 penalty on the initial Will save to resist being summoned; if its sigil is inscribed within the magic circle binding it, the devil takes a –5 penalty on all checks to escape the circle. True names and sigils might also be known to have other powers over devils, though most diabolists keep the discovery of such powers closely guarded secrets.

A devil's relationship with its true name changes through its existence. Every devil takes a true name and sigil upon its creation, either a title and symbol granted by its creator, first master, or—if left unnamed—selected by the newly risen fiend itself. While lesser devils subtly advertise their names in infernal tomes and sinister dreams in hopes of being summoned, greater devils often find service to mortals disruptive to their greater plots. In the cases of infernal dukes and even the archdevils themselves, these masters of devilkind go to great lengths to obscure their true names, taking on various and often fearsome agnomen to prevent the interruption of summoning. A devil's sigil, however, often proves slightly easier to discover, being used in Hell and on infernal contracts in much the same way as mortal signatures. Although such sigils represent a devil's true name, only one who has heard a sigil spoken can glean the hellish syllables these complex glyphs represent.

Discovering True Names and Infernal Sigils

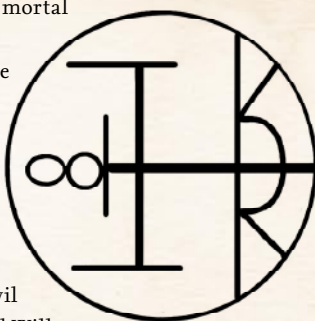
Numerous diabolical spells and magic items increase in potency when drawing upon the true names or sigils of

devilkind—the verbal and symbolic epitomes of these foul beings. Granting greater power over devils and allowing the summoning of specific evil legionnaires, these words and signs of command hold great value for diabolists. Yet most devils—especially the most powerful—seek to hide the secrets that hold power over them, and even those fiends wanting to be summoned prove particular in regard to which masters gain fundamental knowledge of them. Those seeking to discover the true name or sigil of a devil may either research such information or interrogate other devils.

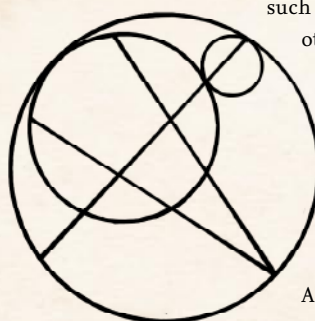
Research: By studying tomes of dark lore, infernal documents, and tragic histories, one might discover occluded riddles and hints at the names of devils working their will upon mortal kind. A researcher not specifically searching for the true name or sigil of a specific infernal creature might discover either of these details relating to a lesser devil by spending a month doing nothing besides studying in a sizable library of historical or arcane lore. At the end of this month, the GM should make a DC 25 Knowledge (planes) check for the researcher, modified by aid from a single assistant and any tomes noted to be of particular

value. If this check succeeds, the researcher discovers the type and true name or sigil (one or the other) of a random lesser devil. If the check fails, the researcher discovers nothing of value relating to true names; he may spend additional months researching again in the same library, but each subsequent check there takes a cumulative –2 penalty for that researcher until the penalty is so great it is obvious the place holds no valuable lore. If the researcher fails his check by more than 5, he believes he's discovered a creature's true name, but it is in fact a fake, and holds no power.

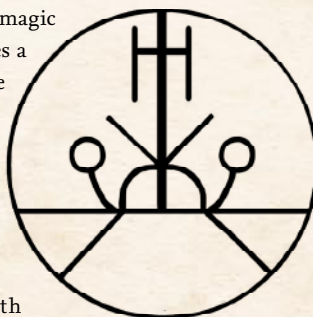
If the researcher knows of a specific devil, he may attempt to specifically research that creature's name or sigil. For a lesser devil, researching this information takes a month, while for a greater devil, it takes 3 months. At the end of this time, the GM makes a Knowledge (planes) check for the researcher with a DC equal to 20 + the devil's Hit Dice. Should the researcher already know the creature's true name but not its sigil (or vice versa) he gains a +2 bonus on this check in addition to any other bonuses for assistance or worthwhile tomes. Success on this check reveals the



Zaebos



Eligos



Furcas



Orobas



details being sought, while failure reveals no information, though the researcher may continue to study in the same library, as noted above. Failing by more than 5 uncovers false information, as previously noted.

One might also attempt to research the name of a diabolical being as powerful as an infernal duke or archfiend, but such can only be done in the libraries of Hell or with a tome of fundamental evil power (like the *Book of the Damned*). Although such beings can resist a summons that invokes their true names or sigils, they often choose to appear anyway merely to discover who has learned their secrets and how. Such encounters typically end with such brash diabolists being dragged screaming back to the infernal prince's domain in Hell.

Interrogation: One might attempt to coax knowledge of a weaker infernal creature's true name or sigil from a summoned devil. Any devil has a percent chance equal to double its Hit Dice to know the true name of one or more fiends lower than it in the infernal hierarchy—lesser devils typically know $1d4+1$ true names and sigils, while greater devils usually know $2d8+2$. There are certain exceptions such as lemures that never know any true names, osyluths that usually know as many names and sigils as true devils, and gelugons and certain other highly manipulative greater devils who might know double the typical number.

No devil betrays the true names of its inferiors freely, though. A devil summoned via *planar binding* or *planar ally* might be coaxed into revealing such details, but only for a high and often dangerous price. Fiends typically use this opportunity to entice their summoners into performing acts that further their own nefarious schemes or the goals of Hell. In addition, spellcasters employing *planar binding* still need to engage in a contest of wills to convince the fiend to reveal such a secret, forcing the caster to make an opposed Charisma check as described by that spell. A spellcaster using *planar ally* must perform a deed and pay his infernal contact for its knowledge in treasures equaling 2,000 gp times the Hit Dice of the devil whose true name or sigil is to be revealed. A devil only reveals one true name or sigil per summoning and returns to Hell upon doing so.

Evolution of a True Name

In a time before reckoning, Nhazaghente, the pit fiend scholar of ashes, raised three osyluth assistants from a leaking pit of pallid lemures, deep within the swamps of Stygia. One among these bone devils was called Ihazaaz and would serve its master for centuries to come, eventually revealing a conspiracy by its pit fiend master to undermine the machinations of a rival. Acknowledged for his revelation, the bone devil was buried amid the moldering libraries of Stygia for dozens of years, left for the eddies of the Styx to corrupt and transform. When finally the devil emerged forth, he did so as a phistophilus, reflecting his

Tomes of Infernal Lore

Certain grimoires bear notorious reputations as repositories for blasphemous insight. Pored over by apostates and diabolists for untold centuries, these cryptic tomes offer up seemingly endless corruptive truths and heretical secrets.

Asmodean Monograph: The unholy book of Asmodeus's faith hides no diabolical names or obscure hellish revelations. Yet those who spend more than a week meditating upon the tome sometimes suffer nightmares of devils and terrifying hellscape that, while disturbing, carry with them soul wrenching truths. Anyone who employs the *Asmodean Monograph* while researching any topics related to devils, Hell, Asmodeus's church, or the Prince of Darkness himself has a 40% chance to gain a +2 bonus on his Knowledge (religion) or Knowledge (planes) checks.

The Imperial Throne: This expansive bibliography of the ruling house of Cheliox details numerous pacts with infernal beings and suggests dozens of blasphemous trysts. Those who consult this tome as part of their research into devils or modern Cheliox gain a +2 bonus on their Knowledge (nobility) or Knowledge (planes) checks.

The Witch-Cults of Northern Avistan: Penned by Pastor Bromon Shy, a corrupt priest of Erastil in the Ustalavic county of Barstoi, this collection of pamphlets details the practices of numerous infernal cults under the guise of warning against their ways. The text hides hundreds of anagrams and linguistic puzzles recounting the names of infernal beings summoned by these cults and the ways such groups recognize their own. Anyone who employs this collection while researching a topic regarding Hell, devils, or infernal cults gains a +2 bonus on his Knowledge (religion) or Knowledge (planes) checks.

advancement with the added moniker Vhalnhazaghente Ihazaaz, meaning "Ihazaaz, the fall of Nhazaghente" in Infernal. Centuries more passed, and the devil worked numerous and varied blasphemies, capturing the soul of the dynast hierophant Yhaum, spiriting away the eldest of the nepenthean seer worms, and serving as seneschal to the cyclopean diabolist prince Solos. Upon adding Solos's soul to the tormented of Stygia, Ihazaaz was recognized by Geryon himself and cast into ice of Cocytus. Five centuries later, Ihazaaz developed the full might of a heartless gelugon, and with his exultation to a greater devil, sought to obscure his ever complexifying true name, adding the title "Deceiver of Yhaum" in the Cyclops language. In addition, seeking to disguise his past, the devil adopted the more prestige name Shalixakthoryn. Thus, though called merely Shalixakthoryn by minions and summoners, the feared gelugon hides a true name suggestive of a terrible history: Vhalnhazaghente, Chovotayn-Yhaum, Ihazaaz.



Diabolist

Some face damnation willingly. Seeking to control the awesome might of the infernal legions and twist the very powers of Hell to their whims, these blasphemous spellcasters jeopardize their immortal souls for mastery over devilkind. While those who already worship evil forces might come to control these profane powers through their vile faiths, sinister arcanists too might learn the names, signs, and incantations to bind devils from heretical tomes and communion with the damned. Though some tread the path of the diabolist to enslave the forces of Hell and turn them toward goals other than corruption, only

the most stalwart of diabolists can resist the temptations of the Pit. Regardless of whatever grim path leads spellcasters to seek power over the diabolical, their destination is nearly always the same—an eternity of damnation in the depths of Hell.

Requirements

To qualify to become a diabolist, a character must fulfill all of the following criteria.

Alignment: lawful neutral, lawful evil, or neutral evil.

Skills: Knowledge (planes) 5 ranks, Knowledge (religion) 3 ranks, Spellcraft 5 ranks.

Special: Must have conjured a devil using *lesser planar ally* or *lesser planar binding* (or a similar spell) and successfully coaxed the fiend into performing a task lasting longer than 1 day.

Language: Infernal.

Class Skills

The diabolist's class skills (and the key ability for each) are Bluff (Cha), Diplomacy (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (arcana) (Int), Knowledge (planes) (Int), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), and Spellcraft (Int).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are features of the diabolist prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Diabolists gain no proficiency with any weapon or armor.

Spells per Day: When a new diabolist level is gained, the character gains new spells per day as if she had also gained a level in a spellcasting class she belonged to before she added the prestige class. She does not, however, gain any other benefit a character of that class would have gained. If a character had more than one spellcasting class before she became a diabolist, she must decide to which class she adds each level of diabolist for the purpose of determining spells per day.

Damned: When a diabolist is killed, her soul is instantly sent to Hell. Any character attempting to resurrect her must succeed at a caster level check equal to 10 + the diabolist's level or her spell fails. That character cannot attempt to resurrect the diabolist again until the following day, though other characters can attempt as they please.

Imp Companion: A diabolist forms a close bond with a particular imp, similar to a druid's bond with an animal companion. The imp is loyal to the diabolist (though ultimately loyal to Hell). The imp companion's abilities, feats, Hit Dice, and skills advance as the diabolist advances in level (see next page). If the imp is slain or the diabolist releases it from her service, she may gain a new one by performing a ceremony requiring a 24-hour ritual to conjure and bind the new imp to herself.

Infernal Charisma: A diabolist gains a +2 bonus on all Charisma checks made when interacting with devils. This bonus increases to +4 at 4th level and to +6 at 7th level.





Diabolist

Hit Dice: d6

Base						
	Attack	Fort	Ref	Will		
Level	Bonus	Save	Save	Save	Special	Spells per Day
1st	+0	+0	+0	+1	Damned, imp companion, infernal Charisma +2	+1 level of existing spellcasting class
2nd	+1	+1	+1	+1	Channel hellfire, infernal bargain	+1 level of existing spellcasting class
3rd	+1	+1	+1	+2	Augment summoning, heresy +2	+1 level of existing spellcasting class
4th	+2	+1	+1	+2	Infernal Charisma +4	+1 level of existing spellcasting class
5th	+2	+2	+2	+3	Hellish soul	+1 level of existing spellcasting class
6th	+3	+2	+2	+3	Infernal transport	+1 level of existing spellcasting class
7th	+3	+2	+2	+4	Infernal Charisma +6	+1 level of existing spellcasting class
8th	+4	+3	+3	+4	Hellfire ray	+1 level of existing spellcasting class
9th	+4	+3	+3	+5	Heresy +4	+1 level of existing spellcasting class
10th	+5	+3	+3	+5	Master conjurer	+1 level of existing spellcasting class

Channel Hellfire: At 2nd level, a diabolist can alter spells that deal energy damage to instead deal hellfire damage (see page 5). She can do this as a free action a number of times per day equal to her Charisma modifier (minimum 1). Spells altered to use hellfire gain the lawful and evil descriptors.

Infernal Bargain: At 2nd level, a diabolist making use of *planar ally* (or a similar spell) can make an opposed Charisma check against a called (but not summoned) devil. If she succeeds, the devil reduces the price it demands to serve by half.

Augment Summoning: At 3rd level, a diabolist gains the Augment Summoning feat even if she does not meet the prerequisites.

Heresy: Also at 3rd level, a diabolist gains a +2 bonus on all checks made to research specific devils' true names or sigils. This bonus increases to +4 at 9th level.

Hellish Soul: At 5th level, a diabolist has been deemed useful enough to the cause of Hell to be allowed a brief respite from damnation. If killed by any means outside of the will of Asmodeus, the archdevils, or another influential force in Hell, the diabolist can be resurrected as normal.

Infernal Transport (Sp): At 6th level, a diabolist can transport herself through Hell in a burst of brimstone. She may use this ability twice per day as per *dimension door*, or expend both uses to travel as if using *teleport*. She cannot use this ability to enter or leave areas warded against evil creatures.

Hellfire Ray (Sp): At 8th level, a diabolist may use *hellfire ray* (see page 46) twice per day.

Master Conjurer: At 10th level, when a diabolist calls a devil whose name she knows, she may cast the calling spell as a standard action and bargain with it as a move action. She adds half her Bluff, Diplomacy, or Intimidate modifier on the bargaining Charisma check (if any).

The Imp Companion

A diabolist's imp increases in power as the diabolist gains levels according to Table 3–8: Animal Companion Base Statistics in the *Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook*, with the following changes.

Class Level: This is the diabolist's class level plus her highest caster level. This does not stack with class levels that grant an animal companion.

HD: An imp has 10-sided (d10) Hit Dice.

BAB: This is the imp's base attack bonus. Imps do not gain additional attacks using natural weapons for a high base attack bonus.

Saving Throws: An imp has good Reflex and Will saves.

Skills: Multiply the listed value by 3 to determine the imp's skill ranks. If the imp increases its Intelligence to 14 or higher, it gains bonus skill ranks as normal. Imps can have ranks in any skill; its class skills are Acrobatics, Bluff, Craft, Fly, Knowledge (arcana), Knowledge (planes), Perception, Sense Motive, Spellcraft, and Stealth. An imp cannot have more ranks in a skill than it has Hit Dice.

Feats: An imp may select any feat for which it qualifies.

Bonus Tricks: This indicates when an imp gains its choice of another alternate form, spell-like ability, or telepathy.

Alternate Form: An imp with this ability may choose one additional Tiny, Small, or Medium animal form as if using *beast shape II*. Each time the imp selects this ability, it gains a new alternate form.

Spell-Like Ability: An imp companion might also choose any one of the following spells to add to its list of at-will spell-like abilities: *bleed*, *deathwatch*, *detect evil*, *detect law*, *doom*, *ghost sound*, *mage hand*, *message*, *open/close*, or *prestidigitation*. Alternatively, it may choose to add any one of the following spells to its list of 1/day spell-like abilities: *curse water*, *floating disk*, *grease*, *hold portal*, *identify*, *silent image*, *unseen servant*, or *ventriloquism*.

Telepathy: The imp gains telepathy with a range of 50 feet, allowing it to communicate with any intelligent creature.

Link: This is identical to a wizard's empathic link with his familiar.

Share Spells: This works like the wizard's familiar ability rather than the druid animal companion ability.

For the imp's base statistics, see the sidebar on page 47.





Infernal Arcana

The following are several spells perfected within the depths of Hell, spread through the heresies of diabolists, and scribed upon the pages of the *Book of the Damned*.

AGONIZE

School evocation [evil]; **Level** cleric 3, sorcerer/wizard 4

CASTING

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, S

EFFECT

Range close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Target one conjured outsider or elemental (see text)

Duration 1 full round

Saving Throw Fortitude negates; **Spell Resistance** yes

DESCRIPTION

You afflict a creature you have conjured via *planar ally* (or a similar spell) with bolts of vicious energy. These foul energies inflict terrible pain upon the summoned creature, torturing it to make it more pliant to your will. The targeted creature must make a Fortitude save or take a –1 penalty for every 2 levels you possess (maximum –10) on all saves and checks made against you for the next hour. In addition, creatures that demand payment for their services reduce the payment by 20% for every 4 levels you possess (maximum 60% reduction). However, beings tortured by this spell quickly come to resent you, making them more likely to try to pervert your orders to malicious ends or try to seek retribution after their release. This spell has no effect on creatures that are immune to nonlethal damage.

HELLFIRE RAY

School evocation [evil]; **Level** cleric 6, sorcerer/wizard 6

CASTING

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, S, DF/F (any unholy symbol or heretical tome)

EFFECT

Range close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Effect ray

Duration instantaneous

Saving Throw no (see text); **Spell Resistance** yes

DESCRIPTION

A blast of hellfire blazes from your hands. You must succeed on a ranged touch attack with the ray to deal damage to the target. The ray deals 1d6 points of damage per caster level (maximum

15d6). Half the damage is fire damage, but the other half results directly from unholy power and is therefore not subject to being reduced by resistance to fire-based attacks.

Any creature killed by this spell must make a Will saving throw; failure means the creature's soul is damned to Hell as a burst of brimstone appears around its corpse. A non-evil spellcaster attempting to bring the character back from the dead must make a caster level check (DC equal to 10 plus the slain creature's level) to succeed; failure means the spellcaster cannot try again for 1 day. Evil spellcasters can raise the slain character normally, without a check.

MALEDICTION

School necromancy [evil]; **Level** cleric 4

CASTING

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, S

EFFECT

Range touch

Target 1 creature touched

Duration 1 minute and instantaneous (see text)

Saving Throw Will negates; **Spell Resistance** yes

EFFECT

Channeling the blasphemy of the Pit into your hand, you mark your target with a brief but fundamental corruption, causing its soul to be irretrievably damned to Hell should it die within the next minute. Those killed while under the effect of this spell cannot be resurrected by normal means. Only a worshiper of Asmodeus (or of your deity, if you are not a worshiper of the Prince of Darkness) can return a soul damned by *malediction* to life. Spells like *raise dead* or *resurrection* cast by the worshipers of other deities automatically fail, though they do reveal that the target soul has met a perhaps undeserved torment in Hell. The spells *miracle* or *wish* return the victim of a *malediction* to life, regardless of the caster's deity.

A soul may also be freed by the efforts of someone bodily going to Hell, locating the affected soul, and leading it out of the plane, which allows it to go to its intended destination in the afterlife and be raised normally. You can end the effects of your own *malediction* by casting the spell again and concentrating on a past target. Doing so frees the past target to its rightful place in death; it does not return the target to life.

Spells such as *break enchantment*, *dispel magic*, and *remove curse* negate this spell if successfully cast before the target dies.

Sacrifice Effects

Type	Sacrifice	Typical Bonus	GP Value
Treasures	100 gp/HD of target	+1	Equal
Lives	1 living creature with HD equal to target	+2	200 gp/HD
Body/Mind	Permanent –1 ability drain	+4	500 gp/point drained
Morals	Alignment shifts one step toward target's	+6	1,000 gp/step
Soul	One permanent negative level	+8	2,500 gp



SACRIFICE

School enchantment (charm) [mind-affecting]; **Level** cleric 4, sorcerer/wizard 4

CASTING

Casting Time 1 minute

Components V, S, M (see text)

EFFECT

Range close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Target one summoned outsider or elemental (see text)

Duration instantaneous, 1 hour, or 1 day (see text)

Saving Throw none; **Spell Resistance** no

DESCRIPTION

You make a sacrifice to aid in conjuring and commanding a creature called with *planar ally*, *planar binding*, or a similar spell. A sacrifice can be used in a variety of ways:

Bargain: Making a sacrifice directly to the conjured being grants you a bonus on opposed Charisma checks made to compel the creature into service for the next hour.

Enticement: Making a sacrifice the round before conjuring increases the DC of the Will save an outsider must make to resist being summoned.

Payment: Making a sacrifice directly to the conjured being allows you to pay for one service from the creature in commodities other than gold.

Reinforcement: Making a sacrifice the round before casting *magic circle* and preparing a summoning diagram increases the power of its warding magic, increasing the DC of all Charisma checks the creature might make to escape. This lasts 1 day.

Multiple sacrifices can be made to affect a single conjuring, but the bonuses provided by this spell do not stack. Therefore, while you can make sacrifices to aid in summoning and bargaining with a creature, you cannot make multiple sacrifices (even of varying types) to enhance the same effect of a particular conjuration.

A sacrifice may consist of any kind of commodity the target creature favors, including treasures, living creatures, or more ephemeral offerings. While this spell is not fundamentally evil, good-aligned creatures prove more selective in what offerings they accept, typically scoffing at blood sacrifices. Many sacrifices are fundamentally evil acts, such as murdering a pious innocent to summon a fiend. Any creature might reject certain types of sacrifices, thus denying you the benefits of this spell, as the offering must appeal to the target—few outsiders would care for 2,000 gp worth of parchment, while 2,000 gp of diamonds would be widely coveted. The GM determines what sacrifices creatures find appealing.

The Sacrifice Effects table on the previous page lists a number of likely offerings, along with the bonus such gifts effect and the offering's equivalent value in gold pieces for the purposes of *planar ally*. Several of these sacrifices involve the loss of ability scores, levels, lives, or even changes in alignment. Any change wrought by such sacrifices (loss of ability score or level, or change in alignment) cannot be recovered, cured, or

Imp Base Statistics

Starting Statistics: **Size** Tiny; **Speed** 20 ft., fly 50 ft. (perfect); **AC** +1 natural armor; **Attack** sting (1d4 plus poison); **Ability Scores** Str 8, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 13, Wis 12, Cha 14; **Special Attacks** poison (Frequency 1/round for 5 minutes, Effect 1d2 Dex, Cure 1 save, Con-based DC); **Languages** Celestial, Draconic, Infernal; **Special Qualities** spell-like abilities (CL 6th), constant—*detect good*, *detect magic*, 1/day—*suggestion*.

4th-Level Advancement: **Ability Scores** Str +2, Dex +2; **Special Qualities** one alternate form (*beast shape I*, boar, rat, or raven, or *beast shape III*, young giant spider); spell-like abilities (CL 6th), at will—*invisibility* (self only), 1/day—*suggestion*; spell-like ability (CL 12th), 1/week—*commune*.

undone by any spell or effect short of *miracle* or *wish*. The same is true of creatures killed as a sacrifice; such creatures cannot be resurrected by any magic less powerful than these spells. Any object sacrificed with this spell is effectively destroyed or removed to an extraplanar holding of the summoned creature's choice. The bonuses and values noted on the sacrifices table are guidelines for offerings; certain types of treasures or lives might prove especially valuable to specific creatures, with extraordinary sacrifices (like a potent artifact or the life of a high-level paladin) garnering increased bonuses.

You cannot make greater sacrifices than those noted on the table to gain increased bonuses or gold values. For example, you could not gain two permanent negative levels to gain a +16 bonus nor gain increased benefit from slaying 20 HD worth of creatures to pay for a 10 HD creature's service.

VISION OF HELL

School illusion (glamer) [evil]; **Level** bard 3, cleric 3, sorcerer/wizard 3

CASTING

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, M (a pinch of brimstone)

EFFECT

Range medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

Effect one 50-ft.-radius emanation

Duration 1 minute/level (D)

Saving Throw Will negates; **Spell Resistance** no

DESCRIPTION

You overlay a realistic illusion of a terrifying hellscape upon an area. Structures, equipment, and creatures within the area are not hidden, though environmental features take on an infernal appearance. While you are prepared for these images and are not affected by them, all creatures within the area must make a Will save or become shaken and also take a –2 penalty on saves versus fear effects; the fear and penalty persists as long as the creature remains in the area. Devils and any lawful evil creatures suffer no negative effects from this spell.



Relics of Hell

Within the deepest pits of Hell, profane smiths rip ingenious blasphemies from the minds of the damned and sculpt soul-flesh into creations of unparalleled malignancy. Several diabolical masterworks, creations of exceptional depravity, appear through accounts of history's darkest annals, leaving wakes of ruin and damnation in their heinous paths.

Book of the Damned: Diabolic

Collected from the scattered records of the exiled angel Tabris—who was ordered to record the lore of all the multiverse and was cast from Heaven for his findings—this flesh-bound folio bears pages from the infamous and blasphemous volume known as the *Book of the Damned*. Its more than 2,500 pieces of dry, yellowed parchment bear profane symbols and diagrams, explanations of foul rites, descriptions of Hell and its torments, vituperations of countless deities, prayers to the archdevils, explorations of diabolical life, heresies and apocrypha profane to every deity, and pages of evil magic supposedly expunged from the world long ago.

Any good-aligned creature who so much as touches this section of the *Book of the Damned* gains one negative level. This level cannot be restored until the character has remained more than 10 feet away from the tome for 24 hours. Creatures that are not lawful evil who attempt to read the book must make a DC 15 Will save or have their alignment permanently take one step toward lawful evil.

Those who dare read this section of the *Book of the Damned* find that it holds a wealth of profane knowledge. Any character who can read Infernal and spends a total of 30 days (not necessarily contiguously) studying the folio uncovers numerous foul revelations and gains a number of benefits. Readers find that the tome holds copies of every spell with the evil spell descriptor (as well as every spell detailed on pages 46–47). The true names and sigils of 4d6 lesser devils, 2d6 greater devils, and 1d4+1 infernal lords blatantly lie within its pages, and it grants the bearer a +4 bonus on all Knowledge (planes) checks or attempts to research further true names and sigils. The descriptions of Hell found within also prove so detailed that any magical attempt to teleport to or within the infernal plane (such as by use of *plane shift* or *teleport*) takes the bearer to the exact intended destination, no familiarity roll needed. In addition, all of the information found in Chapter 1 is found verbatim within the pages of the artifact.

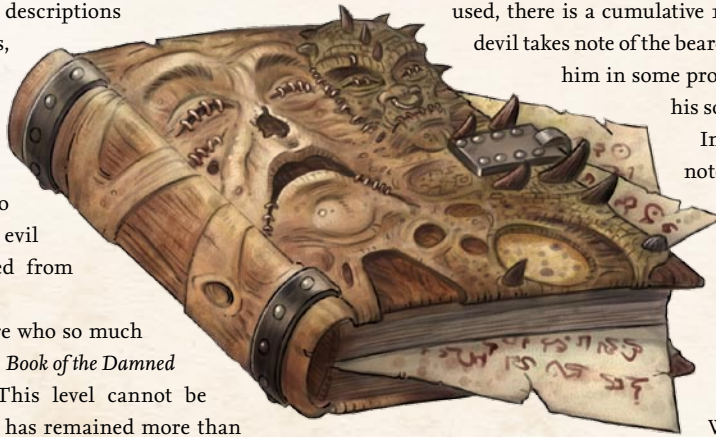
Aside from the literal contents, this section of the *Book of the Damned* is itself a potent unholy magical item. At its most basic level, the tome serves as the focal point for a permanent *unhallow*

effect and *sympathy* tuned to attract lawful evil creatures. Also, any greater devil using *scry* or a similar spell can view the *Book of the Damned* with no risk of being detected by the bearer.

Those in possession of these pages also gain a number of benefits. Bearers cast all evil spells as if they were 2 caster levels higher and gain a +2 bonus on all Charisma-based skills and checks when interacting with lawful evil creatures. Three times per day the tome can be invoked to cast one of the following spells as a standard action: *desecrate*, *dictum*, *greater planar binding*, *hellfire*, *summon hellmouth*, *summon monster VII*, and *unholy blight*. Once per day the bearer can ask the folio a question relating to Hell, lawful-evil creatures, or any other profane topic; he then opens the book to a random page to find the answer, revealed as if the bearer had cast *vision*.

Every time one of the artifact's daily spells or *vision* power is used, there is a cumulative 1% chance that a powerful devil takes note of the bearer and seeks to make use of him in some profane plot or simply claims his soul for Hell.

In addition to the abilities noted here, the *Book of the Damned* manifests greater powers as more of its pages are brought together—a subject for a later tome.



The Ihystear

Written of only in the most cultic lore of Heaven

and Hell, this foot-long sliver of radiance is said to be the only remaining piece of the spear Asmodeus used to slay his brother Ithys. Glowing like a shard of the sun, this strange weapon functions as a +5 *axiomatic brilliant energy dagger* that overcomes all damage reduction. It is said that any creature of deity or near-deity level power (including archdevils, demon lords, empyreal lords, horsemen, and similar beings) who is wounded by the Ihystear is stunned for 1 round.

Aside from its use as a weapon, the fragment holds within it the final scream of Ithys, the cry of the first murder and the first slain deity. As a full-round action, a creature bearing the *Ihystear* can make a DC 30 Strength check to snap the weapon in half. Doing so releases but an echo of this scream, a terrible, deafening shriek that pierces the world and can be heard for dozens of miles. Any creature within 100 feet of the broken *Ihystear*—including the wielder—must make a DC 30 Will save or be slain instantly. Those who make their saves are rendered deaf and insane (as per the spells *blindness/deafness* and *insanity*). This scream continues for 3 rounds and pierces even magical silence. This is a mind-affecting sonic effect. At the end of this time, the *Ihystear* heals itself and returns to normal. However, there is a 50% chance each time the artifact is broken that it randomly shifts to another plane.



For long centuries Asmodeus held the *Ihystear* within the Catafalque, deep in Nessus, though in recent years rumors claim sightings of the weapon in Golarion. If these rumors are true, and why the Prince of Darkness might have released his trophy after untold millennia, remains a mystery.

The Wheel of Worlds

Within the *Wheel* lie all possibilities and none, and while those who use it touch countless worlds, their destinations are the same. At first glance, the *Wheel of Worlds* appears as a masterfully crafted spherical astrolabe approximately the size of a human skull. Rings of bronze, steel, and dark adamantine form a shifting shell, and as each band moves it reveals another below. These rings each bear minute spidery symbols, marking and measuring the location of thirteen planets, countless stars, and the celestial spheres beyond. Many researchers who have obsessed over the device claim that within lies the truth of the Heavens and beyond. Most realize too late that the truth they seek is not one any mortal should know.

The *Wheel of Worlds* creates gates to other planes. Using it causes a portal to open to a random plane for 1 minute (roll on the adjacent table to determine the destination). The portal is not transparent, preventing a view of the plane beyond, though the *Wheel's* user is given an impression of it. The user may then either travel to that plane or call through a creature native to that realm. Doing either immediately closes the gate. If the bearer wishes, he may attempt to open a portal to a specific plane by manipulating the rings of the artifact, a complex series of adjustments requiring a DC 25 Wisdom check. Failure on such a check by 5 or less still results in a random roll on the planes and layers table, but the *Wheel's* user can select whether the destination is that plane or the next or previous plane listed on the table, granting some influence over the gate.

But within the *Wheel of Worlds* lies a trap. Every time a wielder uses the astrolabe, its rings collapse and reveal stranger, more profane markings within. The GM should track each use of the artifact. After every portal opened there is a cumulative 1% chance that next time the portal is used it opens not to the randomly generated plane, but to the corresponding layer of Hell noted on the chart. Every attempt to influence the plane to which the *Wheel* opens a portal (whether successful or not) increases this chance by 3%. In such cases, the wielder is given a wrong impression of the plane beyond, believing the gate has opened to the expected plane, rather than a part of Hell. If he attempts to summon a creature through the gate that is not a native of Hell, a random devil is conjured. This devil is not under the user's control and attempts to drag the user back to Hell with it. Every creature who uses the *Wheel of Worlds* has its own percent chance of this diabolical malfunction that can never be reduced. Should a creature ever reach a 100% chance of opening a gate to a layer of Hell, the *Wheel of Worlds* instantly shifts both itself and its wielder to a random layer of Hell upon its next use.

Books of the Damned

Although there is only one true *Book of the Damned*, its bindings were split and its pages scattered by agents of goodness millennia ago. In the interim centuries, foul influences have unified the lost pages by topic, creating at least three folios containing the text of this most blasphemous tome, though some say collections of lesser sections exist as well. Each of these folios is an artifact in its own right, though together they form one of the most powerful and evil magical creations in existence, capable of summoning impossible evils and dragging whole nations into the depths of the Outer Sphere.

Aside from the true pages of the *Book of the Damned*, numerous copies of the various folios exist, although such reproductions are often riddled with corruptions, mistranslations, diabolical agendas, and purposeful errors. While they hold no magical powers, each text harbors a dark trove of unspeakable knowledge. The following are some of the better-known copies.

The Ghatigahani Folio: Captain Elliot Braker, a sadist in Eleder, bought this strange tome from a leprous traveler. Although he cannot read the exotic Vudrani words, he takes great delight in the revoltingly graphic illustrations. This copy bears copious notes and sketches of diabolical physiology, a description of the hellmouth Cagashags who connects Phelgethon and Malebolge, and the true name of the gelugon Reisiier.

Plaques of the Black Sun: Held under constant guard in Sarenrae's Temple of the Redeeming Sun in Merab, this heavily illustrated Osiriani translation speaks at length of the cult of Belial, holds copies of the spells *eyebite* and *hellfire ray*, and—hidden upon its back cover—bears the sigil of the whore queen Ardad Lili herself.

The Versex Text: Kept within the libraries of the Sincomakti Lyceum in Rozenport, the collection's curators hold this Varisian translation as an artifact of the Whispering Tyrant's grim rule. Within lie the true names of the bruise-colored imp Vagagat, the needle-loving levaloch Jhaphvagh, and the sigil of the one-eyed osyluth Romeiga.

Planes and Layers

1d10	Plane	Layer of Hell
1	The Abyss	Avernus
2	The Maelstrom	Dis
3	Axis	Erebus
4	Nirvana	Phlegethon
5	Elysium	Stygia
6	Heaven	Malebolge
7	The Boneyard	Cocytus
8	Abaddon	Caina
9	Hell	Nessus
10	Roll Again	Roll Again

The Peerage of Hell

To the abysmal echelons of Hell, the thrones of mortal lords, the courts of mortal kings, and the halls of eternal empires are no peer. With age beyond eons and intentions beyond the spheres of dreaming, the masters of the infernal rise in legions of stately horror, their craft and intentions sowing the damnation of races and worlds. Their might bursts the bonds of the Pit and spills forth upon the spheres, stealing the light from day and exposing the lies of mercy and hope. They are the lords of terror, who command all the dark dreamings of limited mortal minds and lord over legions beyond the comprehension of dread.

Yet with all their foul grandeur and dark might, they are but slaves to the true archlords of perdition. And in their helotry is revealed the true hopelessness of us all.

Of the Dukes of the Infernal

Like the stars that burn alone in the eclipse of the longest night, they are the radiance in the abyss, and to tarry too long under their light is to lose your soul.

Aloer: The Pack Lord leads hunters into the nights, returning home those who make prey of both beasts and their enemies.

Eligos: Astride a terror with a thousand shackled limbs, the Winged Rider soars over lands, heralding their doom.

Furcas: Known as the Knight of Laurels, he knows the secrets of plants and flames, both to create and to destroy.

Gaap: The Rai of the Water Devils, whose palms hold the wisdom of centuries and whose tentacles bring a drowning doom.

Iazrael: The angel consumed by the sun, who endlessly falls as a burning shadow of that which he once was.

Kalma: The living charnel pit, its reek attracts flies from countless worlds, bearing with them the souls of the unburied.

Nergal: The Slow Death, who rides to battle with disease and poison, fire and mercilessness, and is foe to all soldiers.

Quindivatos: The Vicious Guest welcomes himself upon every land and person, claiming every wonder as his own.

Rasvool: The Vulture King, who waits not for his subjects to die, bringing storms and dark winds with his cloak of crimson wings.

Urnskrell: Of the metal wing, whose blade sunders all weakness and whose armor hides a vision of the divine.

Yan-gant-y-tan: The wildness who wanders the dark, his cloak of night hiding all the terrors of Hell.

Zaebo: The Prince of Broken Glass, claiming the world as his own, he takes whatever he pleases to sate his boundless boredom.

from The Book of the Damned

Upon a ghoul-guarded corpse in the night,
A vast crypt of the dead never dead,
Throned amid soul flames that burn ever bright,
Looms the pale lord of silence and dread,
And though all of his serfs now lie quiet,
By vanity new slaves are led.

—Excerpt from "Spheres of the Malebranche,"
from the Book of the Damned

Of the Angels of Prostitution

Queens of iron, the bitter maidens of Hell refuse the shackles of their half-kindred. They are the wildness bound within the ultimate cage, who sow the seeds of corruption deep through those who dare think they know all the temptations of Hell.

Andad Lili: The beauty in the serpent and the venom in every lover's kiss, she is every youth's first lust and the lover who brings all men to their doom.

Doloras: Iron-hearted queen of suffering, the tears that rust blades and the convulsions that test bindings, all are praises to Our Lady of Pain.

Eiseth: The rage of angels, her scream rings in the clash of every blade and her blade points every woman to her revenge.

Mahathallah: The twin of the twisted day, in her eyes coil the mystery of every lie, yet in her heart she knows the final truth.

Of the Conquering Malebranche

The least of Hell's kings still rule domains beyond all reckoning, and all mortal lords bow to their whims. In our homes and in our minds they work their terrible ways, as we are but their flock, subtly shepherded to the gates of Hell.

Alichino: The jester prince of the Cage, who has a dozen voices, a hundred faces, and seeks to befriend the lords of every land.

Barbarica: The ancient and wild, who raises an army of his own children mothered by a jungle of evils.

Cagnazzo: Hunter of souls, who races across the world bringing murder to those who would impede his conquest.

Calcabrina: Dreamy mistress of twilight, who dwells within a tower of ether and whose thoughts can cause a man to sleep forever.

Circiatto: The gluttonous, who devourers all that he encounters, vomiting them forth as unliving slaves.

Draghignazzo: The devil-dragon of devastation, who sleeps amid a conquest too complete and longs for Hell.

Farafilello: The interim ruler, a specter of evil who haunts a land of the dead, his conquest having been delayed by death, but not denied.

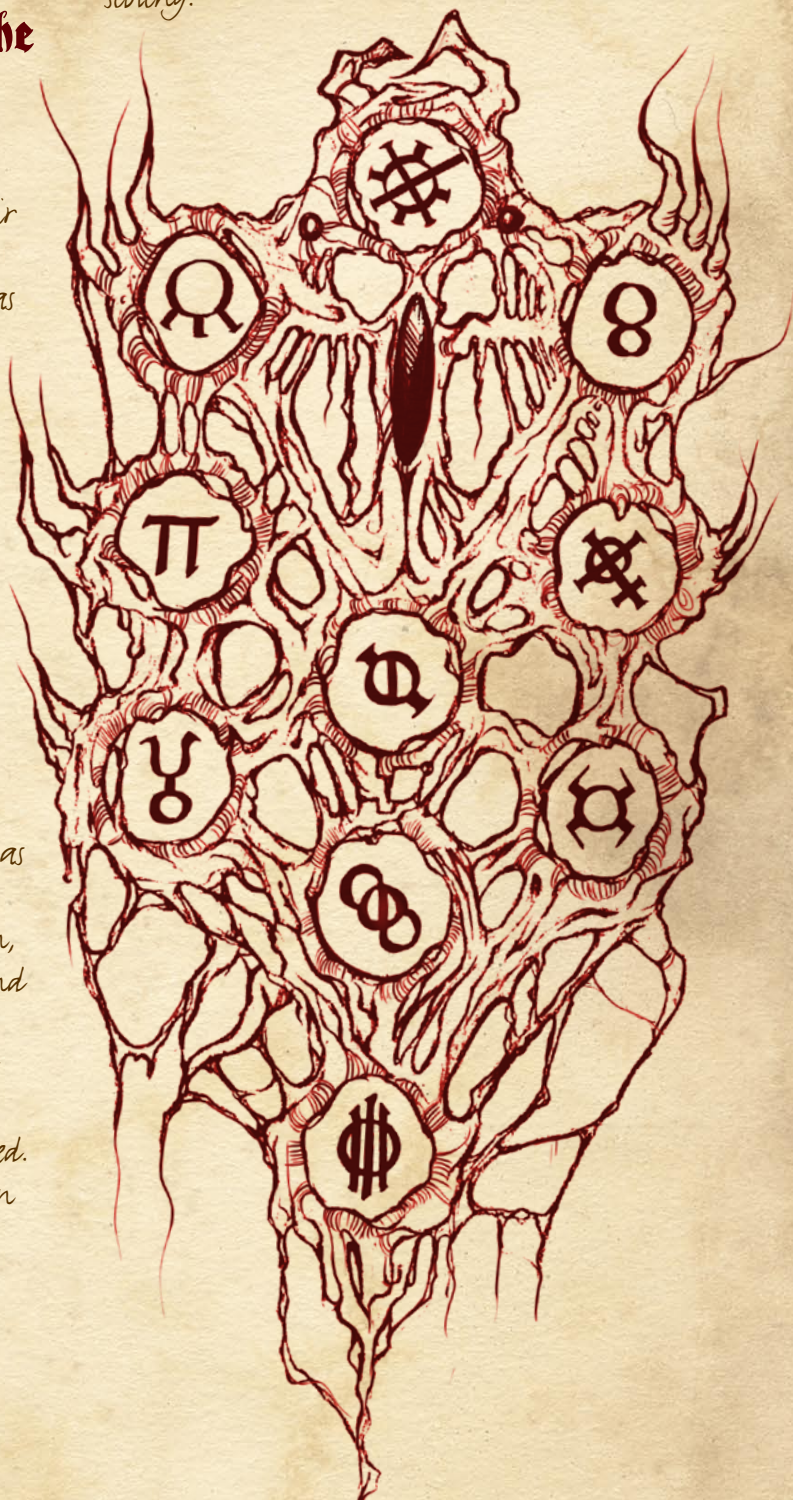
Graffiaccane: The swarm lord, whose face is seen in the eyes of vermin and whose kiss can turn friend into foe.

Libicocco: The prideful lady of winds, whose mission is not to conquer but to destroy.

Malacoda: The most monstrous of all, who is said to have conquered eight worlds and brought its spoils with it to a new realm.

Rubicante: He who grows red, the flame-shrouded prince of rust and ruin, who speaks of sense and peace to those who burn in his embrace.

Scarmiglione: Who shares a fractured realm with Draghignazzo and coaxes wanderers close to feed his monstrous sibling.





Chapter Four

DIABLERIE

Into the Pit I stared, and as is told, the Pit stared back into me. At first all was darkness, as gazing into a chasm with no bottom or a well that draws only blood. But the depths of Hell are not shy, and perhaps the darkness was but a shield, an illusion of my eyes so my mind would not see what I knew bodily—primordially—I should not. And in those eldritch depths, where my eyes strained not to see, stared eyes like ruby, a gaze I knew then and know now I will one day meet again.

—From the Book of the Damned, "A Vision of the Pit"

While built upon millennia-old conventions and the ageless traditions of devils, Hell changes endlessly. Like an extraordinarily ancient creature—and it may be exactly that—the infernal plane grows and changes, contracts and withers, and so do the creatures that flourish and languish within its bowels. Processing an endless flood of mortal souls through eons too vast to calculate, the infernal realm excretes malign potential, which its ruling devils shape into reflections of their own terrifying images. Yet, through the ages, the sins and vices of the damned have changed and evolved, the definition of blasphemy has been revised, and the influences upon Hell's vistas have transformed. In short, the realm of the damned written of on cave walls and on ancient tablets is not the Hell of today. And neither are the beings that claw their way from its rotted womb.

Other Inhabitants of Hell

More than just devils make their homes within the Pit. Hell existed before Asmodeus's spawn and remnants of that primeval time still survive. The infernal realm also has its own children, beings that bow to no master save Hell itself.

The Damned

The most numerous occupants of Hell are not devils, but rather the petty, manipulative, blasphemous souls of those mortals who willingly committed evil acts against their brethren or sullied the names of their gods. Roaming Avernus in fearful droves and facing innumerable torments upon the layers below, these pitiful but fundamentally evil beings face annihilation for lifetimes of sin. In Hell, most of the damned appear much as they did in life, though typically starved and gray in appearance, while others bear the scars of their abuses, being charred, pierced by blades, flensed to skeletons, frozen brittle, or exhibiting any other number of tortures no living creatures could endure. These souls also form the building blocks of many infernal structures, being tortuously molded and crammed into impossible, painful shapes for all eternity.

Hellspawn

Hell is mother to more than just devilkind. Hundreds of strange and deadly beasts crawl, slither, swim, and soar their ways through the revolting and often lethal depths of the Pit. These bestial natives are known as the hellspawn, a vast planar bionetwork comprised of myriad fiendish animals, aborted diabolical creations, and beings unique to the infernal realm. Although burning kasya, the sharp-winged stymphalides, and the leviathans of Cocytus are well known even outside of Hell, cerberi—the three-headed hounds of Hell—prove the most recognizable of all these beasts. While certain infernal realms, such as Phelgethon and Caina, are almost devoid of such fiendish things, other layers like Stygia and Malebolge teem with their own ghastly ecologies. The base creatures of

Ranks of Devils

The hierarchy of Hell is vast and complex, yet noted here are the general stations of the most pervasive breeds of devilkind.

Devil	CR	Ranking
Lemure	CR 1	lesser devil
Imp	CR 2	lesser devil
Gaav*	CR 3	lesser devil
Barbazu	CR 5	lesser devil
Magaav*	CR 6	lesser devil
Levaloch*	CR 7	lesser devil
Erinyes	CR 8	lesser devil
Osyluth	CR 9	lesser devil
Phistophilus**	CR 10	lesser devil
Hamatula	CR 11	lesser devil
Ayngavhaul*	CR 12	lesser devil
Gelugon	CR 13	greater devil
Bedellavrita**	CR 16	greater devil
Cornugon	CR 16	greater devil
Deimavigga*	CR 17	greater devil
Pit fiend	CR 20	greater devil

*New devil in this book

**Detailed in *Pathfinder Adventure Path* volume #12

these regions prey upon souls, planar travelers, and devils alike, though many fiends pride themselves on breaking the fiercest of Hell's brood and training them to serve among infernal armies.

Other Inhabitants

Still other sentient races make their homes among the damned, living in grim societies often just as rigid and terrifying as the orders of devilkind. Kytons of varying breeds flourish throughout the Pit, where evidence suggests they originated eons ago, before the majority emigrated to the Plane of Shadow. Unsavory kyton sensation merchants still haunt the alleys of Dis, kidnapping souls and planar travelers alike, dragging them back to Xovaikain, their realm in the Plane of Shadow, or the ancient, dangling chain cities of Caina. Exotic and sadistic asuras—the fiends of foul philosophies—meditate, train, and prepare exotic tortures for those who fail to attain their destinies. Opportunistic daemons, dauntless mercane, and detached axiomites travel to the cities of Hell as well, warily trading with devils for all manner of blasphemous goods and unsavory treasures. In the wilds, strange and gremlin-like ukobach caper as they torment the damned with their searing brands, while titanic Hell gigas, the infernal elder giants of the planes, cross burning leagues in short steps. Although huge swaths of Hell sprawl as pristine desolations, the infernal realm is vast beyond comprehension and far from empty.



DEVIL, APOSTATE (DEIMAVIGGA)

Armored in the ceremonial garb of some grim knight, this figure stands unnaturally still, though the intricate metalwork patterns of its sculpted mantle writhe and shift as if alive. Claws the length of longswords extend from its armored fingers in razor-sharp fans, and no head or helm rests upon its ironclad shoulders. Instead, there hovers only a plain mask, an unnatural facade devoid of all empathy, emotion, or mercy.

APOSTATE DEVIL

CR 17



XP 102,400

LE Medium outsider (devil, evil, extraplanar, lawful)

Init +14; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., see in darkness; **Perception** +28

DEFENSE

AC 46, touch 20, flat-footed 36 (+14 armor, +10 Dex, +12 natural)

hp 261 (18d10+162); regeneration 5

Fort +20, **Ref** +16, **Will** +20

DR 10/good and silver; **Immune** fire, poison; **Resist** acid 10, cold 10; **SR** 27

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., fly 30 ft. (perfect)

Melee 2 claws +28 (1d8+9/19–20 plus 1d6 Wisdom drain)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Special Attacks boundless reach, ohrwurm, summon devil

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 18th)

At will—*alter self* (DC 20), *dream* (DC 24), *greater teleport* (self plus 50 lbs. of objects only), *major image* (DC 22), *mirage arcana* (DC 24)

3/day—*blasphemy* (DC 26), *dominate person* (DC 24), *hold monster* (DC 22), *insanity* (DC 26), *touch of idiocy*, *veil* (DC 25)

1/day—*mind fog* (DC 24), *screen* (DC 27)

STATISTICS

Str 28, **Dex** 31, **Con** 28, **Int** 21, **Wis** 24, **Cha** 28

Base Atk +18; **CMB** +28; **CMD** 47

Feats Agile Maneuvers, Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Improved Critical (claw), Improved Disarm, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Persuasive, Weapon Focus (claw)

Skills Acrobatics +28, Bluff +30, Diplomacy +34, Disguise +27, Fly +18, Intimidate +34, Knowledge (history) +26, Knowledge (planes) +26, Knowledge (religion) +26, Perception +28, Sense Motive +28, Stealth +28

Languages Abyssal, Celestial, Common, Draconic, Infernal; indomitable oration, telepathy 100 ft.

SQ evangelization, indomitable oration, malleable form

ECOLOGY

Environment Hell

Organization solitary

Treasure double (+5 shadow full plate, other treasure)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Boundless Reach (Su) A deimavigga's claws slice through reality, allowing it to make melee attacks against any creature it is aware of—typically meaning creatures within

100 feet. The devil still only threatens the 10-foot area around it and it cannot make attacks of opportunity against creatures farther away. This ability can span vast distances, allowing a deimavigga making use of divination magic to detect distant creatures and attack foes separated by miles or even planes. Spells like *forbiddance*, which prevent planar travel, also protect against a deimavigga's claws. The spell *dimensional anchor* also prevents a deimavigga from using this ability for the duration of that spell. An attacked creature can retaliate that round, striking at the devil's claws with weapons or spells as if its entire body were present, but cannot grapple or otherwise prevent the claws from vanishing out of reach at the end of the round.

Evangelization (Su) The words of deimaviggas are poison to the mind. Every round a deimavigga speaks (a free action), all non-devils with an Intelligence score of 3 or higher within 30 feet must make a DC 28 Will save or become vulnerable to its blasphemous discourse. The DC of this Will save increases by +1 for each consecutive round a creature has listened to the same deimavigga speak. Creatures must be listening to a deimavigga to be affected by its oration. Deafened creatures and those in combat—either with the deimavigga or other creatures—are not considered to be listening. Victims cannot simply declare they are not listening without taking steps to impede their hearing.

Upon failing this save, a victim can be affected by the heretical power of a deimavigga's words. The devil may use its speech to affect a listener in ways that mimic any of the following spells: *calm emotions* (DC 21), *charm monster* (DC 23), *command* (DC 20), *confusion* (DC 23), *crushing despair* (DC 23), *deep slumber* (DC 22), *enthrall* (DC 21), *modify memory* (DC 23), *rage* (DC 22), or *suggestion* (DC 22). Victims still receive saving throws against these spell effects, but if they fail their saves they are not aware the devil is working its power upon them. A deimavigga can affect multiple victims with different spell effects in the same round.

A creature that makes its save against this ability is immune to that particular devil's evangelization for the next 24 hours. This is a sonic mind-affecting effect. The base save DC is Charisma-based.

Indomitable Oration (Su) A deimavigga's speech is always perfectly clear and cannot be silenced or warped. In areas of incredible noise, through water or airless voids, even in areas of magical silence, these devil's voices can still be heard normally. All beings understand deimaviggas, as if these devils constantly spoke in all tongues at once.

Malleable Form (Su) A deimavigga has complete control over its physical form, and if transformed into another shape against its will, it can revert to its own form as a free action.

Ohrwurm (Ex) As a standard action, three times per day, a deimavigga can whisper a fundamental and terrifying multiversal truth to one creature within 5 feet. The target must make a DC 28 Will save or have the devil's words

take root in its psyche. Outsiders and elementals have a +2 bonus on their saves to resist this ability. Initially, the deimavigga's words seem to have no effect. Anytime the victim tries to rest, though, he must make an additional DC 28 Will save or be affected as per the spell *nightmare* (even if the victim doesn't technically sleep). After a night of suffering vivid dreams and wrestling with the devil's words, the victim must make yet another DC 28 Will save or have its alignment shift one step toward lawful evil. Only by unlearning what the deimavigga told it can a victim be free of this effect, requiring a spell such as *miracle*, *modify memory*, or *wish*.

Summon Devil (Sp) Once per day a deimavigga can attempt to summon 1d6 osyluths or 2d4 barbazus with a 50% chance of success, or 1 gelugon with a 20% chance of success. This ability is the equivalent of an 8th-level spell.

Wisdom Drain (Su) A deimavigga drains 1d6 points of Wisdom each time it hits with its claw attack. (A deimavigga does not heal any damage when it uses its Wisdom drain.)

Regal, fearsome, and unfeeling, deimaviggas seek to turn the faithful from their gods, using cold logic to proselytize the path of atheism, the freedom of the mortal spirit, and the order offered by Hell. Their slowly ever-shifting masks speak envenomed words and imply the hollow nature of their lies. Speaking out against all deities—except for Asmodeus, whom they subtly tout as a bringer of discipline even as they downplay his divinity—these deadly intellectuals know that those who turn from their deities are more likely to succumb to the temptations of their diabolical brethren. Rather than attempting to sway the souls of individual mortals, these cunning fiends take on the roles of prophets of reason, disguising themselves beneath layers of illusion to evangelize the virtues and freedoms of lives unshackled from demanding deities. Occasionally one might focus its arguments on a soul of particular piety, delighting in throwing deities' most devoted servants into endless crises of faith. Deimaviggas care little for what gods their depredations affect, disenfranchising the worshipers of the divine and the profane alike.

In their natural shapes, deimaviggas stand 7 feet tall and weigh a mere 120 pounds. When disguised, though, they typically take the forms of wise old men, priests who have “realized their folly,” and even “angels” of truth.

Habitat & Society

Deimaviggas prefer to spend their time upon the Material Plane, swaying the weak and corruptible souls of mortals. There they seek out either vast mortal cities, where their heresy might reach many ears, or small communities where the isolated might fall to their blasphemous philosophizing. When in Hell, though, they linger in Caina, tormenting the

souls of those trapped upon its lonely islands, developing and testing complicated and often confusing arguments.

Preferring to operate alone, these poison-tongued devils rarely work with others of their kind, even though their status as greater devils affords them great control over their lesser brethren. They find their arguments benefit from simplicity, their endeavors complicated by even the most obedient minions. Pit fiends and infernal dukes sometimes utilize deimaviggas as spies and spreaders of dissension and confusion, though even among devilkind these enigmatic fiends are considered strange and unnerving.





DEVIL, HERESY (AYNGAVHAUL)

Seemingly fused with a monstrous throne of iron skulls, this impossibly corpulent being floats several feet off the ground. Trappings cut in mockery of holy vestments do little to cover the thing's pallid, leaking rolls of blister-pocked girth. Worthless, club-like hands waggle like maggots, directing a cloud of weathered scrolls and blasphemous tomes that orbit its bulk. Barely distinguishable amid its mound of chins squints a pair of glassy black eyes, riding above a disproportionately wide mouth curled into a perpetually lecherous grin.

HERESY DEVIL

CR 12



XP 19,200

LE Huge outsider (devil, evil, extraplanar, lawful)

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., see in darkness; **Perception** +21

DEFENSE

AC 29, touch 7, flat-footed 29 (+4 armor, -1 Dex, +18 natural, -2 size)

hp 175 (13d10+104); fast healing 5

Fort +17, **Ref** +3, **Will** +13

DR 5/good; **Immune** fire, poison; **Resist** acid 10, cold 10; **SR** 22

OFFENSE

Speed 10 ft., fly 40 ft. (perfect)

Melee 2 slams +18 (2d8+7), bite +18 (2d6+7)

Ranged searing word +10 (3d6)

Space 15 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Special Attacks blasphemous bile, summon devil

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 13th)

At will—*deathwatch*, *greater teleport* (self plus 50 lbs. of objects only), *illusory script* (DC 17), *mage hand*, *major image* (DC 17), *message*

3/day—*contagion* (DC 19), *deeper darkness*, *dispel good*, *dispel magic*, *invisibility purge*, *magic circle against good*, *speak with dead* (DC 18), *telekinesis* (DC 20), *stinking cloud* (DC 17), *summon monster V*, *unholy blight* (DC 19), *zone of silence*

1/day—*blasphemy* (DC 20), *legend lore*, *mislead*, *unhallow*

STATISTICS

Str 24, **Dex** 8, **Con** 24, **Int** 22, **Wis** 21, **Cha** 20

Base Atk +13; **CMB** +18; **CMD** 37

Feats Diehard, Endurance, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Persuasive, Toughness

Skills Bluff +21, Diplomacy +25, Fly +8, Intimidate +17, Knowledge (arcana) +22, Knowledge (history) +19, Knowledge (planes) +22, Knowledge (religion) +22, Perception +21, Perform (oratory) +18, Profession (librarian) +10, Sense Motive +21, Spellcraft +22

Languages Abyssal, Celestial, Draconic, Infernal

SQ corpulence, devil summoner, throne of skulls

ECOLOGY

Environment Hell

Organization solitary, pair, or lecture (3–8)

Treasure standard

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Corpulence (Ex) Ayngavhaults are greasy and grossly obese.

This extraordinary bulk provides them with a +10 bonus on their combat maneuver defense.

Blasphemous Bile (Su) 30-ft. line, once every 1d4 hours; damage 4d6 acid, Reflex DC 23 half. Those struck by this bile find themselves drenched in liquid corruption so profound it impedes the power of non-evil divine magic for 10 minutes. Any non-evil divine spellcaster who casts a spell targeting a creature soaked in an ayngavhaul's bile must make a DC 23 caster level check or have the spell fail. A creature affected by this bile may wash off the sludge by spending a round and using at least a gallon of fluid to cleanse itself. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Devil Summoner (Su) Ayngavhaults know the secrets of all breeds of devils, utilizing such leverage in the summoning of their kind. Any devil within 30 feet of an ayngavhaul has half again the normal chance of having a fiend respond to its summon devil ability. For example, an osyluth's usual 35% chance to summon another bone devil increases to 52% when within 30 feet of an ayngavhaul. Summoning bonuses provided by multiple ayngavhaults do not stack. Ayngavhaults are immune to this ability, from both themselves and others of their kind.

Searing Word (Su) An ayngavhaul can speak words of torment, giving them shape and sending them streaking toward their enemies in the form of diabolical sigils. Any good-aligned creature struck by one of these infernal words takes 3d6 points of hellfire damage (half fire, half evil energy); non-good creatures take half damage. These words cannot affect creatures affected by *protection from evil* or within an area of magical silence.

Summon Devil (Sp) Once per day an ayngavhaul can attempt to summon 2d6 imps, 1d4 bearded devils, or 2 bone devils with an 80% chance of success, or a contract devil (see *Pathfinder Adventure Path* volume #12) with a 45% chance of success. This ability is the equivalent of a 6th-level spell.

Throne of Skulls (Su) All ayngavhaults hover upon fearsome infernal thrones. These thrones grant the devils their fly speed and a +4 armor bonus. Should an ayngavhaul be grappled or knocked down, it is unseated from its throne and loses these benefits. An ayngavhaul has telepathic command over its throne and may call its conveyance back and reseal itself as a full-round action.

Bloated scholars of despair, ayngavhaults collect, create, and spread heresies and apocrypha, sowing disbelief and corruption to all who would seek their foul wisdom. Ironically among the most humanlike, yet still most repulsive breeds of devilkind, these corpulent blasphemers are barely even able to move without the aid of their profane floating thrones. Although their bloated forms make them considerably less of a threat than their brethren physically, they speak maledictions

foul enough to agonize those who hear them, yet even with such powers of vicious wisdom, their true strength lies in their envenomed words and temptations of the mind. Their centuries of research grant them great leverage over their diabolical kin, and few devils dare not obey the summons of these hellish scholars.

Ayngavhaults are roughly ovular in form, their deflated girths about 10 feet tall with their rolls of wet gristle spreading over 13 feet wide. Off their thrones, these devils weigh approximately 2,300 pounds, though the eldest can weigh considerably more.

Ecology

Ayngavhaults' bloated girths make them slaves to their repulsive physical forms. All ayngavhaults, even the newly formed, are monstrously obese, trapped within prisons of their own leaking, diabolical flesh. To aid them, though, the forges of Phlegethon create terrifying thrones empowered by infernal magics. These foul chariots hold their corpulent masters aloft, serving as both vehicles and sources of profane protection. Each throne of skulls is bound to a specific ayngavhault, dissolving into a pile of ashes and a breath of searing iron dust should its master be destroyed.

Habitat & Society

The majority of ayngavhaults frequent the grim libraries of Hell, particularly the mired museums of Stygia; the Fallen Fastness of Dis; and Betzebbul, the palace of Baalzebul, in Cocytus. Within these heretical storehouses and academies of evil, these grotesque devils rewrite the histories of countless worlds to obscure truths and skew the past toward the desires of Hell. Grotesque curators of a sort, individual ayngavhaults take great pride in specializing in fields none of their brethren have ever thought to focus their studies upon—the more obscure and blasphemous, the better. Thus, while one devil might spend eons learning all there is to know of linnorm frost poisons, another might research the nuances of Azlanti voice tearing. Each seeks to promote its particular field of research above all others, sowing its knowledge among their blasphemous works, minions, and summoners who might put such foul wisdom to the most sinister uses. They prove incessantly paranoid that the works of their brethren might be outstripping their own discoveries, or that others in related fields might be stealing their research, thus proving both suspicious of their kindred and intimately familiar with the works of other infernal scholars. As such, a single ayngavhault might begrudgingly point a summoner in search of specific information toward a diabolical expert, though these knowledge-obsessed fiends never reveal their secrets without demanding a price.

Robes of Lead

The eldest ayngavhault garb themselves in *robes of lead*, massive suits of armor imbued with diabolical runes and profane symbols. These hulking, blasphemous vestments do little to impede the corpulent fiends' already encumbered movement, yet grant them significant defense against servants of the divine. An ayngavhault wearing a *robe of lead* gains a +6 armor bonus and a +2 profane bonus to its Armor Class (raising a typical ayngavhault's AC to 37, touch 9, flat-footed 37). In addition, these robes add +10 to the wearer's SR when attempting to resist spells cast by a good-aligned divine spellcaster. Any Huge creature can wear *robes of lead*, but non-ayngavhaults must contend with their crushing, 900-pound weight. Any non-evil creature that attempts to wear *robes of lead* gains one negative level until the vestments are removed.





DEVIL, LESSER HOST (GAUV)

This tangle of scaly avian limbs furiously beats its double pair of vulture-like wings, keeping its fiendish, horned skull-head aloft. As fetid breath rises from its repulsive, fly-covered visage, clawed arms work together to slash the air with a vicious-looking spear.

LESSER HOST DEVIL

CR 3



XP 800

LE Small outsider (devil, evil, extraplanar, lawful)

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., see in darkness;

Perception +6

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 15, flat-footed 13 (+3 Dex, +1 dodge, +2 natural, +1 size)

hp 30 (4d10+8)

Fort +6, **Ref** +7, **Will** +0

DR 5/good; **Immune** fire, poison; **Resist** acid 10, cold 10

OFFENSE

Speed 5 ft., fly 60 ft. (good)

Melee mwk spear +7 (1d8+1), 2 claws +6 (1d4+1)

Special Attacks noxious breath, summon devil

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 4th)

At will—*dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *greater teleport* (self plus 50 lbs. of objects only), *mage hand*, *ventriloquism* (DC 10)

STATISTICS

Str 13, **Dex** 17, **Con** 14, **Int** 7, **Wis** 9, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 18

Feats Dodge, Hover

Skills Acrobatics +9, Escape Artist +9, Fly +11, Perception +6, Stealth +13

Languages Infernal; telepathy 100 ft.

SQ superior grappler, shared senses, swarming

ECOLOGY

Environment Hell

Organization solitary or flock (2d4)

Treasure standard (masterwork Small spear, other treasure)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Superior Grappler (Ex) A gauv can wield a weapon and still make grapple checks. If it's not wielding a weapon, a gauv gains a +4 bonus on grapple checks. In addition, it takes up to eight gauvs cooperatively to lift a creature that one or more of them is grappling; each gauv can lift up to 50 pounds and still fly without being impeded.

Noxious Breath (Su) Three times per day, a gauv can exhale a breath that reeks of pure corruption upon a creature within 5 feet. The target must make a DC 14 Fortitude save or be sickened for 1d4 rounds. The save DC is Constitution-based. Creatures that successfully save cannot be affected by the same gauv's noxious breath for 24 hours. A *delay poison* or *neutralize poison* spell removes the effect from the sickened creature. Creatures with immunity to poison are unaffected, and creatures

resistant to poison receive their normal bonus on their saving throws. Once a gauv uses its breath weapon, it can't breathe again until 1d4 rounds later.

Shared Senses (Su) All gauvs and magaavs within 100 feet of one another share the same senses. Thus, if one individual perceives something (for example, with a successful Perception check), all others within range are immediately aware of it. Senses are instantly relayed from one gauv or magaav to the next, allowing for the senses of a single devil to potentially spread through and inform an entire massive swarm instantly. It is still possible for a gauv to be surprised or flat-footed even if other gauvs nearby are not.

Summon Devil (Su) Once per day a gauv can attempt to summon an imp with a 35% chance of success. This ability is the equivalent of a 3rd-level spell.

Swarming (Ex) Up to two gauvs can share the same space at the same time. If two gauvs in the same square attack the same foe, they are considered to be flanking that foe as if they were in two opposite squares.

DEVIL, GREATER HOST (MAGAUV)

Twin pairs of mangy, disease-riddled vulture wings flap in concert, keeping this lean raptor fiend aloft. Twisted horns rise from a head like a monstrous skull and noxious fumes leak from between its yellowed fangs. Hovering with impossible control, its vicious foot-talons clench and unclench, while its clawed hands wield a long, three-pointed ranseur.

GREATER HOST DEVIL

CR 6



XP 2,400

LE Medium outsider (devil, evil, extraplanar, lawful)

Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., see in darkness; Perception +11

DEFENSE

AC 23, touch 15, flat-footed 18 (+4 Dex, +1 dodge, +8 natural)

hp 59 (7d10+21)

Fort +8, **Ref** +9, **Will** +3

DR 5/good; **Immune** fire, poison; **Resist** acid 10, cold 10; **SR** 17

OFFENSE

Spd 20 ft., fly 50 ft. (average)

Melee mwk ranseur +12 (2d4+6), 2 claws +11 (1d6+4)

Special Attacks infernal wound, noxious breath, rend (2 claws, 1d6+1), summon devil

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 12th)

At will—*greater teleport* (self plus 50 lbs. of objects only)

STATISTICS

Str 18, **Dex** 19, **Con** 16, **Int** 10, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 11

Base Atk +7; **CMB** +10; **CMD** 25

Feats Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Mobility, Hover

Skills Acrobatics +14, Escape Artist +14, Fly +14, Intimidate +10, Perception +11, Stealth +14

Languages Celestial, Draconic, Infernal; telepathy 100 ft.

SQ master grappler, shared senses

ECOLOGY**Environment** Hell**Organization** solitary, pair, flock (1 magaav and 2d6 gaav)**Treasure Value** standard (masterwork ranseur, other treasure)**SPECIAL ABILITIES**

Infernal Wound (Ex) The damage a magaav deals with its claws or rend causes a persistent wound. An injured creature loses 1 additional hit point each round. The wound does not heal naturally and resists healing spells. The continuing hit point loss can be stopped by a DC 16 Heal check or any spell that cures hit point damage; casting a curative spell on the injured creature requires a successful DC 15 caster level check, otherwise the spell has no effect. The check DC is Constitution-based.

Master Grappler (Ex) A magaav can wield a weapon and still make grapple checks. If it's not wielding a weapon, a magaav gains a +4 bonus on grapple checks.

Noxious Breath (Su) Three times per day, a magaav can exhale a breath that reeks of pure corruption upon a creature within 5 feet. The target must make a DC 16 Fortitude save or be sickened for 1d4 rounds. The save DC is Constitution-based. Creatures that successfully save cannot be affected by the same magaav's noxious breath for 24 hours. A *delay poison* or *neutralize poison* spell removes the effect from the sickened creature. Creatures with immunity to poison are unaffected, and creatures resistant to poison receive their normal bonuses on their saving throws. Once a magaav uses its breath weapon, it can't breathe again until 1d4 rounds later.

Shared Senses (Su) All gaavs (and magaavs) within 100 feet of one another share the same senses. Thus, if one individual perceives something (for example, with a successful Perception check), all others within range are immediately aware of it. Senses are instantly relayed from one gaav or magaav to the next, allowing for the senses of a single devil to potentially spread through and inform an entire massive swarm instantly. It is still possible for a magaav to be surprised or flat-footed even if other gaavs or magaavs nearby are not.

All magaavs may telepathically communicate with all other gaavs and magaavs within 100 feet at once, allowing the greater host devils to command entire swarms. Although magaavs rarely contradict one another, if faced with competing orders,

gaavs follow the commands of the closest magaav.

Summon Devil (Su) Once per day a magaav can attempt to summon 1d2 gaavs with a 60% chance of success. This ability is the equivalent of a 3rd-level spell.

Hunters of souls, host devils retrieve Hell's most elusive property. Whether souls that have long evaded capture upon the plains of Avernus, damned beings who have somehow managed to escape Hell, or creatures that have reneged upon infernal contracts, vast flocks of these winged fiends swarm from the Pit to recover their prey. Rarely seen alone, host devils travel in great swarms that often number in the thousands. Amid these great hosts flap the swarm leaders, the magaav, fierce mockeries of the angelic form capable of directing and redirecting massive columns of their brethren like the brain of a single colossal infernal beast.

Gaavs stand 4 feet tall and weigh approximately 110 pounds, their wingspans stretching to just over 6 feet wide. Magaavs stand 5–1/2 feet tall and weigh 150 pounds, with wingspans reaching 10 feet across.





DEVIL, WARMONGER (LEVALOCH)

Armored like an infernal knight upon some monstrous steed, this fiend of iron and nails scuttles upon six heavy, bladed, beetle-like legs. Its body seems to be nothing more than plates upon hulking plates of dark metal, each pierced through with gleaming spikes studded with the gruesome trophies of past massacres. In one clawed gauntlet it grips a long, twisted trident, while in the other it readies a thick net woven with fiendish barbs.

WARMONGER DEVIL

CR 7



XP 3,200

LE Large outsider (devil, evil, extraplanar, lawful)

Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., see in darkness; Perception +16

DEFENSE

AC 22, touch 12, flat-footed 19 (+3 Dex, +10 natural, -1 size)

hp 84 (8d10+40)

Fort +10, **Ref** +9, **Will** +5

Defensive Abilities construct form; **DR** 5/good; **Immune** fire, poison; **Resist** acid 10, cold 10; **SR** 12

OFFENSE

Spd 40 ft., climb 40 ft.

Melee mwk trident +13 (2d6+7), 2 legs +7 (1d8+2) or 2 claws +12 (1d6+5), 2 legs +7 (1d8+2)

Ranged mwk trident +10 (2d6+7) or net +10 ranged touch (entangle)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Special Attacks merciless blow, summon devil, trample (1d8+7, DC 19)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 12th)

At will—*greater teleport* (self plus 50 lbs. of objects only)

STATISTICS

Str 20, **Dex** 17, **Con** 19, **Int** 14, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 15

Base Atk +8; **CMB** +14; **CMD** 27

Feats Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Toughness

Skills Acrobatics +14 (+18 jumping), Bluff +13, Climb +17, Craft (weapons) +9, Intimidate +13, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +9, Knowledge (engineering) +9, Knowledge (planes) +13, Perception +16, Stealth +12

Languages Celestial, Draconic, Infernal; telepathy 100 ft.

SQ hellstrider, phalanx, stability

ECOLOGY

Environment Hell

Organization solitary, pair, or troop (3–18)

Treasure standard (masterwork trident, other treasure)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Construct Form Despite being true devils, levalochs possess a number of immunities common to constructs, including immunity to ability damage, ability drain, death effects, death from massive damage, disease, energy drain, exhaustion, fatigue, necromancy effects, nonlethal damage, paralysis, sleep effects, and stunning. Upon being reduced

to 0 hit points, they are immediately destroyed.

Hellstrider (Su) A levaloch is not impeded by rough terrain, and can move or charge through such squares as normal. It can also cross areas covered with deadly impediments (such as caltrops or thorns) without being damaged or hindered. In addition to being entirely immune to fire, the creature's legs are immune to acid and cold, allowing it to cross even rivers of acid or lava without being damaged or hindered as long as the material is less than 4 feet deep. This ability does not protect a levaloch against magical hindrances like *black tentacles*, *web*, or similar spells.

Merciless Blow (Su) Levalochs show no mercy to the vulnerable. Any trident attacks they make against entangled creatures (including those entangled by its net) deal an extra 2d6 points damage.

Phalanx (Ex) Devils gain a +1 morale bonus on attacks and to AC while adjacent to a levaloch.

Stability (Ex) Levalochs receive a +4 racial bonus to their CMD when resisting a bull rush or trip attempt while standing on the ground.

Summon Devil (Sp) Once per day a levaloch can attempt to summon 1d4 lemures or 1 bearded devil with a 40% chance of success. This ability is the equivalent of a 4th-level spell.

Skills Levalochs have a +2 racial bonus on Stealth and Perception checks. This Stealth bonus increases to +8 when a levaloch is concealed amid metal objects or debris.

Fearsome giants of steel and blades, levalochs serve within the armies of archdevils and infernal dukes as potent warriors and tenacious hunters, creatures of absolute discipline endlessly obedient to diabolical tyrants. Renowned for their skill on Hell's battlefields, these fearsome soldiers excel in moving swiftly over the broken landscapes that typify the nine layers of the Pit, hunting down intruders and seeking out errant souls wherever they might flee. En masse, the armored clanking of obedient and watchful infantry sound like the workings of great machines as levaloch hosts man Hell's ramparts, from the Iron Fortresses of Avernus to the walls of Ashtart. Levalochs possess consistent forms, each resembling all others of their kind in general shape and size, though each devil's armor proves distinctive. Some claim that the arrangement of a levaloch's spikes, horns, blades, or other iron-shod embellishments might reveal what layer of Hell or infernal noble spawned the devil, though few have the time to ponder such concerns as one of these razor-legged legionaries rages forward. With little variation, levalochs stand just over 10 feet tall and weigh almost exactly 1 ton.

Ecology

Levalochs blur the line between devil and automaton. While created from the souls of the damned and the profane energies of Hell, these fiends live only to obey their masters and, upon their home plane, seemingly possess little will

or ambition beyond such obedience. Requiring no food or rest, a levaloch sentinel might hold its post, completely motionless, for centuries, collecting ages of dust without complaint as it awaits orders that might never come. While intelligent, these devils prove fanatically devoted to the causes of their masters, the archdevils, Asmodeus, and Hell itself, drawing on ingrained wells of discipline and faith to mete out the greater will of their overlords. Levalochs are highly prized throughout the Pit for this discipline, held up as epitomes of diabolical warriors second only to the ferocious cornugons, and pointed to throughout the planes as embodiments of the soldier's ideal. Yet this discipline only persists while levalochs remain under orders from more powerful devils. Left to their own devices, each levaloch fancies itself a tyrant by its own right and relishes the opportunity to promote conflict and bloodshed through petty mortal angst and grudges.

While all devils possess anatomies that perpetually baffle mortal scholars, levalochs prove even more enigmatic, having no internal physiology at all. Being little more than living suits of blasphemous chitin and Hell-forged armor, these fiends lack all weaknesses of even infernal flesh and blood, while retaining all of the potent resistances common to their diabolical kin. A levaloch's sentience seems to linger within its armored shell, remaining until that exoskeleton proves too damaged to contain an animating spirit any longer. Should a levaloch's armor be destroyed, the plates of metal and carapace fall to pieces and quickly corrode, revealing nothing more than the strong scent of pitch within. Despite their unusual anatomy, levalochs are still thinking, even cunning creatures. The fiendish intelligences housed within these ironclad horrors cause some sages to draw frightening parallels between levalochs and the profane soul-bound armors of the infamous undead graveknights.

Habitat & Society

Commonly found upon the first and sixth layers of Hell and amid the outlying fortresses of Dis, levalochs muster in the service of the Pit's most martial tyrants. Most know only their orders, following their masters' commands to the letter, disregarding all things that fall outside of their purview—at least until such things threaten their masters' holdings or themselves. Intruders within infernal citadels sometimes find themselves unchallenged as they wander vast halls watched over by whole platoons of posted, idle levalochs, only to be attacked unexpectedly upon encountering those specifically commanded to stand sentry. These fiends hold to their orders not out of dull-wittedness, but out of obsessive obedience to the rule of Hell, as proven by their murderous cunning in battle.

On the rare occasions levalochs find themselves left to their own devices, the true intellect of these armored terrors becomes apparent. Capable of shocking changes in personality, a levaloch that might not have spoken a word in its entire existence might prove shrewd and subtle when it finds itself upon the Material Plane, stirring old angers, forging Hellish weaponry, even training mortal warriors in a strategic game of warmongering and open campaigning, all encouraging bloodshed in the name of Hell. They despise the weakness of emotion and the changeability of mortal minds. Thus, they delight in testing themselves against mortal flesh, indulging in massacres and encouraging genocides against such weak, worthless creatures whenever their plots might gain even the slightest benefit from such atrocities. Such pride rarely proves the undoing of levalochs, though, as these armored fiends treat every battle as a chance to hone their impressive skills and give foes—regardless of race—no quarter.



Exodus

Asmodeus raged. Taking his brother by the arm, he showed Ihy's eternities of effort come to ruin. Upon each endless sphere, they found new realms of madness and horror formed by Ihy's loosed creations. "See, brother," Asmodeus sobbed. "See your wonder, the damage you have caused." And Ihy saw. He saw that which he had created reduced to cinders, insane beings abusing his beloved works, creating and recreating things beyond his imagining. And Ihy wept.

Returning to the seal, Asmodeus whispered to his brother of forgiveness, and why their might was theirs alone. He reminded his brother time and again of how his action fed the mad things that lurked beyond

how every age
the scar of this

When Asmodeus
Ihy lay broken and
long he suffered,
being known chiding
his lesser kin, a being
from the seal, who
brilliant and warm,

From the Book of the Damned

Wherein disobedience is justly punished,
weakness is mistaken for virtue, a battle
for creation consumes the children of the
seal, and the fires of Hell are kindled.

their worlds, and
forevermore would bear
one act of chaos.

finally left his brother,
tormented upon the seal.
for never had he or any
or regret. It was one of
he had long ago coaxed
finally came to Ihy.

this fair mote thanked

her creator, for several of the essences of his world had sought shelter with her. She promised to protect those Ihy had released among the spheres, and with them continue his great work. Yet Ihy's heart was not so easily drawn from the shadows. He decried the mote's words as ignorance, for there were things that she did not know and would never possess the strength of mind to discover. To this the shining mote agreed, but also claimed that there was much beneath the greatest gods' notice that she had long ago come to accept. She had traveled her lords' worlds and reveled in their wonders, both glory and despair. Such, she claimed, was the way of all things, and marvels should not be left uncreated for the shadows they might one day cast. And so she departed to tell others of his greatness.

Long Ihy meditated on what the burning mote had said, her words tempering Asmodeus's accusations. Finally, he rose, believing again that he had done something wondrous. Venturing from the seal, he spoke to the droves of lesser gods who had heeded the words of the shining mote.

Upon discovering that his brother had not reconsidered and now corrupted others with his radical ideals, Asmodeus flew into a rage, racing to his brother's side and tearing him away from his growing congregation. Furious, he threatened and pleaded with his brother not to violate the order they had made, but Ihy would not be dissuaded again, and espoused the beneficence of freeing their creations. In his ire, it was Asmodeus who struck the first blow, the first act of violence between deities. Shocked and wounded, Ihy recoiled and fled, as did Asmodeus, distressed by his own actions. Yet lines had been drawn among the lesser gods, and while the First retired, a war began.

Much was created and destroyed in this first war between order and chaos. Those caring nothing for the conflict departed, crafting strange domains far from the seal or journeying into the beyond, never to be seen again. Champions rose among the followers of both Asmodeus and Ihy, but

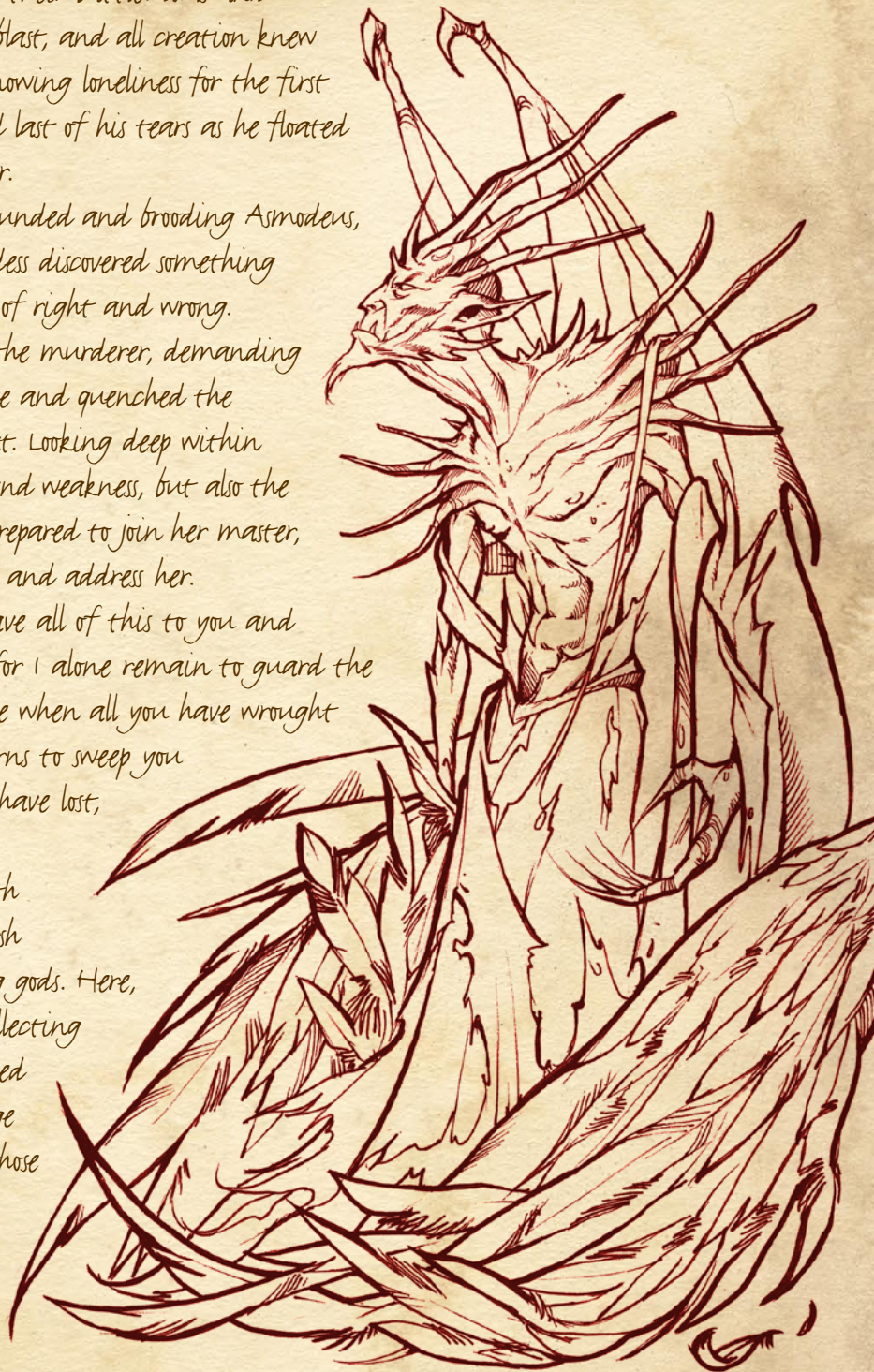
none more zealous than the mote that had come to Ilys in his grief, a gentle yet passionate goddess called Sarenrae, who became his right hand of Ilys in the battle against tyranny.

None can say how long the war between the gods raged, but on an insignificant world far from the seal, between the flickering and dying of godly motes, Asmodeus and Ilys met. Both had suffered much since their last meeting, seen whole worlds of their creations lost. Each paused upon seeing the other, and finally Ilys offered his hand, hoping to find room in their reality for both philosophies. Full of sorrow, Asmodeus reached out with one hand to pull his brother close, while with the other he manifested a great spear and thrust it deep. Shocked and betrayed, Ilys gasped and stared deep into his brother's eyes as his vital force gave way, exploding in an eruption that rocked all creation and shattered the world of their battle. Souls and lesser deities were washed away in the blast, and all creation knew instantly of Asmodeus's terrible act. Knowing loneliness for the first time, Asmodeus, too, shed the first and last of his tears as he floated through the dying embers of his brother.

It was Sarenrae who discovered the wounded and brooding Asmodeus, and in that moment of fury the goddess discovered something beyond order and chaos—her own sense of right and wrong. Sarenrae leveled her burning sword at the murderer, demanding he yield. With a blink, Asmodeus awoke and quenched the goddess's blade, taking her by the throat. Looking deep within her, he saw fear, and insignificance, and weakness, but also the truth of the age. And as the goddess prepared to join her master, she was shocked to feel Asmodeus release and address her.

"Your war is won, Pale Orphan. I leave all of this to you and your ilk. But you will see me again, for I alone remain to guard the old truths. And I will wait for the age when all you have wrought and all for which you have fought turns to sweep you away. Then all of you will see what I have lost, and what I will make mine again."

And so Asmodeus departed, along with the greatest of his champions, to a harsh realm far from the seal and the young gods. Here, nine lost souls lingered and roamed. Collecting and holding them close, Asmodeus shaped his new realm into a fearful pit, a cage to house and torment these souls and those that would inevitably come, to stand forever as a monument to the old ways. And he called it Hell.



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Denizens of Hell

The following compiles many of the diabolical tyrants known to rule in Hell, the vices and transgressions they preside over, and the powers granted.

Deity	Alignment	Areas of Concern	Domains	Favored Weapon
GODS				
Asmodeus	LE	pride, slavery, tyranny	Evil, Fire, Law, Magic, Trickery	light mace
ARCHDEVILS				
Baalzebul	LE	arrogance, flies, lies	Air, Death, Evil, Law	spear
Barbatos	LE	animals, corruption, gateways	Evil, Law, Magic, Travel	quarterstaff
Belial	LE	adultery, deception, desire	Charm, Destruction, Evil, Law	ranseur
Dispater	LE	cities, prisons, rulership	Evil, Law, Nobility, Trickery	heavy mace
Geryon	LE	forbidden knowledge, heresy, snakes	Evil, Law, Strength, Water	heavy flail
Mammon	LE	avarice, watchfulness, wealth	Artifice, Earth, Evil, Law	shortspear
Mephistopheles	LE	contracts, devils, secrets	Evil, Knowledge, Law, Rune	trident
Moloch	LE	fire, obedience, war	Evil, Fire, Law, War	whip
WHORE QUEENS				
Ardad Lili	LE	seduction, snakes, women	Charm, Evil, Law, Scalykind	dagger
Eiseth	LE	battle, revenge, wrath	Destruction, Evil, Law, War	longbow
Doloras	LE	detachment, dispassion, pain	Destruction, Evil, Law, Repose	kukri
Mahathallah	LE	death, fate, vanity	Death, Evil, Law, Trickery	net
INFERNAL DUKES				
Alocer	LE	beasts, hunters, tradition	Animal, Evil, Law, Strength	shortbow
Bifrons	LE	fate, luck, patterns	Creation, Evil, Law, Rune	dire flail
Crocell	LE	hidden waters, illusion, language	Evil, Knowledge, Law, Water	glaive
Deumus	LE	apprehension, promises, terror	Darkness, Death, Evil, Law	halberd
Eligos	LE	flight, soldiers, watchfulness	Air, Evil, Law, Travel	lance
Furcas	LE	duty, flames, herbalism	Evil, Fire, Law, Plant	trident
Gaap	LE	divination, illusion, water	Evil, Law, Rune, Water	shortspear
Haborym	LE	immolation, renewal, shackles	Evil, Fire, Law, Protection	longspear
Iaozrael	LE	authority, hubris, liars	Destruction, Evil, Law, Sun	scythe
Jiraviddain	LE	debility, dependence, frailty	Community, Evil, Healing, Law	sap
Kalma	LE	burial rites, death, insects	Animal, Death, Evil, Law	heavy pick
Lorcan	LE	blood, rebirth, undeath	Evil, Healing, Law, Repose	short sword
Malthus	LE	architecture, expansion, waste	Artifice, Evil, Knowledge, Law	light crossbow
Nergal	LE	atrocities, pestilence, war	Death, Evil, Law, War	spiked chain
Ose	LE	betrayal, doom, obsession	Artifice, Evil, Law, Madness	spiked gauntlet
Pirias	LE	denial, drugs, wonder	Evil, Law, Madness, Plant	throwing axe
Quindiovatos	LE	exploration, gems, legends	Glory, Earth, Evil, Law	rapier
Ruzel	LE	blasphemy, humor, undeath	Death, Evil, Law, Trickery	kukri
Sabnach	LE	construction, parasites, toil	Artifice, Evil, Law, Strength	heavy crossbow
Titivilus	LE	lies, propaganda, rhetoric	Evil, Knowledge, Law, Trickery	longsword
Uruskreil	LE	armor, mercilessness, revelation	Evil, Glory, Law, Strength	falchion
Vapula	LE	discovery, hubris, scholarship	Evil, Knowledge, Law, Liberation	quarterstaff
Vois	LE	pollution, swamps, toads	Evil, Law, Scalykind, Weather	greatclub
Wylgart	LE	condemnation, judges, revision	Earth, Evil, Law, Protection	sling
Xhasnaphar	LE	masks, ugliness, volition	Evil, Law, Liberation, Protection	hand crossbow
Yan-gant-y-tan	LE	hellspawn, misdirection, night	Darkness, Evil, Law, Weather	guisarme
Zaebos	LE	arrogance, nobility, sexual perversion	Destruction, Evil, Law, Nobility	flail
Zepar	LE	abduction, rape, transformation	Charm, Evil, Law, Trickery	bolas
MALBRANCHE				
Alichino	LE	deception, madness, royalty	Evil, Law, Madness, Trickery	dagger
Barbariccia	LE	fecundity, predators, slaughter	Animal, Evil, Law, Plant	spiked gauntlet
Cagnazzo	LE	elusiveness, fear, murder	Death, Evil, Law, Travel	short sword
Calcabrina	LE	dreams, insanity, mystery	Evil, Knowledge, Law, Madness	kukri
Circiatto	LE	gluttony, greed, undead	Death, Evil, Law, Magic	warhammer
Draghignazzo	LE	devastation, monsters, patience	Destruction, Earth, Evil, Law	greataxe
Farfarello	LE	antiquity, death, mists	Death, Evil, Knowledge, Law	morningstar
Graffiacane	LE	corruption, elusiveness, vermin	Animal, Evil, Law, Luck	shuriken
Libicocco	LE	rage, violence, wind	Air, Destruction, Evil, Law	scimitar
Malacoda	LE	cruelty, conquest, martial skill	Evil, Law, Strength, War	bastard sword
Rubicante	LE	fire, honor, nobility	Evil, Fire, Glory, Law	starknife
Scarmiglione	LE	deceit, poison, temptation	Charm, Evil, Law, Water	hand crossbow

Abandon All Hope...

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