

IN NOMINE

GAME MASTER'S GUIDE



BY DAVID EDELSTEIN

STEVE JACKSON GAMES

IN NOMINE GAME MASTER'S GUIDE

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original game by CROC,
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ISBN 1-55634-415-5

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ABOUT *IN NOMINE*

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INTRODUCTION



Welcome to the *In Nomine Game Master's Guide*! For experienced Game Masters, this book expands on the *In Nomine* universe and game system, providing tips on quantifying the powers of Word-bound characters and Superiors, more information about the official setting (including a historical timeline, and the role of celestials in religion), new Roles and other campaign resources, and optional rules. For beginning GMs, this book offers all of the above, as well as a guide to *In Nomine* "canon" (the elements that make up the *official* universe) and how to depart from it, step by step instructions on how to set up a campaign (covering everything from mood and theme to the politics of Archangels and Demon Princes, celestial population density, and the location of Tethers), guidelines for handling player characters (including power level, promotions, rewards and punishments, gaining a Word, and becoming dissonant), and roleplaying Superiors, God, and Lucifer.

If game mastering is an art, then this book is an expanded palette, rather than a "How to Paint" manual. Your brushstrokes determine the finished work of art.



CHARACTERS

This chapter covers character development and play balance, rewards and punishments, and a detailed look at dissonance, Discord, and vessels.

POWER LEVEL

The recommended starting levels for player characters are 9 Forces for celestials, 6 Forces for most humans, and 5 Forces for Remnants. You may wish to start PCs at a different level.

CELESTIAL CHARACTERS

9 Forces is the usual starting point for celestial PCs. In Heaven, few angels exceed this – there's little need for them to. In Hell, demons start at 7 Forces, and only the lucky ones climb above that. 9-Force celestials are *not* “low-powered” characters, and the GM should discourage that attitude.

However, while they may not be lightweights, 9-Force player characters are just starting out on Earth. Older, more experienced celestials, particularly Seneschals and those with Distinctions or Words, are often much more powerful.



Weaker Celestials

In a mixed human/celestial game (p. 58), or one in which you want humans to be credible adversaries, you may wish to make celestial PCs weaker. One option is to play celestial spirits (relievers, imps, and gremlins) or young demons. The *Angelic Player's Guide* (pp. 86-87) describes relievers in more detail, while the *Infernal Player's Guide* describes infernal spirits (pp. 95-97) and young demons (pp. 79-81) as characters.

A second option is a *damaged* celestial – one who has lost Forces in celestial combat, such as a Remnant (*In Nomine*, p. 30). A celestial can theoretically be stripped down to 3 Forces (1 in each realm) and remain a full-fledged angel or demon.

Alternatively, you can lower the starting value of *all* celestials to 7 Forces or less. This will narrow the gap between humans and celestials, and celestials will have to treat humans (particularly exceptional ones) with more respect. Saints and undead become the equal of lesser angels and demons. Ethereals are also more powerful by comparison. Really powerful celestials are probably rarer and much more influential . . . and a much greater threat to the PCs.

Stronger Celestials

A “power game,” with Word-bound PCs vying for Superior status, is beyond the intended scope of *In Nomine*, but player characters don't *have* to start at 9 Forces.

The easiest way to raise the power level is to simply allow more starting Forces. 1 or 2 extra Forces will make the PCs people to be reckoned with from the moment they arrive on the corporeal plane; more than that and they are already among the elite of Earth-bound Servitors. A campaign in which the PCs all start at 12 Forces may be mythic in scale – certainly their opponents will have to be formidable. Such powerful celestials can easily have their way with most humans, and in a mixed game, human characters will be seriously overshadowed, unless you're also increasing the power of humans in the campaign.

Unless you're running a seriously political campaign, or enjoy power gaming, it's *strongly* recommended that player characters not be allowed to begin the game with Distinctions or Words, and should not obtain them easily or quickly. (See pp. 12-13.)

You can, of course, say that *all* celestials are more powerful in your campaign. Raising the starting level for angels and demons widens the gap between celestials and humans, and makes them more godlike. Celestial intervention will become much more decisive and difficult to foil, and unless balanced by other factors, threatens to turn humans into helpless pawns. It will also make celestials much more powerful than ethereals (unless you're making ethereals stronger also!).

EXTRA RESOURCES

A subtler way to adjust the power level in your campaign is to change the number of character points starting characters are allowed. The default of 4 character points per Force (*In Nomine*, p. 36) can be raised to 5 points per Force or more, if you simply want to allow more Resources.

A more equitable option, particularly in games with mixed character types, or where you want characters with more experience but not necessarily more raw power, is to assign a flat amount of extra Resources. A 6-Force Soldier with an extra 20 character points is a formidable veteran, but still quite human. Celestials also can be given extra points for Resources, to represent long but unexceptional

service. For fine-tuning, the GM can restrict what sort of Resources the extra points may be spent on (for example, no attunements or Songs), or even give specific Resources. Elite Soldiers of Laurence might all be given sword relics, for example; for a campaign set in the Marches, the GM might allow everyone to have the Songs of Dreams for free.

Optional Rule: *If assigning extra character points, allow PCs to purchase an extra starting Force out of this pool, for 10 points, or raise characteristics for 3 points each. Alternatively, a PC could choose to start with 1 fewer Force, in exchange for 10 extra character points. (Raise or lower Forces after calculating base starting character points!)*

HUMAN CHARACTERS

Most human player characters in *In Nomine* will be Soldiers; these start with 6 Forces by default. Players may (with the GM's permission) choose to play undead, sorcerers, or Saints. These and other human character types are described in detail in the *Corporeal Player's Guide*. You can alter the power level of human characters, but remember that *In Nomine* normally assumes that humans fall within a narrower range than celestials – radical changes will give your campaign a very different feel.

Weaker Humans

Weaker humans won't be too viable in most *In Nomine* campaigns, but a game can be based on a group of mundanes (with 5 Forces) stumbling into the War. The GM will have to be careful about choosing adversaries, since one 9-Force celestial can wipe them out in a direct confrontation. Mundanes could be opposing the actions of Soldiers, sorcerers, or other human groups. If the GM intends the PCs to become Soldiers, they may start the game as mundanes and acquire their 6th Force during play.

Stronger Humans

Letting human PCs begin the game with more Forces will put them on a leveler playing field with celestial characters, but it makes them *far* more powerful than other humans. A 7-Force mortal is a remarkable human being; 8 Forces or more is legendary. Undead and Saints are a little more potent, but they rarely become as powerful as an average celestial. If the PCs start at this level, they'll certainly attract attention from celestials.

A more drastic option is to make *humanity* more powerful. See *Stronger Humans*, p. 121.

CHARACTER ADVANCEMENT

There are several directions characters can go in their quest for advancement. Certain types of "advancement" in *In Nomine* will be more meaningful to some people than others. This section discusses *how* characters advance – the following section, *Gaining Resources* (p. 11), discusses specific rewards and how to earn them.

CHARACTER POINTS

Resources in *In Nomine* are purchased with character points. Character points represent an abstraction of two different principles: favor from one's Superior, and experience. For example, your Superior can give you a new Song, but you can also learn one during the course of an adventure.

It is simplest to treat all character points the same, and allow a character to purchase whatever Resources the GM is willing to allow with them. However, if a character wants to acquire a Resource his Superior won't allow – or wants to keep Resources *secret* from his Superior – then the GM might want to distinguish between those earned from the character's Superior and experience points, and require the player to keep track of them separately.

Example: Adam, Balseraph Knight of Gluttony, has fallen out of favor with his Prince. After several unpleasant Trauma



experiences, Adam decides he'd like to have a spare vessel, but there's no way Haagenti is going to give him one right now – he's lucky to be allowed out of Hell at all! Adam's player tells the GM he wants to buy a new vessel, and the GM agrees that Adam might be able to cut a deal with another Prince. Once Adam has enough character points saved up, the GM will arrange for Adam to obtain his new vessel, but stipulates that Adam **can't** use any points earned as a result of Haagenti's favor (not that this currently amounts to much anyway . . .)

Experience Points

Characters should normally earn between 1 and 4 experience points per game session, with 1 to 2 being average. Use the guidelines below:

Character made significant progress toward goals	1 point
Character made exceptional progress toward goals (achieved far more than the GM expected him to)	2 points
Very good roleplaying	1 point
Exceptional roleplaying (moved the GM or other players to tears, caused the entire group to laugh out loud, or fall silent in awe of the performance, etc.)	2 points

A character should always receive at least 1 point if he (and his player) actively participated in the session.

COLLABORATIVE CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

Since character points are abstractions (p. 6), a character doesn't just "cash them in" with his Superior and say "I'd like a new Servitor Attunement, please." Instead, the GM and player should work together to allow player characters to develop the way the player wants. Character points are a *game mechanic* – character development is part of the story. If the player wants a new Servitor Attunement for his character, and has 10 points saved up, the GM should arrange for the character's Superior to bestow the attunement. This *can* be as simple as a loyal Servitor asking for it the next time they meet, but it might also be a "spontaneous" gift, or an agreement between player and GM that it will be the next mission's reward.

This assumes the GM is willing to let the character have that Resource. Remember the **GM's Rule of No:** if you (the GM) don't like it, you don't have to allow it! You can also make the character fulfill some conditions before earning a Resource (this especially applies to things like attunements from other Superiors and secret Songs); everything that can be purchased with character points is not *necessarily* available to anyone.

POWERFUL CHARACTERS

Overly-powerful characters can become a problem. If you designed a street-level campaign dealing with human gang-bangers led by Soldiers of Hell and the occasional demon, and all the PCs are now picking up their 12th Force and some have earned Distinctions, you'll probably have to change the focus of the game.

The best way to deal with this problem is to avoid letting it happen in the first place. Calculate how quickly characters can acquire new Forces, and if it's too fast, reduce your awards, or encourage players to spend points on other things. Have in mind what it will take to earn a Distinction, and especially a Word – don't let PCs earn these because a Superior happens to show up in a good mood at the end of an adventure. Most importantly, discuss expectations with your players before the game starts. If you know what each player has in mind for his character's future, you'll have a much better idea of where your campaign is headed than if you simply wait to see what everyone does with their points.

If you *do* wind up with unexpectedly powerful PCs, or if you discover that the challenges you thought would suffice are inadequate, then you may have to adapt. If the PCs are now making mincemeat of gangs and their infernal backers, then surely someone more potent will notice. More powerful characters attract the attention of more powerful enemies, and have more responsibility placed on them by their Superiors.

There are also more subtle ways to challenge powerful characters. A 14-Force demon without a Distinction is outranked by a 10-Force Captain; he might be easily capable of squashing the Captain, but he'll have Hell to pay if he does. An angel with an arsenal of Songs and attunements can be stymied by simple social interactions if he doesn't have the skills to cope with them. A powerful, high-ranking celestial can be balked by an obstinate adversary with a high-Status Role that must not be attacked . . . especially if the would-be attacker also has a Role that must be protected.

MISSION OUTCOMES

When an adventure ends, Superiors will evaluate its outcome according to their own criteria . . . which aren't always apparent to their Servitors! It may happen that a mission a character thinks was a failure was *intended* to fail . . . or achieved some greater purpose by its failure. Being rewarded under such circumstances may be confusing, but wise Servitors learn not to ask questions.

Remember that if the group consists of characters serving different Superiors, an abject failure to one might be a fantastic success to another. Even among allied Superiors, each one will have his own "spin" he wants put on the outcome, or specific objectives he wants his minions to accomplish in addition to the overall goal.



Some additional factors that may affect a Superior's reaction are discussed below. Any negative factors generally preclude receiving extra gifts.

✧ The characters generated a lot of Symphonic disturbance. This is usually a bad thing, if for no other reason than it can bring down the wrath of Judgment or the Game (see *Celestial Intervention*, p. 47, for more). Unless the Superior *expected* a lot of disturbance, reduce the level of success by 1 – more if the disturbance actually damaged the Superior's cause.

✧ The characters hurt one of the Superior's allies, or worsened relations with another Superior. Reduce the level of success by 1 – more if they inflicted serious

harm on a close ally. (Angels of the Sword who accomplish what Laurence told them to, but get a Tether of Judgment destroyed in the process, will *not* be highly rewarded . . .)

✧ The characters managed to inflict harm on the Superior's enemies, in *addition* to the mission's goals. Raise the level of success by 1, or more if they pulled off a stunning coup. Often, Servitors will try to mitigate a mission failure by seeking to score a victory against their masters' enemies.

✧ The character is "in service" to another Superior (particularly Servitors of Creation). Reduce the level of success by 1; these servants always have to work harder to achieve the same level of recognition.

Unsuccessful Mission: The Servitor failed in his task and/or failed to accomplish anything for his Lord.

Recommended Reward: None. See *Punishments*, p. 14.

Mildly Successful Mission: The Servitor performed adequately, scoring a success for his side (Heaven or Hell), but did nothing that advanced his Master's agenda.

Recommended Reward: 1 point.

Very Successful Mission: The Servitor performed very well, not only succeeding, but scoring a minor victory for his Superior's Word as well – generating favorable PR, putting his Lord's spin on events, or accomplishing Word-specific goals.

Recommended Reward: 2 points.

Extremely Successful Mission: Not only was the mission a complete success, but the character advanced his Superior's agenda significantly – by taking credit for the mission's success, obtaining information or an artifact important to his Superior, preventing a major calamity for his Word, or otherwise performing above and beyond the call of duty.

Recommended Reward: 3 points.

Spectacularly Successful Mission: The character is able to claim a major victory for his Superior, beyond the expected outcome of the mission. The character's actions result in a significant gain for his Superior's Word. Examples include discovering a new Tether, foiling the destruction of an existing one, destroying a longtime nemesis who's been damaging his Superior's Word, acquiring a secret Song his Lord wants, bringing a demon to redemption or causing an angel to Fall, etc.

Recommended Reward: 4 points.

Continued on next page . . .

MISSION OUTCOMES (CONTINUED)

Gifts

As described on p. 10, Superiors may sometimes gift Servitors with Resources beyond their usual character point allotment.

Forces and Characteristics: Superiors won't usually bother gifting something as trivial as a characteristic; if they want to make their Servitors more powerful, they'll grant a Force. A free Force should only be awarded as the result of an extremely successful mission, in lieu of other gifts, or for spectacular successes, possibly combined with an attunement or Distinction. Demon Princes are much less likely than Archangels to bestow Forces – powerful Servitors are a potential threat!

Attunements: A new Choir or Band Attunement is an appropriate reward for an extremely successful mission, possibly combined with some other minor gift, while a Servitor Attunement may be given as the sole reward for an extremely successful mission, or as part of a reward for a spectacularly successful one.

Skills and Songs: Superiors don't normally give skills as gifts; while they *can* simply imprint knowledge in a Servitor's mind, it's a trivial use of their powers. They do often bestow Songs this way; a new Song is rarely imprinted above level 1, since it's more efficient to make the student improve on his own. A new Song might be given as a gift for a very successful mission. *Secret Songs* (*Liber Canticorum*, p. 61) are much more valuable, usually only taught as exceptional rewards for Distincted Servitors.

Roles: Roles can't be created by fiat (see p. 12), but someone who asks for one (or an improvement in his current one) might receive assistance in developing it.

Servants and Artifacts: Servants and artifacts are convenient gifts, particularly if a Servitor acquired one on his own and just needs help in bonding to it. Superiors particularly like these since they're so easy to take away . . .

Vessels: A vessel lost in the course of a successful mission will usually be replaced, unless it was lost foolishly (see p. 18). Vessels are very personalized creations and not often offered as random gifts.

Rites: Rites are very common awards, sometimes awarded even for mildly successful missions, if the servant has been exemplary and needs no dissonance removed (below).

Distinctions: Someone with an exceptional record *may* be offered a 1st-level Distinction at the end of an extremely successful mission. It usually takes a spectacularly successful mission to be considered for a 2nd- or 3rd-level Distinction. (Scoring a spectacular success for *another* Lord may also earn you a 1st-level Distinction from him . . .)

Words: Words cannot be awarded by Superiors (see p. 101), but someone with an excellent record who completes a mission extremely successfully may be nominated for one.

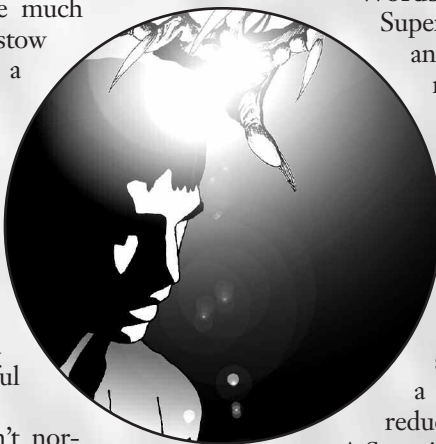
Removal of Dissonance and

Discord: Rather than giving gifts (or sometimes in addition), a Superior might remove dissonance or Discord. A single point of dissonance, earned in a good cause, will be removed for any successful mission. More than that usually requires a very successful mission, and will reduce or eliminate any other rewards.

A Superior will commonly remove one level of Discord for a very successful mission, may remove a Discord entirely in lieu of other rewards for an extremely successful mission, and may combine the removal of Discord with other gifts for a spectacular success.

Other Gifts: The *intangibles* discussed on pp. 13-14 are excellent rewards, since they don't really cost a Superior anything. Any success may be rewarded with some piece of information important to a character, or a small indication of the Superior's favor (which is influence in itself).

Besides the combination of gifts and character points, a Superior might *subsidize* the purchase of a Resource. For example, a character has saved up 5 character points and wants a new Force. The GM decides his latest mission by itself didn't succeed spectacularly enough to be worth a "free" Force, but his Superior will give him one, taking into account previous successes. The character spends his 5 points, and in effect the Superior contributes the other 5.



AWARDS FOR HUMANS

Human characters earn character points for experience (p. 6), but only get rewards from a Superior if they are sworn into service (such as Soldiers, Saints, and most undead). Superiors (especially Demon Princes) are much less generous with human servants. Use the *Mission Outcomes* box (p. 8), but reduce the level of success by one, and extra gifts should be *very* rare.

Usually, a human won't report to an Archangel or Demon Prince at the completion of an adventure. Instead, he's rewarded by his celestial superior, in the form of additional skills, Songs, Rites, artifacts, etc. The *Corporeal Player's Guide* goes into much more detail on Resources available to humans.

Superior Awards

At the end of each *adventure* (usually several game sessions), the group will normally report to their Archangels or Princes, and be rewarded for a job well done. (If they *didn't* do a good job, see *Punishments*, p. 14.) Even if they have infrequent contact with their Superior and don't check in after every adventure, the GM should still keep track of how well they've served their master's Word – a Superior usually has some idea of what his Servitors are up to, and eventually there will be an accounting.

There are two kinds of rewards a Superior might give. The first is simply thanks and an opportunity to ask for a boon. This comes in the form of bonus character points. The second is a *gift*, ranging from a new Rite to a Distinction, or being nominated for a Word. These should be awarded infrequently, and only for very capable, loyal Servitors . . . but they do not cost character points; the Superior simply gives the Resource to his follower. See *Mission Outcomes*, p. 8.

Descriptions of appropriate gifts all assume a good relationship – e.g., that of a favored Servitor. Someone who's currently out of favor (perhaps for botching his last mission) might receive *no* reward, but simply regain his Lord's faith, so that *next* time he may be eligible for recognition.

Outcasts, Renegades, and other beings without a Superior don't get extra rewards – just another way that life's not fair for them. On the other hand, they don't have to worry about punishments either.

OTHER REWARDS

There are other ways to gain Resources, besides experience points and Superior awards. All of these are optional, to be used solely at the discretion of the GM. They are useful methods of balancing things out for humans, Disfavored celestials, and other PCs who don't have a Superior to give them extra rewards.

Acquiring Things During Play

Some Resources may be acquired during the course of an adventure. A PC might capture a relic, gain a loyal follower, or be taught a new skill or Song by an NPC.

The GM is entitled to forbid these Resources, or take them away if not paid for with character points. A Servitor who gets rewards from an Archangel or Demon Prince should *not* also be able to keep other things he picks up for free (unless his Superior's reward consists of permission to keep them). But the GM might permit an Outcast or Renegade, or a human without a patron, to keep a captured relic, or pay fewer points to attune to it (*Liber Reliquarum*, p. 20). Songs learned during play may be counted as "freebies." Be very careful when allowing new Resources to be acquired this way, particularly if player characters can teach Songs, make artifacts, or grant attunements.

Rewards from Other Superiors

Whenever you perform a valuable service for an Archangel or Demon Prince, even if you're not his servant, he may choose to reward you. This may not go over well with *your* Superior, depending on what you're being offered, what you did to earn it, and what relations are like between your Lord and the one offering the gift. It can be used as a plot device to allow player characters to purchase Resources their own Master won't allow, however (see pp. 5-6).

Free Lilim rarely receive extra rewards. They're usually offered a specific reward in exchange for a certain level of Geas, and only receive additional rewards at the end of the mission if their employer is in a *very* good mood . . . or if he likes the Lilim so much he wants to entice her into his service. A Lilim who goes above and beyond the terms of her Geas, succeeding in spectacular fashion, might receive something extra, or be offered a "bargain" – something in exchange for a lesser Geas than it's worth – as an incentive to work for that Master again.

Rewards from Interventions

A character might occasionally acquire a new Resource as a result of a favorable Intervention. Lucifer has been known to grant Words on a whim and Higher Powers sometimes grant angelic Words unexpectedly (p. 32), though this isn't recommended for PCs. A favorable Intervention when rolling a reaction roll for an NPC might result in that character becoming a servant – *if* the GM thinks this would enhance the story. Interventions might also turn mundane objects into artifacts, remove dissonance or Discord, and even add Forces. Attunements and Distinctions are unlikely, since those are specific to an individual Superior, and people don't normally learn skills or Songs spontaneously – but nothing is impossible. Rewards like these should occur only for a suitably dramatic purpose.

GAINING RESOURCES

This section discusses *how* characters can acquire new resources . . . and the possible consequences.

FORCES AND CHARACTERISTICS

There are two ways to gain Forces. The first is to purchase one for 10 character points; this automatically raises characteristics in that realm by 4 points, as usual. The second is to raise the characteristics in a realm individually; every 4 points of characteristic increase in a realm will automatically add a new Force. Since characteristics cost 3 points each (*In Nomine*, p. 202), this method will cost a total of 12 character points per Force . . . but the character will benefit from higher characteristics while he's working toward the new Force – and, perhaps more importantly, his Superior doesn't have to *know* when he acquires a new Force! The GM might require any independent Force “upgrades” to be accomplished by the slower, more expensive method of raising characteristics a point at a time, reserving the instant addition of a new Force for 10 points for those granted by a Superior.

“Force inflation” can be a problem in an *In Nomine* game where PCs spend all their character points on Forces. Relatively young celestials can swiftly overtake their seniors. Remember that many angels and demons with centuries of corporeal experience have only 9-12 Forces, and very few – even those *thousands* of years old – approach 18 Forces. The GM should encourage characters who are adding Forces too rapidly to spend their points on other things . . . perhaps by putting them in situations where they need more skills and Songs, or where a higher-level Role would be useful, etc. Also remember that it's unseemly for angels to accumulate power for its own sake, and it can be *dangerous* for demons! Any Diabolical who's gaining power is a threat to those above him.

More Forces also means a greater disturbance when assuming celestial form (and when performing certain Songs), and can make your celestial form more noticeable. Celestials who value discretion (especially Renegades and Outcasts) may find it in their interests *not* to increase their Forces.

ATTUNEMENTS

Attunements tend to define a Servitor's “specialty”; they're what a Superior gives as tools to get the job done, and they won't be awarded unless the Superior can see some benefit in letting someone have them. They're less noticeable than Forces, since no one else can know what attunements you have until you use them, but they can *only* come from a Superior (or a Word-bound celestial; see p. 26). Accepting

attunements from Lords other than your own invites trouble – your Master *will* notice, the next time he sees you in celestial form. If the Superior who gave you the attunement is an ally or an associate, then it's probably all right (as long as you *tell* your own Lord about it), but if he's neutral, your Boss will have some very sharp questions about what you did to earn it . . . and if he's hostile, you're probably in deep trouble.

Choir/Band Attunements

Only Superiors can grant Choir and Band Attunements. Remember that you *cannot* receive a Choir/Band Attunement that relies on a resonance you don't possess (*In Nomine*, p. 36), nor can you receive the Choir/Band Attunement of any Choir or Band but your own from another Superior. (That is, Yves can give the Seraph of Destiny attunement to any of his own Servitors, or to a Seraph of Judgment, but not to a Mercurian of Judgment.) Humans, except in unusual cases (*Corporeal Player's Guide*, p. 23), cannot receive Choir or Band Attunements; nor can ethereals. Angels (including Outcasts) cannot receive Band Attunements, or vice versa. Additional Choir/Band Attunements cost 5 points.

Instant gratification takes too long.

– Carrie Fisher

Servitor Attunements

Superiors (and some Word-bound celestials, p. 26) can grant Servitor Attunements to anyone, even ethereals, humans (if they have at least 6 Forces), or celestials on the other side! (An angel who *accepts* a diabolical attunement will gain a point of dissonance, and another point every time he uses it! Only under the most unusual circumstances might an Archangel even consider giving a demon a Servitor Attunement . . .) Servitor Attunements cost 10 points.

SKILLS AND SONGS

Skills and Songs can be acquired independently of one's Superior, and even your own Superior can't tell what skills and Songs you know unless you use them . . . making them quite popular with ambitious demons. They're also cheap, costing 1 point per level, regardless of how useful or rare. It takes time to learn, however, and the GM shouldn't commonly allow new skill or Song levels to be added during a game session. Both skills and Songs usually require a teacher, though some skills can be studied on one's own, and there are other means of acquiring Songs (see *Liber Canticorum*, pp. 12-14).

ROLES

Roles are useful, and can be very powerful in the corporeal realm. The GM should be wary of high-Status Roles; a PC head of state, billionaire, major religious leader, etc., can radically impact the game world. Roles – especially high-level ones – can't be created from scratch, and the higher a Role's Status, the more time it takes to maintain it, lest it degrade in effectiveness. (See *Liber Servitorum*, pp. 111-114.) If a PC wants to acquire a Role, or improve the level or Status of an existing one, he must actually spend time to make that Role more real.

SERVANTS AND ARTIFACTS

Servants must usually be granted by a Superior, though it's possible to acquire one on your own (see *Liber Servitorum*, pp. 116-125). Servants and artifacts are both very easy for Game Masters to regulate, since if they're being abused, the GM can take them away. Few celestials rely on these Resources, precisely because they can be lost. Take care that PCs don't pick up lots of helpful minions (*Liber Servitorum*, p. 125) and use them as servants. Also don't let characters accumulate artifacts without paying for them. Some relics are simply too powerful to be left in PC hands for more than one adventure. The *Liber Reliquiarum* has more on the use and control of artifacts in a campaign.

RITEs

Superiors (and Word-bound celestials, p. 27) often teach new Rites as a reward. Anyone, including humans, can learn a Rite, but since a Rite taps into the Word-holder's Essence, they won't give Rites to anyone likely to work *against* their Word. A Superior can't tell what Rites you know by examining you, but he *will* know where the Essence is coming from if he observes you performing the Rite! Rites can't normally be purchased with character points, but must be earned during play. The GM *may* choose to allow characters (particularly humans) to begin the game with one or more extra Rites, purchased for 3 character points each.

DISTINCTIONS

Distinctions can't be purchased with character points; they require roleplaying. They are never easy to come by; most celestials will labor for many years without being promoted.

The higher you go in the divine or infernal hierarchy, the more responsibility you have. Superiors pay more attention to Servitors with a Distinction, which may not always be a good thing! And the higher your rank, the more you have to do to *defend* your position. Diabolicals are extremely status-conscious – promotions always generate resentment

and paranoia. Even angels may find rank involves them in political maneuvering they'd rather avoid. Unless you want your game to move into celestial politics, avoid letting PCs earn Distinctions until they've spent a *lot* of time in service and performed spectacularly well.

Vassals and Knights

A 1st-level Distinction marks a Servitor as someone with definite potential. He may have no major influence yet, but everyone knows he's captured his Lord's favor. Vassals and Knights are usually put in positions of minor authority; lower-ranking Servitors of the same Superior are expected to obey them unless they're following orders from someone with a higher rank. Servitors of other Superiors aren't obligated to obey them, but are expected to show respect. (In practice, this depends a lot on who they serve and what relations are like between their Superiors, of course.)

Friends and Captains

A 2nd-level Distinction is a position of real responsibility. On the celestial plane, Friends and Captains are "middle managers." In the corporeal realm, they're either independent specialists, acting with near-autonomy, or else put in charge of important operations. They can command assistance from fellow Servitors, and even allied Servitors are expected to obey them if it doesn't conflict with their current assignments.

Masters and Barons

A 3rd-level Distinction is the highest normally attained by Earthbound Servitors; anyone who wants to climb further will have to spend at least as much time in Heaven or Hell as on Earth, maneuvering and currying favor with his Superior. Masters and Barons are usually the ranking Servitors in an area, answerable to no one but their Archangel or Prince. All lesser Servitors (including allies) are expected to obey them, and even servants of neutral or hostile Lords will think twice before challenging their authority directly – partly because Masters and Barons are quite powerful in their own right, partly because showing disrespect to such a high-ranking angel or demon reflects poorly on the hierarchy as a whole. It's dangerous to trifle with the mighty.

Higher Distinctions

Ranks higher than Master and Baron exist, but are rarely seen on Earth. Hell's peerage is more formal; above Barons are Counts, then Marquises, then Dukes, who are second only to a Prince. These titles are in addition to any unique Distinctions a Prince may grant (Baal, for example, has Generals who are also Dukes). Heaven has fewer higher Distinctions, all of them particular to those Archangels who choose to grant them.

Higher Distinctions are given only to those who play the political game well *and* serve their Superior's Word unquestioningly for centuries, if not millennia. They are given broad areas of responsibility, a demesne in their Superior's Cathedral or Principality, and are usually planning the War from Heaven or Hell. These ranks are not appropriate for player characters.

WORDS

Gaining a Word is a significant event, even more significant than gaining a Distinction, though a Word in itself does not convey any rank. Word-bound characters are described in detail beginning on p. 21.

Working Word-bound characters into an adventure may be awkward, since they *always* want to advance their Words, and are loathe to get involved in any project that doesn't. A party of Word-bound PCs would be extremely powerful . . . and unlikely, given the inevitable conflicts between multiple Words. However, a minor Word-bound could work with most PC groups, provided he has tangential goals that let him promote his Word. Important Words will tend to dominate the adventure, but the GM might permit a powerful Word-bound character to recruit an entourage of his own (other players could play his Servitors, possibly even taking turns playing the Word-bound). Word-bound celestials are often the most dangerous opponents PCs will face, and their agendas and rivalries can drive a campaign, without ever needing to get a Superior directly involved.

INTANGIBLES

Characters can become powerful in ways that don't cost character points. Celestials also measure puissance in terms of influence; even a weak celestial with no Word or Distinction may be reckoned powerful if others come to him for valuable knowledge or services.

Knowledge

Some celestials become experts . . . often on obscure subjects of interest only to themselves, but sometimes they deliberately choose knowledge other celestials will find useful. This may be for the purpose of obtaining a Word, or just for the commodity value of information. A demon might acquire a high-level, unobtrusive Role and go about becoming an expert on angels and divine Tethers in the area. Without ever engaging the Host directly, he acquires information for which other Diabolicals will pay dearly. An angel might become intrigued by some new technology or cultural phenomenon – if it's just a fad, his interest will remain an obscure hobby, but if it becomes more important, other angels will want to know what he knows. If it's really important, he might even be chosen for a Word. The first celestials who took an interest in computer networks, while others were dismissing it as a novelty with no practical applications, capitalized on the power of the Internet to boost their Superiors' Words.



Extortion is an application of knowledge beloved by demons (and sometimes used by the more ruthless angels). Knowing what others would rather you didn't gives you power, and not a few Diabolicals specialize in uncovering and using just that sort of information. Of course, having blackmail material on others also gives them a good reason to want you dead . . .

Influence

"It's not what you know, it's *who* you know" is often true in celestial circles. Someone who becomes friends with powerful, higher-ranking celestials become someone others come to when they want a favor from a higher-up. Demons learn their bootlicking skills early; sucking up to the right person means that if he rises to prominence, some of his glory may reflect on you. (Of course, the same thing is true in reverse . . .) Angels aren't so obsequious, but being buddies with the local Seneschal (or triad of Judgment) can get you cooperation from those who hope you'll put in a good word for them.



Favors

Lilim aren't the only ones who trade in favors . . . though they're the best at it. Lilim rank each other by the Geases they owe, and the Geases they're owed. By "brokering" their Geases (agreeing to invoke a Geas they hold on someone for a task another client wants performed), they treat Geases as currency. (See *Fall of the Malakim*, pp. 28-31, for more on the mechanics of Geases.)

While other celestials can't impose Geases to make sure their favors will be repaid, they can still keep track of who owes whom, and if someone useful or powerful owes you a favor, that's worth something. (There's always the problem of making them "pay up," of course, especially if they're more powerful than you. In particular, demons aren't known for their sense of gratitude or reciprocity.) Because this kind of mercenary *quid pro quo* is regarded as the province of the Tempters, angels frown on it, and demons often avoid it just because they don't want hassles from Lilim who view them as competitors. Nonetheless, some celestials (and a

few humans!) have built a successful career out of peddling favors from angels and demons. In fact, sometimes demons who build a reputation for being reliable have better luck than Lilim at extracting services from angels. An angel might refuse to deal with a Lilim at all, but if he feels he has *control* over what he has to do in return, he may be willing to negotiate . . .

PUNISHMENTS

If a mission is unsuccessful, then at the end of the adventure, not only will the character not receive *any* of the rewards described on p. 9, but he may be punished. Not reporting to your Superior after a failed mission may save you from punishment for the time being . . . but it may make your punishment *worse* when he finally catches up with you.

Every Superior has a different attitude toward punishment. Some won't hesitate to scatter the Forces of an impudent Servitor, while others rarely inflict more than a scolding. Typical punishments are described below.

Punishments can be combined for major debacles. On the other hand, a mission ending in mixed success might earn punishments *and* rewards. An angel of Judgment who lets an Outcast get away while succeeding in his primary objectives may receive a lesser reward than he would otherwise, or he might be demoted in rank while simultaneously being granted a new Song. Beleth might reward a Servitor for succeeding in his mission, but inflict the Bound Discord for using his celestial form to do it.

Dissonance

Dissonance is painful and limiting for celestials, but easily removed. Demon Princes are very free with dissonance, and often use it as a minor punishment, demanding that the demon either work it off on his own, or perform some other task to get it removed. Archangels rarely impose dissonance, since it pushes an angel a little closer toward Falling, but sometimes find it instructive as a temporary lesson.

Discord

Discord is more difficult to remove than dissonance, so it's usually imposed for specific crimes. Often, Discords are chosen for irony or to reinforce "proper" behavior. Novalis might punish a violent angel with the Merciful Discord; Baal might make a demon who ran from a fight Berserk! Discords imposed as punishments must be worked off in the normal manner: by completing missions successfully. No Superior will impose Discord that hinders his Servitor's ability to serve.

Removing Resources

What your Lord giveth, he can take away. Artifacts, servants, and Roles can be taken away as punishment for misusing them, or for relying on them too much, or sometimes just to discipline a Servitor who's not performing well enough to deserve such perks.

A more severe punishment for misconduct is to remove an attunement. (A Superior will rarely take a native Choir or Band Attunement away – that's one of the essential qualities that makes a celestial a Servitor.) It will take a long time to re-earn an attunement.

Servitors with Distinctions may be demoted; this is much like having an attunement removed, but with the addition of public humiliation. Some Princes promote and demote frequently; others won't bother keeping a Servitor who deserves losing a Distinction. Archangels hate to strip Distinctions away, but may do so for gross negligence.

Stripping skills and Songs away is more difficult; most Superiors can't remove knowledge that precisely. If someone knows secret Songs or possesses other knowledge a Superior doesn't want him to, it may be easier to just strip his Ethereal Forces . . .

Stripping Forces

Stripping Forces is extremely painful for celestials. Princes do this more often than Archangels – some use it as a common punishment for disobedience or insolence, and as a way of keeping ambitious Servitors from gaining power too rapidly. It keeps Servitors in line without taking away Resources that can be used in the Prince's service. Archangels may strip Forces also, if sufficiently angered. Stripping a Force is considered a severe punishment; removing more than a single Force is a sign that the Servitor is very close to being cast out or destroyed. Superiors can choose which realm to strip.

Disfavor

Casting a Servitor out of one's service is the most severe punishment a Superior can inflict, short of destruction. Archangels and Demon Princes both sometimes transfer Servitors involuntarily, if another Superior is willing to take them. A Superior who has *no* further use for a disobedient or incompetent Servitor may shatter his Heart and make him Disfavored instead. Dominic does not approve of making angels Outcasts – he'd rather see them destroyed than risk their becoming demons. Some Archangels loathe slaying an angel outright, however, and hope that the experience will teach their former servant the virtues of serving Heaven. A suitably repentant angel may eventually be taken back in, or seek service with another Archangel. Demon Princes may destroy a useless Servitor, or make him Renegade, depending on their whims . . . some find it more entertaining to shatter a Servitor's Heart and then report him to the Game.

Disfavored celestials sometimes find another Superior willing to give them a Heart and a second chance; they usually start at the bottom of their new organization.

Destruction

Some Superiors destroy disobedient Servitors out of hand, particularly Dominic, Baal, and Saminga. Others never do; some Archangels (like Blandine and Novalis) can't bring themselves to slay a Servitor. Some Princes (like Andrealphus and Kobal) would never kill a Servitor when there are so many more . . . *interesting* things to do with him.

PUNISHMENTS FOR HUMANS

Human servants can be given many of the same punishments as celestials. Soldiers of God aren't held to the same standards as angels – they're only human, after all. However, disobedience will usually result in a loss of privileges (and Resources), and disloyalty is a death sentence. Soldiers of Hell are much more expendable, and can expect punishments to be straightforward, ranging from beatings to death.

Superiors can impose some Discords (actually disadvantages – see the *Corporeal Player's Guide*, p. 25) on humans, and remove attunements . . . and with great difficulty, Forces. Humans are rarely worth the trouble, though – a human who deserves to lose his supernatural powers is usually considered unworthy to be a Soldier.

Saints are treated more leniently; having already attained Heaven, it's *forbidden* for Archangels to destroy them. The worst that might be done to a Saint who becomes corrupted by the corporeal realm is to destroy his vessel, and refuse to let him return to Earth again.

Undead, on the other hand, are even more expendable than Soldiers (especially since most of them serve Saminga). Incompetent or disobedient undead may be slapped with supernatural Discords/disadvantages (or with more corporeal ones, like having limbs removed), but most often, they're simply destroyed. Saminga can always make more undead.

Most Superiors only destroy a Servitor outright when he's proven himself utterly useless – or when he is in open rebellion. Obviously, for player characters, disfavor is preferable to destruction; PCs should only be destroyed if they leave the Superior no other option. (Everyone should know that giving Baal backtalk, or defying Dominic to his face, is suicide.)

Other Punishments

There are many other things Superiors can do to punish wayward Servitors. Some punishments are meant to teach lessons – an angel or demon might be forced to *serve* a human, or forbidden to return to the celestial plane. The penalty for failing a mission might be undesirable assignments, ranging from the boring (like cataloguing books in Kronos' Archive), to the dangerous (like infiltrating a city dominated by the other side). Some Superiors give their Servitors weak or unappealing vessels (like three-legged dogs); others assign them to undesirable Roles (an angel too enamored of corporeal luxuries may be forced to live as a pauper; a demon who grows too complacent in a comfortable Role might be sent to wander the Earth as a vagabond). One common punishment is to "lend" a Servitor to another Superior. Discipline is usually tailored to suit the offense, but an unforgiving Superior might still impose a punishment out of proportion to the crime.

DISSONANCE AND DISCORD

Dissonance (*In Nomine*, p. 57) infiltrates a celestial's personal symphony when he acts out of tune with his resonance. It introduces painful notes that make it more difficult for angels to hear the true Symphony, and harder for demons to impose their internal symphonies upon it. A celestial with too much dissonance will start to resonate *differently* . . . either heading toward a diabolical resonance (for angels) or generating *Discord* (for demons).

Discord (*In Nomine*, p. 60) is a permanent affliction, normally manifesting as a result of too much dissonance. It's a tangible manifestation of a celestial's disharmony. Discord is always visible in celestial form.

Superiors can remove dissonance and Discord, though removing dissonance is easier. There are a few ways that celestials can remove dissonance (*In Nomine*, p. 59), the most common being to spend time working at a Tether. Other methods for each Choir and Band are discussed in the *Angelic* and *Infernal Player's Guides*, respectively. Discord is much harder to get rid of . . . normally, only a Superior can do it, though powerful artifacts and Songs can remove certain kinds of Discord.

Humans *cannot* acquire dissonance – they have no resonance! Humans also can't acquire Discord the way celestials can, though they can acquire physical, mental, and spiritual defects, called *disadvantages*, which are very similar to Discord (see the *Corporeal Player's Guide*, p. 25).

ACQUIRING DISSONANCE

Dissonance is *painful* for celestials. It results from behaving in a manner that is unnatural and unpleasant. Dissonance conditions are *not* invisible tripwires. A celestial who acts dissonantly is doing something he *dislikes* . . . or should. Seraphim are truthful because lying is deeply offensive to them – not because truthfulness is an inconvenient restriction upon them! To Seraphim, the sound of a lie is a painful jarring sound in the Symphony, and a lie in a Seraph's mouth is a foul-tasting abomination. A Seraph who lies is *forcing* himself to act in an un-Seraphic manner. It is this violation of one's own nature that causes dissonance, not the violation of external "rules" enforced by the Symphony.

Demons usually suffer dissonance because they have tried to impose their personal symphonies on others, and failed. Dissonance results when they are reminded that the Symphony is greater than their selfish reality. Demons have more freedom to do as they please, and fewer internal restraints on their behavior . . . but they suffer the consequences for overreaching themselves.

SELFLESSNESS AND SELFISHNESS

In a high-contrast campaign (p. 35), where angels are Good and demons are Evil, both might suffer dissonance for acting "out of character." If an angel acts selfishly, or a demon acts selflessly, he is violating his intrinsic nature. How strictly you enforce this depends on how high your contrast is, and how serious your campaign. An angel might be permitted minor misdeeds while suffering dissonance for committing major sins, or he might suffer dissonance for cursing, or breaking any of the Ten Commandments! Demons might be permitted to act "nice," if it suits them, but take dissonance for doing anything truly altruistic . . . or they might be required to act mean and nasty at all times, and suffer dissonance for the slightest act of charity.

Word-Dissonance

Word-dissonance does not occur because your Superior is constantly watching you, and afflicting you with dissonance when you disobey his rules. A celestial bound to a Word (his own or his Lord's) *feels* that Word as part of his resonance; acting against it is as painful and unpleasant as acting against his Choir or Band nature. When an angel of Stone strikes first, or attacks from a distance, he acts in a weak, un-Stonelike manner. A demon of Dark Humor is attuned to *Kobal's* personal symphony, which reassures all his minions that others exist to be scorned and mocked. A demon of Dark Humor who fails to act accordingly is out of tune with his Word, and loses his grasp on the internal symphony he accepted by following Kobal.

While lesser Words don't come with extra dissonance conditions, anything the GM deems to be acting against one's Word is potentially dissonant. The Angel of Cities, a Servitor of David, must obey Stone's dissonance conditions, but she may also suffer dissonance if she does anything that harms her own Word of Cities (see p. 29).

*History teaches us that men
and nations behave wisely once
they have exhausted all other
alternatives.*

– Abba Eban

Skirting the Edge – Feeling Dissonant

Because celestials resonate to the Symphony a certain way, *any* action that's out of tune with their resonance is potentially dissonant. You're not safe just because you obey the letter of your dissonance conditions; you have to obey them in spirit.

Thus, celestials who "skirt the edges" of their dissonance conditions are playing with fire. Seraphim who try to find ways to "bend the truth" without *technically* lying, Elohim who rationalize subjective actions as objectively good, Impudites who turn their backs and walk away when they know a human is about to die ("I didn't *know* it was going to happen; it's not like I actually stood there watching . . .") should feel a prickly, self-loathing sensation in their gut that tells them they're moving out of tune with their resonance.

It is up to the GM whether such "borderline" behavior will actually incur a point of dissonance. It's recommended that in cases where the *player* is unsure, the character get a "warning" sensation. If he continues on that course, his uneasy feeling will become dissonance.



ACQUIRING DISCORD

Discord can be acquired in several ways, described below. Sometimes the Discord that manifests is random (*In Nomine*, p. 89); other times it is directly related to its origins. Note that Discord acquired after character creation *never* provides additional character points!

Converted Dissonance

A celestial may always turn any dissonance he has into Discord; every 3 points of dissonance, or fraction thereof, will become 1 level of Discord. The player may roll randomly, or add levels to an existing Discord; otherwise, the GM chooses an appropriate Discord. Celestial Discord is relatively uncommon, and should not be assigned casually – either there should be a reason for the specific Celestial Discord that manifests, or it should be a random result. Discord doesn't manifest in a predictable manner, so the guidelines below are only *suggestions*. It's possible for dissonance to become a seemingly unrelated Discord, such as a violent Mercurian developing a Vulnerability to sunlight.

Dissonance resulting from violating one's Choir or Band nature often transforms into Choir- or Band-specific Discord. Acting against one's Word may result in Discord that enforces that Word – a demon of Gluttony who violates Haagenti's dissonance conditions may wind up with

the Gluttonous Discord. Sometimes Discord manifests in ways that may be subconsciously influenced by the celestial himself; an angel of Stone who keeps hitting people first might lose his hand, as dissonance becomes the Crippled Discord. Other times, the Discord may exacerbate the celestial's dissonant behavior; an angel of War who retreats from battle may become Cowardly.

Spontaneous Warping

There are a few supernatural events that can inflict Discord, such as ethereal combat, which afflicts anyone who falls to 0 Mind hits with Ethereal Discord (*In Nomine*, p. 63). It's also possible for a celestial to incur Discord as a result of an unfavorable Intervention. A more common type of spontaneous warping is when a diabolical fails a dissonance roll (*In Nomine*, p. 58). As with converted dissonance, this kind of Discord may augment an existing Discord, be rolled randomly, or be assigned by the GM.



Punishment

Discord assigned as punishment by a Superior is discussed on p. 14. This sort of Discord is not random; the Superior will choose the celestial's affliction.

VESSELS

Celestials do not have a natural corporeal form; most have to own a created one in order to interact with the corporeal world. Some celestials refer to vessels as “flesh puppets” or “meat suits.” A vessel’s durability is determined by its level (representing the amount of Essence invested in its creation) and its owner’s Corporeal Forces.

Celestials can have multiple vessels, and most experienced celestials prefer to have at least one “spare.” While occupying a vessel on Earth, any other vessels vanish until summoned forth. When an angel or demon assumes celestial form, his vessel disappears into the same place. (Where it goes is unknown; many celestials believe vessels go to Limbo when they’re not in use.) Normally, the only way to manifest more than one vessel at a time is by storing one in a relic called a Body Bag (*Liber Reliquarum*, p. 53).

*God made man in his image,
then man returned the favor.*
– Voltaire

Vessels are *not* interchangeable – only the celestial who owns a vessel can summon it and banish it. It is possible for Kyriotes, or someone with the Song of Possession, to temporarily possess another celestial’s vessel. A Superior can transfer ownership of a vessel from one celestial to another (if one or both celestials are not his Servitors, they must agree to the exchange) – this is sometimes how Roles are transferred.

CREATION

It’s said that only Superiors can create a vessel, but this isn’t precisely true – anyone can learn how to do it. All you need is enough Essence, and corporeal matter to animate. The latter is difficult, since you can’t just animate any old lump of clay, and the first part can be a problem, since it takes more Essence than most celestials can hold: 15 points per level, multiplied by the prospective inhabitant’s Forces. Thus, a vessel/3 for a 9-Force celestial requires 405 Essence.

What’s really difficult, though, is breathing *life* into the creation. This “breath of life” (called *ruach* in Hebrew) is what imbues all that Essence into the waiting construct and makes it a living, breathing *vessel*, and only Superiors know how to do it (it’s rumored to be a secret Song). Furthermore, only a Superior can *attach* a celestial to a vessel.

There *are* ways to bypass these steps, though. Ethereal spirits can create vessels from their “Essence cache” (*The Marches*, pp. 110-111), and celestials in Limbo seem to be

able to access a similar Essence reserve *and* summon forth a vessel (*Heaven and Hell*, p. 79). It even costs slightly less Essence to do so from Limbo – only 15 points per level, multiplied by the *typical* Forces of the type. (So a rat vessel/1 costs 15 Essence, while a human/2 costs 150.)

Then there’s the mysterious substance known as Primordial Clay (*Liber Reliquarum*, pp. 89-90), with which celestials (and, it’s rumored, human enchanters) can also create vessels. But without recourse to any of these methods, even if a celestial somehow gathers enough Essence, and creates a suitable vessel, he will still need a Superior to complete the final steps.

Physiology

Normally, vessels are immortal, and immune to disease. They are tireless, and don’t need food or water. They are infertile without the help of special attunements or Songs. They don’t need to excrete normally (but must expel waste eventually if they choose to eat or drink). Vessels *do* need to breathe – this seems to be a necessary component of their animation. It’s assumed in *In Nomine* that a vessel will pass for human (or whatever) even with a thorough medical examination; in reality, advanced medical technology could probably discern an organism that doesn’t age, suffer fatigue, or need to eat or drink, but it’s recommended that this “realistic” detail be ignored unless the GM wants to deal with it.

Non-Human Vessels

Vessels don’t have to be human. A Superior can create a vessel in any form he likes (including inanimate objects). Animal vessels have all the abilities of that creature – use the description of animal abilities in *In Nomine*, p. 191, as guidelines. Animal vessels *don’t* automatically get the animal’s skill-equivalents, though the GM might choose to assign a bonus for certain activities. Thus, a wolf vessel would have a Power +2 bite and a running speed of 12 × Agility. It would not automatically come with Tracking skill, though the GM might give it a bonus on Perception rolls to detect odors. Vessels can all talk, but otherwise suffer the appropriate limitations of their form (such as having no hands, or being colorblind).

Some celestials may want more formidable vessels, including forms that don’t exist in nature, such as a winged monkey or an armor-plated, amphibious humanoid. If a character can convince his Superior to grant him an unusual or “monster” vessel, these features may make the vessel more “expensive”; see *Unusual Vessels*, p. 19.

APPEARANCE

A Superior can fashion a vessel with any appearance he likes, including an exact duplicate of another person (or vessel!). If the Superior is able to observe the subject he’s duplicating, he can make a vessel that’s identical right down to its fingerprints and DNA.

UNUSUAL VESSELS

Some characters may want vessels with “unusual” features, like wings or night vision or two heads. Superiors rarely grant such requests, *especially* if the vessel is clearly “unnatural”; angels and demons running around on Earth in monstrous vessels is *not* how Heaven or Hell chooses to fight the War.

If there’s a good reason why a character should have an unusual vessel, and the GM chooses to allow it, there are two ways to handle it:

- ✕ Don’t charge anything extra; treat such vessels similarly to animal vessels (p. 18), and assume that any advantages (like wings, claws, or 360° vision) are outweighed by the fact that the vessel can’t be used in public. This assumes the abilities are within “normal” parameters; an elephantine hide that provides 2 points of Protection might be reasonable, but a bulletproof hide worth 6 points of Protection is clearly supernatural! Likewise, “hidden” abilities (such as a human vessel with night vision, or the ability to breath underwater) should cost character points.

- ✕ Allow vessels to be purchased with extra abilities that add to their cost; these abilities are called *Features*.

Features

Features are extra abilities added to a vessel. *Charisma (In Nomine)*, pp. 48-49) is the most common feature. Supernatural Features are variations of Corporeal Songs, and only those that represent *physical* abilities or alterations should be permitted. Most such Features can be repre-

sented with Numinous Corpus. As always, anything the GM doesn’t like is forbidden.

Vessel Features function like the Song they’re based on, except they work automatically and don’t cost Essence. Aside from duration, the Feature’s effects are calculated as if the Song were performed with a successful CD of 0, and 0 Essence spent. The equivalent level of the Song is equal to the level of the Feature; this is also its character point cost.

Example: *A demon of Nightmares talks Beleth into letting him have a four-armed, bat-winged vessel with perfect night vision. The two extra arms are supplied by Numinous Corpus: Arms (Liber Canticorum, p. 43) as a level 2 Feature; the wings come from Numinous Corpus: Wings (Liber Canticorum, p. 45) purchased at level 1, and night vision is provided by the Corporeal Song of Sight (Liber Canticorum, p. 54), also purchased at level 1 (there’s no benefit to buying either of the last two at a higher level).*

The total cost for these Features is 4 points; a Vessel/2 with permanent wings, extra arms, and night vision would cost $(2 \times 3) + 4 = 10$ points. If this vessel should be slain, however, there’s no guarantee Beleth will give the demon another one with the same Features, and if she doesn’t, the extra points are lost.

Anything that doesn’t have a Song equivalent costs whatever the GM feels is appropriate; minor abilities (such as a dog vessel with opposable thumbs) typically cost 1 point each, but highly useful Features may cost more.

Most celestials have a favorite vessel. If that vessel should die, their Superior will usually replace it with an identical one. Even if a celestial can’t always use an *identical* vessel, they can often be identified by their preferred “model” (muscular, Nordic-looking male, dark-skinned female with narrow hips and long fingers, etc.).

LOSS AND REPLACEMENT

A vessel’s cost (3 points per level, plus any Features – see box) represents your Superior’s willingness to give you such a gift. When a vessel is killed, the reaction of the owner’s Master depends on how the vessel was lost.

A vessel lost in a good cause will usually be replaced for free. Sacrificing one’s vessel to prevent a mission failure is not only acceptable, but expected. Dying *stupidly* is another matter. If your own bungling left you no choice but to sacrifice your vessel, your Lord might not replace it so cheerfully.

Malakim are given a lot more tolerance. It’s their *nature* to go through a lot of vessels, especially when they’re new to corporeal duty. Still, even Malakim aren’t expected to throw their lives away carelessly.

If your Boss thinks the loss of your vessel was avoidable, he might charge you some or all of the cost of replacing it, or he might give you a replacement that’s not as good as the original. Sometimes Superiors will inflict Corporeal Discord to go with a new vessel – of course, this Discord will manifest in *every* vessel that celestial owns until he earns its removal. This may be the only way someone who’s lost his last vessel and has no “goodwill” left (in the form of character points) can earn a new vessel; if he really, *really* wants to go back to Earth, his Superior will let him . . . as a puny, three-legged dog.

Optional Rule: *Let celestial’s accumulate Essence to help pay for new vessels; every $(15 \times \text{total Forces})$ points of Essence equals 1 vessel level. Of course the celestial needs some way of storing it until he has enough to offer his Superior; Superiors aren’t amused by Servitors who want to waste their time making trivial “deposits” every few days . . .*

CHANGING CHARACTERS

There may come a time when a player is not happy with his character, or when a character no longer fits into the campaign. If a celestial is frequently earning dissonance, it might be an indication that he's being played in a manner that doesn't suit the character. After the GM and the player discuss why the character is no longer satisfying, there are several options they might consider.

NEW CHARACTERS

You can, of course, "retire" a character and create a new one. The old character might simply be reassigned elsewhere, or the player and GM might concoct a dramatic story in which the "retiring" character is promoted, granted a Word, dies, or Falls or redeems!

The GM may require all new characters to start at the same level that the other PCs did. If the campaign has been running for a while and the other PCs have become fairly experienced, new characters might be allowed to start with more resources, so they won't be at any disadvantage (see *Extra Resources*, p. 6). It's strongly recommended that no new character be allowed to start with Distinctions or a Word, however . . . and a newly-introduced character who's not a 9-Force newcomer to the corporeal plane should have a back story to explain his additional experience.

ALTERING A CHARACTER

Instead of retiring an existing PC and starting play with a new one, the player might just want to *change* his character.

Changing Focus

Sometimes, a character concept that sounded interesting during the creation stage turns out to be less fun to play. An angel of Flowers may be left in the background of combat-oriented adventures. A Lilim who owes a number of interesting Geases might not work if the Geases don't provide the story hooks they were intended to. Servitors of the Wind and Theft will have problems if a lengthy adventure stays concentrated on one location.

The solution may be to shift the character's focus . . . or for the GM to change the *game's* focus. The angel of Flowers might decide to learn how to fight (reluctantly), and then drive the other angels crazy trying to insert more pacifistic proposals into their tactical plans. If the Lilim's Geases don't generate story ideas with their original owners, perhaps Lilith has done some trading . . . The GM can

find opportunities for Windies and demons of Theft to range farther afield. Making sure that every character gets equal time is a responsibility of the GM *and* the players, working together.

Changing Superiors

Sometimes a character doesn't work with his current Superior. This may be because relations have deteriorated and a Servitor is looking for greener pastures, but some Words just don't suit certain characters. An angel of Stone who can't wait for the other guys to strike first, an angel of Flowers with violent urges, a demon of Dark Humor who's not funny, or a demon of Theft who begins longing to settle down somewhere . . . these are all signs that a celestial might be better off serving someone else. Someone frequently at odds with his Superior's dissonance conditions might want to think about changing bosses.

The process of changing Superiors is described for angels in the *Angelic Player's Guide* (pp. 97-98), and for demons in the *Infernal Player's Guide* (pp. 93-94). If the change is prompted because the *player* isn't happy with his character's Superior, then the GM should facilitate the transfer somehow . . . which doesn't necessarily mean it should be easy on the character! It might require a great deal of negotiation and roleplaying, and a misstep might result in the former Servitor becoming an Outcast or Renegade instead!

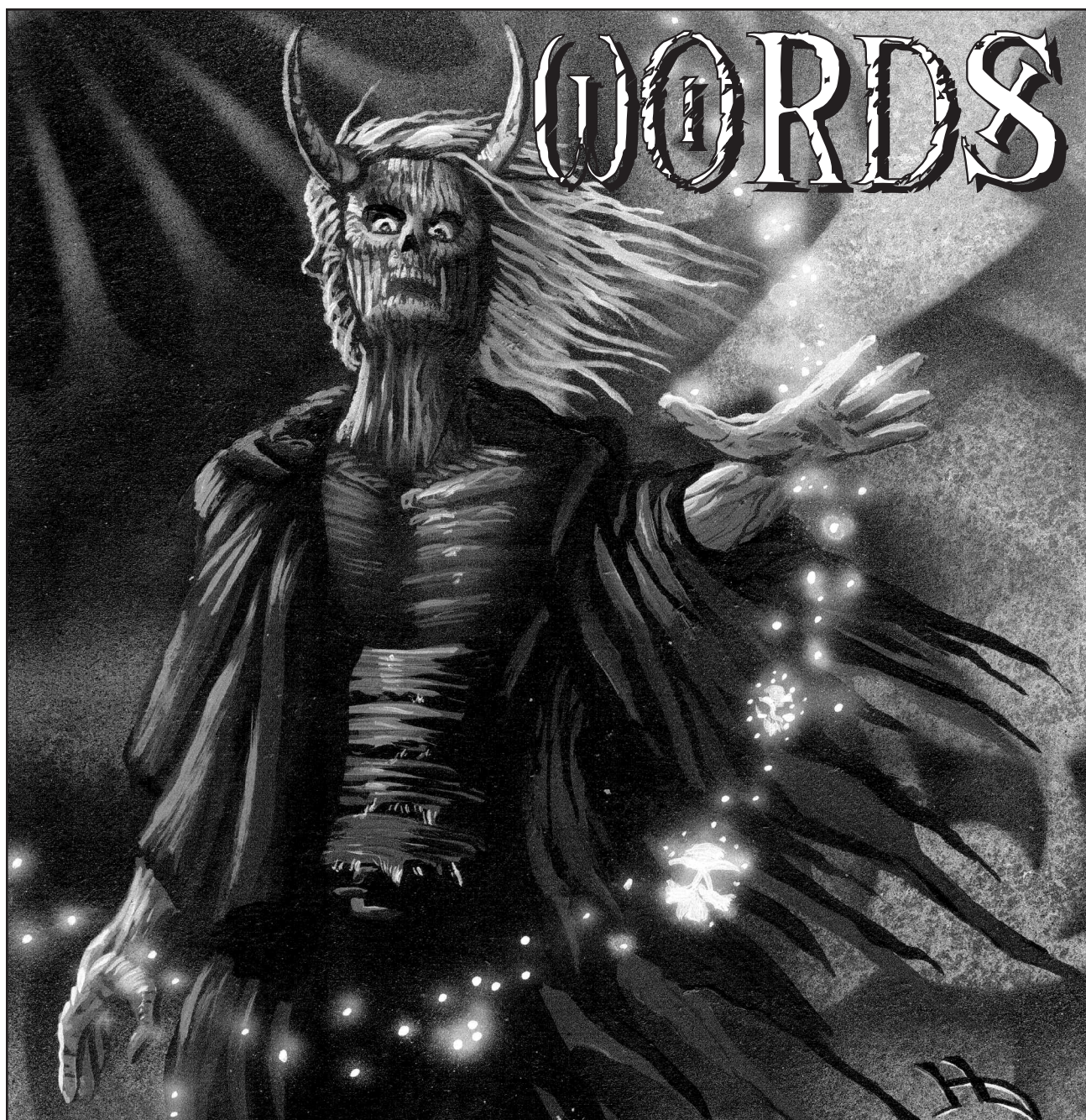
Changing Sides

Some players, after playing *In Nomine* from one perspective for awhile, may want to explore the possibility of roleplaying the other side instead.

Falling or redeeming (described in the *Angelic Player's Guide*, pp. 105-114, and the *Infernal Player's Guide*, pp. 113-115, respectively) is a *major* character change. Normally, it should not happen unless the player *wants* it to happen . . . though consistently playing an angelic character in a dissonant manner is bound to result in a Fall eventually. Having your character switch sides is a drastic move in the game, and should be a dramatic roleplaying event.

Except in a mixed angels/demons campaign, it's not likely you can continue to adventure with your former comrades when you've joined the other side. However, if there is a way for the GM to work a Fallen or redeemed PC into the game in his new status, this may be the solution for a character that's become frustrating as a result of his Choir or Word-based restrictions.





From the meanest Word-holders to Archangels and Demon Princes, the Word-bound are living embodiments of concepts. Saminga is Death, and his lowly Servitor, the Demon of Choking on Chicken Bones, is every chicken bone that lodges itself in someone's throat. It may not mean much in the greater scheme of things, but it's his reason for being – it's all he has and all he is. To become Word-bound means to be intertwined with a tiny part of the Symphony. You can play that aspect of the Symphony directly, but you are only as loud as your Word.

THE MEANING OF WORDS

A “Word” is not a literal word. It is a concept, something that actually exists in the Symphony. Human words merely approximate what can only truly be expressed in the celestial tongue.

Thus, while words may be ambiguous, *Words* are not. The Angel of Coke, a minor Servitor of David, has dominion over a petroleum byproduct of coal. He is not the angel of cocaine, nor of any carbonated beverage. Semantics do not change the scope of a Word; celestials embody ideas, not lexical items.

This doesn’t mean Words are rigidly-defined and static, however. While *semantic* changes in the human translation of a Word don’t affect its scope, physical or conceptual changes in a Word’s manifestation do.

A Word can change in two ways. First, if the Word is tied to a concrete object or place, then that object *is* the Word’s manifestation. (This most often affects Seneschals – see *Places*, below.) If a place expands, its Word will too. If an object or location which is a Word is destroyed, the Word becomes meaningless and the celestial bound to it will probably die (p. 28).

Words also represent concepts which can be interpreted in different ways by humans, highlighting a critical role humanity plays in the War: they affect not just the strength of a Word, but its manifestation.

Novalis, for example, is literally the Archangel of blooming plant life. But as the Archangel of Flowers, she also represents all metaphors linked to flowers. As the Archangel of Flowers, Novalis embodies flowers: peace, beauty, joy, etc. If flowers symbolized violence and bloodshed, Novalis would be a militant Archangel!

Word-bound celestials can sometimes expand the nature and scope of their Words by “attuning” themselves to new interpretations – and sometimes, external influences can change their Words in ways they don’t like! (See *Changing Your Word*, p. 30.)

TYPES OF WORDS

There are Words representing everything that can be conceived in the Symphony. People (professions, ethnic groups, those in certain situations or states of being), activities, places (usually Tethers, but sometimes other places are important enough to have celestials Word-bound to them), things, phenomena, ideas, and of course, virtues and vices . . . all spawn a multitude of Words. The power of a Word has little to do with its category, only its influence in the Symphony. The Seven Deadly Sins are powerful Words indeed, held by Demon Princes (if at all), but the Demon of Stiffing Waitresses is a very minor, penurious servant of Mammon, Prince of Greed. Much of the power of a Word is also determined by *how* it is wielded – see p. 26. There’s

CONCEPT, SEMANTICS, AND SLANG

Only the Game Master can decide when a slang term has actually settled into the mass consciousness of humanity sufficiently to add to the underlying metaphoric *concept* of a Word – but it’s not a trivial thing. Furthermore, the original concept of a Word may languish long enough to kill its holder before a new slang term catches on, even if he could have made the concept-shift in the first place!

Thus, David’s Angel of Coke could only acquire connotations of “cocaine” if nearly every human on Earth *intuitively* associated the petroleum byproduct of coal with the drug . . . which is highly unlikely to happen.

(Needless to say, cross-language puns and passing slang *never* affect the underlying concept of a Word.)

nothing that *can’t* be represented by a Word, though incredibly specific or obscure Words are rare; no Archangel needs an Angel of Witty One-Liners About Doctors in Family Sitcoms. Very broad and powerful Words, on the other hand, can only be handled by Superiors . . . or those with Superior potential.

WORDS IN THE SYMPHONY

A Word is a distinct Symphonic chord; by investing a celestial with a Word, the Seraphim Council or Lucifer attunes him to that chord. Words do not define elements in the Symphony; the Symphony defines Words. Not everything that *could* be a Word is assigned as one. Heaven and Hell only bind celestials to Words when there is some strategic value in doing so. There is no Angel or Demon of Apple Juice, for example, because no one has yet seen any value in promoting the cause of apple juice in the War. (Some Superiors do become enamored of obscure Words whose value is only apparent to them, however, and Lucifer and the Seraphim Council will often humor them.)

Even if a Word is important enough, there must be someone suitable, someone who will be completely, unfailingly devoted to it. A celestial must be an expert on a Word before he will even be considered for it (see *Obtaining a Word*, p. 31). Not every Word that Heaven or Hell would like to see represented has an eligible candidate ready to take it. The more important the Word, the more difficult it is to find the right celestial for the job . . . which is why abandoned Superior Words (pp. 25-26) usually remain unspoken for.

A Word can exist, even thrive, without any Word-bound celestial watching over it. Gluttony existed long before Haagenti was created, and obviously water still exists, even though Oannes, Archangel of the Waters, is dead. If a Word waxes or wanes, any celestial bound to it will grow or diminish in power accordingly (p. 27), but the reverse is *not* true. A Symphonic Word does not automatically weaken if the celestial who holds it dies, nor does granting a celestial a Word make that Word stronger.

It may *seem* that way, because it's a Word-bound celestial's job to increase the presence and influence of his Word. Without Andrealphus, humans would still lust, but he's done much to encourage naked, carnal desires; it's questionable whether Western society would be as sex-obsessed as it is if not for the Prince of Lust and his hard-working minions. Likewise, Raphael's destruction in battle with Legion did not bring an end to knowledge – indeed, the Renaissance and Enlightenment occurred shortly thereafter. But many angels credit her with beginning the trends that led to them, and humanity's increasingly materialistic focus is often blamed on the lack of an Archangel to promote the higher ideals of Knowledge.

Few Words are exclusively Heavenly or diabolical. Important Words will rarely be left to one side; any Word that has a major impact on the War *will* be countered. This doesn't necessarily mean an opposite number will be given the same Word (though this is a common response, *if* a suitable adversary is available – see pp. 32–33). However, either an existing Word-bound celestial will be assigned to counter the rival Word, or someone will be given a *similar* or *opposing* Word and appointed as a foil. (Many celestials believe that the reason the media has become such a blight upon civilization is that Heaven has yet to produce an effective counter to Nybbas.)

SUPERIORS AND WORDS

Most Words are subsets of larger Words; the Word of Choking on Chicken Bones is a subset of the Word of Choking, which falls in the domain of Death. The most powerful Words encompass broad themes – the most powerful of all being those of Superiors.

Because Superior Words have such broad scope, there is often overlap, and thus many Words could fall under the jurisdiction of more than one Superior. The Demon of Choking on Chicken Bones could as easily be a Servitor of Kobal as of Saminga. A Word-bound celestial's Superior will determine how he interprets and promotes his Word. If the Demon of Choking on Chicken Bones was a Servitor of Dark Humor, he would try to cause darkly humorous choking incidents. The Servitor of Death with that Word, however, takes a more serious view of his job, trying to cause as many chicken-bone fatalities as possible.



WORD-BOUND CELESTIALS WITH NO SUPERIOR

A few celestials (such as the newly Fallen or newly redeemed, and Free Lilim), serve no Master. It's possible for these celestials to attain Words as well. The Seraphim Council would never do this, of course, but God might (see p. 32). Lucifer *has* been known to give Words to Free Lilim on a few occasions, and he's *rumored* to have given Words to the mysterious "Unknown," the Fallen who never sought service with a Prince (*Angelic Player's Guide*, p. 114).

Disfavored Word-Bound

Outcasts and Renegades keep their Words, as long as they survive. An Outcast can only be stripped of his Word *in person* by the Seraphim Council, and Lucifer generally leaves Renegades alone . . . they are for Asmodeus (or their former master) to deal with.

The Seraphim Council has never granted a Word to an Outcast, but it's rumored that *God* has, once or twice. Likewise, while the Game denies it, there are persistent rumors that Lucifer has occasionally been so impressed by a Renegade that he gave the demon a Word.



Orphaned Word-Bound

When a Word-bound celestial is orphaned by the death (or Fall or redemption) of his Lord, usually he'll seek service under some other Superior. While Heaven will find a place for any angel in good standing, Demon Princes have little interest in supporting Words that contribute nothing to their own. Some orphaned Word-bound demons are forced to become Renegades when no Prince will take them in. And sometimes, a celestial may decide *he* doesn't like his choices, and refuse to serve a new Superior at all. Most of Uriel's Word-bound, for example, joined Laurence, but some of them chose to remain among the Outcast Tsayadim.



There's often competition between Superiors for the best Words. (Sometimes there is competition for unimportant Words; it might not have ever occurred to Saminga that he wanted a Servitor with the Word of Choking on Chicken Bones, until he heard that one of Kobal's demons was seeking it.) How such conflicts are resolved depends on the relationship between the two Superiors. Sometimes they will make a deal; other times they will play politics to sway the Seraphim Council or Lucifer. Often, there will be a contest between multiple aspirants to a Word, to see who is more worthy. (See *Obtaining a Word*, p. 31.) It's forbidden for Superiors to interfere directly in these contests, and it's considered bad form to destroy someone else's Servitor because he holds a Word you want for one of your own servants. Even so, it's always hazardous to hold a Word some other Superior wants – Superiors (especially Demon Princes) have been known to cheat during Word trials, or engineer the downfall of the winner if their candidate fails. Wise celestials make sure their own Lord will back them fully, or else they try to come to an understanding with any rival Superiors, before aspiring to a contested Word. In extreme cases, Word-bound celestials may actually switch Masters, either before or (more rarely) after attaining their Word.

WORD-BOUND CHARACTERS

Word-bound characters are like any other celestial, with the addition of a Word. Words are, by definition, unique, so no two Words provide exactly the same benefits, but it's possible to quantify their power.

WORD-FORCES

Word-Forces are an abstraction of the power accruing to a celestial because of his Word. For game purposes, a Word can be assigned a certain number of "Forces" based on its power in the Symphony (see *The Strength of a Word*, below). As a Word waxes and wanes (p. 27), its holder may gain or lose Word-Forces.

Word-Forces are added to an angel's regular Forces, *only* for the following purposes:

- ✧ The amount of Essence he can store.
- ✧ The amount of disturbance he makes when entering or leaving the corporeal plane, and when changing between vessels (*In Nomine*, p. 55).
- ✧ In celestial combat (*In Nomine*, p. 64), a Word-bound celestial may *choose* to lose a Word-Force instead of any other kind of Force, weakening his connection with his Word.

Word-Forces do *not* grant any additional characteristics or Resources, or add to any d666 roll.

Example: *Absinthia, the Demon of Writers' Block, has 3 Corporeal Forces, 4 Ethereal Forces, and 4 Celestial Forces. Her Word of Writers' Block is a minor one (p. 25) with 4 Forces. Absinthia can hold 15 points of Essence, and she counts as 15 Forces for purposes of making a disturbance in celestial form. She can also choose to lose Word-Forces instead being stripped of Corporeal, Ethereal, or Celestial Forces. For all other purposes, she is an 11-Force celestial.*

THE STRENGTH OF A WORD

The number of Forces bound into a Word indicates its strength in the Symphony. Celestials can only estimate this strength, since no one (except the Word-holder) knows exactly how many Word-Forces anyone has. The categories below are *abstractions* – rough guidelines, not absolute parameters – but it's rare for a Word's Forces to vary much outside a certain range, unless the Word itself becomes much more powerful or much weaker (see *Waxing and Waning with Your Word*, p. 27).

It's completely up to the GM to determine a Word's strength. The GM assigns Forces to a Word, and may decide that one of the *trivial* examples, below, is actually a *major* Word in his campaign.

Newly Word-bound celestials normally start with no more than the *lowest* number of Word-Forces for the strength of their Word – even with a thriving Word, it takes time to orient oneself to all its interpretations and the potential therein.

Trivial Word (1-3 Word-Forces)

Trivial Words are almost superfluous. Usually they are assigned for special reasons, or to indulge a loyal but obsessed Servitor who *has* to have it and can convince the Seraphim Council or Lucifer that it can actually serve the cause of Heaven or Hell. As Hell goes for quantity over quality, trivial Words are more likely to be diabolical than Divine.

Examples: *Choking on Chicken Bones, Goth Wannabes, Hot Sauce, Nightmares About Rabid Dogs, Stale Bong Water, Unexpectedly Short Fuses, very small, weak Tethers.*

Minor Word (4-6 Word-Forces)

A minor Word is something that most people have heard of, but which is unlikely to impact their lives. Often these Words are stepping stones to Words with more responsibility (see *Word-Promotion*, p. 30).

Examples: *Barbie Dolls, Falcons, Lies Told to Spouses, Nannies, Outdoor Sex, Pipe Bombs, Writers' Block, small Tethers.*

Significant Word (7-10 Word-Forces)

Significant Words may not have a daily impact on peoples' lives, but they're widespread, and if the Word disappeared from the world, it would have a noticeable effect. Under the right conditions, a significant Word can be very powerful.

Examples: *Air Disasters, Birds of Prey, Bombs, Highways, Police, Serial Killers, Ships, average Tethers.*

Important Word (11-15 Word-Forces)

Important Words are common throughout the world – not everyone encounters them all the time, but almost every human's life will be touched by them, at least indirectly, and many lives will be devoted to or destroyed by them.

Examples: *Artists, Birds, Hagglings, Kings, Nuclear Warheads, Poison, Repentance, Suicide, strong Tethers.*

Major Word (16-20 Word-Forces)

Major Words are always present on Earth; they are either part of nature or part of humanity. A world (or a human race) without one of these Words would be very different. Celestials bound to these Words could conceivably

approach a Superior in raw power, and *might* (though in most cases will not) someday become Archangels or Princes.

Examples: *Blame, Cities, Courage, Earthquakes, Enlightenment, Final Judgment, Music, Wisdom, the most powerful Tethers.*

Superior Word (21+ Word-Forces)

Acquiring more than 20 Word-Forces does *not* make a celestial a Superior; becoming a Superior is a quantum leap in power that must be facilitated by the Seraphim Council or Lucifer (see p. 117). However, for a Word to become this powerful, it must have become an critical factor in the War, intrinsic to the Symphony or inseparable from humanity. Angels who reach this level will be considered for Archangel status by their peers; demons will probably either be made Princes or destroyed.

Examples: *The Words of all the Archangels and Demon Princes.*



ABANDONED WORDS

Attunements are powered by a Word, not the celestial bound to it – though only a Word-bound celestial can grant one in the first place. As a Word continues to exist even after its guardian is no more (*Words in the Symphony*, p. 22), those who received attunements from a slain (or Fallen or redeemed) celestial can continue to use them, as long as the *Word* endures.

If the Word fades, however, attunements may stop working. This rarely happens with Superior-level Words; the rare orphaned Servitors of deceased Superiors like Mariel, Demon Princess of Oblivion, and Oannes, Archangel of the Waters, still have their attunements intact. Lesser Words that grow obsolete, however, like Buggy Whips or Foot-binding, with no living angel or demon to nurture what little is left of them, no longer have enough impact on the Symphony for someone to be attuned to them.

Unlike attunements, a Rite will no longer function if the Word has been abandoned; Rites require the existence of a Word-bound celestial to function as a conduit between the performer and the Symphony.



Word-Bound Remnants

If a Word-bound celestial becomes a Remnant, he keeps his Word. He may not *remember* his Word clearly, but he will still feel an affinity for it. His Word is treated the same as an abandoned one (above) for the most part, but the Word-holder himself may continue to use his Word's Rites, and he retains any powers that don't require the use of his resonance or Celestial Forces. Since a Remnant probably can't promote a Word effectively, his Word-Forces are likely to decline (and like other Word-bound, the Remnant will expire if his Word fades completely – p. 28), but granting another celestial the same Word causes the same problems as with other shared Words (p. 32).

POWERS

Words provide several other powers to their holders. These should be personalized for each Word-bound celestial, but generally fall into the following categories. The guidelines below are *suggestions* for how many abilities a celestial should gain, according to the strength of his Word (p. 24). If the character is a PC, the GM and player should agree on any new powers the Word-bound character acquires.

Special Abilities

Every Word-bound character should gain at least one special ability related to his Word. This ability can be anything the GM feels is appropriate, but its power should be proportionate to that of the Word. A celestial with a trivial Word should have a trivial power; the Demon of Hot Sauce might be able to increase the spiciness of any hot sauce he sees at will. An important Word should grant very useful abilities, on the level of a Superior's Servitor Attunements. The Angel of Courage might be capable of letting anyone disregard fear with a touch. The range, duration, Essence cost, and limits of such powers are all determined by the GM.

As a *general rule*, consider allowing a Word-bound celestial one special ability for every 5 Word-Forces (p. 24) or fraction thereof. As Words increase in strength, their special abilities become more potent.

Servitor Attunements

Some of the more powerful Word-bound can grant Servitor Attunements (see p. 11). The Demon of Sorcery, for example, can grant the Infernal Pact attunement (*Corporeal Player's Guide*, p. 28) to other demons, which allows them in turn to give the Sorcery attunement to humans. This is a very potent special ability – 10 Word-Forces is the recommended minimum.

The Essence cost of granting an attunement is equal to the recipient's total Forces. A Word-bound celestial can retract an attunement he has given with a touch, by spending Essence equal to the subject's total Forces again.

Every time a Servitor Attunement is used, it draws on the power of the Word from which it came. Proper uses of an attunement (i.e., uses that support the Word) have a neutral effect on the Word – the expenditure “pays for itself.” But applications that *diminish* the Word have a more deleterious effect than any mundane actions! If someone with Dominic's Incarnate Law attunement uses it to respect and enforce local laws, he affirms the Word of Judgment. Someone who uses the attunement to find loopholes, or opportunities to *break* the law unjustly, will weaken Dominic's Word (and surely incur his wrath).

While it would take *many* abuses to have a noticeable impact on a Superior's Word, the attunements of minor Word-bound pose a more severe threat if misused. Someone using the Infernal Pact attunement to create “white sorcerers” – sorcer-

ers who use their powers to achieve their destinies, instead of their fates – could cause a loss of Word Forces to the Demon of Sorcery (a Balseraph of Fate) with *each* sorcerer who is turned toward his destiny! A Word-bound celestial who is too generous with Servitor Attunements is cutting his own throat.

If a player character receives an attunement from a non-Superior, it might not cost character points (see *Other Rewards*, p. 10), but it *must* be earned by roleplaying. A Word-bound celestial will only give his attunements as a great reward to those devoted to his Word – normally, his own servitors. If a Word-bound player character starts giving attunements to other PCs (or numerous NPCs), the GM may wish to charge the recipients 10 character points each, and be harsh when calculating whether all these attunements are being used for the good of the Word . . .

Rites

Every Word-bound celestial has at least one Rite he can perform to gain extra Essence from his Word. Powerful Words may permit several ways to draw Essence from them; as a *general rule*, one Rite for every 5 Word-Forces or fraction thereof is appropriate. However, Word-bound celestials have to learn how to perform these Rites; they don't come automatically just because the Word gains Forces. On the other hand, a clever and resourceful celestial might find several ways to milk Essence even out of a minor Word. The GM can let a celestial have several Rites related to his Word, if the character has spent a lot of time and effort researching it. For player characters, it's recommended that each Rite after the first cost 3 character points, and should only follow an appropriate period of exploration and new experiences with the Word. A Word should *never* have more Rites available than it has Word-Forces. Rites that grant more than 1 Essence at a time are very rare, and should count as multiple Rites for this purpose.

Word-bound celestials may grant their Rites to others, just as Superiors can. However, Rites are corporeal actions that impact the Word's interpretation in the Symphony. Every performance of a Rite generates the power to strengthen, weaken, or alter a Word – more power than most mundane actions. For example, a Dream Soldier who terrorizes other dreamers while performing Beleth's Rite of spending 6 hours in her realm strengthens the Word of Nightmares, even while drawing Essence from it. But a turncoat, who spends that time helping other dreamers escape to Blandine's side of the Marches, *siphons* Essence from Beleth's Word!

As with attunements, a Superior's Rites would have to be misused *a lot* to have a noticeable effect, but a lesser Word-bound can suffer a loss of Word-Forces from just one person abusing his Rites. Thus, they cannot afford to give their Rites to the wrong people . . .

Normally, a Word-bound's Rites draw upon his link with his Superior's Essence. A Disfavored Word-bound loses access to his ex-Master's reserves, and any Rites will draw upon his *personal* Essence, instead!

WAXING AND WANING WITH YOUR WORD

As the strength of a Word waxes and wanes, so will the power of its holder. This applies to all of the Word-bound, from the Demon of Stale Bong Water to the Archangel of War. If a Word thrives, its holder can increase in power, perhaps someday even reaching Superior level (pp. 25, 117). But if his Word declines, so will he . . . and if a Word is snuffed out of existence, its holder rarely survives.

A Word's strength is measured by its influence on the Symphony, as described on p. 25. Some Words are strong enough to perpetuate themselves, requiring little maintenance by their holder, but few Word-bound celestials will ignore their Word in this manner. Even if a Word is stable, Heaven and Hell are constantly trying to degrade the others' Words; this is one of the most common activities in the War. A Word-bound celestial who isn't paying attention may suddenly find his Word becoming less popular, or worse, twisted (see *Word-Shift*, p. 31). The Demon of Pipe Bombs spends much of his time on the Internet nowadays, posting instructions on the care and handling of explosives – if he doesn't, he may not notice when divine agents make a concerted effort to bring down the websites and e-mail lists where this information can be found. Outside of cyberspace, other attacks on his Word may make pipe bombs less "cool" to angry, disaffected teenagers, or tighter legislation might make it harder for people to make them.



Many fluctuations in a Word are *short-term*. A famous event can give a Word a boost; the Demon of Air Disasters gains a Word-Force or two whenever there's a major air disaster, but this lasts only as long as it's a major media story. When it fades from the public consciousness, the Word of Air Disasters recedes to its usual level. A diligent celestial works hard to consolidate such gains; if the Demon of Air Disasters can keep disasters fresh on the public's mind, and even arrange a series of new ones relatively soon after the last, then he might keep his temporary boost. But this requires constant maintenance . . . as soon as air disasters decrease, and news coverage slips, he will be back where he started.

Likewise, the power of a Word can take a temporary dive; the Angel of Ships suffered the loss of a few Word-Forces in the wake of famous disasters like the *Titanic* and the *Lusitania*, but unless such events become commonplace, or cause a permanent decrease in the popularity of ships, these losses are temporary (though no less painful).

SENESCHALS

Full Seneschals are Word-bound celestials also – their Tether is their Word. The *Liber Castellorum*, pp. 28-37, describes the qualifications, duties, selection process, and powers of a Seneschal in detail. In most ways, they follow the same rules as other Word-bound celestials. A Seneschal's Word-Forces are equal to the Forces of his Tether (*Liber Castellorum*, p. 13), and these can be used as a guideline in determining what additional special powers and Rites the Seneschal gains (pp. 26-27). Like other Words, a Tether's power can wax and wane, with the same effects on its Seneschal.

The more powerful a Word is, the more it takes to strengthen or weaken it. A trivial Word can easily gain a Force with one highly-publicized event; the Demon of Choking on Chicken Bones would gain a Word-Force if a very famous person died choking on a wishbone. More powerful Words require a lot more; the Demon of Suicide receives a small boost when a celebrity kills himself, but rarely enough to gain a Force, even temporarily. Highly-publicized mass suicides like Jonestown and Heaven's Gate *might* give her a temporary boost of one Word-Force, but only a steady increase in the occurrence and acceptance of suicide in society will provide a reliable increase in power. Superior Words never gain noticeably as a result of a single incident, and it's rare for them to fluctuate significantly over the course of less than a year.

Gaining or losing Word-Forces can affect the holder's own Forces, as described below.

Gaining Word-Forces

When a Word gains influence – becomes more popular among humanity at large, or a more powerful force in the Symphony – it grows, and the celestial bound to that Word will gain Word-Forces.

The GM determines when a Word gains Forces. Word-Forces *cannot* be acquired with character points; an extra Word-Force is a reward from the GM for *excellent* roleplaying, at the conclusion of an adventure which clearly advanced the character's Word in a significant way, or after a long period of play during which the character diligently promoted his Word. The more powerful a Word becomes, the higher the GM's standards should be for allowing it to increase further.

Gaining enough Forces to rise into the next category (*The Strength of a Word*, p. 24) should occur *only* if the Word's importance in the War has risen to that level! *Minor* Words must be promoted relentlessly, and greatly increase their presence, in order to become *significant*, and to rise further, to the level of *important*, requires a small revolution (whether technological, ideological, or social).

As a Word gains Forces, the Word-holder may be given the opportunity to acquire new special abilities and Rites (pp. 26-27).

Losing Word-Forces

When a Word becomes *less* influential in the Symphony – manifesting less often, discredited, or less noticeable to the public – it loses Forces. This can also happen when its prevailing manifestation is twisted away from the interpretation promoted by its holder (*Word-Shift*, p. 31). Belial seeks to weaken Gabriel by making Fire a symbol of destruction and carnage only, obliterating its illuminating and inspirational aspects . . . thus, *he* might gain in power through his Word, while Gabriel, holding the same Word but with a divine aspect, would become weaker. Likewise, the Angel and Demon of Cities *both* gained Word-Forces as cities became bigger and more common, and would lose Word-Forces if the population began abandoning cities in large numbers. But the Angel of Cities could gain Word-Forces while hurting her rival if cities become cleaner, more civilized, and did more to promote a divine way of life, while the Demon of Cities would gain at his counterpart's expense if cities become more polluted, crime-ridden, and symbolic of corruption and urban despair. (See *Word Battles*, p. 33.)

As with gaining Word-Forces, it is up to the GM to decide when a Word loses Forces. A celestial who doesn't vigorously promote his Word will suffer a decline sooner or later . . . sooner, if the opposition is actively trying to erode it. A disastrous failure that inflicts great harm on a Word can also cause a lasting loss. Only a serious decline in a Word's overall influence will permanently drop it to a lower level of strength (p. 25), though.

A Word that loses enough Forces might cause the holder to lose some of his special powers, and even Rites, associated with it (see *Powers*, p. 26). For this reason, celestials struggling to preserve a declining Word will often sacrifice some of themselves to save their Word. Just as a celestial may choose to lose Word-Forces rather than normal ones in celestial combat, if his Word loses Forces, he may choose to take those losses to his own Forces instead (roll randomly for Corporeal, Ethereal, or Celestial). The reverse is *not* true – a celestial who gains Word-Forces *cannot* add them to his own Forces instead! If he takes a reduction in his own Forces rather than suffer a *temporary* decline in Word-Forces, *his* Force loss is still permanent!

Losing Word-Forces in celestial combat (p. 24) *can* result in the loss of Word-based powers, as described above. While losing Word-Forces in this way doesn't diminish the power of the Word in the Symphony, it does diminish the celestial's connection to it. It's slightly easier to recover from such a loss, since "temporary" gains in Word-Forces (p. 27) are permanent until the celestial's Word-Forces return to their normal level.

Losing Word-Forces (permanently *or* temporarily) also threatens to strip the holder's Forces. Whenever a Word-bound celestial loses a Word-Force (*except* when he chooses to lose one in celestial combat in lieu of a normal Force), he must make a d666 roll with a target number equal to his total (normal) Forces. Essence *can* be spent on the roll, but *the maximum target number is 12* – the Automatic Success rule does not apply to this roll! Failure means he loses a Corporeal, Ethereal, or Celestial Force also! *If* his Word-Forces exceed his normal Forces, then even on a successful roll, the check digit must exceed the difference between them (*after* the Word-Force reduction), or he suffers the same fate.

Example: *Salem, the Angel of Cities, has 15 Forces. Her Word is a major one (p. 25) with 18 Forces. In the past year, urban growth has stagnated worldwide, which is enough to cause her to lose 1 Word-Force. Her target number is 12 (not 15 – no bonus to her check digit). She cannot fail the roll (except on an Infernal Intervention), but she must still beat a check digit of $(17 - 15) = 2$, or lose one of her own Forces as well.*

If a Word falls to 1 Word-Force, then *every* subsequent loss of Word-Forces *automatically* strips one of the holder's Forces *instead*! A celestial bound to a dying Word will die with it.

Losing a Word

Usually, one can only lose a Word by losing all Word-Forces . . . which requires losing all of one's own Forces first and being dispersed into the Symphony. A celestial can't relinquish a Word even if he wants to (except by Falling or redeeming), and a Superior cannot remove a Word, even from his own Servitor.

The Seraphim Council can strip an angel in their presence of his Word. Lucifer can strip any demon of his Word. (It's unknown whether either can remove a *Superior's* Word . . .) Neither do this often; incompetent Word-bound Servitors are the responsibility of their Superiors.

Occasionally, a celestial linked to a dying Word (particularly destroyed Tethers) will be saved by his Superior, who can supply Forces to replace those that are "hemorrhaging," until he brings the Servitor before the Seraphim Council or Lucifer to be unbound from the Word. These unfortunates are never the same again. Having once been intimately tied to an aspect of the Symphony, being disconnected from it causes a profound sense of loss and failure. Often, it would be more merciful to let the celestial die – which is precisely why some Princes *don't* . . .

Dissonance

Word-bound characters are still bound by the dissonance conditions of their Choir or Band and their Superior, like any other celestial. In addition, the Word-bound can suffer dissonance if they act against their *own* Words (see p. 16). This is at the GM's discretion – lesser Words don't necessarily come with specific dissonance conditions, as Superior Words do. Alternatively, the GM might rule that acting against one's own Word causes the loss of a Word-Force instead. (Superiors who violate their own dissonance conditions sometimes weaken themselves, rather than becoming dissonant.)

Servants of Word-bound celestials, even those who have accepted Rites or attunements from that Word, are not so constrained. Only Superiors can impose the dissonance conditions of their Words on their Servitors.



INFERNAL SPAM

The Demon of Spam, formerly a Servitor of Haagenti with a trivial Word, eagerly embraced the cause of junk e-mail, even though his celestial Word was “Processed Meat,” not “Unsolicited Mass E-mail.” He became so successful at promoting the new kind of spam that Nybbas recruited him, and sponsored him for a Word change. Lucifer complied by somehow making the demon’s Word embrace *both* meanings. Performing this trick for an unimportant Servitor intrigued and unsettled the Princes of Hell (no doubt as Lucifer intended); no one is quite sure whether Lucifer somehow gave the demon *two* Words, or made him “The Demon of Things Called ‘Spam’ In Corporeal Speech.”

CHANGING YOUR WORD

For most Word-bound, changing one’s Word would be unthinkable. Your Word is what you *are*; you’d no more change that than you’d change your Choir or Band. Once you become Word-bound, the Word is all you can think about. You can’t help but want to promote it.

Theoretically a celestial could be stripped of one Word and granted another. Few would think of asking for this, however, and neither the Seraphim Council nor Lucifer would be likely to grant a new Word to a celestial who wanted to abandon

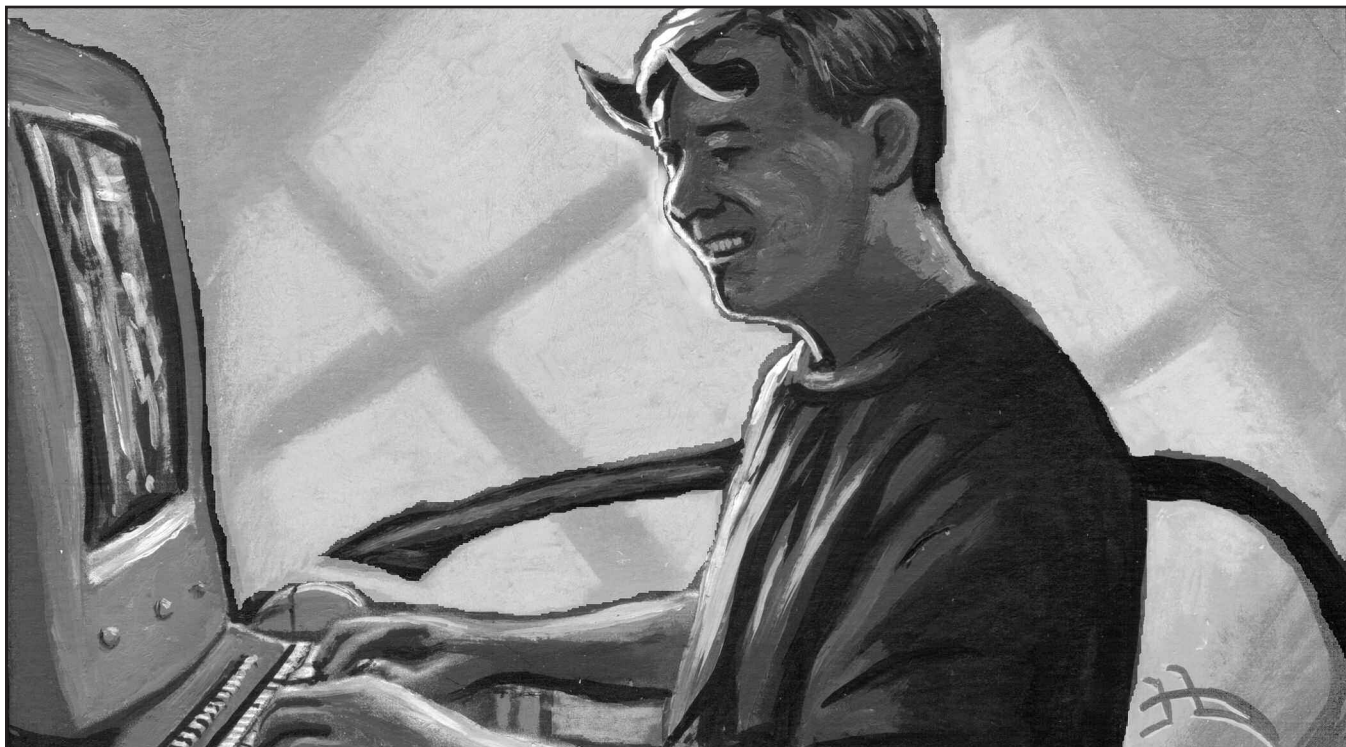
his old one . . . though Lucifer is known to have changed someone’s Word occasionally as punishment, or for more devious reasons (see box).

There are two common situations in which a Word can be changed, however; *promotion* and *reinterpretation*. A third, *Word shift*, is something that *happens* to a Word, often to the detriment of the celestial bound to it.

Word-Promotion

Many Words occupy a rung on a hierarchy; the Angel of Falcons serves the Angel of Birds of Prey, who serves the Angel of Birds, who answers directly to Jordi. Acquiring a greater Word that encompasses your old one is not changing your Word, but broadening it, and this is often how Superiors find Servitors to hold increasingly important Words. The Demon of Hot Sauce, had he not been such a terrible Servitor of Gluttony, might eventually have been promoted to the Demon of Sauces, and perhaps from there aspired to become the Demon of Condiments.

The Seraphim Council or Lucifer are still required to “promote” a Word, but this is more routine than the initial granting of the Word; if the celestial’s Superior says he wants his Servitor’s Word “upgraded,” the appropriate powers will *usually* validate his desire with little debate. The exception is if the candidate is controversial, *or* if there is someone else who might aspire to the same “promotion.” If the Demon of Air Disasters, a Servitor of Saminga, aspired to become the Demon of Vehicular Accidents, Vapula might push forward a competing candidate.



Reinterpretation

As described in *The Meaning of Words* (p. 22), celestial Words aren't affected by the changing semantics of their translations in corporeal tongues. However, it is possible to latch onto changing *perceptions* of a Word . . . or even to cause changes in perception yourself. For example, the Demon of Buggy Whips, a Servitor of Technology much-hated by Jordi, died when his last Word-Force faded. If he had considered other applications of his Word, though, he might have shifted his focus to more . . . creative uses for buggy whips, and still be alive and thriving in the service of Andrealphus.

Reinterpreting a Word is a difficult feat, and often a measure of how clever and adaptable a Word-bound celestial can be. Demons (particularly Balseraphs) tend to be better at it than angels. The Demon of Forged Signatures, whose Word originally encompassed handwritten signatures only, is growing in power through the unexpected application of digital media, and takes great interest in encryption technology. (He's also considering whether he might be better off leaving Valefor's service and joining Vapula.) Had he been less prescient (or less computer-literate), he would never have been able to take advantage of this opportunity to expand his Word.

Word-Shift

Angels and demons regularly try to undermine each others' Words; a more subtle way to attack a Word-bound celestial is *change* the interpretation of his Word in the minds of the populace. This is, essentially, imposing an involuntary "reinterpretation" (above) on a Word-holder. (Theoretically, one could also do this by changing how a Word actually manifests in the Symphony – turning every flower on Earth poisonous would have a major impact on Novalis – but this is obviously not very practical.)

The power of a Word is connected to its prevalence in the Symphony, *and* its interpretation. If Diabolicals launched a campaign to make Flowers (and all its symbolic links, like peace activism, tolerance, and harmony) a metaphor for apathy and anti-intellectualism, and it took root in the public's mind, Novalis would be forced to embrace these new aspects of her Word . . . or lose power by rejecting them and contracting her Word.

To corrupt a Superior's Word in this manner is, of course, very difficult, both because a Superior Word has massive inertia, and because Superiors have many, many Servitors who will work to counteract any such attempts. Lesser Words are much easier to target, which is why even a strong Word needs constant maintenance by the angel or demon in charge of it, lest the enemy twist it.

OBTAINING A WORD

Angels can only be granted Words by the Seraphim Council (or, very rarely, God). Demons can only be granted Words by Lucifer.

Not every possible (or desired) Word will be awarded. A celestial may become intensely interested in something that his Superior – or Lucifer or the Seraphim Council – doesn't feel merits a Word. Also, few celestials are competent and trustworthy enough to become Word-bound – every Superior has more Words he'd *like* to see supported than he has Servitors worthy of supporting them. Frivolous Words are a waste of able Servitors, while powerful Words must be assigned *very* carefully.

I felt my aspect begin to come upon me; felt my function possess me. I was no longer an individual – I was the Vengeance of the Lord.
– Neil Gaiman, *Murder Mysteries*

Thus, Jordi, for example, won't assign a Word-bound Servitor to every species of animal life. (Even if extinctions didn't promise a regular loss of Word-bound Servitors, the Seraphim Council won't indulge an Archangel's every whim.) On the other hand, Mammals, Birds, Reptiles, and other animal families embody major portions of Jordi's Word – he'd rather leave such Words vacant than have them held by a Servitor who can't strengthen them (and thus Jordi).

Assuming a Superior determines that a particular Word is worthwhile, the celestial who would hold it must meet certain requirements.

ANGELIC WORDS

Angelic Words, naturally, are things that will strengthen the Symphony and represent Heaven's cause on Earth. Usually, they are benevolent, though some angelic Words don't fit every human's idea of morality – Abortion, Vengeance, and Teenage Death all have angelic guardians.

The process of seeking a divine Word is covered in detail in the *Angelic Player's Guide* (pp. 95-96) – first an angel must be chosen by his Archangel, then he must go before the Seraphim Council, defend his candidacy against anyone who chooses to challenge it or compete with him, and probably go on a quest to prove his worth. If he's successful, the Seraphim Council will attune him to his new Word.

Before an angel can even be considered for a Word, though, he will probably have to meet certain qualifications.

GOD AWARDING WORDS

The first Archangels were all granted their Words by God. Nowadays, He rarely gets personally involved with administrative matters. Sometimes, a contest between angels for a Word has been resolved by Divine Intervention granting the Word to one of the candidates. (And in at least one case, they *both* received Words *other* than the one they were competing for!) On a few occasions, angels who weren't even trying to get a Word have received one on a Divine Intervention. (It's recommended that this *not* happen to player characters!)

Divine actions are often obscure, but if an angel should suddenly show up with a Word that was not granted to him by the Seraphim Council, it will be accepted as the will of Higher Powers.

Qualifications

Each Archangel has his own requirements for a Word. Some, like Dominic and Laurence, have rigid criteria. Others, like Eli, Gabriel, and Novalis, are casual or even capricious about endorsing Words, and may sponsor Servitors no one else would consider. There are certain standards that most Archangels expect, though.

An angel must be strong enough to support his Word. The more powerful the Word, the stronger the angel must be. Almost always, an angel should have as many total Forces as the prospective Word (see *Word-Forces*, p. 24), and rarely will an angel with less than 12 Forces be considered for *any* Word.

Of course the angel must be well-regarded by his Archangel. His loyalty should be absolute, his devotion to his Superior's Word unquestioned. It's rare for an Archangel to sponsor an angel who hasn't yet earned a Distinction. Needless to say, angels with dissonance or Discord will never be considered for Words!

*For as laws are necessary
that good manners be
preserved, so there is need
of good manners that law
may be maintained.*

– Machiavelli

DEMONIC WORDS

Diabolical Words are all selfish. Not all are evil – some are even ambiguous enough that they *could* be interpreted in a benevolent manner. They must in some way serve the cause of Hell, though they can be obscure and seemingly pointless. The One Below doesn't appoint Words by committee, and he can give any damned Word he pleases.

The process of seeking an infernal Word is described in the *Infernal Player's Guide* (pp. 91-93). Most Words are sponsored by a Prince, and prospective Word-bound demons must campaign intensely just to get the support of their Prince, before being exposed to the more vicious politics of the Infernal Lowerarchy.

Qualifications

Princes only appoint loyal Servitors for Words. However, demons are more expendable than angels, even among the Word-bound. Significant Words are rarely given to a demon with less than 12 Forces, but trivial or minor Words are often granted to less powerful Servitors. If the demon survives and grows, he will enhance the Word; if not, he can be replaced. Likewise, a Prince usually wants trusted Servitors – those who've earned Distinctions – to hold important Words, but sometimes less important ones are given to a moderately successful demon as a means of reining him in. Servitors who are growing in power and influence, and thus may someday be a threat, but who are too useful to kill, might be bound to an important Word as a means of controlling them.

Rarely will a Prince sponsor a Servitor for a Word against his will. Poorly-maintained Words contribute nothing to the Prince's resources, and disgruntled Word-bound Servitors can cause problems out of proportion to their actual power, turning minor irritants into serious annoyances. Punishing a Servitor by giving him an undesirable Word is foolish, and costly.

Likewise, Lucifer usually won't grant a Word to a demon who's not fit to hold it. A Prince will want to make sure his minion is an expert on the Word, and completely dedicated to maintaining it, unless he's willing to risk the embarrassment of having his candidate rejected.

SHARED WORDS

A Word is an inherently singular thing – a celestial who becomes a Word, *becomes that Word*. Two celestials sharing a Word is like two individuals sharing the same identity. There are two ways in which celestials can share a Word, but both present problems.

Diametric Opposites

Angels and demons represent two diametrically opposite resonances of the Symphony. Thus, an angel and a demon



can hold the same Word, though the “true” interpretation of their Word is found in each being’s respective celestial tongue – subtly different inflections of the same concept.

This causes friction. The Angel of Cities can “feel” her counterpart’s presence, embodying a warped manifestation of her Word – her *identity* – in the Symphony. Likewise, the Demon of Cities is always aware of the existence of his nemesis, because she *is* a bright reflection of him. It’s possible for them to coexist, and sometimes even cooperate

(since the Word they both serve must be promoted, even if they seek to promote it in vastly different ways), but each would be more comfortable (and have more power – see box) if the other didn’t exist . . .

The most obvious case of this Word-friction is that which occurs between Gabriel and Belial. Gabriel has been driven mad in part by the constant aggravation of Belial’s usurpation of Fire, while Belial can never forget that Gabriel is the Divine origin of his Word, embodying everything that he does and more.

For this reason, Heaven and Hell are both careful about assigning Words held by someone on the other side. It’s a great burden on the Word-holder, especially if he’s outmatched by his counterpart. Neither the Seraphim Council nor Lucifer are likely to pit a Servitor against an enemy Superior; it’s assumed the resulting Word-friction would cause the lesser celestial to go mad and burn out in short order.

WORD BATTLES

The struggle between diametric Word-holders is reflected in their Word-Forces (p. 24). Changes in a Word that affect its overall power in the Symphony will change each celestial’s total equally. (If cities started to become depopulated, the Angel and Demon of Cities would both lose Word-Forces.) But when an angel and a demon are battling over their interpretations of the same Word, a gain by one is often reflected by a loss for the other. It is possible for both to have the same number of Word-Forces, but usually the one who is more successful in promoting his version of the Word will sap strength from the angelic or diabolical interpretation, thus weakening his rival. It’s rare to force one’s adversary into a lower strength category (p. 25), but it can happen when one interpretation completely dominates how that Word affects the Symphony.

Dual Word-Holders

There is only one special case of a Word being shared by two celestials on the same side: Daniel and Hutriel, the Angels of Final Judgment, who stand at the gates of Hell (*Heaven and Hell*, p. 15), and possess nearly the power of an Archangel between them. Their Word’s Forces are treated as a common “pool” that *both* can draw upon . . . and both can sacrifice in celestial combat! This obviously requires absolute trust and mutual reliability.

Lucifer, presumably, could do the same thing . . . if he could find two demons capable of the selflessness inherent in sharing a Word, yet diabolical enough to serve it well! This is not likely to happen.

CAMPAIGNS

The French game, IN NOMINE SATANIS/MAGNA VERITAS, on which IN NOMINE is based, is a highly satirical, tongue-in-cheek portrayal of the War. The “official” IN NOMINE setting is somewhat more serious, but remains a cinematic game that treats theology in a very casual manner. It also assumes that celestials are the focus of attention.

Your IN NOMINE campaign can be anything you want it to be. The canonical setting and the game mechanics can cover the full spectrum from dark occult horror to superheroics. To get the kind of game you want, it’s a good idea to make some early decisions about your campaign.



MOOD

People will bring to a game certain assumptions about angels and demons. The mood you set will determine whether your game is deep and suspenseful or action-packed and campy. The three most important factors in determining mood are *brightness*, *contrast*, and *humor*. Each is discussed below. Remember that nothing prevents you from varying them between adventures – though a certain amount of consistency is a good idea in a continuing campaign.

How Superiors are portrayed has a lot to do with mood – see pp. 103-110 for alternate ways to present each Archangel and Demon Prince.

CONTRAST

Heaven casts the War as Good vs. Evil; Hell portrays it as Individuality vs. Tyranny. Usually, angels represent the forces of Light, demons the forces of Darkness. But neither side can necessarily be painted in monochrome hues; angels can be vicious bastards, demons can be sympathetic. And both may at times question whether they're on the right side. Contrast determines how much real (or apparent) difference there is between Heaven and Hell.

At one extreme is a black-and-white world, where the line between Good and Evil is clearly drawn, and angels and demons never cross it, unless they are switching sides. This doesn't mean angels are necessarily the *nice* ones . . . perhaps Heaven really *is* a ruthlessly authoritarian regime, and Hell really does represent independent thought and free will. But angels always act angelic, and demons always act demonic . . . whatever that means in your campaign.

At the other extreme is a world of solid gray, where being an angel or a demon says nothing about one's disposition. Heaven and Hell simply represent two different points of view . . . and while they purport to be diametrically opposed, they may really differ only in their scenery. Being an angel or a demon is more like being a member of a political party than representing a moral alignment. Celestials on both sides span the entire range from Good to Evil, Selfish to Selfless . . . and they're much more likely to sympathize with the other side.

The sharper the contrast, the more difficult it becomes to play a game with mixed angelic and diabolical PCs. The blurrier the lines, the more angels and demons have in common – they may often get along with the other side better than with rivals on the same side.

Whether contrast makes the setting grim and depressing or bright and cheery depends on another mood factor: Brightness.

BRIGHTNESS

Brightness may be the single most important mood setting, since it determines the overall feel of your campaign. Brightness is a measure of how optimistic your campaign world is. Does Good triumph over Evil in the end, or are the good guys fighting a hopeless battle?

"Bright" doesn't necessarily mean "angelic." This depends partly on contrast (above) but also on how you portray Heaven and Hell in your campaign. If demons are freedom fighters and angels are automatons, then a "bright" setting is one in which the diabolicals confound Heaven and are liberating humanity from mindless obedience to a dictatorial God, and a "dark" setting is one in which free will is crushed as angels purge all traces of independent thought from the Symphony. (See *In Nomine Backwards*, p. 63.) Brightness and darkness are measures of whether *humanity* is "winning" or "losing."



In a very dark setting, the world is a miserable place; either the "good" side is losing, and badly, or (in a low-contrast campaign) Archangels and Demon Princes are *all* cruel tyrants, and their Servitors have few options for doing the right thing. A very dark campaign should feature the worst aspects of life on Earth: poverty, drug abuse, rape, murder, urban wastelands, and overwhelming despair. Campaigns like this can be very depressing, but some players like angst in large doses.

At the other extreme is a very bright setting, in which humanity is benefiting from the War . . . if only by the fact that it's not affecting them much. If angels are the good guys, then they're kicking Hell's ass; if angels are the bad guys, they're ineffectual buffoons. If the contrast is very low, then celestials on both sides conspire to keep extremists from taking over the Symphony.

SAMPLE CAMPAIGN STYLES

Here's a look at a few different styles of campaigns, mixing the extremes of brightness and contrast.

Bright, High Contrast

This sort of game is likely to resemble a four-color comic book; angels are Good, demons are Evil, and the good guys always win. (Or, demons are clever and admirable free-thinkers, angels are mindless, inept drones.) Most adventures will be upbeat, morality is clear-cut. Only a masochist (or someone who likes playing campy, melodramatic villains) will want to be one of the bad guys.

Bright, Low Contrast

The bad guys in this sort of game aren't necessarily the Other Side, but anyone who happens to be working against the PCs. Angels and demons alike can be heroes or villains. In a humorous campaign, mixed parties become quite likely, as alliances of Archangels and Demon Princes work against rival alliances. Even in a serious campaign, mixed groups are possible, since some things will be regarded as a threat to both sides, and Heaven and Hell often have common interests (whether it's keeping the War secret, suppressing ethereals, or just maintaining the status quo). Judgment and the Game might be the main adversaries, or you might introduce a third force (or have the PCs *play* a third force) that's inimical to both sides.

Dark, High Contrast

In this sort of campaign, it's easy to tell the good guys from the bad guys . . . and the good guys are losing. Angels fighting the forces of darkness are outnumbered by demons (who are really, *really* bad), receive little help from their Superiors, and are struggling to protect humans who often aren't much better than the things they're being protected from. Alternatively, demons are waging a hopeless struggle against a tyrannical, murderous Heavenly regime. This kind of game is good for one-shot adventures, but might be difficult to maintain, unless the players enjoy always being on the losing side.

Dark, Low Contrast

This is a campaign for players who don't mind not knowing who the real enemy is. Heaven and Hell are both full of cruel, manipulative bastards. The PCs might be trying to liberate humanity from the meddling of celestials on both sides, or just trying to find an internal compass to guide them in a world where there is no right or wrong. Demons are violent fanatics doing what they please; angels are violent fanatics doing God's work. Neither are very nice.

HUMOR

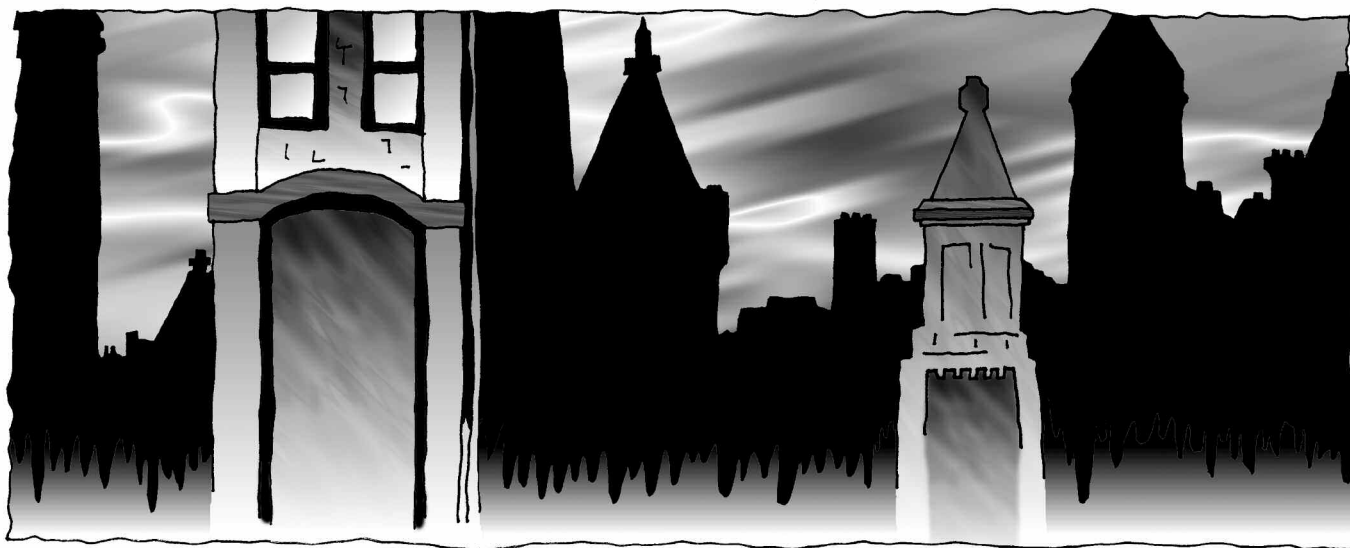
Humor is the last mood determiner. *In Nomine* can be deadly serious, or over-the-top campy (or vicious) satire, regardless of its brightness and contrast.

If you want angels and demons to be taken seriously, you'll need to treat them seriously. For a deep exploration of theological issues, heavy on mythic archetypes, allegories, and history, you'll have to work hard to keep any hint of parody out of your campaign. This can be difficult, since *In Nomine* is by its nature not entirely serious. For an utterly serious game, you'll probably want to eliminate the more tongue-in-cheek Songs and attunements, and alter or eliminate some of the Superiors (see pp. 44-45). Note that a serious campaign doesn't mean that *characters* can't have a sense of humor; it just means that *In Nomine's* premise, of angels and demons fighting a War on Earth, must be played straight and consistently.

Interjecting humor into *In Nomine* is easy; just leave the setting as is, and play everything (especially Superiors) with a straight face. Some of the most subtle humor can manifest in a game where inherently absurd premises are accepted without question. Like a television drama, the characters should usually take themselves and their environment quite seriously, but there can be occasional comic episodes, possibly even times when the characters acknowledge the ridiculousness of their situation. The most satirical campaigns are those in which preposterous situations (Servitors of Judgment appearing as government auditors, for example, or Eli acting like a drunken frat boy) are taken at face value.

For vicious satire, or campy parody, you can take the gags to an extreme. The best way to run a satirical campaign is to have Superiors take themselves and the War very seriously, but let their Servitors recognize the absurdities and play their situation for laughs. If your game is entirely comic, then you can play up every humorous angle, introduce even *more* satirical celestial powers and Superiors, and let everyone from the Archangels and Demon Princes down to mundane humans milk laughs out of the players. Remember that a campaign with a dark setting can be funny too (though mostly to Servitors of Kobal . . .).





SETTING

After deciding the mood of your campaign, the second most important decision is the setting. *Where* will adventures take place; with the War taking place across time and space, on what front are the player characters fighting?

LOCALIZED CAMPAIGNS

The most common campaigns are based on a local setting, whether it's a city or an entire country. The smaller the locale, of course, the easier it is to fill in details. Most Servitors on Earth are assigned to a small area; they're expected to become familiar with the people and places within their territory, and strengthen their Superior's Word. Some are given specific missions, others are simply agents-at-large.

For this type of campaign, just choose an area that you think would make an interesting setting. Many GMs, of course, will choose their own local area, since that's what they and their players are most familiar with, and adventures feel more "real" when they take place somewhere that everyone knows.

Local Tethers

The single most important detail in a local setting is its Tethers. Tethers are usually the decisive factor in determining which Superiors are most influential in an area, and which side has dominance. The number of Tethers also affects how many celestials are present in the area. A city with many Tethers will be a hotbed of celestial activity; a city with few or none might be regarded as an unimportant backwater by all sides . . . or it might be a major battleground, where dozens of Servitors are working to establish a beachhead for *their* Superior in virgin territory.

If your PCs have a friendly Tether in the area, they have access to direct support, a sanctuary, a quick gateway to the celestial plane, and even healing and Essence in an emergency. They also may be able to work off dissonance there. Celestials in an area with no friendly Tethers must be self-sufficient. If the *enemy* has Tethers to support them, *they* will be much better-equipped, faster to recover from losses, and faster to respond to major movements in the local War.

Small cities average one Tether on each side; major cities (with a population in excess of a million) usually have several Tethers. These are only averages; individual cities may have anywhere from zero to over a dozen, regardless of size (and you can vary these frequencies in your campaign – see p. 40). You can place as few or as many Tethers as you like in your local area without affecting the state of Tethers in the world at large. Every Tether you create should have a history (remember that not every famous place is a Tether, and not every Tether is a famous place!), and you should have a rough idea of how strong it is, and what resources its Seneschal has available. (See the *Liber Castellorum* for much more on Tethers.)

Important Personalities

Local personalities are important in any region. This includes prominent politicians, businessmen, and celebrities, and any other interesting characters the GM desires. In a real locale, you can use real people, but you'll probably want some fictitious ones to fill particular roles anyway. The most important people will be those in a position to affect the player characters . . . especially if they're active participants in the War. Some may be Soldiers, while others are celestials with a Role, but make sure the War doesn't take over the mundane setting – not *every* influential person will be working for Heaven or Hell!

You also want to decide who the most powerful celestials in the area are (besides the player characters), since the PCs must either interact with them or avoid them. The highest-ranking angel or demon around *might* be the leader of the local celestial community (for his side), but rarely by unanimous acclaim . . . demons are particularly unlikely to stand united behind any authority figure. Any Word-bound or Seneschal characters the PCs might encounter should be accounted for, and probably any celestials with Distinctions. These are the individuals whose schemes are most likely to involve other local celestials.

Local Politics

Celestial politics may or may not play a large part in your game (pp. 43-44), but they usually play a large part in shaping corporeal settings. Few areas are evenly balanced between Heaven and Hell; usually one side has an advantage, whether it's a slight edge or overwhelming dominance. Likewise, no Superior can have Servitors everywhere, and even the largest cities aren't of equal interest to everyone. You should decide which Archangels and Demon Princes are most active in the area (often this will be determined by which Tethers exist – see above). Which ones have strong positions, and which ones are trying to expand? If the player characters serve an influential Superior, they'll have more help available, but fewer opportunities to stand out. Servitors of Archangels or Princes whose presence is weak are more on their own . . . but they won't have to share their successes either, and any gains they make will be much more noticeable.

The overall political situation can be altered on a smaller scale. In Austin, for example, angels and demons observe a truce that allows them to coexist more or less peacefully. In demon-controlled Los Angeles, angels are more cooperative by necessity, and treat Servitors of other Archangels as if they were a degree more friendly than elsewhere. Sometimes the local celestials can alter the political situation with their own actions; if a Baron of Fate made friends with a Captain of Dark Humor, then local Servitors of Kronos and Kobal might enjoy cordial relations, though their Princes are hostile. Likewise, if the highest-ranking angel in the area is a stiff-necked Master of the Armies of God who alienates everyone else with his intolerance of any Word but Laurence's, then angels of the Sword might find themselves with fewer friends than usual.



GLOBAL CAMPAIGNS

Instead of anchoring your campaign to one location, you may want the player characters to be world travelers, going wherever their Superiors need them. This has the advantage of variety, and the disadvantage that it's harder to develop a detailed setting for each adventure. Even if your campaign is based on a local area, though, you'll want to give some thought to the global situation; it will affect the local front, and your PCs may sometimes travel elsewhere during an adventure.

Important Characters

In a global campaign, local personalities won't be very important. The recurring characters the PCs are most likely to deal with will be powerful individuals with global influence, and perhaps other traveling "field agents," who may be allies or nemeses. The former will mostly include celestials with Words and/or Distinctions; when you operate on a global level, you deal with more powerful people. To give the campaign some direction, you may wish to assign a high-ranking Word-bound angel or demon as the group's immediate superior. Angels serving several different Archangels could all take orders from a Master of the Armies of God, for example, and Baal might organize a task force of demons serving different Princes (complete with infiltrators and counter-infiltrators). Lilith can pull together some *extremely* eclectic groups by calling in a few Geases . . .

GLOBE-TROTTING

If the player characters travel the world, you'll need to consider how they get around. For celestials with no Role, it can be relatively easy, as long as there's a friendly Tether in the vicinity of wherever they want to go. Even without being able to go up and down Tethers, some Superiors establish "relay networks" of Servitors who've been to various places on the corporeal plane, and can lead others there as needed.

Celestials who have a Role, especially a high-profile one, will need to be more judicious about globe-hopping; it can be difficult to explain being seen in New York one hour after you had a meeting in Paris. Maintaining a Role may require resorting to mundane transportation at times. Superiors will make sure Servitors have the funds for any travel their duties require . . . though it may not be luxurious.

Humans, of course, don't have much choice about transportation, and have to use whatever is available. Humans serving in the War *might* be given a transportation allowance, but celestials tend to overlook such things – since they rarely need to worry about funding, they may not consider it for their human servants. Celestial standards of comfort may also leave something to be desired; a Djinn or a Cherub would see nothing wrong with spending 12 hours stuffed in a wooden crate in the back of truck. Humans who will do a lot of traveling in the War might want to consider the financial benefits of high Status . . .

Besides these global characters, you'll also need to work up profiles of the most important celestials (and humans) in any area the PCs enter. Besides plot-related people, you'll want local Seneschals and Word-bound, as for local settings (pp. 37-38), but in less detail.

Global Politics

In a global campaign, global politics are more important than the situation where the PCs happen to be at the time. Characters will be given orders in response to major movements in the War, and they'll be more interested in the big picture than local politics. This also means they'll be outsiders when they enter a local area, and may have trouble dealing with peculiar arrangements like Austin's truce. Local celestials, even unfriendly ones, may band together against disruptive outsiders!

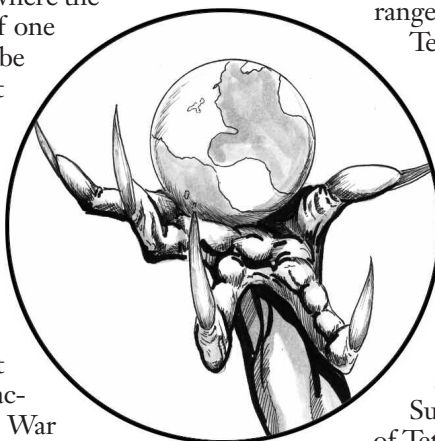
The GM will have to decide how the War is going, overall, and which Superiors are on the rise or on the decline. In particular, what are the primary goals of each player character's Superior? Is Blandine staging a rare offensive against Beleth? Is she concentrating on recruiting more Dream Soldiers? Is she fending off an alliance between Beleth and Belial to raze her Marches? Is Vapula plotting to seize control of the Internet, or is he more enthralled by the potential of cloning and biotechnology? Is Kobal building up to his Big Joke, or he is sulking and uncommunicative?

In a global campaign, Servitors of different Words will react according to relations between their Superiors, unless given a reason to act otherwise. While it's fairly easy to throw Servitors of hostile Superiors together for one adventure, or make them interact in a local setting, in a global campaign they aren't likely to work together for long.

Tethers in the World

You don't need to map every Tether on Earth for a global campaign, but you will want to know where the most important ones are. Make a list of one or two dozen famous places that will be Tethers in your campaign. Add to that list at least one additional major Tether to each Superior – these don't have to be famous places, just important to the Superior who owns them. This will give you an idea of where major strongholds for each Archangel and Demon Prince exist.

Next, you will probably want to make some decisions about important cities . . . at least, those the player characters are likely to visit. In some cities, the War has reached a stalemate, but in others, one side will enjoy a dominant position by having more Tethers.



THE BALANCE OF POWER

For convenience, the guidelines on p. 40 assume roughly equal numbers of divine and infernal Tethers worldwide, evenly distributed among all Superiors. This isn't necessarily the case – if one side is *losing* the War, it may have fewer Tethers, and the most powerful Superiors will probably have many more Tethers than weaker ones. Tethers may also vary in *quality*; there might be many more infernal Tethers than divine ones, but divine Tethers might be much stronger, on average. This could also be reflected in the strategies of individual Superiors; David might not bother stabilizing weak Tethers, so Tethers to Stone are rare, but very powerful wherever they exist. Haagenti, on the other hand, might grab every Tether he can, resulting in a large number of Tethers to Gluttony, which tend to be weak and poorly defended.

It's also assumed that ethereal Tethers (*Liber Castellorum*, p. 13) are so rare as to be statistically insignificant. This also doesn't have to be the case, particularly if you are running a variant campaign such as *The Ethereal Option* (p. 63) . . .

You don't have to decide exactly how many Tethers are present in every major city, but you will want to know who has the advantage anywhere that might be important in your campaign. National capitals are particularly influential, since in many countries, the capital dominates the rest of the country in politics, economics, the media, and popular culture. Note that cosmopolitan cities often have a disproportionate number of Tethers, because events of importance to the rest of the world are more likely to happen there.

Finally, you'll want a rough idea of how common Tethers are in your world. The table below offers a range of options. The ratio of humans to Tethers is a *suggestion* – humans are the most frequent causes of Tethers, so a high population is more likely to produce Tethers. However, the frequency of Tethers doesn't have to be based on population in your campaign. Even if it is, these figures are worldwide *averages*, not a consistent phenomenon that applies everywhere equally.

(The *Liber Castellorum* has much more information about Tethers, including a large list of Tethers for each Superior, all over the world. The frequency of Tethers in the official *In Nomine* universe is somewhere between *Rare* and *Uncommon*.)

Frequency	People per Tether (Approximate number of Tethers worldwide)	Significance
Very rare	10 million (600)	Even major cities have at most a single Tether, and each Superior has only a couple of dozen worldwide. Every Tether will be a major nexus for celestials, and attacking one is almost unthinkable. Seneschals are the most powerful Servitors on Earth, and a threat to a Tether will attract the personal attention of the Superior who owns it. New Tethers form <i>very</i> infrequently – only a handful every year – and become major battlefields, taking top priority in the War.
Rare	1 million (6,000)	Only the largest cities have more than one Tether, and smaller cities usually have none. Each Superior has a few hundred worldwide. Tethers act as regional strongholds, and are <i>very</i> heavily defended. Each Superior <i>might</i> gain a couple of new Tethers every year; each one is a major acquisition.
Uncommon	250,000 (24,000)	Major cities usually have several Tethers; any population center has at least one in the area. Most Superiors have just under a thousand Tethers worldwide. Tethers are important, but might not receive full support if the Superior has more important concerns elsewhere. New Tethers form often, but Servitors will still invest a lot of effort to secure one.
Common	100,000 (60,000)	Almost every city has a Tether; in a major city, <i>every</i> Archangel and Demon Prince might have one. Every Superior has several thousand Tethers worldwide. They are important locations, but only the most important ones have a lot invested in them. New Tethers form at the site of nearly every major event; competitions to find and secure Tethers are routine.

HISTORICAL CAMPAIGNS

Instead of the present day, you can play *In Nomine* in a historical setting. The War has been going on since before recorded history; any period you want to explore will have had angels and demons active somewhere. While *In Nomine* has no published historical settings – yet – there are many other historical roleplaying games with materials easily adapted to an *In Nomine* campaign. In particular, *GURPS* (also by Steve Jackson Games) has over a dozen published historical worldbooks, covering ancient Greece, Rome, and Egypt, China, Japan, the French Revolution, and the American Old West, just to name a few. (And *GURPS In Nomine* provides complete conversion notes which will help you use any of these supplements in your campaign.)

Running *In Nomine* in a historical era may help you flesh out your campaign, as you resolve what various Superiors were doing in the past, and which side they took in major wars and movements. You can even do this as part of a modern campaign; if the player characters are old celestials, you can run “flashback” adventures!

There are two important considerations when running historical campaigns:

Historical Superiors

There were different Superiors active in the past. Heaven and Hell have both suffered losses since the Fall, and new Archangels and Demon Princes have arisen. The timeline in Chapter 4 (pp. 92-94) will help determine who’s still alive and who hasn’t yet become a Superior during a given historical period, but you’ll have to make some decisions yourself about what the political situation was like . . . and you may need to detail some deceased Superiors yourself if you want their Servitors to play a role. If you choose to play Old Testament-era *In Nomine* (p. 79), for example, then Michael is still leading the Host, Uriel is one of his most powerful allies, and Laurence doesn’t even exist yet. Haagenti, Kronos, Nybbas, Valefor, and Vapula are all centuries in the future, Saminga is still an up-and-comer, and Mariel (Oblivion), Meserach (Sloth), and Genubath (Rapine) are among Hell’s most prominent Princes.

See *Alternate Superiors* (p. 45), for more on creating a new celestial hierarchy.

Human History vs. Celestial History

There may be a strong temptation to recast history in celestial terms. It can make a medieval campaign more interesting, for example, to fill Crusader ranks with angels of the Sword, to represent Richard the Lionhearted as a Soldier of God, Saladin as a Servitor of Khalid, and make demons responsible for every major atrocity. But doing this turns humans into mere pawns, putting celestials behind every important event and implying that every major historical figure must have had supernatural help. This does not make a very positive statement about the importance of humanity. Certainly, celestials *will* be involved in important events, and sometimes they cause them. And some famous people *were* Soldiers, Saints, undead, or celestials with a Role. But it's recommended that you take care to make these the exceptions, rather than the rule, unless you want *In Nomine* to be a game about angels and demons controlling the world behind the scenes.

ALTERNATE SETTINGS

Rather than setting *In Nomine* in the “real world,” past or present, you can use another world altogether. Your favorite setting from another game, a fictional series, or just a different genre – high fantasy, occult horror, science fiction, etc. – can all be settings for the War as well. Importing *In Nomine*'s Superiors and celestials into a new setting only requires deciding what Heaven and Hell's outlook on the world is. The French game *In Nomine Satamis/Magna Veritas* has a supplement called *Stella Inquisitorus*, which details a space-opera setting for angels and demons. Some other examples are discussed under *Variant Campaigns*, p. 62.

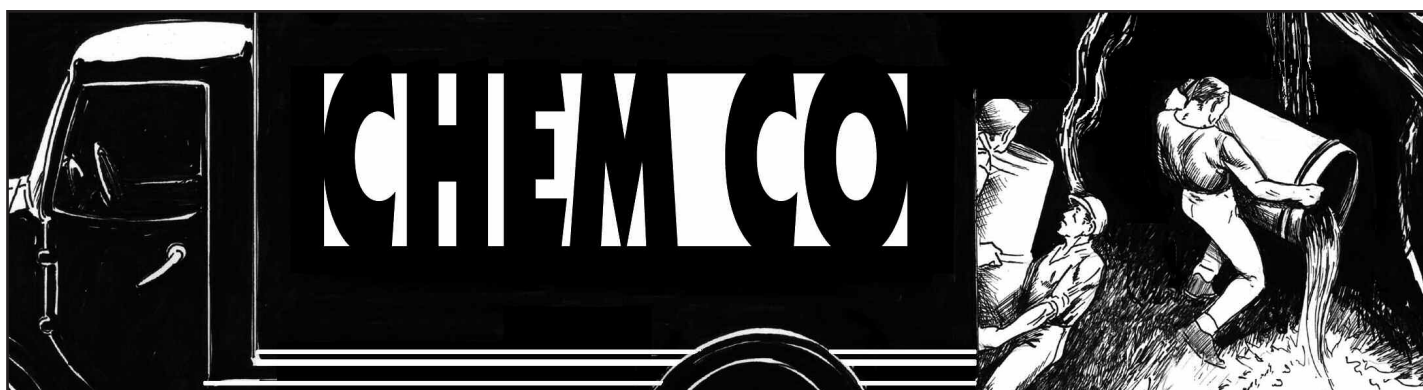
THEME

Having decided on a mood and a setting, you now need to address broader issues. What is your campaign *about*?

You don't need to begin your campaign with any kind of theme in mind, and even after you do choose one, it's not set in stone. Themes often develop *after* a game has been running awhile, and the player characters begin to find their niches. Many GMs prepare a setting and drop the PCs into it to see what they do. Over time, certain themes will emerge . . . but you can always change them, either to take the campaign in a new direction, or just for episodic variations.

There are an infinite number of possible themes, as general as “defeat the forces of darkness,” and as specific as “Foil Baal's plan to trigger Armageddon.” A theme is really just a long-term plot that will result in a series of adventures . . . until they become repetitive, and then you can choose a new one. Most fall into the one of the following categories, however, and if you like to have a direction in mind when you begin your campaign, you should discuss these with your players.





MYTHIC

In a mythic campaign, the player characters are acting upon the Symphony itself; they wage the War on a broad level, and look for supernatural solutions rather than mundane ones. Individual mortals are rarely important; Heaven and Hell aren't going to do battle over the soul of Harold Brown, the local banker.

Superiors and the Word-bound are more likely to get involved directly in this sort of campaign. The fact that player characters are favored Servitors will be emphasized; they are movers and shakers in the War. A mythic campaign is good for players who want to have an impact on the War, and see the campaign world change as a result of their actions.

Examples:

✧ *Gabriel is descending into madness – even her own Servitors fear her Fall is imminent. The Host debates over whether (and how!) to save or destroy her. Some Princes want her to stay in Heaven, rather than unbalancing the infernal hierarchy; others prepare to welcome her into their ranks, while Belial plots her destruction.*

✧ *Laurence decides the time is right for Heaven to go on the offensive. Heavenly politics become intense, as the militant Archangels pressure the more peaceful ones. Hell senses something is afoot; diabolical PCs must infiltrate angelic circles and pass intelligence back to their Masters . . . who react variously with glee or horror in anticipation of Armageddon. Meanwhile, angels are dispatched to the Far Marches, to recruit Uriel's lost Servitors, the Tsayadim. And both sides cultivate support among the pagan gods . . .*

✧ *The Media's hold on society is propelling Nybbas to unparalleled heights of power. Soon, it is whispered, he may rival Lucifer himself. Suddenly, Eli returns to Heaven and declares that Nybbas must be destroyed at all costs. Frantic maneuvering on both sides ensues.*

REALISTIC

The opposite of a mythic campaign, a "realistic" campaign mostly involves angels and demons on the front lines of the War. The action is ground-level; it may still be epic in scope,

as the characters try to save refugees in a war-torn land, or bring down a government, or it may be a street campaign, waging war against a corporation, combating gang warfare in the inner city, or installing political candidates. The grittiness of a realistic campaign depends a lot on its mood (p. 35).

Realistic campaigns are more personal. Individual souls matter more, but the player characters matter less in the greater scheme of things. A realistic campaign is good for players who want lots of character development, but don't expect to change the world . . . at least, not often.

Examples:

✧ *The Demon of Toxic Waste has his heart set on despoiling a pristine environment that happens to include Tethers to Animals and Flowers. He doesn't have enough power to mount a frontal assault; he (and his diabolical allies) must instead manipulate the local community, and corporate landholders.*

✧ *Humans whose dreamscapes drift into the Far Marches are waking up with supernatural powers. Celestials must find out what's causing this, while dealing with the effects on the corporeal plane.*

✧ *A new Tether has just formed in the campaign city, threatening to break the stalemate that's prevailed for the past decade. The disadvantaged side must avoid losing ground; the other side must press their advantage. Superiors on both sides have agendas of their own.*

HIGH CONCEPT

The "high concept" is a story based on a single, easily-summarized premise, character archetypes, presuppositions about the setting, and a uniform image. It's often decried in Hollywood, but it can be an excellent foundation for a role-playing game . . . especially since, unlike movies, a campaign theme can be changed at will if it becomes boring or trite. You can base a single adventure or an entire campaign around a single idea. High concepts can be combined with either of the above campaign styles – whatever your concept, the action can be mythic or realistic, as suits your tastes. Below are some different kinds of "high concepts" particularly suitable for *In Nomine*.

The Quest

The player characters are seeking something. Finding it might mark the climax of the campaign, or it might just move the campaign to a new phase.

Examples: *The Holy Grail; Archangel Eli; the remnant Archangel/Demon Prince of (your choice); Uriel's Outcast followers, the Tsayadim; the entrance to the Lower Hells; the edge of the universe; the truth about Jesus Christ; a Tether of Light; predating Lucifer's Fall; Asmodeus' lover; the Garden of Eden; Adam and/or Eve; a Grigori Archangel; a Fallen Malakite; Metatron's corpse.*

The Crusade

A broader form of quest, a crusade is a long-term endeavor with a specific goal. Like a quest, a crusade can last for one adventure, or occupy the player characters for an entire campaign. Usually, crusades support the cause of one or more Superiors, but sometimes individual celestials set out on crusades of their own.

Examples: *Take over a city; destroy a powerful Word-bound; obtain a Word; aid a Word-bound's quest to become a Superior; undermine an Archangel or Demon Prince; destroy a major Tether; create a Tether; steal a Tether; end a war; start a war; corrupt an angel; bring a demon to redemption; make a Malakite Fall; bring down the Catholic Church; retrieve an important Servitor from Limbo; start a sorcerous cabal; learn Saming's secrets of necromancy; plant a spy in Jean's/Vapula's laboratories.*

The Premise

More of a general concept, a premise-based campaign is one in which you take the usual *In Nomine* setting, and alter something, or add a major event. This can spawn various quests and crusades, depending on how the player characters react to it. The premise need not even be real – perhaps it's just a *rumor* which the PCs must investigate!

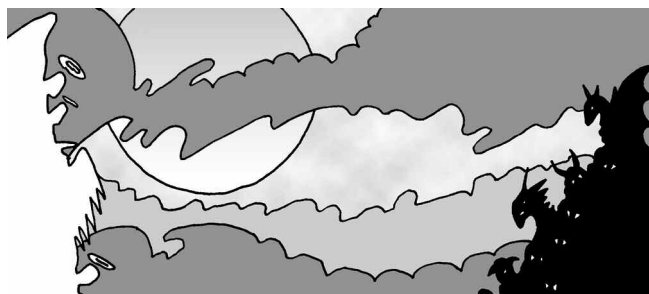
Examples: *Eli/Gabriel/any other Archangel has Fallen/is about to Fall; Dominic is secretly a Balseraph; one of the Princes is on the verge of redemption; a new Archangel/Prince appears; there's been a coup in Hell/in Heaven; two or more Princes are going to war; an Archangel has been killed by a Prince (or vice versa) and his Servitors (or Heaven or Hell) are trying to cover it up; Lucifer has abdicated his throne; Lucifer has disappeared; God is dead; Uriel has returned; Jesus Christ (or some other Messiah) has returned/has come; the Final Trumpet is about to blow, ushering in Armageddon; celestials are emerging from Limbo; celestials are vanishing into Limbo; a Malakite has Fallen; a pagan god is gaining enough strength to challenge the Superiors; the ethereals are going to war against Heaven/Hell/both; human souls are returning from the Higher Heavens; one of the major human religions is **right**, about everything.*



SUPERIORS IN THE CAMPAIGN

The War is led by the Archangels and Demon Princes. Most *In Nomine* characters will serve one of these Superiors. There are many ways they can be handled in your campaign, from active presences who show up as often as any other major NPCs to unseen, ineffable beings as remote from the player characters as the President and Joint Chiefs of Staff are from the average soldier.

Chapter 5, *Superiors* (p. 95), describes Superiors, their abilities, and the problem of roleplaying them, in much more detail. This section discusses how to fit them into your campaign.



POLITICS

Relations between Superiors affect many scenarios. Besides the obvious antipathy between Archangels and Demon Princes, many Superiors don't get along with others on their own side. Servitors are expected to show loyalty to their own Master, which means treating minions of his Superior's enemies as his enemies, and friends likewise. This can make things complicated in games where PCs serve Superiors with conflicting goals. Politics can be interesting, providing for Machiavellian plots and intense roleplaying, or they can simply be frustrating. You should decide how much attention you'll give to Superior politics in your campaign. You can use the options below to set the general tone of your campaign, or you can make some Superiors more political than others – Laurence, for example, might be *very* conscious of politics, and displeased at any Servitor who helps Novalis, or fails to cooperate with an angel of Judgment, while Michael might not care, as long as the job gets done.

The importance of politics can change according to circumstances; a normally apolitical setting might become *very* politically charged if a triad of Judgment comes to town, scrutinizing "improper relationships." Conversely, if Superiors are distracted by more important events, politics might fade into the background.

High Politicking

In a high politicking campaign, Servitors must *always* keep political considerations in mind when they ally, even temporarily, with other celestials . . . or when they refuse to do so. An angel of War had better have good reason for talking to a Servitor of Judgment, or he'll answer to Michael. Likewise, Servitors of Andrealphus and Nybbas had best play nice, even if they can't stand each other, or their Princes will be most displeased. *Every* relationship with Servitors of other Superiors is nuanced by the complicated web of celestial politics . . . witness Gabriel's displeasure with her Servitor, Nicole, in *Interlude (In Nomine, p. 12)*. A high politicking campaign can make certain PC combinations difficult; Servitors of Novalis and Michael are unlikely to work together except under direct orders, for example.

Low Politicking

In a low politicking campaign, political considerations exist, but are less important to Servitors at the PCs' level. You are still expected to help your Superior's allies, and hinder his enemies, but most Superiors don't pay much attention to day-to-day interactions. Angels of War and angels of Judgment can have civil conversations, and even exchange information and minor assistance without incurring the wrath of their Archangels. If a demon of Lust and a demon of the Media don't like each other, they don't have to cooperate, as long as neither does anything to *harm* their Master's ally.

No Politicking

If you don't want to worry about politicking, forget about Superior relations, at least among Servitors. Angels are all assumed to be on the same side, demons are all assumed to be out for themselves, and as long as you serve your Superior's Word and don't do anything that *diminishes* his allies, or strengthens his enemies, it doesn't matter who you work with.

WHO'S IMPORTANT

The *In Nomine* rulebook provides 13 Archangels and 14 Demon Princes; several more have been described in various supplements. These are not the only Superiors, just the most active. 27+ Superiors is quite enough variety for the average campaign, and may be too much if you're trying to develop Tethers, important Servitors, and story hooks for all of them. So it's important to remember that you don't *have* to use all of them. Just as *In Nomine* presents only a few of the Superiors who exist today, you can choose a smaller number from this lineup, and treat the others as unimportant in your campaign.

The Superiors who figure most prominently will of course be the ones the player characters serve; others can appear or not as you like. For example, if the theme of your campaign is a plot by Andrealphus and Nybbas to lure Eli into Falling, then a complete story could be told with those three Superiors, Dominic (who would of course be investigating the rogue Archangel of Creation), Kronos (who is allied with Nybbas, and would be very interested in a plot to bring an Archangel to his fate), and Asmodeus (who could hardly be kept *out* of an affair like this). All angelic PCs could be Servitors of Judgment, or else of Creation, in service to other Archangels (or not); diabolical PCs could serve Lust, the Media, Fate, or the Game. The rest of the divine and infernal hierarchies would be irrelevant. Choose Tethers and Servitors from among this group, create a setting where they are the only Superiors who have influence, and you have a tight, manageable scenario with enough plot hooks to keep the campaign running for a long time.

Even if you don't want such a limited roster, you can ignore any Superiors who don't interest you, or you can simply emphasize those who do. If your favorite Archangels (and the ones who generate the most story ideas) are Blandine, Jean, and Michael, and your favorite Princes are Haagenti, Kobal, and Saminga, then create a city where all Tethers and important Word-bound celestials are divided among those six. They will be the most heavily-represented Superiors in that setting, with the others appearing or not as you please.

FAVORED SERVITORS

As described in *In Nomine*, p. 33, the player characters are usually assumed to be *favoured* Servitors who've caught the attention of their Archangel or Demon Prince. They are more highly esteemed than the average celestial; they are given missions directly by their Superiors, and may summon them personally.

Celestial PCs don't *have* to be favoured Servitors; they might be mere cogs in the War, assigned to some minor, tedious job on the corporeal plane and expected to per-

form it without question. Such Servitors are more free in some ways; they don't need to worry about politics as much, and their Superiors don't pay as much attention to them. However, they're also not given much autonomy. Anyone who starts acting independent – especially if it causes him to neglect his regular duties – will either be swiftly brought to heel, or attract the notice of his Superior, depending on how much his Superior values initiative (and most Demon Princes *don't*).

ALTERNATE SUPERIORS

If you don't mind deviating from canon (p. 58), you can not only emphasize or ignore certain Superiors, but *change* them. Changes can be subtle (such as making David a Cherub instead of a Malakite, ranking Nybbas as the most powerful of Princes, or eliminating the hostility between Michael and Yves) or profound (such as making Dominic the fair-minded and compassionate Archangel of *Justice*, rewriting Novalis as a militant, Malakite Archangel, or adding Jordi to Hell's side as the Shedite Prince of Beasts).

There's no limit to the changes you can make, but most will consist of altering or eliminating existing Superiors, or making up new ones.

Rearranging the Hierarchy

When making changes in the existing hierarchy, remember that no Archangel or Demon Prince rose to power in a vacuum. Examine the interrelations between that Superior and all the others. If Dominic is the Archangel of Justice, for example, then he may or may not still be investigating Eli and Gabriel, but he's probably less hostile about it . . . and he almost certainly doesn't cooperate with Asmodeus. If the Media is propelling Nybbas to the top spot in Hell, he probably has more allies . . . and much more devious enemies. If Novalis is a Malakite, then the entire course of the War will be altered . . . Heaven's militant camp will be *much* stronger and more united, its peace faction correspondingly weaker, and the Host will be prosecuting the War much more vigilantly. The demons will have to fight harder and dirtier to hold their own.

Making Up New Superiors

New Superiors may make your campaign radically different from "official" *In Nomine*, or hardly change it at all, depending on how important your additions are. The Archangels and Demon Princes described in *In Nomine* supplements are *minor* Superiors, with less power and influence than those in the main rulebook. If your additions are likewise second-stringers, they may add variety to your campaign without shaking up the hierarchy. If you create new Superiors who are major players in Heaven or Hell, then as with rearranging the hierarchy, you will have to consider the political and strategic implications.



Remember that Superiors are chosen *only* when there's a gap in the power structure. Neither the Seraphim Council nor Lucifer wants redundant Superiors. Thus, any new Archangels or Princes you create should cover some aspect of the Symphony that's not already being handled directly by another Superior on the same side.

Players may want to create new Superiors themselves, often so their characters can serve them. *If* you permit this, don't hesitate to exercise GM veto power over anything you don't like – Choir and Servitor Attunements can be *especially* unbalancing if not well thought-out. (Keep in mind also, that just because a Superior exists doesn't mean you have to permit his Servitors to be player characters. Perhaps an obscure Superior who exists for a specific reason in your campaign never sends Servitors to Earth – or those who do appear on Earth are all Word-bound NPCs.)

CELESTIALS IN THE CORPOREAL REALM

Having decided on the role of Superiors in your campaign, next you must decide what exactly their Servitors do, and how they do it.

Every single blade of grass has a corresponding angel in the sky which hits it and tells it "Grow, grow!"

– Midrash Rabba, Bereshit

FREQUENCY

The words of Rabbi Simon notwithstanding, you probably won't want that many angels on Earth. It's assumed that each Superior has a fair number of Servitors on the corporeal plane, but humanity outnumbers celestials by a large margin. You might want the player characters to encounter other celestials rarely, or you might want to provide dozens of celestial enemies and allies. As with Tethers (p. 40), the easiest way to determine their frequency is to calculate an average humans-to-celestials ratio. (Since Tethers are bases of operations for celestials, you may wish to base the number of Servitors a Superior has on Earth on the number of Tethers he owns.) This doesn't mean the celestial population density is proportionate to the human population density in all locations; as with Tethers, celestials will be more common in places of strategic interest to Heaven or Hell, and rarer elsewhere.

Below are some approximations which you may alter as you see fit.

Very Rare

(Approximately 1 celestial per 1 million humans, or 6,000 worldwide)

Celestials are about as common as billionaires or serial killers – your chances of meeting one during your lifetime are almost nil. Celestials are loners, and may never encounter each other on the corporeal plane. Each Superior has at most a few hundred Servitors on Earth, which means the PCs are truly among the elite. Each angel or demon has a large territory to himself – often an entire city. It will be difficult to run a standard *In Nomine* campaign with such a

low population of celestials; teams of Servitors serving assorted Superiors, like the typical player character group, will only occur under very unusual circumstances. A human-centered campaign (p.62), however, could benefit from the presumption that celestials are very rare, and that most interactions will be with their human servants.

Rare

(Approximately 1 celestial per 100,000 humans, or 60,000 worldwide)

Celestials are about as common as movie stars. Most Superiors have between one and two thousand Servitors on Earth. In large cities, there may be several dozen celestials, but rarely more than one or two serving the same Word (except those most influential in the area). Celestials rarely encounter each other accidentally, and most are lone operatives, with a very loose support network.

Uncommon

(Approximately 1 celestial per 10,000 humans, or 600,000 worldwide)

Celestials are about as common as politicians. Every Superior has several thousand Servitors on Earth. Small cities have over a dozen celestials, and large metropolises may have hundreds; there are few places with *no* celestials in the area. Each Superior is well-represented in major population centers; angels and demons may form extended networks and organizations, creating a sizable subculture of their own.

CELESTIAL DEMOGRAPHICS

As with Tethers (p. 40), the global celestial population isn't necessarily evenly divided between angels and demons. Hell has always preferred quantity to quality, and the demons in Hell certainly outnumber the angels in Heaven. Celestial demographics might be reflected on the corporeal plane, with angels being less numerous than demons, but more powerful on average, or Hell might send a smaller fraction of Servitors to Earth, but only those who are a match for angels.

Individual Superiors may also have their own policies; Andrealphus might let only his finest Servitors leave Hell, making demons of Lust rare but far more capable than most Diabolicals on Earth. Novalis, on the other hand, might send any Servitor who wants to go, making angels of Flowers common but relatively underpowered.

Common

(Approximately 1 celestial per 1,000 humans, or 6 million worldwide)

Celestials are about as common as doctors. Even small communities have a few resident celestials, and major cities may have *thousands*. Every Superior has over a hundred thousand Earth-bound Servitors. Very few celestials are operating by themselves; hierarchies are evident everywhere, and celestial associations are large and interconnected in complex ways. Hardly any major event will occur without one or more celestials participating in some way.

Very Common

(Approximately 1 celestial per 250 humans, or 24 million worldwide)

With every Superior represented by nearly a *million* Earthly Servitors, celestials are everywhere, watching everything; almost every organization will be infiltrated. Almost everyone on Earth personally knows someone who is actually an angel or demon, and celestials can populate an entire neighborhood in large cities. This sort of campaign may easily become farcical.



CELESTIAL INTERVENTION

After deciding how many celestials are on Earth, you should decide how actively they intervene in corporeal affairs. This is an important decision, because it will set the tone for your campaign; are celestials conspiratorial, unseen manipulators, or are they guns-a'-blazing Holy Warriors? Is your game one of occult espionage, mythic archetypes in action, or cinematic battles of Good vs. Evil?

Open Intervention

A standard *In Nomine* campaign assumes that Heaven and Hell, for various reasons, agree that the War should not be made public. Angels and demons should not use supernatural powers in public, and they certainly shouldn't invoke their Superiors on TV. In an open intervention campaign, all such restrictions are banished. Angels and demons may fight the War in plain sight. They recruit openly, and everyone on Earth knows of their existence (though not everyone may believe they are really angels and demons!). This is very unlike most *In Nomine* scenarios, but would be a good option during Armageddon . . .

DIVINE AND INFERNAL INTERVENTIONS

Divine and Infernal Interventions should reflect the general degree of celestial intervention in the campaign (see maintext). In an open intervention campaign, God and Lucifer don't need to hold back, and Interventions may frequently result in fire and brimstone or plagues upon the Earth. In a non-intervention campaign, on the other hand, Interventions should be so subtle that not even celestials can be sure one has occurred.

The *Angelic Player's Guide* (pp. 75-77) and the *Infernal Player's Guide* (pp. 76-77) have advice for handling Divine and Infernal Interventions, respectively.

High Intervention

In a high intervention campaign, celestials aren't supposed to be open about the War, but they don't go to great lengths to hide it. Your Superior won't be too upset at you for using Songs and other supernatural powers to dispatch an enemy on a crowded city street, as long as you don't stay around to answer questions. In a modern setting, this has certain problems; if angels and demons are using supernatural powers in public, sooner or later someone will get it on film. Unless celestials are extremely rare, repeated public interventions will be impossible to keep out of the media; the government, and other groups, will certainly get involved. In an unrealistic, cinematic campaign, PCs can act like superheroes or action movie stars.

Before communications and recording technology, celestials *did* act much more openly; a demon could wipe out an entire village, and not have to answer to anyone except the angels who might hear the disturbance. Even in a historical campaign, however, there are good reasons for angels and demons not to walk openly on Earth, so Dominic and Asmodeus will still be trying to keep public intervention from getting out of hand.

Moderate Intervention

If moderate intervention is allowed, celestials are expected to keep supernatural powers out of sight as much as possible, but occasional human witnesses are inevitable and expected. (If they cause problems, they can be persuaded, discredited, or eliminated.) Carelessness earns your Superior's wrath, as does any public display of a celestial nature, unless you can justify it, cover it up, or both. Roles are more valuable; celestials are obliged to act with some subtlety, but usually because they fear alerting other celestials more than humans.

I would rather go honestly to Hell, admitting that I leaped knowingly into error and folly, than enter into the sweetest Heaven men can dream of by whining that I had been pushed.

– *Freedom and Necessity*,
Steven Brust & Emma Bull

Low Intervention

In a low intervention campaign, celestials are expected to do everything possible to avoid revealing their presence to humans (except for those rare few who serve them knowingly, such as Soldiers). Any public supernatural display, even one with no witnesses, is cause for discipline, and Asmodeus and Dominic are *extremely* unforgiving of infractions. Celestials should use Songs only rarely and with great caution. Assuming celestial form on Earth is forbidden except in extreme cases, since there is always the chance that a lucky or perceptive mortal can spot you. This sort of campaign emphasizes roleplaying over combat and supernatural powers, and Roles are virtually required.



Non-Intervention

In a non-intervention campaign, celestials are *forbidden* to intervene on the corporeal plane. Like open intervention, non-intervention contradicts the premise of a standard *In Nomine* campaign, but it is an interesting variant. Of course, you'll have to decide what the PCs are doing on Earth. Several possibilities:

- ✧ The player characters are humans. The War is fought entirely through human agents, who may have irregular contact with celestials at Tethers, in the Marches, via the Songs of Projection, etc.

- ✧ Only Outcasts and Renegades (and the elite Servitors who pursue them) can be found on Earth. The PCs belong to one of these groups . . .

- ✧ A very few celestials are sent to Earth for very specific purposes, and are required to perform their tasks without doing anything to disturb the Symphony. The PCs are elite Servitors chosen for such missions; they must be *extremely* subtle, since they're closely monitored.

MUNDANE MATTERS

Celestials, especially in a cinematic game, do not need to bother with all the mundane details of mortal existence. However, some details will affect the “realism” of your campaign, and determine how celestials interact with humans; is society an irrelevance they can ignore, or is it an obstacle that will make their jobs impossible if they don't learn how to deal with it?

Identification

Celestials without a Role can face serious difficulties on Earth. No Role means no legal identity, and no one who can vouch for you. The GM can enforce this as strictly as he likes. Celestials without Roles may be permitted to function with a fake driver's license and stolen credit cards, or they may be forced to carry cash, and avoid any contact with inquisitive mortals (particularly the authorities). The *Liber Servitorum*, pp. 110-114, has more on the utility of Roles and the inconvenience of not having one.

Money and Possessions

Wealth and equipment aren't very important for *In Nomine* characters. A celestial who needs money can usually get it. Superiors are assumed to provide basic amenities for their Servitors on Earth – nothing luxurious (unless the Servitor has a high-Status Role), but adequate living quarters, a small allowance, possibly a vehicle, and anything else necessary to perform one's duties.

As a general rule, anything a character wants that's reasonable for him to possess should be available. Very expensive or unusual equipment might need special permission from one's Superior, or negotiation with someone who can provide it. A Servitor of Baal will probably have no trouble getting hold of assault rifles, grenades, even a flamethrower, but tanks and cruise missiles aren't easy to come by. If an angel of Lightning wants a laptop computer with a satellite uplink, that's not a big deal . . . but an Artificial Intelligence might not be something Jean allows out of the Halls of Progress.

Player characters shouldn't have to worry about mundane maintenance. Cars run, computers function, flashlights have batteries, and guns have ammo – unless the GM decides an equipment failure (or ammo shortage) is appropriate for the scenario. This doesn't mean that celestials all have relic-weapons with unlimited ammo . . . go ahead and require them to reload now and then. But don't make them keep track of how many bullets they're carrying.

Celestials do *not* have to buy their important possessions as corporeal artifacts (*In Nomine*, pp. 41-42). Doing so does ensure that that particular item will always be available (or that its owner will know where it went if it's not).

HUMANS

Celestials aren't the only players in the War. Humans also have a vital role . . . sometimes as player characters, sometimes as important NPCs. You may choose to run a game that de-emphasizes humans, but unless you mean to run a campaign entirely on the celestial plane, it's hard to ignore them entirely.

EXCEPTIONAL HUMANS

The vast majority of humans possess 5 Forces. These ordinary mortals are called *mundanes*. *Exceptional* humans – those with 6 Forces or more – are the material from which Soldiers and sorcerers are made. They have a special place in the War, and the GM will want to decide how common these exceptional humans are, and how easy it is to recruit them. In the official *In Nomine* universe, about 1 human in 100 has 6 Forces, but it's unknown how many mundanes have the *potential* to gain a 6th Force. If the proportion is very low, then Soldiers must be discovered, not made, but if the number is higher, then any celestials might set up a "training program" to create Soldiers.

Not every 6-Force human *is* a Soldier, or even Symphonically aware (*Corporeal Player's Guide*, p. 22). This is another decision the GM must make: of the humans who have the potential to become Soldiers, how many are active participants in the War? If the proportion is low, then *many* potential Soldiers are in the population, and overt celestial interventions are likely to awaken them to the War (not necessarily on the right side!). If it is high, then most exceptional humans are already involved in the War.

In general, the more exceptional humans there are, the more cautiously celestials must act. If they are very rare, they become more valuable as servants, but celestials won't worry as much about human interference. If exceptional humans are relatively common, then Soldiers become less valuable, but celestials can never assume that if they disturb the Symphony, their only opposition will come from other celestials.

The topic of humans and Forces is discussed in far more detail in the *Corporeal Player's Guide* (pp. 17-20).

Soldiers and Others

Most exceptional humans who are active in the War are either Soldiers of God or Soldiers of Hell. The GM should decide approximately how many there are on each side – especially in a local campaign setting. Soldiers might be very rare, important agents, or a particular Superior might have hundreds of Soldiers in major cities (or only in the campaign city – perhaps it's the headquarters of an organization of Soldiers). There is a big difference between having a small network of Soldiers worldwide, and being able to field a small army!

Not all Soldiers serve Heaven or Hell, however. There are also pagan Soldiers serving ethereal gods, and occasional "rogue" Soldiers working only for themselves, sorcerous cabals, or human agencies. The latter can be especially dangerous if they're common enough that every mundane organization has Symphonically aware agents! (See *Human Agencies*, below.)

Besides Soldiers, there are also sorcerers, who may be rare, isolated lunatics who serve only as distractions in the War, or founders of powerful cabals that actually control important agencies. Additionally, there are undead (most of whom work for Saminga), Saints (rare, reincarnated, blessed souls working for one of the Archangels), prophets, and even ghosts and dream-shades. All of these can have an impact on the War, locally if not globally, and if any are to be important in your campaign, you should include them among the setting's *Important Personalities* (p. 37).

HUMAN AGENCIES

The *Corporeal Player's Guide* (pp. 103-114) describes human agencies (mundane and supernatural) in terms of their involvement in the War: which ones are obvious candidates for infiltration, and which ones might be a *threat* to celestials?

All that is necessary for evil to triumph is that good men do nothing.
– Edmund Burke

This section offers suggestions to the GM on using human agencies as tools. Each organization is described in terms of how it will affect your campaign depending on its *competence* and *participation* (see box, p. 50). There is also a list of suggested Roles for each agency. Remember that a useful Role makes an equally useful servant performing in the same capacity.

The Government

There are few better ways to shape society than to work directly in the government. Celestials usually find it more effective (and safer) to recruit or subvert mortal politicians than to put themselves in political Roles, but sometimes even an angel or demon will run for office. The higher the Role's profile, the greater the danger of exposure; in modern times, it's unlikely that either side could place a Servitor directly in the highest government offices without being exposed. Presidents and Prime Ministers have wide circles of friends, though.

Inept – An inept government can't cope with celestials (whatever religious beliefs its leaders may espouse). Any reports of supernatural events will be ignored or scoffed at. Though easy to infiltrate, such a government is hard to push toward Heaven or Hell, since politicians are among the most willful of mortals.

Average – If the government has an average level of competence, bureaucracy makes it difficult for it to react to any truly new phenomena. There are a few members who can grasp the concept of the War, and recognize it as a threat (or opportunity!). Celestials can find willing allies, but also determined opponents.

Competent – A competent government reacts quickly to supernatural threats. If they don't understand what they're dealing with, they recruit experts and conduct investigations. Since the government commands the military, the law, and many other agencies (below), a competent government can mobilize vast resources against a perceived threat. Most Superiors want to leave such a government alone . . . the consequences of exposure are too dire.

Roles

✕ Politician (*In Nomine*, p. 72) – A handy Role, but one constantly in the public eye. Balseraphs love political

AGENCIES

Competence

In *In Nomine*, an agency's competence at performing its normal function is less important than its ability to react to supernatural events. When presented with evidence of the War, ranging from a murder scene that doesn't make sense to a demon assuming celestial form in front of witnesses, how does the agency react? You can sort groups into one of three broad categories:

Inept

An inept group will refuse to change its methods no matter what it encounters, and its leaders will seek *any* explanation other than a supernatural one. Celestials will find it easy to deceive (and infiltrate!) inept groups. The GM may choose to make most organizations inept in less realistic campaigns, if he wants to permit celestial interventions without much fear of affecting the setting.

Average

Groups of average competence tend to be unimaginative in responding to unusual events . . . but they're not completely stupid. If someone disappears into thin air, you won't be able to convince witnesses that it was their imagination. As long as celestials are somewhat circumspect in their interventions, and present a plausible excuse for unnatural events, they can probably function undetected. If they are careless, however, they may have serious problems from an inquisitive agency.

Competent

A competent agency is dangerous. It *will* notice unusual patterns, and it will definitely *not* ignore unnatural events. This doesn't mean that upon discovering a blood-drained corpse, investigators will immediately conclude "vampire" . . . but if presented with enough evidence, they'll at least consider the possibility. Even if those in charge of the

agency are skeptics who refuse to accept the idea of angels and demons, they'll devise suitable countermeasures for whatever they *think* they're dealing with. When dealing with an astute agency, celestials have to be *very* careful. Using supernatural powers too openly can quickly ruin a Role, destroy a mission, and require massive cover-up efforts that will *severely* displease one's Superior. Infiltrating such an agency is extremely dangerous . . . especially if there are counter-infiltrators from the other side!

Remember that just because an organization is inept or competent in general doesn't mean that every member will be – an astute police force could be burdened with a plodding, unimaginative Chief of Police, and an inflexible military might have a few open-minded officers who are willing to consider what their superiors will not . . .

Participation

Human agencies can also be described as *unaware*, *misled*, and *informed*. Unaware agencies have no knowledge of the War, and generally do not believe in supernatural powers. Misled agencies *think* they know something . . . but what they know is mostly wrong. Informed agencies know about the War (though they may have interpretations of their own that are not completely accurate). Being aware, of course, doesn't necessarily mean they are actively allied with one side or the other!

The default for mundane organizations is *unaware*. A group that is misled has usually stumbled upon some information accidentally – or may have been fed misleading information by someone. Informed agencies have almost always been infiltrated – if not taken over – by beings in a position to inform them (which doesn't negate the possibility of a subsequent purge, shift in allegiances, or both . . .).

As with competence, individuals within a group may be more or less aware of the War than its leadership.

Roles, but few angels do, and not many other demons can handle them well. Celestials operating under the constraints of a political Role rarely make good player characters, except perhaps on the local level. Politicians make excellent allies, enemies, and servants.

✧ *Political Aide* – Status ranges from 3 to 5; they require no skills, though Fast-Talk and Charisma are helpful. Every politician needs a staff of secretaries, researchers, spin-doctors, and advisors. High-level aides are often the power behind the throne.

✧ *Lobbyist* – Status 4 to 6. Savoir-Faire and Charisma are essential; Emote, Fast-Talk, and Lying are useful. Lobbyists aren't actually *in* the government, but seek to influence it, with methods ranging from persuasion to bribery.

The Law

This includes everything from local police departments, to federal agencies like the FBI, as well as other civilian regulatory agencies.

✧ *Inept* – Inept law enforcement agencies make life easy for violent celestials. Grisly murders, celestial pyrotechnics, and other unusual behavior will be blamed on drug addicts, terrorists, or whatever convenient excuse presents itself. Autopsies and forensic investigations are rarely performed, and when they are, any discrepancies will be rationalized away.

✧ *Average* – An average law enforcement agency notices when people die in a bizarre fashion, and a string of similar deaths leads to theories of a serial killer. They find "rational" explanations for strange events, but too many oddities eventually attract attention.

✧ *Competent* – If the law is competent, then investigators compile databases to track unusual incidents, and a complete forensics team descends on the scene of "supernatural" crimes . . . and they *will* draw correlations and entertain unorthodox theories. Murderous celestials have to watch their step.

Roles

✧ *Policeman (In Nomine, p. 72)* – an ordinary cop will have a Status of 3 (for a patrolman or beat cop) or 4 (for a detective); the Sheriff or Chief of Police of a large city would be Status 5. Federal agents should be at least Status 4; someone very high in the federal hierarchy should be Status 5 or 6. Comes with legal enforcement powers, often including the ability to carry weapons where ordinary citizens cannot. Don't forget that a Role of Policeman lets a celestial shoot people without creating a disturbance – as long as it's in the line of duty!

✧ *Clerk/Administrator* – Status of 2 or 3, no additional skills required. While they don't have the



legal enforcement powers of a policeman, the civilians who work for law enforcement agencies have access to all kinds of sensitive information, as well as weapons lockers, morgues, police scanners, etc.

✧ *Coroner* – as per doctors (*In Nomine, p. 72*), but Status is rarely 6. Being a coroner (or having one as your servant) is immensely useful if you're the sort of celestial who leaves bodies lying around . . . or if you have a *use* for cadavers.

The Military

The military is the ultimate source of heavy firepower, and in some countries, it's the ultimate political power as well.

✧ *Inept* – An inept military classifies anything it can't explain; reports of supernatural incidents gets the witnesses "debriefed" and sent for a psychiatric evaluation. Their reports will subsequently be filed in a records morgue, buried forever. Celestials love inept militaries, as they're easy to deceive, point at the wrong targets during wartime, and appropriate equipment from.

✧ *Average* – A moderately competent military still classifies anything they can't explain . . . but *somebody* might actually look at the reports. If they repeatedly encounter a mysterious threat, someone gets assigned to study it. Obvious evidence of the supernatural brings very secretive men in black from mysterious government agencies to the scene . . . You can't steal equipment as easily from a smarter military. Diverting a few crates of ammo or a grenade launcher now and then is one thing, but they *will* notice if a tank goes missing.

✧ *Competent* – If the military is sharp, celestials are in serious danger. The military has vast resources, and vast armaments. If they think they're dealing with something supernatural, the natural solution is to use heavier firepower. With enough experience, the military could develop procedures for dealing with supernatural beings, as well as tighten security so they're not easily infiltrated.

Roles

✧ *Soldier/Sailor/Marine/etc.* – Status is usually low, 1 or 2 for the average enlisted man, 3 or 4 for officers. Top brass are Status 5 or 6. Requires Ranged Weapon (Rifle), and two other skills depending on branch and specialty; Driving, Engineering, Fighting, Move Silently, Ranged Weapon, Small Weapon, Survival, Swimming, and Tactics are all common. Soldiers can get their hands on military hardware, but are subject to rigid discipline and don't have much freedom of movement. A military Role usually only covers disturbances generated during wartime or training – but it's about the only way a celestial can safely play with explosives and heavy ordinance . . .

Intelligence Agencies

Most “spies” are desk-jockeys sitting in office buildings. Often they have access to very useful information, but their jobs aren’t very exciting from a roleplaying perspective. To Heaven and Hell, however, they can be crucially important . . . and incredibly dangerous.

Inept – An inept intelligence agency is too hidebound to accept evidence of anything that doesn’t fit its narrow analytical models. Anything supernatural is rationalized as something else, or filtered out as “anomalous.” They will have effectively no information about celestials or any kind of supernatural activity. This makes them less dangerous to celestials, but also less useful; an intelligence agency that can’t collect and interpret information relevant to the War probably isn’t worth infiltrating.

Average – An intelligence agency of average competence doesn’t pose much of a direct threat to celestials; they still interpret “unnatural” events as unexplained phenomena, worth filing, but rarely worth investigating. Those files can be useful to those who know how to interpret them, however, which means even an ineffectual spy agency is worth celestial attention.

Competent – An acute intelligence agency is possibly the most dangerous mortal threat celestials might face. They have the means to collect extremely valuable information, which neither side wants revealed to *anyone* else. They also have the means to inform other government agencies – such as the military – what they’re dealing with. A spy agency that suspects it’s dealing with the supernatural could well devote an entire department to researching it . . . or sponsor the creation of a new, specialized agency to be the bane of all celestials. Superiors don’t dare *not* try to keep abreast of what such agencies are up to . . . but infiltrating them is difficult, and if a celestial’s cover is blown, he only gives the spooks *more* information.

Roles

✧ *Intelligence Analyst* – Status ranges from 3 (for anonymous paper pushers) to 6 (for those who have the ear of the President). It requires a relevant Knowledge skill; Computer Operation, Electronics, and (at the higher levels) Savoir-Faire are useful also. Intelligence analysts would probably be boring to play, but *very* valuable as allies or servants.

✧ *Espionage Agent* – Status 3 or 4. These are the James Bonds who actually go out and *do* things, whether it’s tapping phones or assassinating heads of state. There’s hardly a skill that *isn’t* useful to them, but Detect Lies and Fast-Talk are essential. A celestial with such a Role has access to a lot of interesting information, and his Role might cover anything from firefights to demolitions, but he must be careful about keeping his allegiances straight . . . and *very* careful about being exposed, if he’s a double-agent in an agency with any knowledge about the supernatural!

Business

Business, from street vendors to multinational corporations, makes the world turn. It all fuels Marc’s Word, but it can be put to many uses, infernal and divine. The business world is immense, so the GM should decide on the competence of individual businesses that figure into the plot . . . whether it’s a software company about to unleash Vapula’s latest pet project on the Internet, or a family grocery store where a battle for souls is being waged.

Inept – Inept businesses only care about overhead and profit; anything that doesn’t figure into the books simply isn’t relevant. Entire companies can be subverted by celestials; employees won’t notice as long as they keep getting their paychecks.

Average – An average company isn’t interested in supernatural events *per se*, but notices odd things that affect business. Ambitious individuals might want to take advantage of unusual phenomena, others worry about what their business is getting into . . .

Competent – An alert business collects information on supernatural phenomena, seeing either opportunities or dangers. Too much meddling in the business world, and celestials find R&D companies analyzing artifacts, systems administrators searching the Internet for signs of this “supernatural” subculture, and security-minded corporations looking for ways to detect infiltrators. Demons may find businesses easily tempted with promises of increased profits, but few will *knowingly* make a pact with Hell.

Roles

✧ *Businessman* – Status 3 (for small shopowners) to 6 (for CEOs). No skills are required, but Charisma, Emote, and Fast-Talk are useful. The main virtue of being a businessman is having money; important executives can also commandeer company resources like vehicles, computer labs, even land . . . though exceeding one’s expense account invites scrutiny.

The Media

Not solely Nybbas’ tool (though his Servitors have the greatest influence here), the world’s news media has the power to keep the War out of the public’s sight . . . or to blow it wide open. Being a subset of the business world (above), the media doesn’t act as one monolithic organ (yet). Individual newspapers and TV stations can be much more savvy than the print or broadcasting world at large.

Inept – Inept media outlets scoff at the supernatural, ignoring stories that don’t make sense, or misreporting them as something else. Alternatively, they credulously accept *anything*, so that genuine accounts of angels and demons are buried amongst stories of Elvis sightings and crop circles.

Average – A media organization with a little bit of judgment is just dangerous enough to be worth avoiding.



They rarely believe in the supernatural, but they investigate anything that looks interesting. If they gather enough evidence, *someone* will consider more unorthodox explanations.

Competent – Sharp journalists are a definite threat to the War; they *must* be avoided, subverted, or eliminated. If an entire organization becomes convinced something strange is going on, they can assign considerable investigative resources to it; a newspaper or magazine *specializing* in supernatural inquiries may be a tempting target for celestial infiltration (since they might uncover Enemy activity), but with no allegiances in the War, they're likely to turn on those who would use them.

Roles

✧ **Journalist** (*In Nomine*, p. 72) – Journalists feed information to the masses, and can also feed information to their friends. A journalist Role or servant can help a celestial disseminate (or suppress) information favorable to one side in the War. Journalists also have access to people and places that an ordinary person doesn't.

✧ **Announcer** – From radio talkshow hosts to evening news anchors, announcers are the human face of the media, and they wield enormous influence. Status ranges from 4 (for a local host) to 6 (for nationally-known media figures). Some are actually journalists, but many are just talking heads, for whom the only requirement is Charisma.

Academia

From public schools to world-renowned universities, brilliant minds work alongside crackpots, and both can be useful in the War.

Inept – Inept schools scoff at the supernatural, insisting on "hard facts." There's little threat they'll expose the War

to students and researchers, but it's harder to direct them toward research that celestials might find useful.

Average – An average educational institution has enough open-mindedness to consider "unconventional" theories. From divinity schools to paranormal research institutes, there are many academics who believe in the supernatural, some who believe in Heaven and Hell. Here you can find professors who can translate ancient, dead languages, or teach students sorcerous rituals as "alternative medicine" . . .

Competent – A competent school seriously investigates supernatural phenomena – not necessarily believing, but willing to examine the evidence. A school that's convinced that supernatural beings exist can gather a lot of information that celestials would very much like to see . . . or have destroyed. Such schools are also fertile recruiting zones for angels and demons looking for ready followers.

Roles

✧ **Teacher** – Most have a Status of 3 or 4, though respected college professors may be Status 5. Knowledge of one's subject matter is necessary; Emote and Charisma are the marks of excellent teachers. Teachers have the power to shape young minds, whether it's pre-schoolers or graduate students, and Servitors of Blandine, Beleth, Kronos, and Yves find teachers especially invaluable.

✧ **Student** – Status is 1 through high school, 2 for college students. No skills required. Students are the ideal, unobtrusive agents, anonymous to their teachers and other students, but able to move easily through schools and corrupt or enlighten their fellow knowledge-seekers.

Religion

Religion is covered in more detail in the next chapter (beginning on p. 64), but each religious organization will have its own perspective on Heaven and Hell . . . which may or may not bear some resemblance to reality. To celestials, religion can be a powerful political tool, or the means by which souls are led to their destiny or their fate.

Inept – Inept religions know nothing about the War, regardless of what they *think* they know. Either those in authority don't *really* believe what they preach, reciting theology by rote, or their worldview is so narrow that any contradictions simply cannot be accepted. Demons find such believers to be pliable tools; angels often despair of leading them away from ignorance.

Average – If a religion's followers really believe in the supernatural, they'll probably accept evidence that it's among them . . . though they'll have their own interpretations of it. Diabolicals need to be more careful when dealing with such groups, since almost no religion would *knowingly* ally with demons. Angels often find them hard to deal with as well; if angels don't meet the believers' expectations, they may be rejected as demons!

Competent – A believer who has faith in the supernatural, but enough flexibility not to make snap judgments about what he encounters, can be a celestial's best friend or worst enemy. While many individuals are this open-minded, few religious organizations are. The Host would *like* to enlist the full support of the world's religions to their cause, and are often frustrated that it's not that easy. A church with full knowledge of some aspect of the War will almost certainly choose a side . . . which may not be the side it *thinks* it's on!

Roles

✧ *Religious Figure (In Nomine*, p. 73) – If celestials want to infiltrate a religion, they *need* clergy to do it. For angels, a religious Role also gives access to those needing help. For demons, it gives unparalleled potential to corrupt human society and demoralize Heaven. Both use such Roles to get reports of supernatural activity, as people tell priests things they wouldn't tell the police or anyone else. Creative celestials might try to gather a flock of their own, to provide ready-made servants for the divine or diabolical cause.

Organized Crime

Organized crime represents a major unrecognized political and economic power in most societies. From the Mafia to the Triads, from the yakuza to international terrorists, from local street gangs to South American drug cartels, organized crime commands resources vaster than those of many governments. Naturally, they are favorite tools of Diabolicals, but in a world that's not black and white, angels may find them useful too.

Inept – Though criminals may be “a cowardly and superstitious lot,” most actually have no idea what to do when confronted with the supernatural. Their response is to ignore it or run from it, depending on whether it appears dangerous. Celestials easily infiltrate criminal groups that give no thought to unearthly powers.

Average – Criminals alert enough to notice celestial activity may try to benefit from the supernatural power angels and demons have, but if they see celestials as a threat, they'll try to figure out how to neutralize them. Celestials should avoid alerting such groups; demons because proof that Hell exists might cause many criminals to rethink their ways, angels because alert and hostile criminals are more difficult to foil (or save).

Competent – A competent criminal organization deals with supernatural activities the way they would with any other potential threat; avoid it, destroy it, or co-opt it. If criminals know that supernatural beings exist, it won't be as easy to infiltrate them, *or* intimidate them. Diabolicals find it easier to *deal* with competent criminals, but also more dangerous; humans can be as adept as demons at the art of the double-cross.

Roles

✧ *Gang Member* – Status 1. Fighting is required. Weapon skills, Fast-Talk, Lying, and Escape can all aid survival. Leaders are usually the ones with the highest Strength and/or Charisma. Violent celestials love such Roles, as they're barely noticeable to the rest of society, and can cover for all manner of mayhem. Having loyal gang members as friends can be very useful in a fight (though the GM should be careful not to let fellow gang-bangers be treated as free servants).

✧ *Drug Dealer* – Status 1, sometimes higher for those catering to more discriminating customers. Requires Fast-Talk and Lying; Escape and Running are also essential to the successful pusher. Celestials involved in the drug world are likely to run into Servitors of Fleurity, the Demon Prince of Drugs. Few angels would get involved in such a loathsome activity, though some Servitors of Gabriel have found it an excellent venue for identifying self-cruelty. A Role as a drug dealer will cover for certain kinds of violence, as well as for deaths by overdose.

✧ *Wiseguy* – Status 2 (for low-level thugs) to 6 (for Mafia Dons, Columbian drug lords, Yakuza kingpins, etc.). Requires Fighting and Lying at a minimum; veterans will probably have Weapon skills, Escape, Fast-Talk, and Running as well. Membership in an elite criminal organization provides access to wealth and power, and the ability for celestials to kill with near-impunity if their Role is high enough. Demons can wreak havoc in the underworld, but some Malakim gleefully assume the Role of a hitman and go gunning for God.

PARTY COHESION AND CONFLICTS

One of the most difficult parts of putting together an *In Nomine* campaign can be making the group of player characters work together. With so many diverging goals, it's inevitable that there will be conflicts of interest, unless everyone serves a single Superior. These conflicts are intentional; Superior politics, inter-Choir/Band rivalries, and Word-driven agendas are part of the drama of the War.

Conflicts can be managed, but some will inevitably pit celestials against one another. Part of the GM's job is to look at every prospective player character's potential interactions with other PCs. If you see a problem that just can't be reconciled with the existing group, you may have to turn down certain character concepts. For example, while it's possible to get angels and demons to work together, it's highly unlikely that a Malakite of the Sword could be restrained from carving up a demon for a single adventure, much less for an entire campaign. Thus, unless the Malakite can somehow be kept unaware of the nature of the other characters, he just won't work in a mixed party. Likewise, the hatred and mistrust between Servitors of Asmodeus and Valefor is such that while they *might* be compelled to collaborate on a single mission (scheming to backstab and undermine each other the entire time), ongoing cooperation is highly unlikely.

Keep in mind also that inter-character rivalries can sometimes lead to inter-*player* conflicts. This should be avoided at all costs. A character that just isn't going to fit into the group should be refused, both for the GM's sake and for the sake of player enjoyment all around. *Manageable* conflicts should be examined closely before the GM goes ahead and permits them . . . while well-roleplayed conflicts can make the game more interesting, there are more than a few players who *believe* they can handle such in-game tension without taking it personally, but who will begin feeling resentful when their character is the one who gets balked time and again. Don't let someone play a Servitor of Judgment in a group consisting of angels of Creation, Fire, and War, unless the *player* has a very good sense of humor . . .

Heat and animosity, contest and conflict, may sharpen the wits, although they rarely do; they never strengthen the understanding . . .

– Walter Savage Landor

Below are some the conflicts likely to arise in an *In Nomine* game, and ways to deal with them. (Note that many solutions require player cooperation – free will is such that the GM can't *make* PCs get along without the players' help. Likewise, players can't smooth over rough patches if the GM, in the role of the rest of the universe, doesn't assist, at least subtly.)

RIVALRY

Even if all the player characters are on the same side, Superiors on the same side don't always cooperate . . . especially in Hell. While you can always devise a reason why hostile Superiors would cooperate temporarily, long-term peaceful coexistence will require more finagling.

Rival Archangels

The problem of hostile Archangels is less acute (unless you are playing a *very* political campaign), because all angels are ostensibly on the same side, united in their desire to banish diabolical influences from Earth. Even the most intense animosities (such as that between Jean and Jordi) will be set aside in the face of an infernal threat . . . and even when there is no reason to cooperate, hostile Archangels don't openly war with one another.

If there is abiding hostility between two PCs' Archangels, you'll have to give them a reason to cooperate. The easiest way is to give them a mutual enemy. In demon-controlled Los Angeles, for example, *all* angels cooperate more.

Another option is to establish a *personal* relationship that supersedes the political one. While Dominic looks with a jaundiced eye on Eli, an angel of Creation might have convinced the Archangel of Judgment that he is loyal to Heaven, whatever his master is up to . . . and thus Dominic instructs his Servitors to regard that *particular* Servitor of Eli as reliable. Likewise, angels of Flowers and War usually don't have much use for each other, but the rare Malakite of Flowers might have earned the respect of local Michaelites, and a battle-weary, gentle, but loyal angel of War might win a soft spot in the hearts of Novalis' Servitors.

Rival Demon Princes

The rivalry between hostile Demon Princes is much deeper and more violent than among Archangels, and can be difficult to manage in a group of diabolical PCs. Indeed, demons can expect to be *punished* if they aid Servitors of an enemy Prince. While all demons are expected to further the cause of Hell (and thus are all subject to a crackdown by the Game, should their rivalries flare up to the extent that it gives an advantage to the Host), only direct orders from Asmodeus, Baal, or Lucifer are likely to make hostile Demon Princes cooperate.

A common threat can bring mortal enemies together temporarily. If the dam that Servitors of Lightning are trying to build will submerge a Tether of Lust and a Tether of Death, Servitors of Andrealphus and Saminga may cooperate just long enough to oppose the dam (though both would like to see the *other* Prince's Tether destroyed). The only thing that will keep them working together after the common threat is gone is a personal reason . . . one strong enough to make the demons risk punishment by their Prince. True friendship between demons is rare – even rarer between Servitors of enemy Princes. But it can happen. It's also possible that a Servitor of Lust might see some long-term gain in cultivating a relationship with a Servitor of Death. Perhaps his Master even approves of this subterfuge, or instructed his minion to spy, but it could never become public, and thus may be difficult to sustain in a long-term campaign.

Of course, demons don't always tell the truth about who they really serve. Followers of hostile Princes could have cover identities as Servitors of *allied* Princes, and if they don't want to blow their covers . . .

MIXED PARTIES

As described in *Mixing It Up* (*In Nomine*, p. 203), sometimes players will want to run angels and demons in the same group. This can be done, as long as their goals are not *too* diametrically opposed. Angels and demons can coexist more easily in a game with shades of gray, less easily when the campaign's contrast is sharper (p. 35). Humorous campaigns also make it easier for angels to collaborate with demons. Mixed groups will be far more difficult if the angelic PCs lean toward Malakim or Servitors of Dominic and Laurence. Lilim and Impudites are the best at socializing with angels; few angels will be able to tolerate a Calabite or Shedite, and few Habbalah will want to associate with Heaven's "wimp angels," or vice versa.

The *Angelical Player's Guide* (pp. 88-93) gives advice for running angels in a mixed group, and the *Infernal Player's Guide* (pp. 86-90) offers the same advice for demons. Below are some GM tips and sample mixed adventures or campaigns.

Enemies

An adversarial campaign is possible, but the GM must monitor it *very* carefully. The slightest hint of partiality will have all the players feeling resentful. Even if things run smoothly, it's inevitable that some PCs will be foiled, put in Trauma, possibly even destroyed, and eventually one side will gain the upper hand. Unless the campaign is intended to be short-term, or all the players are very comfortable with having their characters suffer abuse at the hands of other PCs, it can be difficult to keep everyone enjoying such a game.

Allowing players a character on each side may allow them to be on the winning side no matter what, and the GM can

see if *both* of a player's characters are oppressed – a warning sign that players may be reacting to in-character slights.

Sample Scenarios

✦ *Claiming Tethers* – An incident has prompted the formation of a new Tether – but its celestial endpoint is not yet secured. It could become a Tether to Heaven or Hell. (For example, a student who's been tormented and abused in gym class for years finally snaps, chains the gymnasium shut during a basketball game, and sets it on fire. His abusers die in the flames, along with dozens of innocent people. The resulting Tether might be claimed by Gabriel, Belial, or Saminga.) Angels and demons must work to influence the Tether toward their side, but subtly – open warfare means Symphonic disturbance, and could destroy the Tether altogether. (See the *Liber Castellorum* for much more on Tether formation.)

✦ *Turf Wars* – One side dominates an area. The other side wants to move in. (Or both sides are moving into previously unclaimed territory.) Who will prevail?

✦ *Saving Souls* – A particular mortal, or a group, has a bright destiny and/or a terrible fate. Angels must do everything they can to ensure the former; demons are assigned to bring about the latter.

Temporary Allies

A mutual threat forces opposing sides to cooperate. The threat may come from a Superior whose goals are inimical to all the PCs' Superiors, or from a third party, such as a mortal agency, or ethereals, or the mysterious Grigori. Their alliance will last only until the threat is resolved.

Continuing threats may not be plausible, but if the characters developed relationships, normal hostilities may become more intellectual. Instead of slaying vessels, characters may try to outwit (or recruit!) each other, resulting in a truce or cold war (see below).

Sample Scenarios

✦ *Outcast Archangels/Renegade Princes* – A Superior has become an Outcast or Renegade, and is now working against both Heaven and Hell. The Archangels and Demon Princes have no choice but to ally against this threat, as they did against Makatiel, Prince of Disease, and Legion, Prince of Corruption (p. 94).

✦ *Conspiracy Theories* – Someone seems to be conspiring against all the PCs' Superiors. Maybe Tethers have been destroyed, Servitors killed, etc. Who is responsible?

✦ *Armageddon* – Someone wants to bring about Armageddon. Superiors on both sides are either in favor of or opposed to this. Pro-Armageddon angels may ally with demons just long enough to ensure the Final Trumpet blows; Archangels in favor of maintaining the peace may secretly ally with their pro-stalemate counterparts. (The *Revelations Cycle* is built around such a premise.)

Mutual Interests

Certain Superiors have interests that coincide often enough to assign Servitors to cooperate. (Of course, each Superior has his own agenda, so be alert for treachery!)

Sample Scenarios

✧ *Judgment and the Game* – The PCs are elite Servitors of Dominic and Asmodeus, who collaborate to hunt down dangerous Outcasts and Renegades, or investigate rumors of Grigori activity, ethereal incursions, or *other* secret Heaven-Hell alliances.

✧ *Lust and Flowers* – Andrealphus and Novalis may find one another morally reprehensible, but they are united in their desire to preserve humanity (albeit for vastly different reasons), and prevent Armageddon. The PCs are secret “peace-keepers,” dedicated to maintaining the stalemate and foiling plots by militant Archangels and Princes to escalate the War. They also oppose violent celestials (on both sides) who kill humans wantonly.

✧ *War and the War* – Baal and Michael both want the War to be over. Soon. The PCs are assigned to escalate the War and push both sides toward Armageddon.

✧ *Freedom and Trade* – Sometimes, Heaven and Hell have to do business. Sometimes, even the most militant Superiors have an urgent need to deal with the other side, but can’t do it through their own Servitors, even their most trusted ones. Or perhaps they need something from the pagan gods, a sorcerous cabal, or the Grigori, none of whom will meet angels or demons under normal circumstances. The PCs are secret diplomats and negotiators working for Marc and Lilith, the only parties on either side “neutral” enough to work together, and be trusted by others to keep their word.

Cold War and Armistice

For whatever reason, the PCs have orders to maintain the peace. That doesn’t mean they shouldn’t continue promoting their Superiors’ Words, or fail to balk the other side where possible, but open warfare is forbidden; they have to coexist.

Sample Scenarios

✧ *Truce* – The campaign setting is a non-combat zone. For some reason, both sides agree to coexist peacefully in the area. See the Austin, Texas setting in *Night Music* for an example.

✧ *Cold War* – Angels and demons don’t have to “get along,” but they’re not allowed to cross certain lines. No killing enemy vessels, for example, or no attacking someone’s Role. This may be the result of an agreement between Superiors, or just a desire to prevent escalation in a sensitive area. Servitors must do their jobs without striking *directly* at their counterparts.

✧ *Silent War* – Disturbances are not permitted – *any* disturbance will invoke the wrath of one’s Superior. Perhaps there are a number of delicate Tethers forming, on both

Noel found it difficult to holler at an angel while a demon clung to him so closely. His subconscious was allergic to allegory.

– Esther Friesner, *Demon Blues*

sides, or there may be other reasons (see *Treading Lightly on the Symphony*, p. 124). The War may continue, but it must continue very quietly . . . so celestials on opposite sides may take the opportunity to talk now and then.

Personal Relationships

Though the War goes on, individuals have formed relationships that cross celestial lines. Some angels remain friends with comrades who Fell; some demons stay in touch with buddies who went for the halo. Others, thrown together by circumstances, discover a kindred spirit on the opposite side. This can be very dangerous if one’s Superior (or Dominic or Asmodeus) find out. On the other hand, your Lord might see your “special relationship” as an opportunity to feed false information to the enemy, or lure them into a trap.

Sample Scenarios

✧ *Enemy Mine* – Former comrades can’t seem to stay away from each other, even though one has Fallen. See Marcus and Nicole’s relationship in the vignettes from *In Nomine*, the *Infernal Player’s Guide*, and the *Liber Reliquarum* for an example.

✧ *Defection* – An angel seems on the verge of Falling, or a demon appears to be ready to redeem. Is it for real, a trap or *both*?

✧ *R&R* – Some celestials want to be “off duty” sometimes. Particularly in a humorous campaign, there may be times and places where the War isn’t in effect, and enemies can meet as friends.

Disfavored

The last option is for celestials on either or both sides to be Disfavored. Outcast angels might ally with Renegades or demons; Renegades might seek sanctuary with angels. Of course, angels will only cooperate with a Renegade who seems willing to redeem, and demons will strive to make an Outcast Fall. But Renegades and Outcasts might seek protection *together* against their mutual persecutors. Having both angelic and demonic resonances available can be very useful.

(Such a motley group might also accept humans and ethereals; see below for tips on incorporating non-celestials.)

CELESTIALS AND OTHERS

Not all player characters are celestials. Humans and ethereal spirits may also become involved in the War. If the GM allows non-celestial player characters, he must decide how they can fit in with a celestial group.



Celestials and Humans

Human characters include mundanes, Soldiers, sorcerers, Saints, and undead. Many of these characters participate actively in the War. The main problem with adding human PCs to a celestial campaign is that they tend to be underpowered. To ameliorate this, the GM might give humans extra Resources, or impose special restrictions on celestials. It is very important that human PCs not be dominated by celestials and confined to unimportant roles in the campaign. The *Corporeal Player's Guide*, pp. 95-96, offers more tips on including humans in a celestial-oriented campaign. See *Power Level* (p. 5) for suggestions on balancing human and celestial PCs.

Celestials and Ethereals

Ethereal spirits don't mingle easily with celestials. The Host has forbidden ethereal spirits to manifest on Earth, and destroys any ethereal vessels they encounter.

Demons usually react the same way, not liking the competition, though they might be more willing to bargain with ethereals if they see some benefit in it. Only in a campaign taking place mostly in the Marches are ethereal spirits likely to be able to coexist with celestials, and then only uneasily. Servitors of Blandine and Laurence patrol Blandine's side of the Vale, keeping any ethereals out; while some might not be aggressively hostile toward all ethereals, they see no reason to ally with them. Servitors of Beleth, on the other hand, often make bargains with ethereals, and it's possible other demons who venture into the Far Marches might be able to strike a deal with one of the pagan gods. Many of the *kami* of Japan work with Nybbas (*The Marches*, p. 104); other diabolical pacts are possible.

Not all Archangels are hostile to ethereals, however. A tolerant angel might be able to work with ethereal spirits, as long as they aren't allied with Hell, and Judgment doesn't find out. A few ethereal spirits *might* occasionally talk to, and even ally with, angels. The *loas* of African-Caribbean religions such as Voudon and Santeria have an unspoken agreement with Heaven (*The Marches*, p. 104), and the Aboriginal spirits of the Dreamtime (*The Marches*, p. 103) are unofficially tolerated.

CANON

In theology and academia, "canon" refers to an essential body of work, the writings that are the foundation of a particular religion or school of thought. In *In Nomine*, all rules and settings published by Steve Jackson Games for the "official" *In Nomine* universe are *canon*. Any rules or scenarios that *aren't* official are specifically marked "optional" or *non-canonical*. The official published universe has a set of rules, a cast of characters, and a history (which will continue to develop as future supplements are published) which will remain consistent. The purpose of establishing canon is to provide a reliable reference GMs can use as a "baseline" for their campaigns. Thus, for example, in the *Demon Prince of Rock and Roll* (*Night Music*, pp. 113-127), it is established in the official *In Nomine* universe that Furfur, the Demon of Hardcore, is elevated to Superior status by Lucifer. The Demon Prince of Hardcore has become part of canon . . . but that *doesn't* mean you have to use him in your campaign.

Because the official *In Nomine* universe is an evolving one, it is inevitable that some events in your campaign will play out differently than they do in canon. You may begin with a canonical campaign, and find that it's diverging from the official universe after a few adventures, or you may elect to ignore major elements of canon from the beginning. *Anything you do with your campaign is fine!* Canon is a reference tool, not *rules* your campaign must follow!

As a GM, you will want to decide what is "canon" for *your* campaign. For the sake of consistency, and so your players know what to accept and what to disregard in published *In Nomine* supplements, it's a good idea to outline how your campaign differs from canon. Note that you need not decide everything from the beginning. Also note that your players don't need to know the answers to all canonical questions . . .

CANONICAL CAMPAIGNS

A "canonical" campaign is one that follows canon . . . mostly. It's unlikely that you'll want to use *everything* exactly as written from all published supplements – but making a few changes doesn't mean your campaign is now heretical! It's easy to adapt published materials into a canonical campaign, and such campaigns will require little explanation to players already familiar with *In Nomine*. You might make minor changes, like dispensing with Furfur, or using one or more of the optional/variant rules in Chapter 6 (p. 119), or adding some new Superiors of your own. More importantly, an active, evolving campaign will feature changes in your universe (especially if you are playing a game that's *mythic* in scope – p. 42). These changes may bring about small or large discrepancies between your campaign and the official universe – in your campaign, an Archangel may Fall, a new Demon Prince may rise, Los Angeles may be destroyed in a

nuclear blast, etc. *Don't* try to railroad your plots to conform to what happens in official supplements (like the *Revelations Cycle*). If things occur in such a way that it's easy to follow the canonical storyline, wonderful. But if things happen differently in your campaign (and if they don't, your players probably aren't trying hard enough!), don't sweat it.

Most changes in the official *In Nomine* universe are *intended* to be easily worked around. *Night Music* introduced a new Demon Prince, but he's a minor figure, and easily ignored if you don't like him (or don't have *Night Music*); no future plots in published supplements will *depend* on Furfur. Likewise, *The Final Trumpet* told the story of Khalid, Archangel of Faith, dissonant and skirting the edge of a Fall. In the official *In Nomine* universe, Khalid regains his perspective and rejoins the Host. In your running of that adventure, Khalid may have Fallen . . . or he may not exist in your campaign. Future supplements may mention Khalid, and the role he might play in an adventure, but nothing will be invalidated should Khalid not exist (or be a Demon Prince) in your campaign.

Since minor changes are just significant enough to cause confusion, it's a good idea to make a list of them and give them to your players, so they know not to make too many assumptions based on published materials.

NON-CANONICAL CAMPAIGNS

Non-canonical campaigns diverge significantly from the published rules (using some of the optional rules beginning on p. 119, for example), or use alternate settings (such as those presented on pp. 62-63). A non-canonical campaign might be almost identical to the official universe, or it may be a radically different setting. Variant campaigns will require more explanation to orient your players to the differences between your game and published materials. They will also require more planning on your part, as you need to consider how each change you make might affect other aspects of the *In Nomine* universe – if you run an ethereal-based campaign, for example (p. 63), it will be important to know exactly what position each Archangel and Demon Prince takes toward ethereal spirits. You will also need to flesh out the Marches more, make sure to familiarize yourself with all rules pertaining to ethereal spirits, and consider the true nature of ethereals and celestials (p. 61).

Most published *In Nomine* materials will still be usable in a variant campaign, but you'll need to examine supplements more closely, to decide what alterations need to be made. Many supplements include alternate versions of certain events and resources, to facilitate adapting them to a variant campaign.

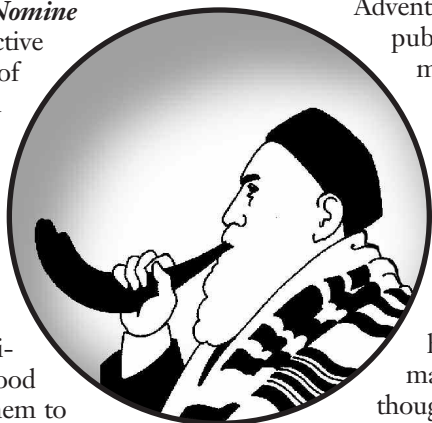
CANON DOUBT AND UNCERTAINTY

Certain metaphysical questions may be fundamental to the *In Nomine* universe, but rarely impact the game. Some of these questions may have profound implications in the War. If your players are inclined to investigate the Big Mysteries, especially in a mythic campaign, they may want these questions answered someday.

"Canon doubt and uncertainty" is a term used to describe questions that will *never* be settled canonically.

Adventures may deal with these questions, and published characters (including Superiors) may express *opinions* about them . . . but no *In Nomine* book will ever reveal the official "Truth."

You are free to explore these issues in your game, or ignore them. None of these questions *need* to be answered; the GM doesn't even need to know the answers himself! On the other hand, taking a position one way or the other shouldn't affect how your games play out, or force you to make changes in any published materials . . . though it may certainly affect how the PCs react!



GOD'S NATURE

God is always "offstage" in the official *In Nomine* universe. All instances of direct Divine Intervention – from '111' rolls to those rare occasions when He is said to have personally intervened in the War, such as the elevation of Laurence to Archangel status – are ineffable. No one, not even the Archangels, can definitely state what God is . . . or *if* He is! Below are several different views of God; each perspective has its adherents in the *In Nomine* universe.

God is God

God is the Supreme Being, Almighty Creator of the universe, Alpha and Omega, be-all and end-all without beginning or end. As such, He is beyond speculation or judgment. Morals and motives don't apply to Him. *Everything* in the universe is part of God, and God's will is ineffable. There is simply no way of knowing what God "thinks," or what He wants, or whether He even cares about the War. Such questions are irrelevant.

Many angels believe this; so do some demons. For Diabolicals, it can be depressing to believe that your adversary really is omnipotent . . . but some of them point out that the angels can't be any more certain that He's really on *their* side . . . or that He'll intervene on their behalf in the end, even if He is.



God is Good

Not only is God the Supreme Being, but He is good. He is an active, aware deity, with a moral perspective . . . and He definitely takes sides in the War. By definition, those on His side (the angels) are good; those who oppose Him (demons) are evil. Most angels subscribe to this view of God; not surprisingly, few demons do.

Of course, just because God has an opinion doesn't mean everyone agrees with it. To those who believe God loves and cares about humanity, a diabolical might point out that He doesn't do much to show it . . . or that His love is a form of suffocation, depriving humanity of free will. Diabolicals take the position that what's "good" to God isn't necessarily good for everyone else. Angels are quite comfortable with moral absolutes, but demons, naturally, have a hard time accepting the idea that their enemy is all-powerful and they are by definition on the wrong side.

God is Evil

God is a selfish being with His own agenda, and He simply can't stand not getting His way. God has no claim to higher morality, other than by virtue of might makes right. He may be portrayed as deliberately malicious and cruel, or simply petty and intolerant, but He's not a nice guy.

It may not make demons more optimistic to believe God is a bastard, but it makes them feel a little better about their cause. Some ethereal spirits also accept God's preeminence, but maintain He's a malevolent Creator.

God is Dead

Supposedly this is Lucifer's position; God, as such, *does not exist*. Perhaps once there was a Supreme Deity, who has now withdrawn from the universe, or perhaps He was always a delusion of the Archangels. In any event, there is no God now. No one occupies the Higher Heavens; all

“Divine Interventions” are random events (possibly inscrutable ones, but not inherently miraculous), or generated by Archangels . . . or possibly the subconscious will of the entire Host. (This is a popular theory among ethereal spirits.)

Many demons claim to believe this, but few can honestly say they’re certain. Angels, of course, will vehemently deny believing it . . . but some can’t honestly say they have no doubts.

God is an Ethereal

Once, there was an unremarkable god named Yahweh, an ethereal spirit who became powerful thanks to the Essence of his tribal worshippers. He was initially no stronger than any other pagan deity, but as his mortal followers, the Israelites, conquered their neighbors, Yahweh devoured the gods of the defeated tribes, as ethereal spirits frequently do. Then, somehow, Yahweh discovered a secret source of power, some way of elevating himself above all other ethereal spirits. Not only did he far outstrip his fellow deities, but he became able to rewrite reality itself. He was able to shape the corporeal plane as well as the ethereal plane, and he created a separate Domain for himself and the lesser ethereals who served him. He called it the “celestial” plane, but it was really just another level of the Marches that he somehow made “off-limits” to anyone but his own followers. To this day, God is just a vastly powerful ethereal deity, and angels and demons are but ethereals gifted with some of Yahweh’s power. And if God could be cut off from his power source . . . or if someone else could access it . . . the War would be very different indeed.

Naturally, while this is a popular theory among ethereals, few celestials buy it. In Heaven it is considered heresy; in Hell, it’s simply delusion. Angels will never accept that their memories, stretching back millennia, and the Archangels’ recollections of creation, are all a fabrication imbedded in their minds when Yahweh created them. And demons will never accept that they are just Yahweh-fortified ethereal spirits.

RELIGION

Canonical *In Nomine* conforms precisely to no particular set of religious beliefs – which means it takes the position by default that no religion is exactly correct. It would be very difficult to support Biblical inerrancy in a canonical *In Nomine* campaign, for example. However, this doesn’t mean that some (or all) religions may not have an element of truth . . . nor does it mean that one religion *can’t* be essentially correct (though perhaps not in every detail).

In Nomine does take a position on some of the specific beliefs of various religions (see the next chapter, beginning on p. 64), but it does not take a position on the ultimate validity of any of them. In your campaign, perhaps God *does*

favor Christianity, or Judaism, or Islam . . . or maybe God *isn’t* the Supreme Being (see *God’s Nature*, p. 59), and one or more pagan religions are closer to the truth. Or perhaps the Symphony *is* all an illusion, and it’s the Buddhists who are correct.

Certain important religious figures – in particular: Jesus, the Virgin Mary, Muhammad, and Buddha – will never appear personally in the official *In Nomine* universe. Their connection to the Divine is ineffable, and while celestials have many theories about them, to have them show up as characters, or explicitly state their nature, would close too many storylines.

See the next chapter for more on religion and religious figures in *In Nomine*.

THE AFTERLIFE

The *Corporeal Player’s Guide* (p. 15) discusses the possible destinations for a human soul, but how one gets to each destination is left up to the GM. It is known that achieving one’s destiny gets you to Heaven, and achieving your fate drags you to Hell . . . but those who do both or neither may wind up reincarnating, disbanding, or wandering the Marches as dream-shades (*Corporeal Player’s Guide*, pp. 82-83). Not even Superiors can be sure where a given human soul goes after death, if it doesn’t arrive on the celestial plane. You may decide in your campaign that atheist souls disband upon death, while Buddhist souls reincarnate . . . or ascend straight to the Higher Heavens if they have achieved enlightenment. Or you can make it random, with the person’s religious beliefs playing no part in his ultimate disposition.

THE HIGHER HEAVENS AND THE LOWER HELLS

The Higher Heavens (*Heaven and Hell*, p. 65), also known as the Upper Heavens, are completely inaccessible to *In Nomine* characters. When human souls go there, they don’t return. Even the Archangels have not been there since before the Fall. They are said to be planes as far removed from Heaven as Heaven is removed from Earth, inhabited by beings even greater than the Archangels, yet equally minuscule before God. But it is all hearsay; the Archangels *can’t* describe it in terms that make sense to lesser beings (even if they want to), and some Demon Princes claim they are a myth anyway. No canonical *In Nomine* adventures will take characters to the Higher Heavens, or describe their nature.

Likewise, the Lower Hells (*Heaven and Hell*, p. 82) will never be detailed. Unlike the Higher Heavens, they *are* accessible . . . but if the PCs choose to go there (or are summoned by Lucifer), it is up to the GM to make them indescribably horrifying.

VARIANT CAMPAIGNS

Not all *In Nomine* campaigns feature a canonical universe (p. 58) with celestial PCs fighting the War. Below are some ideas for variant *In Nomine* games; some merely look at the War from another angle, others are clearly non-canonical.

ALL-HUMAN CAMPAIGNS

Humans don't *have* to be fodder and pawns of higher powers . . . and shouldn't be, to keep the War interesting. Humans (mortals and immortals alike) can be fascinating, viable player characters in their own right. The most obvious human-centered campaign would be one in which all the PCs are Soldiers of God or Soldiers of Hell, or sorcerers, but there are other options. (For any human-centered campaign, you will certainly want to read the *Corporeal Player's Guide*, the definitive sourcebook for human characters in *In Nomine*.)

Mundanes in a Supernatural World

PCs are mundanes, unaware of the War (at least at first). They may start as ordinary 5-Force humans, or they may be exception mortals with 6 or more Forces, but not yet Symphonically aware. This can serve as a prelude to their *becoming* Soldiers . . . or they might become "rogue" Soldiers (below), or remain mundanes. They might be police officers or federal agents, or independent investigators, researching supernatural occurrences. Their enemies may be undead, sorcerous cabals, or ethereal spirits and their mortal followers, with celestials never appearing at all, or only as rumors or background presences. The existence of Heaven and Hell might be a secret that the PCs seek to uncover, with the climax of the campaign being their initiation into the War.

Rogue Soldiers

Humans can become Symphonically aware without joining either side. Sometimes such mortals learn Songs and gain other supernatural powers without even being aware of the War. Celestials call these exceptional humans "rogue Soldiers." Rogue Soldiers rarely remain independent long, since both sides seek to recruit them or destroy them, but some mortals manage to keep their powers secret, or stay one step ahead of celestial pursuers.

In Nomine Black Ops

A sort of "rogue Soldiers" campaign, but in this version, the PCs are *recruited* by a third party . . . one which wants angels and demons alike to butt out of human affairs!

Perhaps the PCs are elite government agents, part of a secret agency that knows the truth about Heaven and Hell and regards all celestials as a threat. Or maybe they work for a private organization that has less benevolent reasons for opposing celestials. Or perhaps they only *think* they're a neutral force . . .

ILLUMINATED *IN NOMINE*

With secretive beings fighting a War that dates back long before recorded history, *In Nomine* is ripe for conspiracy theories. Take your favorite secret conspiracy – the Templars, the Assassins, the Mafia, the Bavarian Illuminati, the New World Order – and give it an *In Nomine* spin. Better yet, blend *all* of them and play illuminated *In Nomine*. In this sort of campaign, the PCs never *really* know exactly what's going on, or even who they really work for!

This may work best for a human-centered campaign (above), since it's relatively easy for celestials to penetrate the layers of deception that human societies accumulate. However, celestials (especially demons) can also conspire and deceive. They have often created (or infiltrated) secret societies, to use them for their own ends . . . only to find that



secret organizations aren't easy to control, as members each pursue their own agendas, split up, and form counter-conspiracies. (Malphas has helped a lot here . . .) Perhaps the Knights Templar were originally sponsored by angels of the Sword to promote chivalrous ideals among the Crusaders . . . or maybe they were a plot by Malphas to fragment Christendom and drive a deeper wedge between Laurence and Khalid . . . or perhaps the charges of their accusers were true, and they *were* practicing sorcery, under the influence of Servitors of Kronos. Maybe *all* of these things are true, or none of them . . . the Knights Templar were founded by humans with their own agendas, and various Superiors got involved, resulting in a dozen conspiratorial branches that persist to this day.

Who's Really in Charge?

In an illuminated campaign, the GM will probably want to have an idea who's "really" in charge (though if there are multiple competing conspiracies, the answer may be different for each). Certainly, humans are capable of running their own conspiracies. On the other hand, Superiors can hardly resist the opportunities that secret societies afford (especially large and influential ones). And celestials may

choose to infiltrate human conspiracies on their own initiative – Diabolicals, Outcasts, and Renegades may find them an ideal haven. Lastly, don't forget ethereals, who can also benefit from having a secret organization of mortal supporters (see pp. 84-85).

IN NOMINE BACKWARDS

Playing *In Nomine* backwards means turning the basic setting on its head – the angels become the bad guys, and the demons become the good guys.

This works best for a dark campaign, or a humorous one (see p. 36). Diabolicals often *do* see themselves as the heroes in the War anyway, fighting for freedom and individuality against an oppressive Host enforcing the monomaniacal will of a Divine Tyrant. *What if they're right?*

You can run a campaign like this with diabolical PCs who are every bit as mean and nasty as demons in a standard *In Nomine* campaign – in a universe where God and His angels are out to get you, you have to be that much meaner just to survive. Or you can portray demons sympathetically, while presenting angels as single-minded fanatics incapable of looking beyond the biases of their Choir and Word. For different takes on the Archangels and Princes, suitable for such a "reversed" campaign, see *Alternate Versions*, p. 103.

THE ETHEREAL OPTION

Ethereal spirits make fascinating characters in their own right, and have motives and abilities at least as diverse as those of celestials. Ethereals can be allied with Heaven or Hell (p. 84), but more rarely, they are on their *own* side, seeking only the freedom to travel to Earth at will, as they once did, mingling with humanity for good or ill. Some are pagan gods (or servants of gods) who try to establish a mortal following, recruit Pagan Soldiers, and deal with Dream Soldiers in the Marches. Others are independents who just want to gather enough Essence to form a vessel, so they can pursue their own goals on Earth. All of them must regard angels and demons as potential enemies, though occasional alliances are possible. They may also be opposed by rival spirits.

For a more mythic campaign featuring ethereal spirits, consider exploring the theory that God is Himself just a vastly empowered ethereal (p. 61). Maybe the PCs are searching for the source of Yahweh's power . . . either to deprive him of it, or access it themselves.

Or perhaps many of the old gods have quietly recovered much of their power, and are biding their time, preparing to strike against their celestial oppressors and reclaim the worshippers and ethereal Tethers that were once theirs . . .

For an ethereals-based campaign, you will need *The Marches*, which covers ethereal spirits and the ethereal plane in much greater detail.



RELIGION AND HISTORY



Though *In Nomine* is not a religious game, it is based on religious lore. Celestial characters may bear only a sketchy resemblance to the angels and demons of the Bible and the Quran, but the game's premise is ultimately derived from Judeo-Christian-Islamic writings. You *can* run a game about angels and demons without ever touching on religious themes, but it's a shame to ignore thousands of years worth of background material, more detailed, fantastic, and dramatic than any writer or Game Master could ever create by himself.

How much religion you want to add to your game is a personal decision, which should take into account both your

own sensibilities and those of your players. Many people don't mind a cavalier treatment of religious beliefs, even their own, but some may be offended by it. (You may encounter players who are uncomfortable with the idea of playing demons, for example.)

The following sections discuss real-world religions in an *In Nomine* context. Such a brief overview can't begin to be comprehensive, of course. If something strikes you as interesting enough to use in your own campaign, do some additional research and flesh it out. There's plenty of source material out there . . .

THOUGHTS ON GOD

"Do you believe in God?" isn't just a yes-or-no question . . .

Monotheism

Monotheism is the belief that there's only one true God – a single omnipotent Creator. Monotheism comes in several flavors, though:

Exclusive Monotheism: There is one, and *only* one God. Any other so-called gods are either nonexistent, or actually lesser (usually evil) spirits. Judaism and Islam fit into this category, and it's the doctrine Dominic favors (though he tolerates the Christian adaptation, below).

Pluriform Monotheism: There's only one God, but He has multiple manifestations. Rites dedicated to one manifestation are *also* dedicated to the One God . . . though they address and deal with each manifestation separately. The Christian doctrine of the Trinity (p. 73) falls into this category.

Inclusive Monotheism: There are many gods, but they're really all the same. If you pray to Zeus, Odin, or Jehovah, you're praying to the same being, though He may manifest differently for each worshipper. Many native tribes, and practitioners of Afro-Caribbean religions such as Voudon and Santeria, are inclusive monotheists. Those religions are known to support ethereal spirits, yet *also* generate divine Essence (p. 66). Dominic doesn't *approve* of such religions, but finds them less objectionable than true polytheism (below); Laurence's angels generally ignore spirits created by these faiths, as long as they behave.

Monolatry: Also known as *henotheism* or *kathenotheism*. Only one God is omnipotent, but other gods may exist. Early Judaism was monolatrous, and Hinduism still is. Monolatry is heresy in Heaven, though Dominic hasn't found a solution to the "Hindu problem" (p. 83) yet.

Monism

Monism by itself is more a philosophy than a religion; it's the belief that all existence is one, and multiplicity and individuality are illusions. The major Eastern religions – Buddhism, Taoism, and Hinduism (pp. 81-83) – are essentially monistic, and even some mystical sects of the monotheistic religions have monistic doctrines. Some angels have synthesized monistic beliefs with Heavenly theology; Dominic scowls, but can't prove monism is wrong. **Pantheism** is the most common form; it is the belief that the universe is God. **Panentheism** is the very similar belief that all of exis-

tence is part of God. Most angels would rather dance on pinheads than try to unravel the distinction . . .

Deism

A philosophy that became popular during the 17th and 18th centuries in Europe, and still has adherents today. Deists believe in "Nature's God," a Creator whose only role was the act of Creation itself, and who now takes no active part in running the universe. Many demons hold a similar view of God as do some pessimistic angels.

Theism

Similar to deism (above), but theists are not pantheists – they believe God *is* a separate and active entity, with whom it's possible to relate, but to whom religious doctrines are irrelevant. This is the most common angelic philosophy.

Polytheism

Polytheism is a belief in many gods, all equally valid (though not necessarily equally powerful). Limited forms of polytheism can actually shade into variant forms of monotheism (above). Thus, Hinduism may simultaneously be considered a polytheistic religion and an inclusive monotheistic one (and ultimately monistic). Pagans are polytheists, naturally, and ethereal spirits maintain the *universe* is polytheistic; the One God just happens to have become far more powerful than all the others.

Dualism

In a dualistic universe, there are *two* all-powerful beings, usually inimical to each other. Zoroastrianism's good Ormazd and evil Ahriman fall into this category. Early Christian Gnostic sects also suggested an evil Creator called the Demiurge, in contrast to the good God. Dualism is popular with demons, who'd *like* to believe Lucifer is God's equal. Lucifer knows better.

Atheism

Atheists believe that there are no gods. There are two varieties of atheism: **strong atheism**, a conviction that there is no God, and **weak atheism**, a simple absence of belief. The latter is sometimes difficult to distinguish from **agnosticism**, which is the belief that one cannot know whether or not God exists.

THE MANY NAMES OF GOD

When referring to God, a distinction should be made between a *name* and a *title*. “God,” like “Lord,” “Almighty,” “Adonai,” and various other honorifics, is simply a title. The 99 names of God commonly referred to by Muslims (He has *many* more) are similarly mere titles, which translate as “the Protector,” “the Watcher,” “the Answerer,” etc.

God’s given name is a touchier subject. He’s been given many names, of course, and those who believe in Him tend to use whichever one suits their taste (or religion). Some pious individuals (including many angels) believe that the Lord’s name should never be uttered except in the most solemn invocations. But since only Yves knows God’s true name, those who want to avoid blasphemy have to simply avoid using *any* of God’s names. (Angels less concerned with formality will point out that virtually all of God’s so-called names simply mean “God” in a more ancient language.)

El was the Canaanite High God, and that name became the derivation of many other names . . . such as Isra-El, Mika-El, and El-ohim. Some angels still refer to *El Elyon* (“The Most High God”), while Servitors of David prefer *El*

Shaddai (“El of the Mountains”).

In ancient Hebrew texts, God’s name is spelled “YHVH.” No mortal today *really* knows what the proper pronunciation was. (Biblical Hebrew is written without vowels . . .) *Yahweh* and *Jehovah* are the most common interpolations.

Allah is not a personal name. It is simply the Arabic word for “God.” (In pre-Islamic times, al-Lah was the greatest god in the Arabic pantheon . . . but *al-Lah* simply translates as “The God.”)

According to Muhammad, God actually has 3,000 names: 1,000 are known only by angels, and 1,000 only by the prophets. 300 names for God are found in the Torah, 300 in the Psalms of David, 300 more in the New Testament, and 99 in the Quran. This makes 2,999 names. One last, hidden, name is called *Ism Allah al-azam*; “The Greatest Name of God.” Like the name that God supposedly whispered to Moses from the burning bush, this name is too awesome for mortals to comprehend it. In some traditions, any being who *does* know and understand God’s true name will possess vast power . . .

THE ESSENCE OF RELIGION

Humans generate Essence with their faith; it’s what makes them special, and what angels believe sets them apart from other beings. Humans who worship God, particularly through one of the monotheistic faiths, generate Essence for Heaven. Some of it flows into divine Tethers, some of it feeds the Word of an Archangel directly. Belief in pagan spirits feeds (and in some cases *creates*) ethereal entities. Thus, Heaven differentiates between *divine* religions and *pagan* religions in a slightly different manner than humans do; to the angels, a pagan religion is any faith that feeds ethereals.

Monotheistic religions *do not* create ethereal spirits, even if their adherents sometimes pray more to certain icons of that religion than they do to God directly. No angel has ever encountered an ethereal Jesus, Virgin Mary, or Muhammad. (They have encountered spirits *masquerading* as these individuals, but none who were actually sustained by prayers to them.) Furthermore, some pagan deities have been “killed” by losing their worshippers to a monotheistic faith. Brigid, for example, was once a fairly potent Celtic goddess, but when the Roman Catholic Church made her a saint, Essence sent in prayers to her went to Heaven; the pagan spirit eventually faded from existence, and no ethereal St. Brigid roams the Marches. Dominic regards this as proof of the Divinity of the Abrahamic faiths . . . and it is a major reason why pagan gods *loathe* monotheists.

However, Essence from worship is diffuse and not easy to track – even Superiors can only *estimate* what beliefs and actions feed them Essence, by correlating fluctuations in their “supply” with events on Earth. They cannot with certainty connect the prayers of a single human being, whether it be to Jehovah, Allah, Buddha, or Zeus, to an identifiable bit of Essence floating to the celestial or ethereal plane. (Note that *Rites*, p. 25, are an entirely different matter.) Thus, not all religious beliefs are easily pegged as “divine” or “pagan.”

Certain other religions do not create ethereals either. Taoism (p. 82) and Buddhism (p. 81), for example, have a huge following, and some sects *do* believe in entire pantheons of gods and spirits. Yet these beings have never been found in the Marches . . . and there are certainly no ethereal Buddhas.

Some angels believe this is because Eastern monism (p. 81) is divine also. These religions may not recognize God per se, but they do teach Heavenly values. And Taoists and Buddhists *can* wind up in Heaven or Hell. But so can pagans and atheists. Dominic and Laurence suspect that Essence from Buddhism and similar religions goes *elsewhere* . . . maybe it doesn’t feed any pagan gods (that they know of), but it’s also not going to Heaven. Some Archangels are certain they *are* receiving Essence from non-monotheists, but not everyone is convinced.

Complicating the issue are religions like Hinduism (p. 83), and certain polytheistic beliefs, such as those of the Australian aborigines and some Native American tribes. Hindus and some polytheists simultaneously believe in an

all-powerful Creator *and* a host of lesser deities. These believers *have* created divine Tethers, strengthened the Words of Archangels, and served as Soldiers of God . . . but they have *also* created ethereal Tethers, strengthened ethereal deities, and served as Pagan Soldiers!

Thus, the only unambiguous religions are pure monotheism and polytheism. (Yet even the latter, it's said, may generate divine *or* infernal Essence under the right conditions . . . as well as ethereal-bound energy.)

ANGELS AND THE ONE TRUE GOD

Dominic, typically, cannot accept this blurry line between Godliness and paganism. Non-monotheistic beliefs are heresy in Heaven, and collaborating with ethereal spirits is a crime, but some angels have tried to syncretize monotheism with Buddhism, Taoism, and other

faiths. Dominic looks very narrowly at any angel who veers away from the God of Abraham, but can't actually *ban* such theological experimentation. (There are Buddhist and Hindu Bodhisattvas in Heaven, after all.)

Most angels don't subscribe to any particular religion, and regard the trappings of mortal religions as superfluous. Belief in God is the only thing that's important – the language you pray in, the scriptures you follow, and the funny clothes your priests wear are all cosmetic details. However, some angels do profess a specific faith. Angels of the Sword are mostly Catholic (and almost all Christian), while Servitors of Khalid, Archangel of Faith, call themselves Muslims. Even they don't care about the extraneous doctrines and rituals, though . . . they *know* what's important and what's not. Angels are generally more tolerant of religious diversity than humans, but that doesn't prevent the occasional heated debate in the Council Spires.

RELIGION IN HELL

Most demons believe God exists, and He's a bastard, and beyond that, religions are just ways to manipulate and misguide humans.

Still, some uniquely diabolical sects have developed in Hell . . . especially in Stygia. These range from the predictable maltheism ("God is evil") to odd, convoluted Habbalite cults, to creative twists on Earthly religions (often developed by Balseraph theologians). Most Demon Princes don't care what their Servitors believe, as long as it doesn't interfere with their job . . . though a demon who seems to be getting *too* religious invites inquiry by the Game.

Hell's Princes would love to "cash in" on the flow of Essence from Earthly religions, of course. They delight in corrupting "divine" religions, and gaining infernal Tethers from misdeeds performed by good Christians, Muslims, and Jews. However, no religion has ever proven a *reliable* source of Essence to Hell, since human religions are all either based on fundamentally selfless principles, or else constitute direct worship of a pagan god. Essence can be *diverted* to infernal Words, but it's very difficult to keep humans focused on intentional selfishness. Not many religions explicitly endorse evil, and the few that do rarely attract a stable following (see *Satanism*, p. 85). Baal and some other Demon Princes *were* worshipped as gods in the ancient world, but no one has been able to substitute himself in place of a deity in modern times.

Andrealphus and Nybbas are known to be collaborating on a postmodern media-driven religion of pure carnal self-indulgence. The rest of Hell views this experiment with interest and trepidation. If successful, it will prove that faith, that "special quality" of humanity, *can* be turned to pure selfishness. But it may well also turn Andrealphus and Nybbas into the most powerful Princes in Hell . . .



JUDAISM

Jews share much in common with Christians and Muslims. Jewish scriptures influenced both later religions. However, Judaism today is a culture as well as a religion – many people identify themselves as Jews, but do not practice the Jewish faith. One can be a secular, even atheist Jew.

Anti-Semitism has often tarnished relations between Jews and gentiles. From the Jewish perspective, Christianity is a rather odd, Hellenized pagan offshoot of Judaism. Many angels feel the same way, and even those who now favor Christianity still respect the Jews and recognize that they serve the same God the Archangels do . . . and were the first mortals to do so.

*I am the Lord thy God.
Thou shalt have no other gods before me.
Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image.
– Genesis 20:2-4*

HISTORY

And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect. And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly. And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying, As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee. And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee.

– Genesis 17:1-6

By 2000 B.C., many pagan gods were benefiting from mankind's invention of religion. Some of them rivaled Archangels in sheer Forces, and it was feared that the strongest of them might soon to be able to contest some of the weaker Words. Yves proposed a solution: Heaven should encourage monotheism.

So it was that a mercenary tribal chieftain named Abram was led from Mesopotamia to Canaan (modern Israel) in the 19th century B.C. In exchange for serving God and God alone, the renamed Abraham was promised that his people would prosper.

Abraham's grandson, Jacob, sired the 12 Patriarchs, and the tribes of Israel conquered their neighbors. Archangels David and Michael both lent their aid to the Israelites. Yahweh worship became much stronger than the Canaanite gods, and Heaven was pleased.

At this point, the Israelites were not truly monotheistic; they still believed in other gods, but held that Yahweh was supreme, and the only one worthy of worship. Ethereals mark this as the point where hostilities with Heaven began. (They also claim that Yahweh was simply a war god who got lucky, and all celestial memories before this time are Yahweh's implanted forgeries – see p. 61.)

The evolution toward true monotheism took over a thousand years. The Israelites repeatedly turned back to pagan gods, despite the warnings of their prophets, and so Michael and David often stood by as they were enslaved by the Egyptians, then conquered by the Babylonians, the Assyrians, the Persians, the Greeks, and the Romans. But when the Jews remained loyal to God, David often sent servants to aid them, such as in the Maccabean revolt in 167 B.C. (the origin of Hanukkah), and the siege of Masada in 73 A.D. that turned the Zealots' fortress into a Tether to Stone.

By the 5th century A.D., Rabbinical scholars had compiled the *Talmud*, a book of commentaries on the Hebrew Bible by Jewish scholars. More than anything else, this unified the Jews as one *monotheistic* people.

Over the next few centuries, the Jewish Diaspora continued, spreading Jews from China to England to sub-Saharan Africa. Often, they lived in insular communities within larger Christian or Muslim societies. In Europe, they faced persecution, both for their non-Christian beliefs, and because they were moneylenders. Usury was forbidden to Christians, so only Jews could fill this important role. While it made them unpopular with the nobility, who often found that pogroms or exile of local Jews was a convenient way to avoid paying back loans, Jewish merchants played an enormously important role in European trade, and so earned Marc's favor.

Until this century, Jews often found Muslim lands more hospitable than Christian lands. Muslims discriminated against Jews less, and many Caliphs and Sultans appointed Jews to high positions within their courts. Jewish doctors and scholars were highly respected.

The Hebrews, once the social and military force that powered the spread of monotheism, were now scattered into enclaves, innocuous and largely invisible against the clashing of the Western powers. With Christianity and Islam now serving the function the Israelites once did, no single Archangel took a special interest in the Jews anymore.

The Holocaust generated enormous guilt in Heaven. The sheer loss of life staggered everyone, of course, but the attempt to wipe out God's chosen people struck the Host as an obvious diabolical plot. Even when it became clear that any diabolical involvement was simply opportunistic, and that the attempted genocide (of the Jews and many other peoples) was a very human evil, the angels felt shame that no patron Archangel was watching out for the Children of Israel.

So far, no Archangel has stepped forward to become the primary patron of Judaism, as Laurence is the patron of Christianity and Khalid is the patron of Islam. (Half a century is a very short time for Archangels to deliberate over such things.) However, Michael and David are known to support the modern state of Israel . . . though it's less comforting to know that Valefor and Malphas also championed its formation. Dominic has recruited an increasing number of Orthodox Rabbis as Soldiers and Saints of Judgment. Eli has been spotted in Reform synagogues from Florida to France. Janus is rumored to have some interest in the Reconstructionist movement. It is certain that the Jews are no longer invisible to Heaven.

SUBDIVISIONS

Ethnic Branches

Ethnically, modern Jews are divided into the Askenazi and Sephardic branches (plus a few other small offshoots, such as those from Yemen and Asia). The Askenazi are descended from Eastern European Jews, and are responsible for the Yiddish language (a creole of Hebrew, German, and Russian). Sephardic Jews are descended from those who once lived in Spain and Portugal, and later spread to the Middle East. Their language, Ladino, was almost wiped out during the Holocaust. Observant Jews of both branches now speak Hebrew, but with different accents. The Sephardic Jews tended to integrate into the local cultures more than the Askenazis did, and Askenazi Jews spawned more movements (see below), but there is little real difference between the two branches today.

Sects

Earlier in Jewish history, there were several sects, notably the Samaritans, the Pharisees, the Essenes, the Sadducees, and the Zealots. All but the Pharisees were wiped out under Roman occupation, and Jews remained essentially homogeneous until medieval times. Almost all modern Jews trace their history back to the Rabbinical tradition which compiled the Talmud. Modern sects, such as the Hasidim and the Mitnaggedim, developed in the 1700s in Eastern Europe.

Movements

Theologically, the primary divisions among Jews today are the *Orthodox*, *Conservative*, and *Reform* movements. (A newer movement, the *Reconstructionists*, is a small but vocal minority in the U.S.) Orthodox Jews believe the Torah is the literal word of God. Reform Jews believe the Torah was written by humans, and thus may be flawed and need not

1. *The existence of God.*
2. *The unity of God.*
3. *The incorporeality of God.*
4. *The eternity of God.*
5. *The prohibition of idolatry.*
6. *The validity of prophecy.*
7. *Moses was the greatest of the prophets.*
8. *The divine origin of truth.*
9. *The eternal validity of the Torah.*
10. *God knows the deeds of men.*
11. *He judges them accordingly.*
12. *He will send a Messiah.*
13. *The resurrection of the dead.*

– Maimonides' Creed

be interpreted literally. Conservative Jews fall somewhere in between – they see the Torah as a human-authored document, but divinely inspired.

TENETS

The most basic tenet of the Jewish faith is that there is one God, and only one. It is also agreed by all Orthodox Jews that the Torah is the literal word of God, from which not one word should be added or taken away. (Reform and Conservative Jews also consider the Torah sacred, but not necessarily inerrant.) Jews still await the Messiah, whom they believe will someday come, rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem, and transfigure the world. In the meantime, they honor the Sabbath (Saturday) as a holy day.

The Torah is a book of *laws*, and Orthodox Jews try to obey all 613 of them. But since no two Rabbis can agree on exactly what every one of the laws means, even Orthodox Jews don't all follow the Torah in the same way.

Much of modern Jewish orthodoxy was shaped by Maimonides (a.k.a. Rabbi Moses ben Maimon), a 12th century physician who emigrated from Moorish Spain to Egypt (where he served in Saladin's court). His book *A Guide for the Perplexed* was meant to make the religion accessible to the common man. He argued against anthropomorphizing God, and codified the Jewish creed in 13 articles (see box).

JUDAISM AND *IN NOMINE*

The *In Nomine* notion of squabbling, politically-minded Archangels is a bit foreign to Judaism. The Hebrew God is a very active, interventionist deity who takes an interest in every aspect of His creation, and individually judges every human being. The remote, ineffable God of *In Nomine* is entirely too impersonal, and serving individually Worded Archangels, rather than God directly, borders on idolatry.

The Hebrew Bible and the Gemara (books of commentaries, the writings of various Rabbis' interpretations of the Bible) say little about Heaven, Hell, and the afterlife. Jewish beliefs on the subject tend to echo folklore rather than scripture, but few Jews believe in Hell as a place of eternal suffering and torment. Jewish angels cannot Fall, being fragments of God's will split off for specific purposes. Jewish demons are not Fallen angels, but malevolent spirits who act as distractions, rather than true enemies of God. (Asmodeus is often called the king of demons in Jewish myth, and Lilith is his consort.) Lucifer (named Samael in some legends), the Adversary, the Lightbringer, the Accusing Angel, is not God's enemy, but His servant – he exists to *tempt* mankind, not damn them.

Dominic still regards Maimonides' creed as one of the best, succinct statements of orthodoxy that any mortal has ever produced, and recommends it to angels as well.

Jews believe that prayer, penitence, and charity (including good deeds) are what is required to gain entry to Heaven . . . and many hold that good deeds alone are sufficient; God will forgive a lack of prayer. Thus, anyone can get into Heaven by their works – they don't have to be Jewish.

God's Chosen People

Dating back to the covenant with Abraham, the Hebrews have identified themselves as God's chosen people. This was *not* intended to be an exalted state, however. Being chosen by God does not mean they are special and superior – it means they have made a special covenant with God, and must honor the terms of that agreement or suffer God's displeasure. Gentiles aren't held to the same standards as Jews, but they aren't *supposed* to be considered inferior.

Zionism

Zionism is a political movement founded in the 19th century by Jews seeking a homeland for the Jewish people. The early Zionists believed Jews would never be truly emancipated and united until they had a nation of their own. They chose Palestine because of the Hebrew peoples' ancient ties to that land . . . and because they believed at the time that they could coexist peacefully with the Arabs who were already living there.

Though Zionism has religious overtones, it is primarily a secular movement – Orthodox Jews were originally opposed to it. Today, like the state of Israel that it brought about, Zionism remains a very divisive issue among Jews and non-Jews alike. Some angels believe Malphas himself is responsible for Zionism . . . yet David supported the Zionists, and Baal opposed them, not wanting to see his ancient enemies, the Israelites, reunited and rearmed.



CHRISTIANITY

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

— Luke 2:8-11

Today the dominant religion in the Western world, Christianity was once an obscure Jewish cult. Some credit Christianity with wide social reform and the evolution of Western intellectualism; others hold it responsible for terrible wars and bloody intolerance. Christians can have terrible fates and shining destinies like everyone else, and Christianity has led believers to both.

HISTORY

Early Christian history is Jewish history. Christians revere the patriarchs and prophets of the Old Testament as Jews do, but believe the laws God gave the Hebrews have been supplanted by a new covenant established by Jesus Christ.

Gabriel herself (himself at the time) announced the birth of Jesus. The other angels assumed Jesus would be an important new prophet, but the prophetic Archangel didn't explain further . . . and has not, to this day. Gabriel never said Jesus was the Messiah – but hasn't ever contradicted the parts of the Bible that put words in her mouth, either.

Jesus *did* perform miracles. Nothing that Old Testament prophets hadn't done as well, but he was impressive enough to attract some celestial attention. By the time the alleged Messiah became important enough to merit the attention of the Divine Inquisition, though, he'd come and gone. Yves said that Jesus was "important," and encouraged other Archangels to support the new religion. He's also rumored to have obscured much of its early history, such that many crucial events remain ineffable and undiscoverable, even to the penetrating resonances of Seraph Archangels (see p. 101). Michael, who had long patronized the Jews on Yves' recommendation, was put off by the sudden promotion of a new sect. Though he eventually decided that Christianity was also worth supporting, his suspicion of the Archangel of Destiny blossomed into open hostility during this period.

Christianity spread and mutated rapidly. The extent to which it was aided by Yves, Raphael, and Gabriel is still debated, but certainly those Archangels were early patrons of the faith. Paulinist doctrines that contradicted Jewish law entirely (by allowing gentiles to convert to Christianity without becoming Jews first), and the Diaspora following the fall of the Jerusalem Temple in 70 A.D., ensured Christianity's break with Judaism.

Christian thought evolved in all directions, spawning countless movements and interpretations. The nature of God, Christ, and the universe was debated endlessly . . . even while Christians were being fed to the lions by the Romans, who regarded these "Godfearers" as dangerous radicals. But in 312 A.D., the Emperor Constantine converted to Christianity, and promoted it as the Roman state religion. This led to the first Council of Nicea, in 325 A.D., and the establishment of the Nicene Creed (p. 73). This is also the point at which Dominic and Uriel both endorsed Christianity – Dominic because the Roman Church now appeared to be a better vehicle than Judaism to spread monotheism, and Uriel because he chose to accept the Nicene Creed on faith. Uriel's conversion may have led to his Purity Crusade, in 715 A.D., aimed at eliminating paganism once and for all (and some say his next target was the growing Muslim empire).

After Uriel was recalled to the Higher Heavens in 745 A.D., Laurence was appointed in Uriel's place. Laurence has also patronized the Roman Catholic Church, but where Uriel wanted to purify, Laurence hoped to unify. His patronage of Charlemagne and the Holy Roman Empire fueled a chivalric renaissance, during which western Europe was Christianized and the Iberian Muslims were thoroughly contained. The split between the Byzantine east and the Roman west in 1054 A.D. dashed Laurence's hopes for a truly "catholic" church, however.

The centuries that followed were bloody ones, and certainly not what Laurence intended for Christendom. In the aftermath of the Crusades (in which angels and demons both frequently became active participants), Dominic decided that angels were meddling too much in religious affairs, and that pagans and Diabolicals were getting away with too much. His Servitors adapted some of the methods of the Divine Inquisition and taught them to agents in the Church . . . only to watch in dismay as the worldly Inquisition came to be used for political purposes, and spread out of control.

The Great Schism of 1378 A.D., engineered by Malphas, weakened the Church badly, as Europe was scandalized by the spectacle of *two* Popes and Colleges of Cardinals denouncing each other. But it was the Protestant Reformation that sundered Christendom more thoroughly than Malphas ever could . . . and that, ironically enough, was instigated in 1517 A.D. by a theologian named Martin Luther, who had been groomed by Laurence as an agent for reform.

As Christianity spread to the New World, it took on new forms, ranging from now-mainstream denominations with few real differences to radical fringe cults. Most Christian beliefs today would be quite surprising to the founders of the Church . . . but in Heaven, where the angels can peel away dogma and rituals and get at underlying Truths, the man from Galilee is still problematic.

SUBDIVISIONS

There are three main branches of Christianity today, though there is tremendous diversity within and without these groups.

The Roman Catholic Church

The Roman Catholic Church is the single largest Christian denomination, with nearly a billion members worldwide. "Catholic" means universal, and the Church claims universal authority over all Christianity – those who reject that authority are considered to be in error. There are many orders, sects, and movements within the Catholic Church, but all recognize the authority of the Pope, who is believed to follow an unbroken line of succession from the Apostle Peter. The Pontiff leads the Church from the Vatican in Rome.

For much of its long history, the Church effectively *was* the government. Today, it remains a major world power, though it tries not to meddle *overtly* in politics. Catholicism remains a very formal religion, with hierarchies of priests, bishops, arch-bishops, cardinals, saints, and angels all mediating between man and God.

The Orthodox Catholic Church

The second major branch of Christianity is more commonly known as "Eastern Orthodox." The Orthodox Church is made up of numerous "autocephalous" churches, which are essentially national branches (such as the Greek Orthodox, Russian Orthodox, Romanian Orthodox, etc.). Each church appoints its own primates and bishops, but accepts a nominal order of precedence, placing the patriarchate of Constantinople (modern Istanbul) first.

The Roman and Orthodox Catholic Churches split in 1054 A.D. Orthodox Catholicism is based on the first seven

ecumenical councils of the original Church; they reject the authority of the Roman Church and the Pope. In recent years, there have been

gestures of reconciliation (such as when the Pope and the Patriarch of Constantinople stopped excommunicating each other); some, including Laurence, hope for eventual reunification.

Protestants

Since Martin Luther's Reformation, hundreds of Protestant sects have formed. Some, such as the Anglican and Episcopal Churches, maintain rituals very similar to those of the Roman Catholic Church from which they are descended. Others are very different, in form and substance. Mainstream Protestant denominations include Baptists, Lutherans, Methodists, and Presbyterians. There are also a large number of non-denominational Protestant churches,

ranging from unaffiliated small-town congregations to the multi-million dollar headquarters of various televangelists. These churches may differ only slightly from the mainstream, or they may embrace radically different beliefs. All differ from Catholicism in that they reject Papal authority, and eschew the veneration of saints (whom they sometimes accuse Catholics of putting above Jesus and the Holy Trinity, along with the Virgin Mary).

Three Protestant movements have crossed denominational lines in the past century. The *Pentecostal* movement emerged in 1901. Its followers (also called "Charismatics") are notable for the practice of *glossolalia*, or "speaking in tongues," and for believing that surrender to the Holy Spirit allows them to perform miracles, such as receiving prophecies and laying on hands. They also originated the practice of receiving a "second baptism," or being "born again."

Fundamentalism was established in 1895, as a deliberate reactionary response to modernizing trends in mainstream Christianity. Over time, Fundamentalism spawned the *Evangelical* movement, which tends to be more moderate and take a more studied view of the Scriptures. Evangelicals emphasize missionary work, or "witnessing."

Some "Protestant" churches have adopted doctrines so different from other branches of Christianity, that the Christian mainstream does not always consider them Christian. Some have veered into mysticism; others are essentially personality cults. Only a few, such as the Christian Scientists, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (commonly known as Mormons), and Jehovah's Witnesses, have proved stable over the long term. Angels usually regard them as somewhat odd branches of Christianity – but their iconoclastic nature, and tendency to inspire more intense devotion than mainstream sects do, makes them popular among celestials (of both sides) looking for recruits . . . particularly if they want to do their recruiting without being noticed by the Archangels who keep an eye on the major religions.

And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.

And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be until all people.

For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ our Lord.

– Mark 2:9-11

TENETS

Creeds

Two creeds are fundamental to Christianity; the Apostle's Creed and the Nicene Creed. Roman Catholics and most Protestants subscribe to both; Eastern Orthodox churches don't include the Apostles' Creed in their liturgies, and reject one clause in the Nicene Creed – they omit “and the Son” from the clause that says the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Lord and the Son.

CHRISTIANITY AND *IN NOMINE*

The degree to which *In Nomine* conflicts with Christianity depends on which Christian doctrines you compare it to. Evolution, a universe billions of years old, and non-Christians being able to enter Heaven are all contrary to Fundamentalist doctrines. Non-Fundamentalists will have fewer problems with *In Nomine*'s premises, but will still find much at odds with their beliefs.

One of the most basic tenets of Christianity is the immortality of the soul. Reincarnation is highly unlikely in most Christian doctrines, but the *destruction* of a mortal or angelic soul is impossible.

The idea that angels *don't know* whether or not Jesus was the Messiah would shock many Christians. Angels arguing and even acting at cross-purposes might be troubling. However, there is no one commonly accepted view of angels – Augustine, Aquinas, and Milton all painted very different pictures of them. (Catholics might have less trouble imagining the Seraphim Council acting like the Sacred College of Cardinals . . . all working toward the same goal, but capable of having differences of opinion.) Angels acting “sinful” (particularly in a carnal fashion) might also be disconcerting.

Christian angels can Fall, but it's usually assumed that the original Fall was a unique event – everyone chose to follow God or not at that time. Popular lore sometimes describes angels who continue to stray, though, so it's not completely inconceivable. Likewise, it's accepted that Lucifer and his demons *could* repent if they wanted to – they do have free will – but it's commonly assumed that they won't.

The Apostles' Creed, or *Apostolicum*, by tradition was composed by the 12 Apostles, but was actually a set of baptismal creeds developed in the 1st or 2nd century. By the 7th century, it reached its final form, and became an official doctrine of the Catholic Church. It testifies that God is the Creator, Jesus was the Son of God, Jesus died, was resurrected, and will return to judge mankind, and affirms the existence of the Holy Spirit, saints, forgiveness of sins, resurrection, and eternal life.

The Nicene Creed, established by the Council of Nicea in 325 A.D. (p. 71), is more concerned with particulars. It established the Holy Trinity (below), God's creation of the universe *ex nihilo* (from nothing), and Christ's nature as both God and man. It is now the most widespread definition of orthodox Christianity; churches that do not follow the Nicene Creed (such as Mormons and Jehovah's Witnesses) are often considered non-Christian, by orthodox churchmen.

Father, Son, and Holy Ghost

All Christians, by definition, believe in the divinity of Jesus Christ, as the Son of God. They differ a great deal as to what this means. Usually, Christ is regarded as a perfectly *created* human being, who was born, lived, and died without sin. In early Church history, the question of whether Jesus was God or man was vitally important. The most important tenet of the Nicene Creed (above) was that Jesus is of the *same* substance as the Father – that is, he was literally God made flesh. The Nicene Creed also established the existence of the Holy Spirit, as the third (and equal) part of a holy trinity. Almost all Christians today believe in this trinity. Angels (except for those who are Christian themselves) mostly see it as humans attempting to rationalize the ineffable.

Original Sin and Salvation

Original Sin and salvation is one of the most divisive issues among Christians. All agree that mankind is tainted by Original Sin (also known as Adam's Fall, though in previous centuries, Eve tended to get the blame). By being so tainted, man can no longer enter the kingdom of God; God cannot suffer imperfection in His presence. Christ, as Redeemer, was sent to save mankind, suffering for their sins.

Most Christians (including Catholics) believe that Christ's intercession will allow anyone into Heaven, even those who don't believe in Him (obviously, following Christ offers the *best* means of salvation). Many Protestants (especially Fundamentalists) believe that only through an explicit acceptance of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior (being “born again”) can one enter Heaven; those who don't accept Jesus are damned.

Celestials, of course, know full well that non-Christians can enter Heaven, so even Dominic and Laurence try to soften the exclusionist attitudes that Christianity sometimes fosters. Demons, on the other hand, find the whole concept of Original Sin and damnation an entertaining and useful tool.

Scriptures

The Christian Bible, which was compiled into its final form around the 4th century, is the basic canon for most Christians. The New Testament was mostly written in the century after Christ's death. The Old Testament is the same as the Hebrew Bible. The most famous Protestant translation is the King James Version. Both Catholic Churches use a Greek version (or translation thereof) of the Old Testament, which includes books that are considered apocryphal by Protestants.

Different denominations treat their Scriptures in different ways. All give them great authority, equal or superior to church tradition. Fundamentalists regard the Bible as the inerrant word of God, to be interpreted literally.

Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child of the Holy Spirit . . .

– Matthew 1:18

Eschatology and the Anti-Christ

Eschatology is actually a minor part of Christian doctrine, but it's the part of most interest to angels and demons.

The *eschaton* is the end of the world – Armageddon. The Tribulation is described in colorful detail in the Book of Revelation, but interpreting the visions of St. John has occupied theologians for centuries. All Christians agree that someday Christ will return (the "Second Coming"); in this they differ from Jews only in how many times they think the Messiah has visited previously. Some believe the Messiah's return will be accompanied by wars and cataclysms (the Apocalypse), others believe there will be a relatively short transformation of the world order before Christ begins his 1,000-year reign (the Millennium). Somewhere during this period, the faithful will all be snatched to Heaven (an event referred to as "the Rapture"). Other writings of St. John mention the Anti-Christ, who will lead the forces of darkness before being crushed by the forces of God during Armageddon.

Some angels *do* believe a Messiah will herald the beginning of the end, but are exasperated by humans who keep trying to predict when it will occur. Armageddon will arrive, someday, but *only* when God wills it, and He will surely send a clear sign. Demons likewise believe in the apocalypse, but would much rather initiate it themselves, in a time and manner of *their* choosing.

ISLAM

La Ilaha-Illa Allah, Muhammad al-Rasul Allah

(There is no god but God, and Muhammad is the messenger of God.)

– Muslim profession of faith (Shahada)

In the West, "Muslim" too often brings to mind suicide bombers armed with AK-47s, or black-robed women cowering behind their veils. Between Nybbas and Malphas, the youngest of the Abrahamic religions has had serious image problems this century – which is a shame, since it's the one that has had the most Heavenly support.

HISTORY

By the 7th century, some angels were becoming a bit disappointed with monotheism. Everyone agreed it was a good idea, but the implementation just hadn't worked out. Jews were scattered across three continents, seemingly destined for obscurity. Christians, once they'd settled on a theology, were using it to expand their political positions, rather than transfigure the world. And paganism seemed to be as strong as ever. There were some mutterings that humans couldn't be trusted to do religion right . . . that if they were going to serve God properly, someone had to *really show* them how.

In 610 A.D., Archangel Gabriel appeared to a merchant from Mecca, a member of the Quraysh tribe named Muhammad, informing him that Gabriel was the messenger of God. For the next 23 years, Muhammad regularly received revelations, which he commanded his followers to memorize and write down. These revelations, once compiled into a single book around 650 A.D., became the Holy Quran.

Yves claims that he told Gabriel exactly what to tell Muhammad. (He has declined to state whether the words of the Quran were his or God's.) Dominic, carefully comparing Yves' copy of the Quran to what Muhammad's followers transcribed, discovered discrepancies. He accused Gabriel of taking liberties with Yves' revelations, and tried him for heresy. Before the trial was finished, the Archangel of Fire stormed angrily out of Heaven into self-imposed exile that lasts to this day. Gabriel also began assuming female form more often – some have interpreted this as a deliberate attempt to distance herself from the religion she helped found.

Dominic still suspects Gabriel of manufacturing Quranic verses for her own ends. Uriel certainly believed this was the case. Others believe that Gabriel *did* add additional material – revelations of her own, for she is also known to be a prophet. Or they propose that Muhammad himself, as a prophet, sometimes received revelations *besides* those given to him by Gabriel. They point to Yves, the instigator, and ask whether his assignment to Gabriel might not have been

intended to spark such revelations, Truths he couldn't deliver himself. Michael suspects darker motives on Yves' part . . . he wonders why the Archangel of Destiny defends Gabriel so mildly, rather than *stating* the truth and settling the matter once and for all.

However it came to him, the Quran was Muhammad's mandate to lead his pagan kinsmen to God, and Islam expanded more rapidly than any previous religion. By the time of Muhammad's death in 632 A.D., almost the entire Arabian peninsula was Muslim. Within another century, most of the Middle East and North Africa was under Muslim control.

Though it was mostly pagan gods who were threatened by the new faith, Hell also viewed it with alarm. Never before had Heaven acted so directly to create a new religion – obviously it couldn't go unopposed. Malphas had already begun trying to pry apart the growing Muslim empire, and Baal and Belial, with deep roots in the area (and deep animosity for Gabriel), also began exerting their influence. Meanwhile, Uriel assigned Khalid, the Angel of Faith, to study the Muslims and determine whether Islam was truly a divine religion (see p. 66).

Khalid followed the expansion of the dar-al-Islam to Europe, and witnessed their defeat at Poitiers, France, in 732 A.D., when Charles Martel put an end to their westward expansion. Khalid was more favorably impressed by the Muslim faithful than their Christian counterparts, which caused him much distress, as his master Uriel patronized Christianity. Khalid is said to have been relieved when Uriel was recalled to the Higher Heavens in 745 A.D.

The beginning of Islam's golden age coincided with Khalid's elevation to Archangel, in 750 A.D. Islam ceased to be an *Arab* religion, and embraced people of all nations; there was a flowering of arts and sciences in the Islamic world, while Europe sank into the Dark Ages. But with globalism came more divisions, and increasing diabolical pressure. Gabriel and Yves had both turned their attentions away from religion; Heaven seemed indifferent to the plight of the Muslims. Khalid felt he was being ignored as he tried to defend the faith against this onslaught . . . and then came the Crusades, in which most Archangels either sided with Laurence (who sided with the Christians) or stayed neutral.

Islam entered a darker age after being savaged by Crusaders and Mongols, and Khalid became increasingly bitter. Centuries later, in many respects Islam is stronger than ever – it is the dominant religion throughout the Middle East and much of southeast Asia, and there are now mosques being built in every nation. But Islam is no longer the dynamic force for social change that it once was – rather than bringing unbelievers to God, it brings believers into conflict with other believers. Muslims, like the Archangel who patronizes them, often feel surrounded by enemies, misunderstood, and unable to adapt to the modern world.

Islam is far from a lost cause, however. The events of *The Final Trumpet* have humbled and enlightened Khalid, and

today, while some Arab and Iranian Muslims remain fundamentalist fanatics, a growing number favor entering into a dialogue with the West. There are many Muslims *in* the West, spreading the message the Islam is a religion of peace. And there are *many* Soldiers of God and Saints who serve Allah.

SUBDIVISIONS

There is no single authority recognized by all Muslims, save for the Quran. Certain sects follow the guidance of one or more religious leaders, but theoretically, all Muslims are equal before God. Archangel Khalid remains impartial about these divisions.

Sunni

The majority of Muslims today are Sunni, or “orthodox” Muslims. Sunni Islam is literally the “religion of the majority” – popular consensus and social unity is considered of paramount importance, while minority viewpoints are suppressed. Sunni Muslims base their doctrines on the *Sunnah* (Muslim law, which has earned Dominic's respect) and various *hadiths* (p. 77).

Shi'ah

The Shi'ah sect was founded in the 7th century, as a protest to Umayyad rule. Shiite “legitimists” supported the succession of Ali, Muhammad's son-in-law, and still commemorate the martyrdom of Ali's son Hussein. They demanded that the Caliphate be restored to members of the Prophet's family. Since then, the Shi'ah have developed a theology that differs greatly from the Sunni majority. Shiites believe that truth can only come from a divinely-appointed *Imam*, a descendant of the Prophet. Most Shiites believe there were 12 Imams, the last one ascending in the 9th century. Shiite diviners (*mujtabids*) purport to receive guidance from the Imam when interpreting the Quran and Islamic doctrine. Shiites believe that at the end of time, the Imam will return (much like the Jewish and Christian Messiah) to transfigure the world. Shiism was once a major force in the Islamic world, but now the only nation ruled by the Shi'ah is Iran; Shiites are a small minority in other Muslim countries.

Isma'ili

The Isma'ili sect is a subsect of the Shi'ah sect. It formed in the 8th century, as a result of a dispute over the spiritual successor to the 6th Imam. Most Shiites accepted Musa al-Kazim as the 7th Imam. A minority believed his elder brother, Isma'il, was the 7th Imam, and became Isma'ilis. The Isma'ilis split further; the “Seveners” believed the succession of Imams stopped with Isma'il, and that his son would return at the end of time as the *Mahdi* (“divinely guided one”). Most Isma'ilis believed the line of succession continued into the Fatimid dynasty in Egypt.

MUSLIMS AND ATHEISM

Muslims regard atheists as anathema, but the Muslim meaning of “atheist” is *not* “someone who does not believe in God.” Such people are simply ignorant (and wrong). To a Muslim, an atheist is someone who has consciously *rejected* God, by believing in Him and then turning away (to conventional atheism or paganism). Such people are showing unforgivable ingratitude to their Creator.

Of course, many Muslims don’t make such fine distinctions, and *will* treat all atheists alike, regardless of the source of their atheism.

The Isma’ilis were heavily infiltrated by celestials from the beginning. Initially Malphas was responsible, but several Demon Princes planted agents among them. One group of Isma’ili Fatimids, led by Hassan-I Sabbah, took control of the mountain fortress Alamut in the 11th century, and became the secretive sect known as the *Hashishim*, or Assassins. The Assassins were destroyed in the 13th century by the Mongols (with some help by Asmodeus, and reportedly with Dominic’s assistance), but their parent sect survived, and today millions of Isma’ilis in India, Pakistan, Syria, Iran, and parts of Africa follow a *living* Imam called the Aga Khan. A splinter group, called the *Druze*, split off in the 11th century and formed their own secretive religion; the Druze are now a hill people living in southern Lebanon, Israel, and Syria.

Others

Historically, there were several other major sects and movements among Muslims, but only a few survive today. The most famous are the *Sufis*, mystics who have been active since the earliest days of Islam, but began forming large orders and fraternities in the 12th century. Sufi ascetics and missionaries stand in marked contrast to more worldly Muslims. One order, the Muradi Sufis, is actually a network of Soldiers of God (*Corporeal Player’s Guide*, p. 110).

The *Ahmadiyah* were founded in the 19th century in India, as a reaction to Christian missionaries. Their leader, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, attempted to syncretize all religions, and claimed that he was an incarnation of Muhammad, Jesus Christ, and Krishna. Ahmadi Muslims are still active in India, Pakistan, and elsewhere in the world, but often face persecution from other Muslim sects.

An American phenomenon known as the Black Muslims (or Nation of Islam) developed after World War II in the African-American community. Their leader, Elijah Muhammad, claimed to be a divinely-inspired prophet, and adopted some Islamic practices along with a black separatist

agenda. Malcolm X, their most famous spokesman, was assassinated in 1965 after he broke with Elijah Muhammad and began to follow conventional Islam. The Nation of Islam changed its name and mission in the 70s, but a New York City-based splinter group, led by Louis Farakkhan, remains a political force in the United States. The Nation of Islam bears little in common with mainstream Islam, but there is some interaction between the two groups, and while demons have preyed on Farakkhan’s aggressive, separatist message, angels (particularly Servitors of David – see *Liber Castellorum* p. 74) have found Black Muslims to be strong communitarians and useful allies against the forces of Hell.

TENETS

While the exact tenets of Islam vary between sects, some are basic to all Muslims. An important one to remember, beyond theological beliefs, is that to Muslims, the concept of a separation between Church and State is alien and totally irrational. Islam (which means “submission”) is not merely a religion, but the proper way of living – therefore, the government naturally should exist within the guidelines prescribed by the Quran.

There Is No God But Allah . . .

Islam is the most uncompromisingly monotheistic of all religions; it allows no suggestion of *any* other power in the universe but God. God is omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent; *nothing* happens without God’s will and foreknowledge. This very strong sense of predestination has made free will a hot topic of debate among Muslim philosophers. Sunni doctrine does not admit true free will, since that would imply that thoughts and actions can originate from some other source than God. Shiites, and many liberal Muslims, differ slightly.

Because all things come from God, it is blasphemous to credit anyone other than God for *anything*. One doesn’t thank someone for doing you a service – one thanks God for

MUSLIMS AND WOMEN

Islam has earned a reputation for being a misogynistic religion, but the Quran is no more misogynistic than the Bible, and frequently admonishes those who mistreat women. Muhammad was (for his time) a radical proponent of women’s rights; Islam brought marked improvements in the status of women. The oppressive conditions under which many Muslim women live today are cultural institutions, many of which developed only in later centuries.

causing His agent to help you. One never praises oneself or others for any accomplishment, but God, for making it possible. (Of course, not all Muslims follow this convention strictly.)

The Christian doctrine of the Trinity (p. 73) is utterly blasphemous to Muslims.

... and Muhammad is His Prophet

Though Muhammad says in the Quran that he is just a man, Muslims believe that he submitted himself completely to God's will, and that therefore his behavior and person were so exemplary as to be beyond question . . . to the point that the slightest aspersion on the Prophet, or any of his family members, is often greeted with violence. Devout Muslims follow *any* mention of the Prophet, spoken or written, with "Peace be upon him" or a similar honorific. Christians used to call Muslims "Muhammadans" in the mistaken belief that Muslims *worship* Muhammad, and in fact, the reverence of some does often seem to approach idolatry – though it would be *extremely* blasphemous to suggest such a thing!

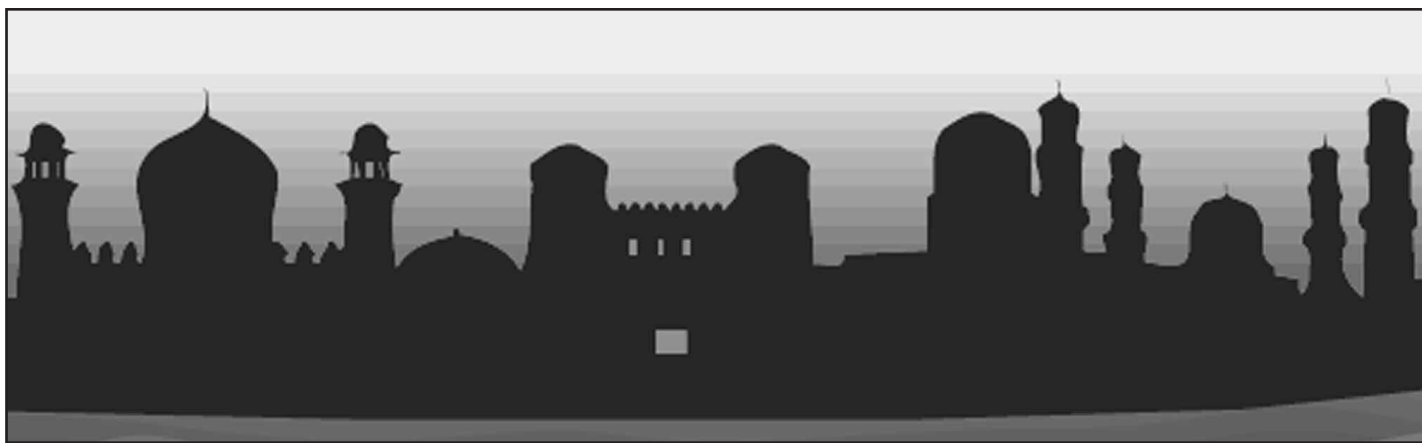
Muslims also revere Judeo-Christian prophets, considering themselves to be fellow descendants of Abraham. Jesus Christ is regarded as a holy prophet, but *not* the Son of God. Sunni Muslims believe that Muhammad was the *last* prophet, bringing the final, most perfect revelation, the Quran (see below). Other sects believe there have been additional prophets since Muhammad.

Scriptures

All Muslims revere the Quran, which was dictated to Muhammad by the Archangel Gabriel (or *Jibril* as he is known in Arabic). The Quran is considered to be flawless and complete, containing all the wisdom mankind needs. In its original Arabic, it is both a work of supreme poetry and a collection of eternal, uncreated Truths. Some Muslims consider translations in other languages sacrilegious. The Quran contains a mixture of history (much of it similar to that in the Bible, but differing in many details) and moral guidance given to Muhammad by God. Jewish and Christian scriptures are also considered holy, having been given by God to other "people of the book," but the Quran supersedes them.

Like any scriptures, believers have different interpretations of certain verses in the Quran, and so a tradition has developed of using *hadiths* ("stories") as additional doctrine. Hadiths are quotes of the Prophet, or stories of his life, recorded separately from the Quran; since Muhammad obeyed the Quran perfectly, his words and deeds must therefore be perfect examples of how to behave, and can be used for guidance. There is vigorous debate among Muslims as to which hadiths are authentic . . .





The Five Pillars of Islam

All Muslims observe the “five pillars” that Muhammad prescribed for society.

The first pillar is the *shabada*, or profession of faith (see p. 74). A true believer must utter it at least once in his lifetime, with true understanding and sincerity. This is all that is required to become a Muslim.

The second pillar is prayer. Muslims must pray regularly, in the direction of Mecca. Sunni Islam mandates five daily prayer rituals. Muslims also traditionally gather on Fridays for a public prayer and sermon at a mosque. Other sects have different prayer rituals (and differ on the number of daily prayers required).

The third pillar is an obligatory tax called the *zakat*, or “purification.” The Quran describes how the *zakat* is determined, and how it is to be spent – it is primarily intended to care for the poor. In medieval times, Muslim governments collected the *zakat* as a mandatory tax; in modern times, Muslims treat it as a voluntary contribution to charity, much like Christian tithing.

The fourth pillar is fasting. Muslims must fast during the ninth lunar month, called *Ramadan* in the Muslim calendar. They may not eat, drink, or smoke from sunrise to sunset. People who are ill or traveling are permitted to postpone their fasting until they can make up an equal number of days; the elderly and chronically ill may feed a poor person instead of fasting.

The fifth pillar is the *hajj*, or pilgrimage to Mecca. All Muslims are expected to make the *hajj* at least once during their lives, where they perform a number of rituals, including circling the *Kab'ab*, a great cube-shaped (formerly pagan) shrine, housing a black stone in one corner, which is now a Tether to Faith.

Jihad

Sometimes called the “sixth pillar” of Islam, the concept of *jihad*, or holy war, was actually introduced by the Khawarij sect in the 7th century. Though many Muslims today do practice *jihad*, it is not a part of orthodox Muslim doctrine.

Muhammad vigorously preached against mandatory conversions, and while the Muslim empire did expand by conquest after his death, these were temporal conquests; conquered people were never required to convert to Islam (and in fact, at first were forbidden to). Only in later centuries did Muslims practice *jihad* and convert by the sword. More recently, some Muslim theologians have interpreted “*jihad*” as *spiritual* warfare, by pen rather than sword, or against one’s own desires.

ISLAM AND *IN NOMINE*

Muslims believe in the absolute preeminence of God and God alone; anything remotely smacking of idolatry is blasphemous. Serving an Archangel instead of God would be idolatrous; Archangels *not knowing* God’s will is a blasphemous notion. Muslims believe in Judgment Day, but not Armageddon – such a battle would be pointless, as there can be no doubt about the outcome.

The Quran describes *jinn* (or “genies”), who are quite different from the diabolical Band of the same name. Islamic *jinn* are spirits, neither men nor angels, much like Jewish demons (p. 70). Muslim angels can’t Fall, but they *can* rebel. In the Quran, Satan (or “*Shaitan*”) is named Iblis. Iblis is a *jinn*, but his followers include angels who refused to bow before Adam; God’s requirement that no one be honored but Him conflicted with His requirement of obedience to His will. These angels and *jinn* are punished by being denied the sight of God.

The Quran also denounces the idea of female angels: “*Lo! it is those who disbelieve in the Hereafter who name the angels with the names of females.*” (*The Star* 53:27)

IN NOMINE BY THE BOOKS

For an *In Nomine* game with a very different feel, try basing a campaign on the Bible or the Quran. This doesn't necessarily mean stating that any one religion is entirely correct – you *can* follow the doctrines of Orthodox Judaism or Roman Catholicism or Sunni Islam explicitly, but you can also decide for yourself how accurate their interpretations of the scriptures are in your campaign.

These variants work best in a historical game – *In Nomine* set during the Exodus, for example, or during the Purity Crusade – but can also be translated into the modern world, with angels and demons who contrast archaic and contemporary cultures.

Open strife between angels is unlikely; Dominic and Michael might not *like* each other, but they will cooperate. Contrast should probably be fairly high (p. 35), but brightness varies. (Many heretical Jewish and Christian sects believed in a true dualistic universe, in which evil might triumph, or even one in which evil *had* triumphed!) If you want celestials to inspire a sense of awe and wonder, consider a higher-powered game (p. 5), with much more active intervention (p. 47) – though humans are also more impressive in the scriptures. They wrestled angels and demons, and invoked the wrath of God. It was an age of heroes, and giants walked the earth . . .

Ethereals may occupy a more prominent role, usually as adversaries. Pagan gods are rivals of the God of Abraham, and whether Yahweh really is the Supreme Being, or just a magnified tribal deity (see p. 61), the other gods are fighting for their lives. Hell needn't even make an appearance at all!

Old Testament In Nomine

In the Old Testament, angels (and God) act with a much heavier hand; the wrathful Hebrew deity of Exodus and Job is less gentle than Jesus' Heavenly Father, and His angels are sent to test, torment, or *kill* people more often than to save them. Divine Interventions destroy cities and turn people into salt. Prophets and sorcerers are everywhere. Angels battle the forces of Evil directly; the work of providing aid, comfort, and guidance to mankind is left to Soldiers and Saints. The War is not entirely a two-party affair. Pagan gods and their followers are strong, and oppose both Heaven and Hell (but are willing to ally with either if it's in their interests).

A sense of antiquity is essential. David, Dominic, Michael, and Gabriel should figure strongly in such a



campaign; other Archangels have reduced roles. Yves should be a distant background presence. Use Hebrew names for celestials, particularly for non-Biblical Archangels (like Dominic and Novalis). Demon Princes might be younger, with less traditional names . . . modernity can be a symbol of moral decadence! Alternatively, replace contemporary Superiors in Hell's hierarchy with more traditional Princes like Mammon, Magog, Moloch, and Beelzebub.

Falling and redemption should either be impossible, or very, *very* rare. Consider using the optional *jumping* rule for angels (p. 126). Newly-created celestials are rare; most remember the Fall. This means that angels and demons are *old*, and tend to know each other. They aren't just fighting the Enemy; they're all fighting former friends and relatives.

Besides the Old Testament itself, Milton and Dante (particularly for a *Christian*-flavored game) are highly recommended for any GM who wants to capture the right style. Remember that Lucifer always gets the best lines!

New Testament In Nomine

A game based on the New Testament may be explicitly Christian, or it may highlight the rift among the Jewish people and the Diaspora following the destruction of the Temple (p. 71). Archangels either know that Jesus *was* the Messiah, or else the question of Jesus' status will be the central preoccupation of Heaven. Jordi will have to be lightened up a *lot*, and it's highly unlikely that Gabriel really delivered the Quran to Muhammad – unless she was *already* insane, or *deceived* . . . Squabbling between Archangels should be reduced still further – New Testament angels don't argue much. Falling is even more unlikely than in an Old Testament setting.

Continued on next page . . .

IN NOMINE BY THE BOOKS (CONTINUED)

The contrast in a New Testament campaign will probably be very high (p. 35). Demons are *evil* abominations, and diabolical encounters are usually gruesome. Brightness varies from light and optimistic, with Jesus standing ready to protect every member of His flock, to dark and pessimistic, with the forces of Satan ascendant on Earth, the War against them expected to be long, hard, and bleak. Saints usually achieve their status by being martyred in bloody fashion.

If the Fundamentalist interpretation of salvation is correct (p. 72), and accepting Jesus really is the only way to Heaven, then everyone else is damned. God probably only intervenes on behalf of the faithful, and Soldiers of God (and every Blessed soul in Heaven) must be Christian. Other mortals might *think* they're serving God, but they're wrong . . . ignorant at best, dupes of Hell at worst. If your game follows more liberal Christian theology, then it's possible for Soldiers of God and Saints to be non-Christians.

Angels in a New Testament campaign should be much more concerned with saving individual souls. They will probably be more overtly religious and preachy. Demons will specialize in leading humans away from salvation (traditionalists emphasize the Seven Deadly Sins . . .). There may be a temptation to let Jesus appear on Divine Interventions, and Lucifer (as Satan) become actively involved in the campaign – many Christians believe both figures *do* become personally involved with every believer. But be very careful about using these personalities in a game – it's easy for them to act as *dei ex machina*, or send the game spiraling into bad taste.

In a Christian game, souls *can't* be destroyed. If someone loses all his Forces in celestial combat, he might go into a very long Trauma – possibly until Judgment Day. But he doesn't die . . . not really.

Catholic In Nomine

In a *Catholic* game, Laurence and Dominic will probably be the most prominent Archangels. The Pope really *does* receive divine guidance. Saints may be vastly more powerful, possibly even acting as minor superiors, with the ability to direct angels, lesser Saints, and Soldiers of God. You'll need to add *Purgatory* to the traditional celestial planes. Purgatory is a place where

human souls who aren't quite blessed enough for Heaven go to refine themselves; it probably won't figure into play very much, though it might be where dissonant angels go to do penance.

The Roman Catholic Church is so large that some divisions often work at cross-purposes. It's entirely possible for one branch of the Church to be led by angels and Saints, while another is a diabolical front!

Being in a state of Grace following confession might offer tangible protection against Diabolicals and malignant ethereals. Consider allowing devout Catholics to gain the Blessed advantage (*Corporeal Player's Guide*, p. 26) temporarily, as long as they remain in a state of Grace (i.e., they have no unconfessed sins). (In a hardcore Protestant setting, *all* born-again believers may gain the

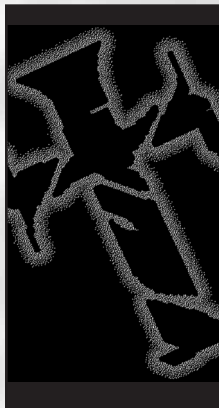
Blessed advantage automatically.)

Islamic In Nomine

Four Archangels are mentioned by name in the Quran: *Jibril* (Gabriel), *Mikal* (Michael), *Israfil* (Raphael), and *Izra'il* (Azrael, the Angel of Death). The Quran doesn't say other Archangels *don't* exist, but these four – especially Gabriel – should be the most prominent. You might add Khalid, Archangel of Faith and patron of Islam in the official *In Nomine* universe, to this quartet, or make him a Servitor of Gabriel. Gabriel should be a lot less mad – Dominic would never have been allowed to persecute him for conveying the Truth! As mentioned under *Islam and In Nomine* (p. 78), angels in the Quran are explicitly male. Demons are tempters and deceivers, but their status is not much different from ethereal spirits and pagan gods.

If Jesus *wasn't* the Messiah, then either Laurence doesn't patronize the Catholic Church, or else he's an angelic rebel like Iblis (p. 78), and Khalid may be the Commander of the Host. The Purification Crusade was probably fought in the Middle East and North Africa, rather than Europe – perhaps Uriel was overzealously planning a jihad against *Christianity*!

According to Sunni Islam (p. 75), Muhammad was also the *last* prophet, which means there will be no real prophets (*Corporeal Player's Guide*, p. 68) in an orthodox Islamic game.



EASTERN RELIGIONS

"Eastern religion" is a convenient label, though neither precisely accurate (many of these religions are now common in the West) nor all-inclusive. It would be more precise to call the religions below "*Eastern monism*" (p. 65), as they all hear-ken back to the principle of oneness. From Heaven's point of view, they qualify as divine religions (p. 66) – barely. The many gods and demons who populate the Taoist and Buddhist celestial planes have yet to appear in the Marches, but the Hindu deities *do* exist as ethereal gods . . . and they are very powerful. Dominic has not *officially* labeled these religions heretical . . . but he certainly doesn't like them.

BUDDHISM

Buddha means "Awakened One" or "Enlightened One." The original Buddha, Siddhartha Gautama, was born some-time between the 6th and 4th centuries B.C., in India. Contradictory stories of his birth and upbringing abound, and like Jesus and Muhammad, certain Truths about the Buddha's existence seem to be ineffable. Buddhists believe that his incarnation as Siddhartha was merely the last in a long line of reincarnations, before he finally reached Nirvana. In Heaven, the term *Bodhisattva* has been adopted to refer to those Blessed souls who choose to stay in the Lower Heaven in order to help mankind, rather than ascend to the Higher Heavens. This fits well with the doctrines of many Buddhist sects, who believe there are many bodhisattvas active on Earth at any given time.

Buddhism has had an *enormous* impact on the Orient. There are about a billion Buddhists worldwide, and like the monotheistic religions, Buddhism has been a major force for social reform and intellectual development. Also like the monotheistic religions, Buddhism has spawned innumerable rival sects, doctrines vastly different from what the Buddha taught, and plenty of corruption and strife.

The Four Noble Truths

All Buddhists believe in these fundamental truths, called the *Dharma*:

1. *Do not kill.*
2. *Do not steal.*
3. *Do not lie.*
4. *Do not be unchaste.*
5. *Do not use intoxicants.*

– *The Five Precepts, defining Right Conduct*

CONFUCIANISM

Confucius (K'ung-Fu-Tzu) (551 B.C. to 479 B.C.) was a Chinese philosopher and political theorist who became famous as a great teacher during his own lifetime, and whose lessons have shaped the course of Asian civilization. Confucianism is more a philosophy than a religion; it is the way of living virtuously. The natural order is divine; submit yourself to Heaven and you will be a moral person. However, Confucianism does not actually deal with the supernatural at all; there are no angels or demons in Confucian philosophy, and Confucius regarded "Heaven" as a state of mind.

Confucianism is very much a cultural phenomenon – modern Chinese, Japanese, and Korean society is deeply Confucian, while Confucian values are antithetical to much of Western thought. In later centuries, the simple, orderly values that Confucius prescribed became rigid social hierarchies and dogmatic rituals. Confucianism appeals equally to Dominic and Asmodeus, who have both found it immensely valuable in spreading their Words in Asia.

Confucian philosophy underlies many other Asian religions, but few people identify their *religion* as "Confucianism"; one can be a Confucian Buddhist, a Confucian Christian, a Confucian atheist, etc.

1. Life is suffering.
2. The cause of suffering is desire.
3. Suffering can only be ended by the removal of desire.
4. The removal of desire requires a carefully regulated existence, interpreted variously by different sects. Some emphasize meditation and asceticism, others stress moral behavior, and some take a more mystical path. Most follow the *Eightfold Path* of Right Knowledge, Right Thinking, Right Speech, Right Conduct (see box), Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, and Right Concentration.

What follows from these truths is that to a Buddhist, the corporeal world is an illusion, and all thoughts and desires are artificial burdens people impose on themselves. Good actions accrue good karma for the next lifetime, and bad actions accrue bad karma; Buddhists believe in reincarnation. But the ultimate goal of a Buddhist is to get off the eternal wheel of sorrow, death and rebirth, and achieve *Nirvana* – oblivion.

Forms

There are many, many Buddhist sects, but three major forms:

Theravada Buddhism: Also called the Hinayana ("Small Vehicle" – meaning salvation for only a select few) school. The dominant form in southeast Asia, Theravada Buddhism is the oldest and most "orthodox" school. It emphasizes the Four Noble Truths (p. 81) and meditation. Buddha is revered as a sage, but not as a divinity. Scriptures are written in Pali, an ancient Indian language.

*I look upon the judgment of right and wrong
as the serpentine dance of a dragon, and the
rise and fall of beliefs as but traces left by four
seasons.*

– Siddharta Gautama Buddha

Mahayana Buddhism: The mainstream form in China, Japan, and Korea, Mahayana Buddhism (literally, the "Great Vehicle" – making salvation accessible to the masses) is less esoteric than the Theravada form. The Buddha is revered as an incarnation of the godhead, and Mahayana Buddhism added the concept of *bodhisattvas* (p. 81). Scriptures are written in Sanskrit. Subsects of Mahayana Buddhism include the Pure Land sect of Japan, in which followers call upon the Amitabha Buddha in order to go to the "western paradise" when they die, the Tendai (or "Lotus") sect, which attempts to synthesize many diverse schools into one, and Zen Buddhism (called "Chan" in Chinese), which has become fashionable among some Servitors of War.

Vajrayana Buddhism: The most mystical and esoteric form, Vajrayana Buddhism is strongest in Tibet, but also has a following in India. It features a large pantheon of Tibetan gods and demons, and emphasizes meditation, chanting, yoga, and religious ceremonies. (Eli is rumored to have spent some time studying Tantric rituals with Vajrayana bodhisattvas . . .)

Buddhist Heaven

Buddhists who arrive in Heaven are often surprised – and disappointed – until an angel or another Bodhisattva points Jacob's Ladder out to them. Some Buddhist souls believe the "Higher Heavens" are actually Nirvana – ultimate Enlightenment, and the end of the illusion of self. (Even Dominic can't say he knows this to be *wrong*.) But a very high percentage of Buddhists in Heaven earn their *Bodhisattva* title, by choosing not to ascend and remaining behind instead, to continue helping others up the path to enlightenment.

TAOISM

"Be still like a mountain and flow like a great river."

– Lao-Tze

Taoism was founded by the Chinese philosopher Lao-Tze (604 B.C. to 531 B.C.), a contemporary of Confucius. Like Confucius, Lao-Tze saw himself surrounded by a society filled with corruption, feudal warfare, and a lack of civility, and set out to create a moral philosophy. Unlike Confucianism (p. 81), Taoism takes a metaphysical view of the universe. By 440 A.D., it had been adopted as a state religion in China, and along with Confucianism and Buddhism, has been one of the most influential movements in Asian civilization.

The Way of the Tao

The primary source for Taoist beliefs is Lao-Tze's book, the *Tao-te-Ching* ("Way of the Tao"). The *Tao* (rough translation: "path" or "way") is said to be the eternal first-cause of the universe, an omnipresent

force that surrounds and permeates everyone and everything. To be in harmony with the Tao is to be one with the universe.

Unlike Buddhism, Taoism does not assert that reality is an illusion or that individuality does not exist. Rather, by accepting unity with the Tao, one becomes able to act at will upon the universe. Passivity is action, not inaction. Time is cyclical, not linear.

Taoists believe that virtuousness is a worthwhile goal; the "Three Jewels" of Taoism are compassion, moderation, and humility. Humans are considered basically good.

Two concepts familiar to many Westerners – *chi* ("air," "breath," or "spirit"), and the balanced forces of the dark, earthly, female *yin* principle and the light, heavenly, male *yang* principle – both come from Taoism originally. Taoist philosophies have been key in the development of many other disciplines, from martial arts to healing.

Like other Eastern religions, Taoism is a very esoteric philosophy, interpreted in innumerable ways; different Taoist schools evolved over the centuries, particularly as a result of contact with Confucianism and Buddhism. This led to a mystical Taoist tradition, which was popular with the masses and unlike anything taught by Lao-Tze. The *I-Ching* ("Book of Changes") blended Taoism with fortune telling. Taoism gave birth to Chinese alchemy and other supernatural practices. An enormous cosmology of heavens, hells, gods, spirits, and immortals, with an attendant hierarchy of priests and monks, developed. Yet perhaps because of its underlying monism (p. 65), Taoist spirits have never come to life in the Marches.

The Tao of Heaven

Angels who study Oriental philosophy often come to appreciate Taoism. Angels of Creation in particular are known to have created syncretic beliefs combining Taoist principles with monotheism. Angels of Flowers find Taoist philosophy soothing and humanistic, and surprisingly enough, Taoism has become quite popular among Servitors of the Wind. Dominic does not approve, but hasn't yet found any overt heresy he can attach to it.

HINDUISM

"Great indeed are the Gods who have sprung out of Brahman."

— *Atharva Veda*

Hinduism, like Buddhism, is native to India. The two philosophies have influenced each other greatly, but Buddhism is now a relatively small religion in the nation of its birth, whereas Hinduism is Indian civilization for the past 4,000 years. 700 million followers is a mighty religious force . . . and the gods they worship continue to flummox Heaven.

Scriptures

Hindu beliefs are based on the *Vedas*, which contain instructions for social and religious rituals (including the basis of the ancient Indian caste system) and prayers to the various gods, and the *Upanishads*, which are commentaries on the *Vedas*, and which elaborate on the *Vedanta*, or Hindu philosophy. Other scriptures exist, including *Puras* – epics and moral stories which expand on Hindu mythology. The most famous of these is the *Bhagavad-Gita*. All Hindu scriptures are written in Sanskrit, and are considered divinely inspired.

Beliefs

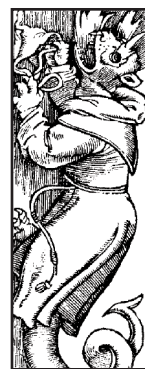
There is no such thing as "orthodox" Hinduism. There is no founder, no ecclesiastical organization, no religious authority, no universally-accepted tenets. Hinduism is an amalgam of many different beliefs – it is not merely a religion, but an entire culture.

Certain beliefs are common to the vast majority of Hindus, however. Like Buddhists, Hindus believe that the world is an illusion, called *maya*. Hindus seek to cast off the veil of illusion and reunite their consciousness with Brahman (see below), just as Buddhists seek to achieve Nirvana (p. 81).

As in Buddhism, Hindus believe they accumulate good and bad karma with their deeds. Good karma brings good fortune, bad karma brings bad fortune. One can move up or down in the world through multiple reincarnations, but it is most desirable to accumulate *no* karma, and thus escape the cycle altogether.

Hindu cosmology is remarkably accurate, from a celestial perspective. There are three planes of existence: the First World is the physical universe, the Second World is the astral plane, where angels and spirits dwell, and the Third World is the spiritual plane, where the Hindu gods reside.

There are no official sects in Hinduism, but there are many different schools of thought, and many modern Hindus are divided between Vaishnavism and Shaivism, representing two separate paths to enlightenment through the gods Vishnu and Shiva, respectively. (Brahma, while recognized, is not worshipped.) There is some rivalry between these groups – Malphas has not spared Hinduism his attention.



God and Gods

Hinduism has been called polytheistic and monotheistic. It is both and neither; monolatry, pantheism, and panentheism (p. 65) all come closer.

There are said to be 333 million gods, but above all is the One God, or *Brahman*. The Vedanta (above) describes Brahman as an impersonal Supreme Being and Absolute Truth. Brahman has multiple roles – Creator, Maintainer, and Destroyer. Human souls all originate with Brahman, and all merge with Brahman in the end. Hindus revere and worship God by worshipping His manifestation in every living thing, and by worshipping the hierarchy of gods below Him. In practice, most Hindus primarily worship one god, such as Shiva or an avatar of Vishnu.

Hinduism is clearly a divine religion (p. 66), which recognizes the Supreme Creator. A lot of Hindu worship seems to strengthen the Words of Archangels. But the Hindu deities *also* manifest as ethereal gods. Celestials are not sure why this is so, but suspect it is because Hinduism wasn't *originally* monotheistic. Indian religion has always been syncretic, and Hinduism is the sum of Indian beliefs that have been accumulating for millennia. The Hindu gods were originally worshipped like any other polytheistic pantheon; their current incarnations, in which they share Essence with Heaven, are relatively new developments. Sharing doesn't seem to have hurt them, probably because of India's explosive population growth.

The most powerful Hindu deities are the trinity of Brahma, the Creator (not to be confused with Brahman, above), Vishnu, the Protector, and Shiva, the Destroyer and Renewer. All three are (according to Hindu beliefs) omniscient and omnipotent, and represent different aspects of reality. These deities *are* vastly powerful – probably the most powerful ethereal gods in existence, and rumored to be nearly the equal of a lesser Archangel. But they very carefully avoid any confrontation with Heaven, and almost never manifest directly on the corporeal plane.

Vishnu (but not Brahma or Shiva) also has a number of avatars, which are worshipped separately. The most famous of these are Rama and Krishna. There are a host of lesser deities, such as Indra, the storm god, Ganesh, the elephant-headed god, Haruman, the monkey god, and Kali, the dualistic earth/warrior goddess. Their histories and interrelationships are complicated, and while all of them have appeared as distinct entities, it is not at all clear which Hindu deities exist as separate ethereal spirits, and which ones are just different guises of the more powerful gods. Some celestials believe that only the Brahma-Shiva-Vishnu trinity really exists, and that every manifestation of a Hindu god is really one of these three. Some go further and suggest that the trinity is really one god. If either of these theories are correct, the Hindu god(s) are even more powerful than Heaven suspects.



Relations with Heaven

The Purity Crusade never got as far as India. Some say the Hindu gods were last on Uriel's list, as they were considered relatively benign; others say India was simply geographically inconvenient, and Uriel was recalled before he could mount a major campaign against them and their worshippers. (Though angels of Purity *did* pursue the gods of Australia and South America . . .) Two equally heretical rumors are whispered in Heaven today. One is that Uriel wasn't sure he *could* take out Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva, and was trying to enlist more support before mounting an attack on the most powerful of all pagan gods. Another is that Uriel was diverted away from India by other Archangels, who had made pacts with the Hindu gods . . . pacts that are still in effect.

Certainly there *were* friendly dealings with them in the old days. Eli socialized with the Hindu gods often enough to perturb Dominic even back then, and Michael regarded Vishnu and his kind as stalwart allies when it came to fighting demons. Shiva has had chats with Gabriel, Janus, Jean, and many other Archangels.

Since Uriel's Crusade, relations have been more distant. Dominic has forbidden any traffic with ethereals, making no exception for the Hindus, and some Archangels have even gone so far as to put angels up to masquerading as Hindu gods, hoping to divert worship away from ethereal spirits and thus cut off their Essence supply. But this doesn't seem to have weakened them, and Brahma and his associates remain aloof from Heaven, yet implacable enemies of Hell.

PAGAN RELIGIONS

Pagan religions, in *In Nomine*, are those whose believers channel Essence to ethereal spirits, whether through actual pagan Rites or through belief (p. 66). Paganism is much weaker than it once was – Heaven has been waging a deliberate war against ethereals for thousands of years. Sometimes it is a cold war, waged with missionaries and rival theologies, and sometimes it's very hot – most recently during the Purity Crusade of the 8th century. Dominic has banned all associations with ethereal spirits, and discourages any pagan-sympathetic attitudes. Angels of the Sword zealously guard the Marches and hunt down any ethereals who manifest on Earth. But some angels would like to reach out to the more benevolent gods, who might be allies rather than enemies.

As described under *Thoughts on God* (p. 65), belief in God and belief in *gods* are not mutually exclusive. All of the Eastern religions (p. 81) are also polytheistic in some forms, yet because of their association with the Divine, they are not labeled "pagan" by Heaven.

While Heaven claims that all ethereal spirits are created by human belief – that the so-called "gods" of the ethereal plane are merely Essence-constructs of human imagination – many of the gods themselves claim that they predate humanity . . . and Heaven. Certainly some of them are very, very old, and have assumed different guises – thus, the same being has received Essence from humans worshipping ostensibly different deities.

POLYTHEISM

Polytheists believe in and worship many deities – potentially an unlimited number of them, though few pantheons name more than a hundred or so (and few religions could sustain so many). At one time, there were many pantheons – the gods of Greece and Rome, Egypt and Scandinavia, China and Japan, the Aztecs and Incas, and many others. Most were decimated by the Purity Crusade. In some cases, this had little effect on the corporeal realm . . . the Greek and Egyptian gods hadn't been actively worshipped in centuries when Uriel's angels stormed Olympus and Heliopolis. The Aztec deities, on the other hand, were wiped out centuries before the Conquistadors arrived to do the same to their followers.

True polytheistic religions are rare nowadays, but not extinct.

That Old Time Religion

Some pantheons aren't completely dead yet, nor are they completely devoid of worshippers. Here and there are isolated devotees of the old gods . . . Odin, Apollo, Isis, Tezcatlipoca, etc. This tiny following is rarely enough to empower a god, yet it may be enough to keep a dying god

alive. More importantly, a true believer can recruit others, and from a large enough pool, one of the pagan gods may be able to recruit priests and Pagan Soldiers (*Corporeal Player's Guide*, pp. 65-67).

For this reason, Dominic and Laurence continue to agitate against paganism. Angels aren't supposed to *kill* pagan humans – the Seraphim Council put its foot down on this after Uriel's excesses. But they will certainly discourage them, by attempts at conversion or outright harassment. This has done nothing to improve relations between angels and ethereal spirits – or between monotheists and pagans. Hell persecutes pagans also, because they don't want any ethereal spirits gaining Essence that isn't dispensed by Beleth.

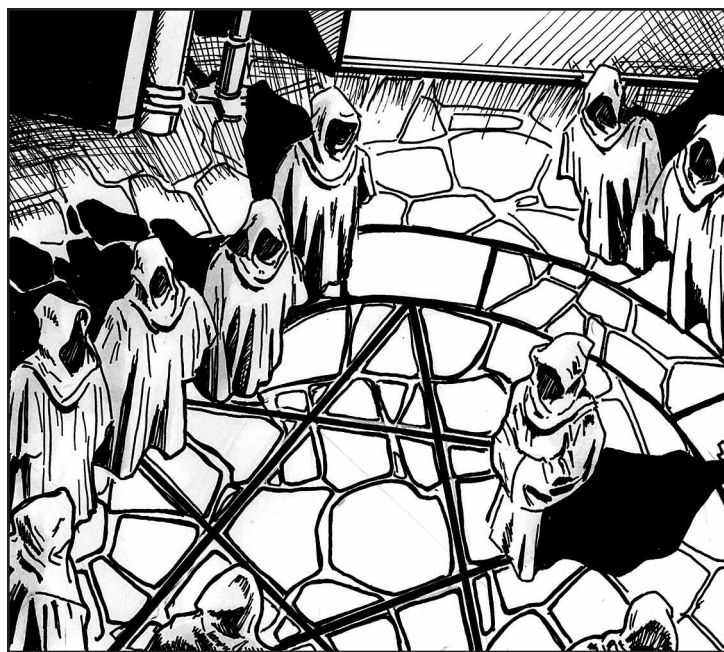
Neopaganism

Neopaganism is a modern phenomenon, often associated with the "New Age" movement that gained strength in the 1960s. Neopagans represent a vast array of beliefs, from attempts to revive worship of the old gods (above) to witchcraft to druidism to UFO cults and circles who pray to the gods of J.R.R. Tolkien's mythos. Most neopagans purport to be trying to reconstruct ancient pre-Christian religious beliefs. **Wicca** is the most famous of these. Many, however, have little knowledge of any true ancient religions – they have constructed entirely new belief systems and attached an assortment of old names to them. (This is deliberate in some cases, and ignorance in others.)

But sometimes, this is enough. The old gods aren't picky nowadays. If a group of neopagans whose understanding of Apollo is limited to Bulfinch's Mythology prays to the sun-god, he'll accept the Essence. A lot of neopagan activity accomplishes nothing significant, but some of it *does* feed ethereals; the more popular deities have become significantly stronger thanks to the neopagan renaissance. Blandine and Laurence (who both monitor such things closely) believe that some of the gods neopagans pray to aren't old ones who've successfully repackaged themselves, but newly created ones. While all of these deities remain weak – even the leaders of the old pantheons are shadows of their former power – it is cause for concern. Demons sometimes harass neopagans on general principles, especially when they're known to be worshipping gods who aren't allied with Beleth, but they've also found neopagans to be usefully credulous on occasion . . .

Satanism

Satanic cults make for lurid fiction, but very few really exist. Official denominations such as the Church of Satan don't *really* believe in demons, much less Satan; the Devil is merely a symbol of their rejection of social mores. Angels dislike them for obvious reasons, and demons sometimes do find recruits among these groups, but they're mostly regarded as a joke by celestials on both sides. Mainstream



Satanism might occasionally supply Lilith or some other Prince with a trickle of selfish Essence, but it's not enough for anyone to notice.

Real diabolical cults are another matter. Sometimes a group forms that genuinely worships demons and the cause of Evil. These cults *do* provide Essence to one or more Demon Princes. Such groups are inherently unstable, being made up of disaffected losers and sociopaths. Few last long; either they fall apart on their own, or the police eventually track down the wackos who are performing human sacrifices. Demons consider them fun while they last; angels treat them pretty much the way they would Hellsworn . . .

ANIMISM

Animism is similar to polytheism in that it entails a belief in supernatural beings, with whom believers try to communicate. The difference is that animists don't *worship* these beings. They do not look to their gods for spiritual guidance or the answers to metaphysical questions; they want material assistance. (Sometimes the spirits are regarded as malign, and animists simply want to keep them *away* . . .)

Most animist beliefs are found in tribal societies, from the Americas to the Pacific Islands to Europe. Belief in totems, "spirit guides," or attributing personal qualities to aspects of nature (including animals) all falls into the category of animism. Ancestral worship is also a form of animism – though a single family can't generate enough Essence to create an ethereal replicant of their ancestor, some ethereals have been known to masquerade as ancestral spirits, in the hopes of receiving Essence. One might also attract the departed himself, if he's actually a dream-shade (*Corporeal Player's Guide*, pp. 82-83)!

From an *In Nomine* perspective, nearly *any* belief that creates or nourishes ethereal spirits is animistic. Fairies are part of an animistic tradition, and the Fay (*The Marches*, p. 98) benefit from humans who still believe in them. The Marches are filled with all manner of other beings, from mythic archetypes to characters out of popular fiction. Most of them are very short-lived, animated by a trickle of Essence from dreamers here and there, then quickly devoured by older, more substantial spirits. Nobody *worships* Captain Hook, the Tooth Fairy, or little gray space aliens. Few people even believe in them as real entities . . . and yet, if enough people dream about them, they can come to life.

Shamanism

Shamanic beliefs are common to primitive peoples, but persist even in modern industrial nations like Korea. Shamans are holy men (or women) who enter a transcendental state in order to



communicate with spirits. Some shamans are actual Dream Soldiers (*Corporeal Player's Guide*, p. 66); others have no more insight or ability than any other mortal.

Shintoism

The native religion of Japan, now occupying a dual station with Buddhism for most Japanese. Shintoism is actually a mix of polytheism (p. 65) and animism (p. 85). The Japanese word *kami* refers to both spirits and gods; there isn't much distinction between the thousands of nature, animal, and ancestral spirits, and gods like Amaterasu, Hachiman, and Susano-wo, except sheer power and popularity. Unfortunately, the Shinto deities suffered badly during the Purity Crusade, and in order to stay alive, have made a pact with Nybbas (see *The Marches*, p. 104). This doesn't mean that *every* Shinto kami is a minion of Hell – but angels will treat them as such until proven otherwise.

OTHER RELIGIONS

No book can list, much less describe, *every* religion on Earth. But here are a few more that may be of interest to celestials (and the GM):

Scientology

A religion founded in the 1950s by science fiction author L. Ron Hubbard, based on his psychotherapy book *Dianetics*. Scientology is frequently rumored to have been engineered by celestials (or ethereals), though no one on either side has proven that Hubbard was anything but a mundane. The Church of Scientology is headquartered in Los Angeles, but has branches worldwide.

Zoroastrianism

A dualistic (p. 65) religion originating in Persia, which still has followers in Iran and India. Much of Judeo-Christian-Islamic mythology (including most of its angelology and demonology) came from Zoroastrianism. It was founded by the Persian religious reformer Zoroaster (or "Zarathustra") (c. 628 B.C. to c. 551 B.C.), with whom Archangel Eli is known to have had many a long chat.

Mithraism

Mithra was the sun god and supreme deity of the pre-Zoroastrian Persian pantheon. Mithra and his fellow

pagan gods were among the first casualties of monotheism (see p. 65). In the 2nd century A.D., however, Mithraism experienced a sudden resurgence in the Roman Empire. Heaven still doesn't know whether Mithra himself somehow engineered a revival of his cult, if scheming Diabolicals did it, or if it was a wholly mortal initiative. For a brief time, Mithra returned as a powerful pagan deity, until Christianity became ascendant in the 4th century.

Sikhism

An Indian religion syncretizing Hinduism and Islam. It was founded in the 15th century by the Guru Nanak. Sikhs live mostly in the Punjab region of India.

Jainism

One of India's original religions, along with Hinduism and Buddhism. Jainism has existed for over 2,500 years. Jain (or Jaina) monks are ascetics who seek spiritual purity and omniscience.

Baha'i

A religion founded in the 19th century by an Iranian, who called himself Baha'u'llah, promoting unity and world peace. Initially suppressed by Shiite Muslims, the Baha'i faith now has several million members worldwide.

DEALING WITH THE FAITHFUL

Even celestials who don't care about religion need to take it into account when dealing with humans who do. Angels in particular find it awkward dealing with humans whose religious beliefs are, well, *wrong*.

Unless you are playing a game based specifically on one of the major religions (see pp. 79-80), your campaign's canon will contradict the most orthodox beliefs of *every* faith . . . and probably won't be at all compatible with most of them. Angels are going to have to deal with Christians who expect them to have met Jesus, and Muslims who refuse to believe someone in a female vessel is an angel.

There are basically three approaches an angel can take to a pious mortal, depending on the angel's needs and the mortal's attitude.

The first is to simply tell the truth about how Heaven works. This is easy if the mortal is open-minded and willing to accept that some of his beliefs are wrong. It's much less easy if he's so attached to his religion that learning of a single false doctrine will cause a crisis of faith (and possibly send him into denial). If an angel wants a long-term relationship with a human, he'll probably have to tell the truth eventually, but it doesn't have to be all at once. Some angels (particularly Cherubim, Elohim, and Mercurians) have the patience and social skills to gradually disabuse a

believer of his cherished notions; Seraphim, on the other hand, are rarely allowed to talk to fundamentalists until someone else has broken the truth to them more gently.

The second approach is to cater to the believer's expectations as much as possible, and smooth over any apparent conflicts. Angels usually do this only when the cooperation of a devout mortal is important, and they don't have the time to break the whole truth to him. Thus, angels will invoke the name of Jesus Christ when greeting Christians, Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) when greeting Muslims, and try to avoid acting "unangelic" around the devout. They also won't mention unbelievers in Heaven to fundamentalists, but they will be sure to mention any Saints of the mortal's faith whom they know *are* in Heaven. If an angel is dealing with a Muslim or a Jew, he'll probably talk about serving *God* rather than his Archangel (and except when dealing with liberal Jews, will avoid appearing in a female vessel). Some Servitors deal better with certain religions than others; angels of the Sword obviously relate to Catholics easily, while angels of Lightning have trouble dealing with some of the more mystical sects.

Continued on next page . . .

SUPERIORS AND RELIGION

Each Superior has his own take on religion, and his own opinions on how human religions serve his Word and the War. Most (even the Demon Princes) see value in it; a few Superiors are themselves religious, and a few have no interest at all.

ARCHANGELS

Blandine: Blandine has no particular religious beliefs herself. She is positive toward religion in general, as it is a source of strength and hope to mortals, but she greatly dislikes those sects (or practitioners) who use it to terrorize believers with visions of hellfire and damnation.

David: The Archangel of Stone has ancient ties to Israel, and has renewed his support for the Jews in this century. He approves of all religions, however, as long as they are divinely-inspired; few groups are as loyal and resolute as a band of fellow believers.

Dominic: Dominic supports the Roman Catholic Church for pragmatic reasons – he sees it as the most effective institution for combating heresy and diabolicalism on Earth. Theologically, Dominic is an absolutely exclusive monotheist, and thus feels equally comfortable with any of the Abrahamic faiths. Still, it bothers him greatly that he *doesn't know* who or what Jesus was, and he continues to investigate the matter.

Eli: Eli has always annoyed Dominic because he prefers religions and philosophies invented solely by *humans*, rather than those that are influenced or blatantly handed down by celestials. He used to promote mystical sects, preferring an intuitive approach to the universe, rather than post-Reformation trends toward rationalizing faith. Nowadays, no one knows what his religious leanings are, though he does seem to hang out at Reform synagogues a lot.

Gabriel: Gabriel was a key figure in the inception of Christianity and Islam; the latter helped drive her insane. She has had no direct dealings with the religions she helped establish in centuries, and has never been known to subscribe to any particular faith. She receives her truths directly from God, and lets others puzzle out whatever doctrines they care to from them.

DEALING WITH THE FAITHFUL (CONTINUED)

Note that “catering” to someone’s beliefs doesn’t necessarily mean *lying*, but it can be difficult for Seraphim . . . though “I am not here to answer your questions,” delivered with appropriate severity, will shut most believers up.

Pretense is an option, though no angel *likes* to deceive pious mortals. It’s only done when a mortal will only cooperate with “angels” who match his preconceptions, and his cooperation is essential and urgently needed. In such a situation, most angels choose the “overawe” routine, appearing in celestial form (enhanced with the Celestial Song of Nimbus – *Liber Canticorum*, p. 43 – if possible) and ready to perform “miracles” to impress their audience. Being well-versed in the mortal’s beliefs is essential. Mercurians are best at this, while it’s usually not an option for Seraphim, unless they can get away with simply hovering in celestial form and chanting in archaic tongues (which can be *quite* effective . . .).

Demons and the Devout

“Even the Devil can quote scripture.”

Some demons become very familiar with mortal religions . . . especially those parts that are wrong. They take advantage of human beliefs, reinforce incorrect doctrines (particularly those that encourage selfishness), and lay traps for any angels who might come along later. (“We know you’re not

an angel . . . *our* angel proved that real angels don’t bleed!”) Diabolicals are only too happy to play upon the prejudices of intolerant fanatics, or the grimmer doctrines of certain sects that lead to fatalism and alienation. Pretending to be a servant of the Lord, and even starting new cults, is a favorite pastime of some demons (particularly Servitors of Kobal and Malphas).

Demons can use all the methods angels do (above), but they rarely tell the *truth* (except for selected parts), and Diabolicals in celestial form aren’t likely to be mistaken for angels (unless the viewer has a rather twisted image of angels). Balseraphs are particularly good at pretending to be angels, naturally. Habbalah believe they *are* angels, and are often *very* well-versed on theology, but an equally well-versed mortal will probably start to have doubts after watching the behavior of such “angels” . . .

The danger for demons masquerading as angels is that few religious people will *knowingly* deal with demons; being exposed as a Diabolical can ruin years of work and a high-level Role. Sometimes it can bring *real* angels down on your head also . . . or worse, a Divine Intervention! There are enough Saints, Soldiers of God, and angels working among all the major religions that the threat of exposure – particularly if one makes a disturbance – is relatively high. And angels are particularly vindictive when they discover wolves among the flock.

Janus: Religions that were once radical often become dogmatic and moribund; that’s when the Archangel of the Wind likes to see rabble-rousers stirring up the hierarchy. When early Christians were shaking up the Jewish Sanhedrin, Janus rooted for them. When Martin Luther triggered the Reformation, Janus was delighted. He much prefers religions like Voudon, Hasidic Judaism, and Pentecostal Christianity, whose followers dance, sing, and move about, to those where they sit quietly in pews with hands folded and heads bowed.

Jean: Jean doesn’t do religion – it’s irrational. That doesn’t mean he thinks religion is *bad*; he’s often commented that it seems to be an objective good, teaching humans how to behave and keeping society in check. But in the absence of proof, theological questions can only be answered with faith. Jean has faith in God; he doesn’t concern himself with extraneous details.

Jordi: The Archangel of Animals is surprisingly well-informed about human religions; as might be expected, he doesn’t care much for them. He appreciates scriptures that

direct people to be “good stewards” and admonishes them against cruelty (particularly against animals), but observes that nearly every religion is extremely humanocentric, assuming that humans are at the top of the natural order by divine providence. Jordi also points out that humans never seem to let religious doctrines inconvenience them when they want to kill something, whether it’s animals or rival worshippers.

Laurence: Laurence is a Catholic. He believes in the Holy Trinity, and he believes the Pope is divinely-inspired. He believes the Roman Catholic Church is the best hope for mankind. He doesn’t discriminate against other Christians (though he wishes they’d all join the universal Church), and he respects those non-Christians who also stand as allies against the forces of Hell, but he makes no secret of his convictions. Angels of the Sword aren’t *required* to be Catholic, or even Christian, but it’s strongly encouraged, and Laurence’s Servitors had better not speak out (or worse, act) *against* the Church. Few non-Christians are comfortable enough in Laurence’s service to rise to the highest ranks.

Marc: Marc had a lot to do with the “Protestant work ethic” . . . but he also approves of the Muslim socialist ethic. He prefers religions that deal with pragmatic matters, like tithes to feed the poor and bans on usury and hoarding. Metaphysics don’t concern him; he finds esoteric navel-gazing useless.

Michael: Michael is one of only two Archangels to be named in both the Bible and the Quran (the other being Gabriel). He was an ancient patron of Judaism, and later became a major patron of Christianity. Michael has a sentimental fondness for the Abrahamic faiths, but finds all religions that recognize the authority of God to be worthy. The question of Jesus does nettle him a bit – mostly because he resents how mysterious Yves is being about the Messiah – but unlike Dominic, the Archangel of War is content to wait until God makes everything clear.

Novalis: As Novalis would put it, “Every human religion since the first boils down to just two principles: behave, and don’t hurt each other.” She has struggled to avoid disillusionment, as one religion after another plants seeds of charity and compassion, and bears fruit that involves the slaughter of infidels. “It’s not what your holy book says that matters, it’s what you *do*,” she frequently says.

Yves: Organized monotheism was Yves’ idea; it hasn’t worked out too well. He was instrumental in promoting Judaism, then Christianity, and most recently Islam. He claims to have sworn off trying to engineer religions, saying that humans have enough spiritual tools now to chart their own paths.

DEMON PRINCES

Andrealphus: Contrary to what many assume, Andrealphus *loves* religions that make sex dirty and sinful. “All the ‘Thou Shalt Nots’ in the world won’t keep humans from lusting and coveting,” he says, “and the more repressed and frustrated they are, the more they desire what they can’t have, the more they become *mine*.” On the other hand, he’s also fond of libertine cults. Any religion that has people dancing around naked, or better yet, engaging in orgiastic rituals, amuses him. He has high hopes for the religion of entertainment he’s working on with Nybbas (see p. 67).

Asmodeus: Asmodeus likes religion with *rules*, especially modern religions with volumes and volumes of dogma, prescribing what kind of clothes one can wear, on what days one can plant and what days one can sow, legalistic requirements for salvation, and narrow definitions of orthodoxy and heresy, all written in sufficiently vague language that nearly anyone can be damned for the slightest infraction. Enforced correctly, religion becomes a collection of rules and taboos, with the underlying spiritual message forgotten. Habbalah of the Game are among the best theologians in Hell.

Baal: Baal has ancient ties to the Levant. The Canaanites worshipped him as a god; they were wiped out by the Israelites, and Baal still hasn’t forgotten that. Nor has he forgotten that Christians and then Muslims extinguished his remaining cults in North Africa. Under different names, Baal was worshipped in places as remote as Eastern Europe and South America. Nowadays, he no longer seeks direct worship. He’s pleased enough to see religious believers promoting his Word by slaughtering each other.

Beleth: Beleth regards religion as a pitiful delusion of humanity, something to cling to in the face of a hostile and overpowering universe. She wants to see humans *keep* using religion as a crutch, rather than an aid to standing on their own. She also finds that religion can spread fear as easily as hope; Servitors of Nightmares encourage Christians to see Satan behind every misfortune and adversity, Muslims to see encroaching Western materialism with every new innovation, and atheists and pagans to see stakes and inquisitions whenever the word “God” is mentioned.

Belial: Belial was also active in the ancient Middle East, and received his share of worship. He didn’t take enough notice to be upset when his cults disappeared. The Prince of Fire couldn’t care less about religion, though he does enjoy a good witchburning.



Haagenti: Catholic priests were once required to drink any sacramental wine that wasn’t consumed during communion service, since throwing out the blood of Christ would be sacrilege. This resulted in many a priest deliberately overmeasuring the amount he’d prepare for the service. That was Haagenti’s contribution to religion. Between that, and the Conquistadors who brought back chocolate and coffee from the New World, Haagenti is quite fond of the Roman Catholic Church . . . though Protestant potlucks and Jewish mothers also amuse him.

Kobal: Kobal regards religion as a sadistic joke, and an endless source of Dark Humor. His Servitors have had their fun with every faith; the Children’s Crusade, Pope Joan, Shabbetai Tzevi (the “False Messiah”), modern Westerners beguiled by hokey New Age fads . . . Kobal had a hand in all of these. The more seriously a religion takes itself, the easier it is to puncture its solemnity.

Kronos: Kronos is quite satisfied with how religion has played itself out; it *seems* that Yves’ experiments have all proven only that humans can damn themselves as easily with religion as without it. It’s rumored, however, that Kronos has studies indicating that religion leads more people to their destiny than to their fate, by a statistically significant margin. If so, those studies are buried in the Archive, and nobody talks about them.

Lilith: Lilith has *issues* with God, and would be only too happy to see all the patriarchal, Abrahamic religions collapse under their own weight. She resents the whitewash job Adam and Eve get in Genesis (though she finds it deliciously ironic that Eve got blamed for Original Sin), and she's not happy with her portrayal in Jewish midrashas as a screeching, baby-strangling monster. (Of course, some whisper that she's not happy because it's a *true* characterization, and it's only in the modern age that she's worked toward shedding that image.) Most of all, Lilith doesn't like the rules and morals that religion impose, and encourages people to break free of their strictures whenever possible.

Malphas: Malphas *loves* religion. He considers it the most useful tool humans have ever invented. There isn't a single faith he can't fracture, and he never tires of seeing how many sects and subsects a belief system can subdivide into, before they turn on one another in holy war. Nothing inspires a passion for exclusiveness and murder like religion. He encourages all of his Servitors to find religion (and he assures each of his servants privately, of course, that he believes their faith is closest to the truth) and be zealous in promoting it.



Nybbas: Nybbas feeds the masses what they want; sanitized, squeaky-clean images of wholesome religious icons, devoid of any deep meaning or critical examination. "You can have anything you want if you pray hard enough." "Anything is possible if you just *believe*." Religion can be marketed like any other product, and sells best when not burdened by awkward moral values and complicated theology. Meanwhile, he is working with Andrealphus to create a religion of their own, based entirely on entertainment and selfish gratification (see p. 67).

Saminga: Saminga thinks it would be cool to be worshipped as a god. His Servitors have tried to promote such death-cults many times, but they don't last long (see *Satanism*, p. 85).

Valefor: Valefor laughs at the Eighth Commandment. He also laughs at how Christianity has literally stolen the beliefs of other religions (and stolen the Essence that once went to pagan deities). He really doesn't think about religion much, though, other than to find it annoying for its rules and moral strictures.

Vapula: The Habbalite Prince believes himself to be above any need for religion. Religion is just ignorant superstition, an outmoded thought process. The proper way to seek God is by uncovering the clues He has hidden in the universe . . . the more knowledge one obtains, the closer one becomes to God.

FATE AND DESTINY

It had been a long day. When he found one of his students waiting for him outside the lecture hall, he was not in a patient mood.

"Uh, Professor Shaw," Gina mumbled, shuffling, eyes downcast. "I was wondering . . . umm, if maybe I could make up the midterm, and some of my missed classes . . ."

Once, Shaw would have been sympathetic and probably offered the failing pre-med student another chance. But in the past year, he'd endured a divorce, the death of his mother, and the removal of a malignant tumor. He'd exhausted his last reserves of empathy.

"No, you can't. If you'd cared enough to show up for class and study for the midterm, you wouldn't be failing. Why should I make a special exception for you?" He practically sneered. "Better luck next term." He stalked off, leaving the girl as shattered as her destiny. Gina sobbed, and in that moment abandoned hope. She would never be the great doctor she was destined to become.

And Professor Shaw, whose fate was to snuff out his student's destiny, damned himself to Hell in that same moment. Somewhere, Lucifer laughed.

Every human being has a destiny and a fate (*In Nomine*, p. 67). Some destinies are great and glorious – to overthrow a dictatorship, discover the cure for a disease that afflicts millions, even to save the world. Some are humble and seemingly insignificant in the greater scheme of things – to give comfort to a prisoner, to teach someone how to dance, or to die with dignity. Fates, likewise, range from the terrible to the banal, from causing a genocide to making a baby cry.

Angels try to lead humans to their destinies because that's what they're here for. Demons try to lead humans to their fates because more damned souls means more Essence for Hell, less for Heaven, and more validation that Lucifer was right.

In canonical *In Nomine*, a human's destiny and fate determine whether he achieves Heaven or Hell when he dies. But the GM may feel that this is too simplistic a criteria. After all, an otherwise decent person (like Professor Shaw, above) might succumb to one dark impulse and seal his fate. Eternal torment seems like rather a dire punishment for losing one's temper with a student. By comparison, is it fair that a rotten person might get to Heaven just because he did one noble thing at the right time?

Servitors of Destiny believe that the pattern of selfishness and selflessness in an individual's life predicts the result when the moment of decision arrives. Accepting your destiny or succumbing to your fate isn't one random choice among many you make during your life – it's an outcome you fashion for yourself by the way you live your life. Demons claim it's as arbitrary as all of Heaven's rules, but they're perfectly willing to manipulate those rules for their own ends.



CRAFTING FATES AND DESTINIES

As a GM, you will have to create destinies and fates for NPCs, and sometimes player characters. While minor NPCs can be assigned a random fate or destiny, you should give some thought to those belonging to important characters – they are potential plot hooks. Players are very likely to make an issue of their *own* characters' destinies and fates, and those of people important to them.

Be careful even about what destiny or fate you gave a random NPC, though. By making a given action a destiny worthy of Heaven or a fate worthy of Hell, you say something about the *goals* of Heaven and Hell. You also don't want to write yourself into a corner when the PCs decide to act on the destiny or fate that they perceive.

The following are some guidelines in assigning destinies and fates:

- ✧ Most are modest, hardly likely to change the world. Every third person is not going to have a destiny worthy of John the Baptist, or a fate worthy of Judas. If you give someone a *great* destiny or fate, he should be an important character. If you say someone has the potential to impact the War, PCs will follow him around, and Superiors will certainly take an interest in such an individual.

- ✧ Destinies and fates don't have to be a single defining moment. Sometimes they are lifelong trends. A person *might* earn Heaven or Hell in a single instant with one critical decision . . . but he's more likely to do so by following his inclinations toward selfishness or selflessness. You can fulfill your fate or destiny by simply obeying your inner voice . . . and avoid the same by ignoring it.

- ✧ Destinies and fates are usually more general than specific: "Save someone's life," rather than "Save the life of Seth Carter." They may have embellishments ("Save the life of a drowning man," or "Save someone who will go on to save



CHANGING FATES AND DESTINIES

Once you fulfill your destiny or fate, it's sealed – you don't get a new one. But that doesn't mean you can sanctify or damn yourself and then carry on any way you like with your eternal reward guaranteed. Even after achieving your destiny, you can still meet your fate as well, and vice versa. Some angels of Destiny work extra-hard to bring a damned soul to his destiny, so that he gets a chance to reincarnate and try again, rather than going to Hell. And some demons of Fate are dedicated to bringing those who've met their destinies to their fate as well, in order to deny them to Heaven.

the lives of millions"), but they should never be so particular that missing one opportunity to meet one's fate or destiny precludes achieving it in that lifetime. A person's fate might be "Kill a friend in an argument," but not "Kill a friend with a baseball bat during an argument about the 2002 World Cup."

The *Liber Servitorum*, p. 126, has a list of sample fates and destinies, from the mundane to the earthshaking.

Fate and Destiny for Non-Mortals

All mortals have a fate and destiny. Those who fulfill them and go on to the celestial plane – blessed souls in Heaven, damned souls in Hell – have already closed the loop on their existence. Celestials cannot perceive the destiny or fate of such beings . . . unless they can look into the past. (This is one way to spot a Saint . . . or some undead.)

Celestials have a destiny and a fate too, but not individual, detailed ones that can be discovered. An angel's fate is to Fall; a demon's destiny is to redeem. Most believe that angels, by being native to Heaven, have by definition already fulfilled their destiny. Some, particularly proponents of the free will theory, believe that even angels may have individual notes to add to the Symphony. Likewise, demons may have already succumbed to their fates, by virtue of being in Hell, but some believe that a dedicated Diabolical can fulfill an even darker fate.

As for ethereals, no one is sure. Attempting to read an ethereal spirit's fate or destiny either fails or produces an ephemeral result that will change with the spirit's next manifestation. Some say that since they're Essence-constructs of human imagination, spirits can't *choose* selfishness or selflessness, and such concepts are meaningless to them anyway, for they can never go to either celestial plane. Others believe that ethereals do have souls, and thus may have special destinies and fates of their own.



FATE, DESTINY, AND CELESTIAL MEDDLING

The act of fulfilling one's destiny or fate *must* be freely chosen. A Shedite can't send a host to his fate by fulfilling it for him while possessing him. An angel can't bring a person to his destiny by *forcing* him to do something . . . for that matter, neither can anyone else. An act that achieves a person's destiny must be fundamentally selfless; an act that seals his fate must be selfish. So if you fulfill your destiny to bring a murderer to justice only because someone held a gun to your head as you called the police, or fulfill your fate to kill a loved one by opening a door and accidentally knocking someone off a ladder, you haven't *really* met your destiny or fate.

The exact amount of celestial meddling permitted is up to the GM. The less intervention you want in your campaign (p. 47), the more you should insist on non-interference in a mortal's free will. *Some* meddling must be possible, or Servitors of Fate and Destiny will have little to do. A demon might have worked hard to make Professor Shaw's (p. 90) life difficult, so as to erode his compassion. The GM *might* permit that demon to push Shaw to his fate by repeatedly using his resonance to corrupt the man's morals . . . or the GM might say that every time a celestial uses his resonance directly on a mortal, he risks invalidating any selfless or selfish choice the mortal makes. Angels of Destiny and demons of Fate can thus be blunt, intrusive meddlers, or they can be forced to act surreptitiously, without the slightest hint of Symphonic disturbance.

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RELIGION AND HISTORY

TIMELINE

This is a timeline of major events in the official *In Nomine* universe. (Note that the Creation account is *Heaven's* version of the story . . .)

Creation: *In the Beginning, there was light.*

???: **Yves** is the first soul. He names God.

???: **Michael** is the first angel, followed (in order) by **Lucifer, Baal, David, Eli, Uriel, and Gabriel.**

???: **Metatron** appears. So to speak. Never seen, Metatron is the Voice of God, who dictates orders to the rest. The others believe he is a Seraph, and some believe it was Metatron who actually spoke the words "Let there be light." Whenever God *speaks* to the angels, it is through Metatron.

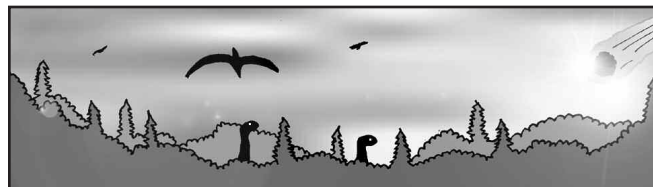
???: Michael, Lucifer, Baal, David, Eli, Uriel, and Gabriel go about creating the universe, receiving orders from God (through Metatron), while Yves names things. They also begin creating lesser beings . . . other angels created during this time include **Asmodeus, Beleth, Blandine, Dominic, Jean, Kobal, Malphas, and Raphael.**

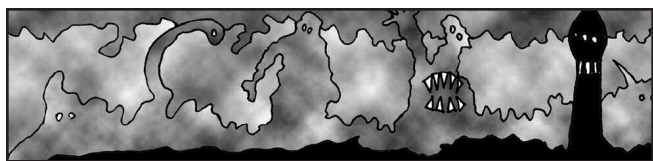
4.6 billion B.C.: The Earth is formed.

100 million B.C.: Malphas, Gabriel, and David (all Archangels now), and a promising young Servitor of Gabriel named **Belial**, have been busy moving, heating, and breaking up tectonic plates. Asmodeus and Dominic begin codifying the word of God. Beleth and Blandine (both Archangels) are exploring the Marches, and soon build their Tower. Yves, Jean, and Raphael are transcribing knowledge – the latter two become Archangels at about this time. Kobal receives his special assignment, which is even yet unknown. **Andrealphus** is created, and (in a relatively short time) becomes the Archangel of Love. **Janus, Jordi, and Oannes** are also created during this epoch. Janus learns how to move ocean waves and winds, and teaches the trick to his friend Oannes. They become the Archangels of the Wind and the Waters, respectively. Jordi discovers how to create corporeal vessels, and is given authority over all living creatures as the Archangel of Animals.

67 million B.C.: **Saminga** is created. Coincidentally, he witnesses the extinction of the dinosaurs during his first visit to the Earth.

500,000 B.C.: Lucifer teaches early humans how to use fire (with some help from Jean).





25,000 B.C.: Humans are developing religion. The Marches are becoming populated with the ethereal creations of human imagination. Humans are also becoming the most selfish of all creatures. Jordi decides to wipe out humanity . . . but Michael (at God's behest) talks him out of it. Jordi still regrets this. Dominic and **Marc** are given their Words, and assigned the task of teaching angels (and humans) how to get along properly.

23,000 B.C.: Yves announces that humans are to be left alone, and the corporeal plane is henceforth off limits to angels. Many (especially Lucifer) are dismayed at this. **The Eden experiment** follows. **Novalis**, the Angel of Flowers, creates the Garden of Eden at God's behest. Adam and **Lilith** are created by God, and Lilith walks away. God creates Eve to replace her. Adam and Eve live in Eden for several years, before Ophis, a Servitor of Baal, sneaks in and taints the experiment. God calls the experiment inconclusive, and forbids further celestial intervention. Dominic places the Cherub Jophiel at the gates of Eden. Lucifer has a long talk with God (through Metatron), but is not satisfied.

22,625 B.C.: The Fall: After recruiting 1/3 of the Host, Lucifer leads his Rebellion. In his last private talk with God, he destroys Metatron. Uriel, formerly a Seraph, becomes the first Malakite during the Rebellion; the Cherub David quickly follows. Michael kicks Lucifer out of Heaven. The Lightbringer plummets to the farthest reaches of the universe, followed by his fellow rebels. They are trapped in Hell (for a time). The last ice age begins. Michael is made Archangel of War and appointed general of Heaven's armies. God lifts the ban on celestial intervention, but insists on subtlety.

22,000 B.C.: The **Seraphim Council** is created. Dominic is elevated to Archangel, and forms the Divine Inquisition. Marc becomes the first Archangel *elect* to that position by the Seraphim Council; Novalis (with considerably more debate) becomes the second. Archangels begin organizing their Servitors into formal hierarchies.

16,000 B.C.: With Lilith's help, the Diabolicals escape Hell, first finding their way to the Marches, and from there to Earth. Beleth begins building her Tower, opposite Blandine's. Lilith becomes the Princess of Freedom. The demons gradually begin acting more openly. The **Grigori** Choir is created, to guard humanity against diabolical influences.

11,600 B.C.: The Second "Fall." The Grigori, assigned to protect humanity from demonic influence, succumb to lust, begin having children, and neglect their jobs. David and Uriel's angels intervene, slaughtering the Grigori's Nephallim children, and rounding up the Watchers. Dominic tries them and finds them guilty; the Seraphim Council votes to cast them out. **The War** is beginning in earnest, as angels and demons do battle across the Earth, disturbing the Symphony and slaughtering many humans.

2000 B.C.: Ethereal spirits are becoming powerful pagan deities, sometimes rivaling the power of an Archangel. The Seraphim Council declares something must be done. Yves suggests promoting monotheism as a way to cut off ethereal worship. Abram (Abraham) leaves the city of Ur. He makes a pact with God, and becomes the Patriarch of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

1700 B.C.: Oannes traps and destroys his former Servitor, **Vephar**, the Demon Prince of the Oceans.

1627 B.C.: Oannes is slain by Belial. During the battle, the island of Thera explodes, leading to the collapse of the Minoan civilization.

1600 B.C.: **Gebbeleth**, Prince of Secrets, disappears. No one notices.

1580 B.C.: The **Trial of Michael**. Dominic accuses Michael of Pride, promoting pagan personality cults, and creating too much disturbance with his actions. Michael is found guilty, but God acquits him. Michael steps down as leader of the Host. He is replaced by Uriel.

1550 B.C.: Saminga arrives in Egypt. He begins studying their necromantic arts, becomes very proficient at it (with some help from the Egyptian gods), and earns the Word of Death.

1500 B.C.: Egyptians start removing mummy brains to thwart Saminga.

1200 B.C.: Saminga becomes the Prince of Death. Lucifer grants him Abaddon.

859 B.C.: **Magog**, a Kyriotate of Stone and Angel of Fortitude, has been patronizing the Hittites, the Assyrians, and the Sea Peoples, spurring them toward conquest so he can strike directly against Saminga in Egypt. Finally, David confronts his Servitor. Magog Falls, and Lucifer crowns him Prince of Cruelty. The next day David, with help from **Khalid**, the Angel of Faith, imprisons Magog and his followers beneath the Egyptian desert.

700 B.C.: **Mammon** becomes the Prince of Greed.

600 B.C.: Eli works with the prophet Zoroaster, in Persia, to promote monotheism.

500 B.C.: **Zadkiel** becomes the Archangel of Protection.



200 B.C.: Uriel begins patronizing the Roman Republic (later Empire), trying to keep the pagan gods they worship under control.

146 B.C.: **Demogorgon**, the powerful Demon of Destruction, is destroyed by Belial amidst speculation that Lucifer is about to crown him Prince.

50 B.C.: **Laurence** is created by Uriel.

6 B.C.: Gabriel announces the conception of **Jesus Christ**.

60 A.D.: Yves, Gabriel, and Raphael work together and somehow cause Christianity to spread so rapidly that it begins cutting off many pagan gods from their worshippers. Michael eventually supports Christianity also, but becomes hostile to Yves at this time.

325 A.D.: Council of Nicea. Constantine begins making Christianity the official state religion of Rome. Uriel and Dominic both declare their support for the faith. **Litheroy** becomes the Archangel of Revelation.

331 A.D.: Laurence becomes the Angel of the Sword.

400 A.D.: **Haagenti** is created, and spends the next 600 years as an abused familiar.

455 A.D.: **Beelzebub**, first Prince of Corruption, is slain by Uriel.

610 A.D.: At Yves' behest, Gabriel visits the Prophet **Muhammad**. Muhammad receives divine revelations (which become the Quran) for the next 23 years.

632 A.D.: Muhammad dies. Dominic summons Gabriel to Heaven, to try him for heresy. The Archangel of Fire angrily storms out of the Seraphim Council, and begins his self-imposed exile from Heaven. Soon thereafter, Gabriel begins assuming female form more often.

715 A.D.: **Purification Crusade** begins. Beleth offers the ethereals sanctuary in her realm, for a price. Some pagan gods flee to the Far Marches instead.

732 A.D.: Laurence and Khalid (both Servitors of Purity) are present on opposite sides at Poitiers, France (see p. 75).

745 A.D.: As Uriel's forces raze the Marches, he is called before the Seraphim Council, but is unrepentant. God abruptly orders Uriel to the Higher Heavens (some claim it was the voice of the slain Metatron who called him); Laurence is elevated to Archangel and made General of the Host in Uriel's place. Khalid begins promoting Islam.

750 A.D.: Khalid becomes the Archangel of Faith. He begins withdrawing from the Seraphim Council, spending more time on Earth.

793 A.D.: **Valefor** appears for the first time. He steals the Word of **Genubath**, Prince of Rapine; Genubath disappears, and Lucifer makes Valefor the Prince of Theft.

900 A.D.: **Kronos** first appears, as the Prince of Fate. (Legend speculates that Lucifer actually found him centuries before this.)

1008 A.D.: **Legion**, a Shedite Servitor of Saminga, learns how to possess multiple hosts. Lucifer is pleased, and names him Prince of Corruption. Legion soon goes mad, and as he begins possessing humans by the dozens, then by the hundreds, Heaven and Hell team up for the first time to destroy him. In the end, Raphael, Archangel of Knowledge, sacrifices herself to destroy Legion. During this battle, the young demon Haagenti distinguishes himself. Kobal takes a liking to him, and adopts the creature as his "brother."

1009 A.D.: Haagenti becomes the Demon of Gluttony. He increases rapidly in power, gathers an army, and sweeps through Hell, devouring **Meserach**, Prince of Sloth, before Lucifer makes him a Prince. Following his ascension to Prince, he devours **Mariel**, Princess of Oblivion.

1212 A.D.: The Children's Crusade prompts the naming of an Angel of Children: **Christopher**, a Servitor of Stone.

1348 A.D.: **Makatiel**, the Renegade Demon Prince of Disease, accelerates the spread of the Black Death, trying to destroy mankind. Servitors of Asmodeus and Dominic collaborate openly for the first time, to hunt down and destroy the mad Prince.

1517 A.D.: **Laurence's Last Lesson**. By using his agent **Martin Luther** to instigate change in the Catholic Church, Laurence inadvertently sparks the Protestant Reformation.

1771 A.D.: As factories spread across England, **Vapula**, the Demon of Technology, is quietly elevated to Prince; Richard Arkwright (inventor of the water frame), is believed to have assisted as Vapula's servant.

1800 A.D.: **Alaemon**, once a Mercurian of Revelation, becomes the second Prince of Secrets around this time.

1864 A.D.: **Fleurity**, a Servitor of Gluttony, becomes the (latest) Demon of Drugs.

1884 A.D.: **Nybbas** (a peon Servitor of Vapula) and several human allies invent television. He is given the Word of the Media and simultaneously crowned Prince. He quickly takes over Perdition.

1900 A.D.: Kobal, growing jaded, begins spending less time on Earth. Meanwhile, Eli starts assigning his Servitors to other Archangels.

1957 A.D.: Eli goes AWOL, abandoning his Heavenly Cathedral.

1978 A.D.: Christopher becomes an Archangel.

1986 A.D.: Crack cocaine gets Fleurity named Prince.

1997 A.D.: **Furfur**, Renegade Calabite of Fire and Demon of Hardcore, is made Prince.

1998 A.D.: Khalid is brought back from the brink of a Fall, but remains somewhat isolated from the rest of the Host.

SUPERIORS

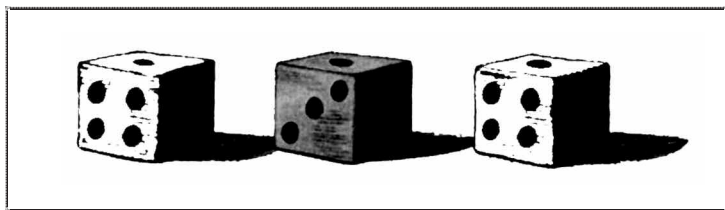
Archangels and Demon Princes are behind most stratagems in the War, which makes them the ultimate source of most action in IN NOMINE. Even if you never roleplay an appearance by a Superior, you should understand their motives, methods, and means in order to establish their role in your campaign.



FINITE BEINGS ON AN INFINITE SCALE

From a human perspective, Superiors are godlike. They have abilities beyond the scope of any lesser being. The most potent ethereal gods may approach the *weakest* Superiors in sheer power, but none of them have a Superior's influence on the Symphony . . . at least, not any more. In the realms dealt with in *In Nomine*, only God and Lucifer can surpass an Archangel or Demon Prince.

With all this power, Superiors are still very finite beings. No Superior is omnipotent or omniscient. They are not infallible or indestructible. The GM should discourage players from thinking of Superiors as opponents they can fight directly, but he mustn't allow Superiors to overwhelm the campaign and make their Servitors superfluous.



It's madness to contemplate going against a Superior in a direct confrontation . . . but that doesn't mean Superiors can't be defeated by non-Superiors. First of all, even lesser beings can possess knowledge and abilities that a Superior doesn't. Many of the tricks celestials now take for granted – being able to manifest corporeally on Earth, performing Rites for Essence, using Tethers – were unknown to the Archangels in the early days of creation, until someone figured out how it was done and taught the rest. And some tricks remain undiscovered. (No one understands undead the way Saminga does, for example, and only a handful of Archangels know the secret of making constructs – *Corporeal Player's Guide*, p. 49.)

Secondly, Superiors have limited perceptions and intellectual abilities, though those limits are far above most other beings. It's very difficult to outmaneuver or outsmart an Archangel or Demon Prince, but it's possible. The GM should play Superiors as *very* canny, *very* experienced beings . . . but they're not immune to misdirection, or letting their ego get in the way of reason. (And some Superiors, like Saminga and David, *aren't* that hard to outwit . . . though even Saminga is prone to amazing flashes of paranoia-fueled insight, and every Superior has very keen instincts where his Word is concerned.)

Lastly, as finite beings, Superiors can be stretched too thinly. Archangels and Demon Princes *do* have a finite number of Forces, and a limited pool of Essence, even if that number is very large (and never quantified in play). While

any single action, from answering an invocation to blasting an enemy celestial out of existence, may be a trivial feat, and no one attack is going to cripple a Superior, many such expenditures over a short period of time can diminish a Superior's power. A weakened Superior is vulnerable to efforts by his enemies to undermine him, so all Superiors are careful about managing their resources.

OPPOSING SUPERIORS

Superiors shouldn't appear in person often; they're extremely busy, supporting their Words on a broad level, not fighting individual battles. That's what Servitors are for. Additionally, Archangels and Demon Princes should be played as unfathomable beings: extremely powerful, somewhat mysterious, often ancient beyond imagining, and more than a little scary. Having them appear too often takes away the sense of awe they should inspire. When a Superior appears in person, it should be *important*.

Thus, the idea of confronting a Superior directly shouldn't even occur to player characters. Superiors simply exist on a higher level, and cannot be directly challenged by lesser beings. You fight a Superior by attacking his servants, destroying his Tethers, and undermining his Word, not by ambushing him and trying to bring him down by force.

Still, sometimes Superiors *will* appear in person, and sometimes lesser beings *will* try to oppose them directly. The GM can handle this in several ways. The easiest way is to simply describe what happens, which will usually be something unpleasant for whoever pit himself against a Superior. This "deus ex machina" approach is perfectly appropriate when dealing with Superiors – there's no need to roll dice or calculate Essence expenditures when an ordinary celestial goes up against an Archangel or Demon Prince.

Some players may feel cheated by this approach, however. If, they reason, Superiors are not truly omnipotent, then they shouldn't *automatically* prevail in every encounter, and they shouldn't automatically succeed at everything they do.

If you GM such a group and aren't willing to make arbitrary rulings, then you might want to consider some of the options in the *Quantifying Superiors* box (p. 97).

SUPERIOR CONFRONTATIONS

Superiors rarely confront each other directly. For one thing, it's risky. You might be pretty sure you're more powerful than your rival, but no one can be certain what arcane tricks another Superior has up his sleeve. And no Superior can be defeated without cost. Baal might be more than a match for a lesser Archangel, and Michael can send most Demon Princes crawling back to Hell, but it takes a lot of energy. Even the most powerful Superior can ill afford another major drain on his resources after such an encounter, and that's exactly when his enemies want to strike.

QUANTIFYING SUPERIORS



Superiors don't have character sheets. While they are finite beings, and some are more powerful than others, there are no rules in *In Nomine* for quantifying Archangels and Demon Princes, and there will never be an official top-to-bottom ranking.

Some GMs may want to do this, however. Perhaps your players resent the presence of godlike beings they can never fight directly, and want the climax of the campaign to be a battle with a Demon Prince. Or perhaps you want to rank Superiors in your campaign so *you* know who will win if Laurence and Belial get in a fight. Below are some suggestions for those who want to quantify Superiors. *Remember these suggestions are not only optional, but unofficial – none of this is “canon” (p. 58).*

The Superior Totem Pole

Without assigning numbers or hard limits to Superiors, you can simply order them in whatever manner is appropriate for your campaign. This can be as simple as a top-to-bottom hierarchy; perhaps you decide that Kronos is the mightiest Demon Prince, followed by Asmodeus, followed by Baal, etc. You can make separate hierarchies for Archangels and Demon Princes, or rank them all together.

This gives you an easy way of deciding the victor in a simple power contest, but remember that Superiors don't usually engage each other in simple power contests. Regardless of relative overall power, a Superior always has the advantage if the contest is being fought within the domain of his Word. Baal would certainly beat Nybbas in single combat, but Nybbas could do more damage to Baal's Word in a war of corporeal influence. Likewise, Michael could probably smite

Asmodeus in battle, but in a game of chess, the contest would be far less one-sided.

Remember this whenever Superiors collide. No Superior is stupid enough to rely on force if he can turn the contest to his advantage with his Word. Novalis may not be the mightiest Archangel, but she can make it *very* difficult for even a Demon Prince to attack her. Andrealphus has ways of . . . distracting those who'd do him harm. And Lilith, generally considered the weakest Superior in sheer power, holds Geases that can stop some of the most powerful Superiors in their tracks. And if that doesn't work, she'll run . . . and no one has yet been able to restrain Freedom.

Counting Forces

If you really want to assign numbers to Superiors, then you can give them Forces just like other celestials – without limiting them to 18. Whether you choose to have Superior Forces number in the tens, hundreds or thousands is up to you. (30 Forces is suggested as the absolute *minimum*, for a newly-ascended, very weak Superior.) Characteristics and Essence can be extrapolated from this. If you are using Word-Forces (p. 24), you may choose to assign each Superior an “average” rating, for comparing them to one another, but Superior Word-Forces would certainly number in the hundreds, if not thousands, and fluctuate greatly over time.

Remember, though, that *In Nomine* mechanics aren't intended to represent ineffable higher powers. Big numbers may give you something concrete to compare against, but they don't really do justice to beings who should be abstractions, not stats.

Superiors as Characters

Another model for quantifying Superiors is to treat them as celestial characters. All Superiors would have 18 Forces, of course (though you might give some less – an argument can certainly be made against Saminga having too many Ethereal Forces . . .). The enormous power of their Words and vast Essence reserves are what set them above an “ordinary” 18-Force Word-bound celestial. For most tasks and challenges, they can be treated normally, but remember their Word will give them enormous bonuses in any endeavor even remotely touched by it – and if they really need to succeed at something, they generally have enough Essence to guarantee they will.



Also, of course, a Superior who knows he's likely to lose a battle probably won't fight it; Demon Princes are particularly untroubled about exercising the better part of valor. Furthermore, few Superiors are both stupid and friendless enough to stand alone against a greater force. That's what alliances are for, and the threat of escalation (as one Superior threatens another, causing that Superior to call on his friends, forcing the first Superior to do likewise) usually prevents Superiors from instigating fights in the first place. More often, like confrontations between rival nations on Earth, two enemy Superiors will simply snarl and posture, take a few token swipes at one another, and then retreat.

Sometimes it happens, though. Two rival Princes may become embroiled in a dispute where neither is willing to back down (particularly if they are before an audience of their Servitors). Militant Archangels are quite willing to attack a Demon Prince, and some Princes (particularly Baal, Belial, and Saminga) won't balk at taking on an Archangel . . . if they think they'll win. (Archangels never actually *fight* each other. Their conflicts are waged on a more abstract level . . . or behind closed doors where no one else can see.)

These encounters are rare, and usually brief. Superiors can fight on any level, but simple power contests are over quickly. One will triumph, and the other will go limping back to the celestial plane. Witnesses may hear the disturbance accompanying massive Essence expenditures, but they may or may not see anything besides the loser's retreating backside.

Just because an Archangel or Prince lost the last confrontation with a Superior doesn't mean he'll lose the next with that same foe. He might have folded the first time because his opponent was willing to spend more Essence – *that time*.

Sometimes, Superiors limit themselves by mutual agreement – waging a corporeal duel with their vessels, for example, or simply staring one another down to see who blinks first. Depending on who's involved and the nature of the conflict, they may agree to a particular venue. (Marc is an intense negotiator, Janus and Valefor are both fond of card games, and Asmodeus can produce a chess set with a snap of his fingers.) Here, the winner may be determined not by sheer power, but who has more of an advantage in the domain of the contest. Naturally, as with brute force contests, no Superior will accept a challenge he's sure to lose – Lilith might play poker with Janus, but she won't agree to an arm-wrestling match.

The most serious contest, of course, is a battle to the death. Celestial combat between Superiors is extremely rare, and almost always ends with a retreat – a Superior who's losing a celestial battle will probably flee rather than be weakened further. Only a few times has a Superior actually been slain in battle. Lucifer killed Metatron during the Rebellion, Oannes, Archangel of the Waters, slew Vephar, Demon Prince of the Oceans, Belial in turn slew Oannes, and Haagenti devoured Meserach, Prince of Sloth, and Mariel, Princess of Oblivion, in their infernal Domains. Archangel Raphael fell in battle destroying Legion, the Demon Prince of Corruption. Some lesser Archangels and Demon Princes have also fallen prey to other Superiors over the centuries, but these are climactic events, usually preceded by years of maneuvering and preparation. If enemy Superiors happen to run into each other on Earth, they rarely just throw themselves into battle.

For the GM, of course, the question is how to determine the winner. It's a good idea to keep Superior-vs.-Superior battles offstage. The player characters don't need to see the fight; they'll just hear how it went afterward. (Assuming both Superiors survive, they may hear different versions.) The site of a battle between Superiors, even a "peaceful" one like a game of cards, is usually an unhealthy place to be. (The loser certainly won't be pleased if there were witnesses . . .)

Whether or not anyone sees the confrontation, Superiors are powerful beings, embodiments of the Symphony. It does not serve them well to represent their conflicts by a roll of the dice. It's strongly recommended that the GM simply decide, in his own mind, who will win the contest. (See *Quantifying Superiors*, p. 97, for tips on how to decide "who's more powerful.") Then make a story out of it, bearing in mind that any contest between Superiors is likely to have ramifications on the campaign, whether it means a shift in the political landscape, a reduction in power for someone, or just a few months of walking on eggshells around a *very* sore loser.

SUPERIOR POWERS

Superiors are celestials of vast power. Anything any angel can do, an Archangel can do; likewise for Demon Princes and diabolical powers. The exceptions are abilities that must be learned, such as certain secret Songs, and attunements belonging to other Superiors. (Some Superiors probably can replicate the effects of another Superior's attunement – and a Superior *might* be able to grant one of his attunements to another, if their Words are not too incompatible – but for the most part, they have only their own attunements available.) Some powers *only* become possible at the Superior level, however. Except where otherwise noted, all the powers below are shared by all Superiors, but impossible for lesser beings. (*Some* of these abilities are available to the more powerful ethereal gods.)

Control Forces

Other beings can manipulate loose Forces in limited ways, such as when using necromantic rituals to create undead, or when making constructs (see the *Corporeal Player's Guide* for more details). Only Superiors can actually work with Forces freely, putting them together and taking them apart, creating different configurations. This allows them to create celestials and Hearts, among other things, as well as permitting Archangels to redeem willing demons. It also allows them to attach Forces to humans and other beings at will, and to stabilize Tethers by investing Forces in them (*Liber Castellorum*, p. 9).

Impose and Remove Dissonance and Discord at Will

There are certain abilities that can impose dissonance or Discord (including ethereal combat), and even rarer ways to remove it, but only a Superior can inflict dissonance or Discord on a celestial at will. More importantly, only a Superior can remove it instantly – this is inherent in their ability to configure Forces, above. There are limits to this ability, though. Unless a celestial “belongs” to the Superior (either by serving his Word, or by the Superior holding his Heart), it cannot be done involuntarily.

Geases are a form of Discord, and any Superior can impose them – but again, the celestial must voluntarily accept the Geas unless the Superior is his own. Removing a Geas is a very difficult (and painful) process, much more so than removing other Discords; the celestial must be taken apart and put back together again, with the Geas stripped away. Lilith is the only Superior who can remove Geases easily. She is also the only Superior who can *transfer* ownership of Geases, as well as remove *Geas-books*. She *may* be able to impose Geases involuntarily, but it would go against her own nature to do so – unless she decides someone *owes* her . . .

Corporeal beings don't have Discord, but disadvantages. Superiors can inflict and remove Corporeal disadvantages on humans, but Ethereal and Celestial disadvantages require the human's cooperation (though he may be tricked, or compelled to agree as part of a pact).

Multiple Manifestations

Superiors can be in more than one place at the same time, even in the celestial realms. On Earth, most use multiple vessels, while Shedim and Kyriotates use hosts. Every manifestation requires a temporary investment of some of the Superior's Forces, splitting them up between manifestations, much as a Kyriotate does. Each one also divides the Superior's concentration. How many manifestations are possible depends on the Superior, but most find it difficult to maintain more than a handful at a time. Kyriotate Archangels can easily handle a dozen or more at once, while some Superiors, particularly Shedite Princes, don't like to split themselves up at all. Whenever something requires a Superior's undivided attention – such as a direct confrontation with another Superior – he'll probably find it necessary to dispel his other manifestations and consolidate himself (except Kyriotates, who have no trouble with divided attentions, so long as they aren't dividing it between two or more different planes).

*He shall cast lightnings, and who
shall not fear? he shall thunder,
and who shall not be afraid?*

*– Book of Ezra,
4:10 (apocrypha)*

Block Resonances and Attunements

Perception-based resonances are almost impossible to block, as are certain attunements, but Superiors can make themselves immune to both. No resonance or attunement will function against a Superior if the Superior doesn't wish it. It requires a conscious effort, and possibly Essence, to block these powers, since some celestials have succeeded in affecting a Superior who was caught unawares. This is said to be why Dominic wears his all-concealing cloak – *Liber Reliquiarum*, p. 93. (Some Superiors *partially* block resonances, allowing angels to read only as much information as the Superior desires . . .) The exception is when Superiors use their resonances and attunements on *each other*, in which case the conflict is resolved like other Superior contests (pp. 96, 98).

Use Multiple Resonances

Some other celestials (such as Masters of Destiny and Balseraphs of Fate) can take on the resonance of a Choir or Band other than their own, usually taking on additional dissonance conditions as well. Only Superiors are able to emulate *any* angelic or demonic resonance, while preserving their fundamental Choir or Band nature. (Archangels can't use diabolical resonances, unless you use the optional *Perverting Your Resonance* rule, p. 126. Demon Princes – with the possible exception of Kronos – no longer have access to angelic resonances.)

Mask Disturbances

Normally, a Superior manifesting on Earth creates a large disturbance, but those who regularly tour the corporeal plane (particularly Dominic and Asmodeus) often appear without any Symphonic noise. Some Superior manifestations create a “delayed” disturbance, akin to the Celestial Song of Shields, which only echoes after the Superior leaves. They are also able to do this for disturbances generated by others. Even Superiors who mask disturbances don't do it all the time, so it is evidently an ability that requires concentration and/or Essence, possibly a Superiors-only Song.

Carry Others in Celestial Form

Beings in celestial form can't be abducted without the use of special attunements, Songs, or relics. Superiors can grab someone in celestial form and take them where they wish . . . though even for a Superior, it's difficult to drag a resisting celestial to another realm. Archangels can not only carry demons to Heaven, but also shield Diabolicals from the harmful effects of exposure to the divine realm . . . at least for a little while. Princes can yank any demon back to their Principality. Sometimes they've done this to Renegades, and even angels, but usually their victim had to either come willingly or be subdued first.

Recognize Other Celestials

A Superior always knows his own Servitors, no matter what form they wear. (And Lilith always seems to know her Daughters, whether or not they are Free Lilim.) Superiors also have ways of recognizing other celestials, even in corporeal form, but it's not automatic. Some celestials have escaped notice when observed by a Superior. (At least, they *believed* they escaped notice . . .) But a Superior who really scrutinizes someone will almost always recognize a celestial in disguise, and know whether he is an angel or a demon. Asmodeus' Humanity attunement is the only certain way of fooling even Archangels and Princes.

Whether Superiors can hide from one another is unknown.

Be Recognized

Superiors can go unnoticed if they choose . . . but many don't choose, and in fact, if a Superior wishes to be recognized, he will be. When a Superior chooses to make his presence known, his Servitors will *know* it's him, on sight or even by the sound of his voice over the phone, no matter what form he's wearing. Other celestials will know they are in the presence of an Archangel or Demon Prince, but they won't automatically know which one (though it's often obvious – Andrealphus, for example, oozes sexuality, while Novalis' aura of peace is unmistakable). Humans – even mundanes – will sense the Superior's awesome presence, which they may perceive as incredible charisma, holiness, or an aura of dread, depending on who it is, but they don't get any other information except through inference.

CONSTRAINING THE UNCONSTRAINED

Superiors are not omnipotent. Here are some of the things they *can't* do.

Unlimited Tampering with the Symphony

Bending the laws of physics requires resonances, attunements, or Songs, even for Superiors, and changes on a large scale require a *lot* of Essence. Superiors have a lot of Essence, but not enough to change the terrestrial landscape (except as a singular and highly risky event, which would leave the Superior severely weakened afterward). A Superior might be able to obliterate a small town – at a massive cost, and with an even more massive disturbance – but no one has enough Essence to sink continents, melt the ice caps, take over the weather all over the planet, or turn the Earth on its axis.

Create Life

Superiors can create celestials and ethereals, but they cannot create corporeal beings from scratch. The Corporeal Song of Life (*Liber Canticorum*, p. 91), gave this ability at one time, but now even the Archangels do not have the ability to perform this Song – saving, perhaps, Eli.

Steal Souls

A human (or animal) soul goes where it will after death – to Heaven, Hell, the Marches, reincarnation, or dissolution (see the *Corporeal Player's Guide*, p. 15). Not even Superiors can alter a soul's destination . . . nor can they *force* a soul to go to another realm, even those souls under their control. Any means a Superior might use to divert a soul after death requires that soul's consent . . . though trickery is possible.



Thus, Archangels can't *make* Bodhisattvas ascend to the Upper Heavens, nor can any soul be sent back to Earth, even from Hell, against its will. The most important consequence of this is that Archangels and Demon Princes can't "steal" souls – they can kill a human, but they can't dictate where he'll go after death.

Destroy Souls at Will

A Superior can blast any lesser being in celestial form out of existence with ease, including the souls of humans in the celestial realms. But a being in corporeal form is not normally vulnerable to celestial attacks. Superiors can't soul-kill a celestial in a vessel, or destroy a human soul while it's still encased in living flesh, without special means, usually requiring that the victim be under the Superior's power.

Raise the Dead at Will

Only a soul who is under a Superior's control, and is willing to be sent back to Earth, can be returned to life – and even for Superiors, it's difficult. The Celestial Song of Souls (*Liber Canticorum*, p. 92) allows this feat under limited conditions, and Archangels can create Saints (*Corporeal Player's Guide*, p. 85). No Superior, however, can raise the dead at will.

Alter Something's Fundamental Nature

Superiors can wreak changes on corporeal, ethereal, and celestial beings, but they can't change what they *are*. A human can't be turned into an angel or a demon, or vice versa, nor can ethereals be turned into corporeal or celestial beings. Mortals can be made into undead or Saints by various means (all of which require the mortal soul's consent), but a Saint or undead can't be turned back into a mortal. Inanimate objects can be supernaturally animated, but not made living (except by binding another being into it, thus creating a living artifact – *Liber Reliquiarum*, p. 105).

Other sorts of transformations, such as turning humans into animals, or changing a celestial's Choir or Band, are possible, but difficult, requiring that the subject's Forces be taken apart and put back together again differently. The new configuration may not be truly the same being as before.

Grant Words

Granting a Word means imbuing a celestial with a part of the Symphony. This is a fundamental alteration in the celestial's nature (see above). Only the combined efforts of the Seraphim Council, or the will of Lucifer, can invest an angel or demon with a Word . . . and even those powers cannot grant a Word to a non-celestial. (How Lucifer did this with Lilith remains a mystery.)

Create Tethers

Superiors can facilitate conditions that may lead to the formation of a Tether, and often do. But Tethers can only form naturally, and any celestial intervention in corporeal events – especially by Superiors – inhibits Tether formation. (See the *Liber Castellorum* for more details.)

Affect Limbo

Limbo, where Heartless celestials go (*Heaven and Hell*, p. 79), is beyond the reach of Superiors. All they can do to someone in Limbo is send him Essence, just like anyone else. No Superior is known to have ever entered Limbo.

Transcend Ineffability

Some things are ineffable – the true nature of God, the nature of the Upper Heavens, the destiny and fate of the Symphony, the destinies and fates of Superiors, the origins and nature of certain remarkable humans, and just about anything pertaining to Lucifer. These things *cannot* be known (except by those who have firsthand knowledge . . .). Ineffable mysteries are ineffable even to Seraph Archangels, and inexpressible even for those who do know.

SUPERIOR BEHAVIOR

Superiors are far removed from the human condition, and some have even forgotten (or never knew) what it's like to be an ordinary celestial in the War. Most of them are old; some are incredibly ancient. They are not completely inhuman, however. They feel emotions, they experience doubt (except Michael), and they seek fulfillment and satisfaction, whatever form that might take.

Every Superior interacts with the world differently. Some *like* to wander the Earth in human form, trying to understand what it is to be mortal, keep up with current events, and establish personal relationships with their Servitors. Others rarely leave the celestial realms, barely notice when major changes occur on Earth, and never deign to address their Servitors except as subordinate units.

A Superior's presence is an unnerving thing. They are beings of vast power, and most of them exude potency – unless a Superior is trying to cloak his presence, it will be very difficult *not* to notice him. Being Words made manifest, they generate an aura around themselves; Dominic makes people instinctively duck their heads and start thinking guiltily about any misdeeds they've committed, people are struck with inspiration and bursts of energy in Gabriel's wake, and everyone loves Novalis on sight, while flowers bloom at her feet. Andrealphus makes everyone around him horny, people become naturally argumentative if Malphas is in the vicinity, and Saminga, even on those rare occasions when he tries to "blend in" with a normal human host, gives anyone who sees him the creeps. Even traveling incognito, a Superior can hardly avoid coming off as very confident, very proud, and very formidable.

The most important thing to remember when roleplaying Superiors is not how powerful they are, but how *focused* they are. No matter what their attitudes, every Superior has a very *intense* personality. They *are* their Words. Every Word-bound celestial is constantly thinking about his Word, to a degree that would be called obsession in humans. For Superiors, this is very much the case, only more so. They perceive *everything* through the mindset of their Word. They use their Word as the basic paradigm with which to define the Symphony; their universe is completely contained within their Word. They consider every situation in terms of how it intersects with their Word. Some of the more subtle Superiors can play this down while talking, but most are easily identifiable even in conversation – their speech is laced with references, metaphors and idioms relating to their Word. Blandine compares everything to a dream, Andrealphus is always lascivious in word and deed, Belial can hardly complete a sentence without mentioning fire, flames, or burning, Kobal never utters a straight line, and Yves and Kronos rarely speak in the present tense.

When player characters encounter Archangels or Demon Princes, they should never be *quite* sure what's going on in

the Superior's head. He may speak and act in a straightforward manner, but even dim Superiors (like Saminga) have remarkable perceptions (and are usually paying attention to several things at once, the PCs probably *not* being the most important), and are very far-sighted where their Word is concerned. What they do may be unfathomable, and trying to predict a Superior's reaction is often fruitless. This makes them seem capricious at times, and adds to the awe and unease they instill in lesser beings.

SUPERIORS AND DISSONANCE

Superiors (with a few exceptions) all began as angels or demons of a particular Choir or Band, and they do not lose that part of their nature upon becoming an Archangel or Demon Prince. They still hear the Symphony with a certain resonance . . . but unlike other celestials, they can stretch themselves beyond their normal range when necessary.

Superiors do not suffer dissonance in the same way angels and demons do. If a Superior violates his dissonance conditions, the tiny note of dissonance is overwhelmed by the true Symphony that resonates within an Archangel, or swallowed in the vast personal symphony of a Demon Prince. It would take many, many such notes before the Superior's resonance would become noticeably out of tune, and even then, Superiors have more than enough Essence to cure their own dissonance.

This does *not* mean that Superiors casually violate their dissonance conditions! Dissonance pains Superiors as it does lesser celestials; a Seraph Archangel values the Truth *more* highly than other Seraphim, and is more disgusted when the Truth is violated, and a Djinn Demon Prince is a supremely uncaring being who will still feel sick at the thought of harming someone to whom he is attuned. But dissonance is much more a matter of psychology for Superiors than the Sword of Damocles that hangs over the heads of angels and demons.

The same is true of dissonance relating to a Superior's Word, only more so. David *can* strike first, Michael can retreat, Andrealphus can fall in love, and Nybbas can spend days brooding alone, without going out to appear in the spotlight. But none of them do these things. It is just too contrary, too antithetical to their very being. Whereas violating one's Word is painful for a Servitor, it is anathema to a Superior, the most terrible act of self-defilement imaginable. Only under the *most* extreme duress would a Superior act against his Word, and it would be with much anguish, and tremendous feelings of guilt (for Archangels) or bitterness and denial (for Demon Princes).

If a Superior ever behaves in a dissonant manner, it should be cause for concern to everyone (it will certainly concern Dominic or Asmodeus). The GM should not depict Superiors as dissonant unless it is a deliberate part of the plot – and the prospect of an Archangel Falling or a Demon Prince redeeming should shake the foundations of Heaven and Hell.

Archangels and Falling

No Archangel has Fallen from Heaven since the Rebellion. This does not mean Archangels cannot Fall. It would take more than a few dissonant actions to provoke such a tragedy, however. It would require a repeated pattern of acting contrary to one's nature, and some celestials theorize that an Archangel is so firmly anchored in the Symphony, and has the Divine so thoroughly entrenched in his being, that only a deliberate, willful rebellion can separate an Archangel from God. In other words, Archangels cannot simply Fall; they must *jump*. But this theory has yet to be tested, and many in Heaven feared that Khalid, the EloHITE Archangel of Faith, was edging dangerously close to a Fall with his weakening faith and his lack of objectivity in clinging to one particular interpretation of Islamic dogma. (See *The Final Trumpet* for more details.)

If an Archangel *did* Fall, he would lose his Word like any other Fallen angel, but he would still be a Superior-level celestial, a vastly powerful being that could threaten Demon Princes even without a Word. (Some angels debate whether a Wordless Superior would eventually lose his power or not, but none wish to see their theories tested.) Lucifer would surely offer a Fallen Archangel a Word and a Principality, unless *he* felt threatened by the new diabolical Superior . . .

Demon Princes and Redemption

Redeeming is more difficult than Falling. Presumably, this is even more true for Superiors. No Demon Prince has ever redeemed, so it's not even certain that it's possible, but some Archangels hope that the Princes will return to the Heavenly fold before Judgment Day.

Because it's never happened, no one can say how the process would work. Normally, redemption requires a demon to give himself completely to an Archangel to be

made Divine again, and not all demons survive the process. It might be that it would take several Archangels, or the entire Seraphim Council, or possibly nothing less than Divine Intervention, to redeem a Prince.

Demon Princes *have* become severely dissonant, but it has always been the sort of dissonance that breaks a demon's mind, fractures his personal symphony, and turns him into a dysfunctional sociopath, rather than the sort that leads to selflessness, epiphany, and redemption. Makatiel, the mad Prince of Disease who had to be destroyed by the combined efforts of Judgment and the Game, is believed to have been severely dissonant; Legion, Prince of Corruption (*Infernal Player's Guide*, p. 14), was also.



ROLEPLAYING SUPERIORS

Roleplaying a Superior can be difficult – you want your players to be awestruck, and you want to convincingly portray inscrutable beings of vast power who embody universal themes. But it can be difficult for a mere mortal Game Master to step into the role of an Archangel or Demon Prince.

There are no secrets to effectively roleplaying a Superior – they are powerful, (mostly) extremely wise beings, but they aren't *completely* alien, and at least when they manifest to converse with Servitors, they have a guise that's human enough to be described and portrayed in human terms. This section presents tips on how to roleplay each Superior, accompanied by alternate perspectives (see box).

ALTERNATE VERSIONS

Part of customizing your campaign is deciding what your Superiors are like. The *In Nomine* rulebook presents the canonical view of all the major Archangels and Demon Princes. Major alterations (*Alternate Superiors*, p. 45) require substantial changes in your world's cosmology, and may include creating new attunements, dissonance conditions, and other attributes for any Superiors so changed.

It's easier to simply change some of the details about a Superior than to rewrite him completely. These details can greatly alter a Superior's image, and how you roleplay him, but don't require any rule changes. Perhaps you prefer the darker Lilith of Jewish mythol-

ogy, the nocturnal mother of demons who strangled infants in their sleep. Perhaps you'd like to use Saminga as moronic comic relief, rather than as a horrific, idiot engineer of atrocities. You can accomplish this simply by making individual Superiors lighter or darker. This may be done for all Superiors, to adjust the mood of the campaign (see *Brightness*, p. 35), or it may be done for individual ones, to suit your tastes.

Accompanying the roleplaying tips in this section are brief descriptions of each Superior in much darker tones, and suggestions for how to use them in a more light-hearted, even comedic way.

Archangels

Blandine: Speak softly, and always be polite, if distant. Act distracted and offer faint smiles of praise, while conveying a sense of weariness. When given bad news, close your eyes briefly, then open them and smile again.

The Dark Side: A darker Blandine is less optimistic and more tired. She never smiles, and is far more detached, both from humanity and from her Servitors. She lives in the world of Dream, and crafts her own to comfort herself. Some of her angels secretly fear she is withdrawing from the War completely, leaving them to fight Beleth's demons on their own. Dark Blandine is a remote, ethereal presence that may occasionally display beauty, but rarely offers comfort directly. That, you must find yourself.

Alternatively, perhaps her angels engage in ethereal brainwashing, crafting dreams to persuade their subjects to "see the light," even going so far as to "reprogram" Soldiers of Hell and the like. Maybe the reason Blandine's Malakim can't be seen in the Marches is that she has *very* secret missions for them . . .

In dreams begin responsibility.
– W. B. Yeats

The Lighter Side: In a brighter setting, Blandine appears triumphantly in regal fantasy dreamscapes – bright stars overhead, dawn approaching, with her Tower shining like a beacon over vast green countrysides. Even in the face of bad news, she offers comfort and optimism to help her servants cope. A comic Blandine traipses through cartoon-like dreamscapes filled with flowers and bunnies and pretty white unicorns, a celestial Pollyanna with a sugary voice and a fairy godmother's magic wand.

David: Speak in a low, rumbling voice, slowly. Listen patiently to your Servitors, nodding or scowling in response but letting them have their say. Give their words consideration, then announce your decision. There is no discussion after that. Your gestures are slow and deliberate, usually involving slow clenching of fists or gritting of teeth.

The Dark Side: Dark David is strength devoid of moral considerations; might makes right. The demons are wrong because they are too individualistic. David holds them in contempt, but he feels much the same about humanity, and many of his fellow angels. He accepts all strong groups into his fold; not just skinheads, but Nazis, terrorists, and anyone else who combines violence and discipline. The War is about smashing your enemy and surviving. David may not strike first, but he always strikes last.

The Lighter Side: David's the good-natured Big Brother who's great to threaten your enemies with. For humor, he can easily be portrayed as a rock-headed buffoon, the stereotypical slow-witted, muscle-bound oaf. Don't forget that he likes to manifest buck-naked . . .

Dominic: Your speech is a soft whisper when you are calm, the voice of doom when you're angry, or pronouncing judgment on someone. Never smile. Give those you are speaking to an unwavering, unblinking stare. Never express doubt or sound less than absolutely certain of what you say – you *always* know the Truth, after all. Pause meaningfully between sentences, to let your words sink in, and give the guilty a chance to break and confess.

The Dark Side: "Kill them all. God will know His own." A darker Dominic is not merely sinister, but downright terrifying. *Everyone* should fear his presence; his Inquisition is merciless and completely without checks and balances. They kill without remorse, including humans. If an elementary school must be blown up to destroy a demon, that is for the greater good; another diabolical influence is expunged, and the children's souls will go wherever they should have anyway, just a little earlier. A dark Dominic can be more of a threat (and a greater villain) than the demons.

The Lighter Side: Dominic's Word emphasizes Justice and Fairness. He'd rather reform miscreants than smite them, and he will even express regret at his conflicts with other Archangels (though he *won't* admit that he might be wrong!). Comedically, Dominic is a Catholic school priest (or nun), the butt of frequent jokes about what he hides beneath his robes. Those who take themselves too seriously are all too easy to make light of, and no one takes himself more seriously than Dominic. While he offers pompous sermons and raps naughty angels, his Inquisition is feared much the same way truancy cops are; everyone avoids them because they can seriously spoil your fun.

Eli: Affect a casual, imperturbable demeanor. Hum, drum your hands, swing your legs or tap your feet, moving to some internal or external rhythm. Interrupt people to point out an interesting knick-knack or ask if they want something to drink. Dismiss criticisms and accusations with a smirk and a wave of your hand. Be friendly and solicitous, and don't let anything get you down or spoil the party.

The Dark Side: Instead of portraying Eli as a groovy free-spirit, you can portray him as an irresponsible dropout who's heading for a Fall. He's abandoned his divine responsibilities and is just cruising around the corporeal realm for his own enjoyment – what is this, if not selfishness? Dominic may be entirely correct about Eli.

And there is also another aspect of Creation: Destruction. They're two sides of the same coin. *What if Eli goes through phases?* What if he's spent the past few billion years helping with the act of creation, and now it's time to tear down and rebuild . . .

The Lighter Side: Perhaps Eli is really working on something Really Big to help mankind and advance Heaven's cause, but he just can't reveal it to the rest of the Seraphim Council yet. As a celestial hippie on a magic carpet ride, Eli has lots of potential for humor. His preoccupation with mundane pleasures – from cafe lattes to jazz to sex – should be emphasized. He has a girlfriend in every city. He refuses to act like an Archangel even for a moment, and one might even encounter him drunk or stoned. On the other hand, he will leave numerous amusing artifacts strewn in his wake – the half-eaten bagel he had last night will become a relic, the telephone he used to order pizza will become a hotline to Haagenti's Shal-Mari pizzeria, and no telling *what* the boxers he leaves lying around in his girlfriend's apartment do.

Gabriel: Stare into space, looking right through the people you're talking to. Then suddenly snap back to attention and ask an irrelevant question. Rant and rave, or spin around while pronouncing a prophecy. Speak in opaque, fiery metaphors. In times of lucidity, affect a smoldering, cynical demeanor, asking sharp questions and demanding accountability, hinting at great anger (and pain) barely held in check.

The Dark Side: Gabriel is mad, in danger of Falling. She is a prophet raving in the wilderness, and no one dares come too close. What she says is often gibberish. She leaves everything ablaze in her wake. Capricious and temperamental, she's as dangerous to her own Servitors as she is to demons. She has no sense of restraint or balance, and angels of Fire may punish the most casual cruelties with death.

The Lighter Side: Gabriel is beautiful but deadly, and her prophecies are more likely to be riddles appropriate to the situation. In a satirical campaign, she might assume dominatrix qualities, punishing cruelty in highly creative ways. She is hot-tempered and sultry. She can also be a source of constant revelations from God – especially irrelevant or inopportune revelations.

Janus: Be brusque and demanding, and easily angered. Show your temper when crossed, or when you hear bad news. Swing your arms violently and dramatically. In a good mood, laugh heartily and clap others on the back with blows strong enough to stagger them. Shuffle and apologize later if you go too far, and sulk if things don't go your way.

The Dark Side: Janus is not merely dynamic, but an agent of chaos, sowing disorder and confusion. His darker incarnation is truly heartless, and his angels will steal anything from anyone and support any sort of revolutionaries, even the most violent terrorists. Janus can be portrayed as a raging, brutal, elemental force, one of the most alien of all the Archangels. Any brief moments of calm and rationality are the eye of the storm.

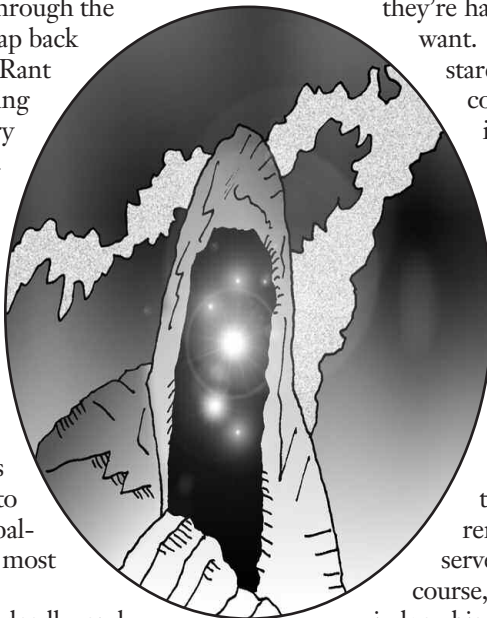
The Lighter Side: Janus' angels are dashing anti-heroes, Musketeers or Robin Hoods who may break the law, but always for a good cause. More comically, they are a bunch of sticky-fingered teenagers, and Janus is the ultimate prankster, always looking for amusing ways to confound demons and other Archangels alike. His Servitors are likely to have lots of motorcycles as artifacts – bikes that disappear on command, invisible bikes, flying bikes, bikes that break the sound barrier on highways, etc. (Some prefer convertibles, though.)

Jean: Be curt and faintly irritable, as if you're being distracted from something more important. Listen attentively to anything people have to say, but cut them off if they're wasting your time. Tell them what they need while they're halfway through explaining what they want. Occasionally pause and nod as you stare into space, deep in thought, then come out of these brief trances bursting with energy and making everyone scramble to do your bidding.

The Dark Side: Elohim can be the most ruthless of angels, and Jean can be depicted as the most ruthless of Archangels. Even Dominic has moral restrictions, but Jean won't hesitate to do *anything* that he calculates will produce an objective gain for Heaven. A darker Jean makes "kill ten humans to save a thousand"-type decisions every day, and feels no remorse for any pain or suffering – if it serves God, it's an objective good. Of course, no one but Jean is competent to judge objectively . . . Played darkly enough, the only difference between Jean and Vapula is that Jean's labs are brighter and cleaner, and Jean makes fewer mistakes.

The Lighter Side: Being an Elohim, Jean well knows when someone's emotional state needs a boost for their optimal functioning, and will arrange matters. More personally, it's awfully hard to be purely logical while still having human thoughts and desires. Give Jean a few secret obsessions to flummox and distract him as he plays Vulcan. The technological aspects of Lightning can also be played for humor; let angels of Lightning carry cell-phones in celestial form, receive e-mails from "God@heaven.org" (or spam from "Satan@a.certain.large.unpopular.software.company.com"), and wield tacky, Buck Rogers-like devices that actually *work* (unlike the tacky, Buck Rogers-like devices that Vapula's demons carry).

Jordi: Speak in harsh, guttural tones. Growl or hiss when angry. Your sentences may be disjointed, and you shift between first, second, and third person; you much prefer nonverbal communication. Scratch yourself, snort, yawn widely. Favor those who annoy you with a feral gaze.



Bank of Marc



The Dark Side: It's not a great stretch for Jordi to begin waging a guerrilla war against humanity. Hunters, loggers, fishermen, and farmers may be found torn apart by wild beasts. Who knows if the stray cat, park pigeon, or family pet is a spy for a vengeful Archangel . . . The great outdoors can become a very scary place if the entire animal kingdom is your enemy.

The Lighter Side: Play down Jordi's disdain for humanity; he doesn't really dislike humans, he just wants them to live more in harmony with nature. Only people who abuse and slaughter animals arouse his anger. To make him more humorous, choose an animal archetype each time Jordi appears, and let him behave accordingly. Do the same for his Servitors; emphasize their animal side, even when they take human form. Cherubim of Animals rub against people, Elohim of Animals have a habit of lisp and sticking their tongues out to test the air, etc. Involve pets and livestock more often than wild animals, where Jordi is concerned – have him concerned with freeing elephants from zoos, liberating housepets and lab animals, saving alligators flushed down toilets, etc.

Laurence: Make speeches, or lecture on the virtues of right-thinking behavior. Issue orders confidently and with no doubt in your mind that they will be obeyed. (Though don't forget to finish briefings with a contingency plan: Improvise.) Never pause to hear idle questions or disagreement. Be decisive and energetic, and sometimes a little brash.

The Dark Side: To demons, Laurence already is the darkest of Archangels; he is the Perfect Malakite, utterly dedicated to the extermination of demonkind. Emphasize Laurence's unyielding, perfect integrity. He is an honorable absolute dictator; all conversations with his Servitors are one-way. His Servitors, in turn, are relentless crusaders who will kill an enemy as soon as look at him. (And anyone who collaborates with the enemy is obviously tainted as well . . .)

The Lighter Side: Laurence is Heaven's ultimate paladin; he may be noble and inspiring, or a clueless Dudley Do-right, depending on how seriously you use him. He exemplifies the chivalrous virtues of courage, charity, and courtesy (and in a more humorous campaign, his vow of chastity may be a great disappointment to the Lilim who swoon over him). He and his Servitors are nasty in a fight, but may easily fall prey to trickery. For campy comedy, Laurence's angels can *all* carry swords, and act like Arthurian knights.

Marc: Speak calmly and reasonably; never be rude. Try to see the other person's point of view, and try to get him to see yours. Don't argue; it's unproductive. Be friendly and personable, but a little bit calculating.

The Dark Side: As a mercenary Archangel, Marc does nothing for free. Every favor has a price, and his attitude becomes extremely Calvinist: the Lord favors those who prosper by their own hard work – those who don't prosper *deserve* to be poor. Poverty is a sign of moral turpitude. A darker Marc represents the darker side of capitalism; he brings peace and prosperity to those who follow his principles, but unfortunates who fall through the cracks are casualties of market forces.

The Lighter Side: Marc's angels try to distribute wealth fairly, concentrating especially on the poor and the dispossessed. In high society, they urge the rich to exhibit moderation and generosity. A humorous Marc is always adorned in Armani suits and Rolex watches, and his Servitors likewise obsess over fashion and brand names. They also carry HisBank credit cards, and all Marc's Tethers resemble banks. To see the Seneschal, you have to go through a teller, and your credit rating is checked before you are provided any assistance.

Michael: Don't waste time or mince words. Give orders like an officer, chew people out like a drill sergeant. Fold your arms across your chest and look severe when someone reports failure or doesn't seem to understand their orders. Occasionally sound weary.

The Dark Side: Michael is particularly ruthless and violent for an Archangel. He doesn't mind using dirty tricks and deception, and isn't above deceiving even his fellow Archangels (whom he's not shy about criticizing when he thinks they're doing a less than adequate job). For a Seraph, Michael can be pretty cagey. Making Michael darker just requires making him a little more bloodthirsty, a little more willing to let the ends justify the means. He'll sacrifice angels, humans, even his own Servitors, if it means taking out some demons and achieving a tactical victory for Heaven.

The Lighter Side: In a brighter campaign, Michael is optimistic because his side is winning! The Seraph War veteran can easily fit every soldier stereotype; as a hard-drinking, brawling, swearing, even womanizing fighter, who'll kill anyone who crosses him without a second thought, he's not too proud to sit down and enjoy beer and a poker game with his troops. He (and his Servitors) may also be gung-ho and macho – they never encounter a problem that can't be solved with bigger guns.

Novalis: Always smile. Be kind, cheerful, and polite, and listen patiently to anything someone has to say. Take time to appreciate something beautiful around you, and draw others' attention to the flowers or the scenery. Calm them down if they're agitated. Give hugs when they're needed.

The Dark Side: Novalis can bring a great deal of pathos to a dark game. In a grim, violent setting, her angels are innocents waiting to be crushed . . . or perhaps they're ruthless killers themselves, all conspiring to conceal the truth from their hopelessly naive, eternally cheerful Archangel. On the other hand, Novalis doesn't *have* to be nice; nature is a thoroughly amoral force that recognizes the need to prune old or harmful specimens so new ones can grow. Or perhaps Novalis' agenda is more sinister than anyone can imagine . . . in a world full of plants, does anyone really need humans?

The Lighter Side: Novalis is Mom; her servants may even call her "Mother." She promotes not just peace, but growth and healing. Comic Novalis is an eternal hippie, a walking Woodstock, Mary Sunshine complete with bouquets of flowers. She is always, *always* nice, so saccharine sweet, she can be sheer torture for other angels (and for demons!), who are forced to be equally nice in her presence, and submit

passively as she weaves flowers in their hair. Try explaining *that* when you go back to your Tether of Death . . .

Yves: Smile enigmatically. Nod with understanding, and sigh when someone expresses anger or exasperation. Be patient, and never get upset. Pat people on the back, and occasionally look off into the distance while relating some obscure fact or anecdote. Rarely give straight answers.

The Dark Side: Yves is the oldest being in creation. He's not really an Archangel, not the way the others are. What *is* he? If he is an incarnation of God, who is to say God's purpose is ultimately benign? If there isn't really any free will, then the Archangel of Destiny may be working, not toward a necessarily brighter future, but a predetermined one, and his sense of security, his utter lack of worry, is because he already knows the outcome. He knows the futility of resisting God.

The Lighter Side: Appearing as a kindly old man, Yves is a Heavenly grandfather-figure. He can make any scenario less depressing without the exaggerated cheerfulness of Novalis, and he speaks to people in a down-to-earth, practical way, unlike the more ethereal Blandine. For more humor, perhaps Yves is getting a little dotty in his old age . . .

Demon Princes

Andrealphus: Leer at everyone. Offer compliments in your smoothest, most suggestive tone of voice. Wink, smile flirtatiously, and turn every touch into a pretext for a lingering caress or a squeeze. Never show anger or lose your composure. When you're angry, just smile while delivering the punishment. Use possessive endearments; "my sweet," "pet," "kitten," "little one," etc.

The Dark Side: Andrealphus' dark side can be very dark indeed; sexuality without emotion, without reciprocity, without consent. He lusts after *everyone* and every sensation – rape, torture, bestiality, pedophilia, necrophilia, and every other degrading, loathsome urge mankind has ever known. Moreover, he delights in perverting every healthy impulse into something dirty and wicked – when he seduces someone, he wants them to *feel* used and filthy when he's finished. Servitors of Lust aren't just about whips and chains and orgies; they're about turning love into an empty craving for bodily friction, and turning natural human desires into a source of guilt and pain.

The Lighter Side: If Andre prefers his playthings cheerful and bouncy, he'll treat them better, and encourage his Servitors to take good care of their humans. A well-trained mortal is a terrible thing to waste! And he can be comic, whether as a drooling hedonist surrounded by centerfolds, or a mincing transvestite playing to every sniggering stereotype. BD/SM, depending on the mood and maturity of your campaign, can be horrifying or humorous, and Andrealphus can play to either angle.



*There are souls more sick of
pleasure than you are sick of pain;
There is a game of April Fool
that's played behind its door,
Where the fool remains forever
and the April comes no more . . .*

*– The Aristocrat,
G. K. Chesterton*

Asmodeus: Stare at people. Stand rigidly erect. Tap your fingers slowly and relentlessly after listening to someone speak, waiting for him to break and say something more. Shuffle papers and smile slightly. Convey hidden menace in your every word.

The Dark Side: Mix an Orwellian dystopia with the Spanish Inquisition, and add some Nazi or Stalinist imagery. The atmosphere of fear and paranoia should be tangible; your best friend may turn out to be one of Asmodeus' double-agents, and the more secret and secure you believe you are, the more likely that his Servitors are laughing as they follow your trail. Asmodeus delights in turning friends against friends, teaching children to inform on their parents, and torturing innocents in front of their loved ones – to force false confessions that will be used to stretch others on the rack.

The Lighter Side: Gamesters blackmail more than torture, keeping their best “offenders” around for their utility. The best way to portray a humorous Game is as an infernal bureaucracy. British civil service and the U.S. Internal Revenue Service are good models; make Asmodeus and his Servitors meticulous about regulations, fussy and inflexible about the letter of the law, politely malicious in enforcing it, and cheerful when catching violators. They may be hellishly efficient (despite the hellish inefficiency of their bureaucracy) or bumbling incompetents who make everyone else miserable with their foul-ups.

Baal: Snap orders with all the self-assurance of one who *knows* he'll be obeyed. Kill disobedient or inept demons out of hand (though be a *little* more forgiving of favored Servitors like the PCs). Be charming and diplomatic when necessary, but never humble. Affect a grave, dignified demeanor except when angered – and icy calm as you destroy what angered you.

The Dark Side: Baal is among the most murderous of the Demon Princes, and probably the scariest of them because he's the most competent. When demons of the War are involved, people should die. If they have their orders, they

can't be negotiated with, and they'll fight to the death; nobody scares them more than Baal does. Baal is a frequent culprit behind plots to bring about the end of the world . . . plots which should come dangerously close to succeeding.

The Lighter Side: Emphasize the twisted honor of the War: have Baalites offer a chance for a foe to surrender, or spare someone who's out of the fight. Have them sneer at the thought of killing civilians, who are clearly no challenge. Some may even follow mortal-crafted rules of warfare . . . though they'll rarely let a code of honor hinder a victory. For humor, demons of the War personify every military stereotype; Baal is always a general (whether a more psychotic Patton, or an absurdly spit-and-polish Rommel), but his Servitors fill every role from the deranged, hyperzealous drill sergeant to the swaggering commando with utter contempt for “civilians” (i.e., demons not serving Baal) to the stuffy, regulations-obsessed officer sporting a dragon's hoard of medals on his chest.

Beleth: Stare unnervingly at people, with wide eyes and a clenched jaw. Burst into horrid laughter for no apparent reason – preferably when it will startle your audience. Turn your back and stare out the window, or at the wall, then murmur commands, or hiss threats. Always sound irritable, and convey the impression that you *loathe* whomever you're talking to and would as soon kill them as listen to them.

The Dark Side: Beleth wants to see humanity demoralized and traumatized until the only emotion left is fear. No Prince hates more passionately and *personally* than Beleth. Her vision is a universe devoid of any emotion but unending, abject terror. Beleth's demons drag humans through such nightmares every night, and try to make it a reality by day. Her Servitors have no friends; they're devoid of any positive feelings, only desiring to terrify and victimize.

The Lighter Side: Beleth lashes out at hope because she still *misses* her old lover – sometimes she broods rather than plots, or makes a twisted peace offering by sparing an angel. (A gesture she later denies, of course.) Humorous Beleth is a campy villainess . . . someone so in love with her own maliciousness that she satirizes herself. Model her after cartoon villains who are evil for the sake of being evil. Some of her Servitors may imitate characters from horror films or classic fairy tales, which can be both scary *and* funny.

Belial: Grin a lot, and look particularly gleeful when you discuss setting things ablaze. Speak gruffly when in a hurry, but affect an arrogant, pompous demeanor when you want to make a good impression. Grit your teeth and snarl when angry; lose your temper explosively when pushed.

The Dark Side: As a walking engine of destruction, Belial lives to burn things down, and he takes particular delight in burning people alive. When his Servitors get involved, there should be massive destruction and a lot of deaths. Don't let anyone get away unscathed; encounters with Belial or his Servitors should leave people grateful just to get away alive.

The Lighter Side: Belial isn't too bright. He can be something of a buffoon, though he's a *dangerous* buffoon. Playing

with Fire shouldn't be regarded as a safe hobby, but for daredevils, it's an entertaining one. His Servitors are very fond of explosives and grandiose schemes to blow things up, and tricking them into blowing *themselves* up is a favorite sport of some angels. (The more humor desired, the more he and his Servitors blow themselves up without help.)

Haagenti: Snort, snuffle, gulp, smack your lips . . . produce a constant stream of unpleasant noises. Speak in a loud, abrasive voice. (Stuffing your mouth full of food while talking, spraying your audience with spittle and crumbs, would add realism, but probably not endear you to your players.) Say little that's intelligible, except for brief commands, but remember everything that's said around you.

The Dark Side: Haagenti is grotesque, a foul-smelling abomination, a bloody maw connected to a digestive tract. He encourages gluttony and dissatisfaction, also enjoying dismemberment. His Servitors wear hugely obese vessels, their clothes stained with blood and entrails, and eat their victims alive.

The Lighter Side: As Kobal's ally, Haagenti is the dimmer half of the duo, and his jokes are usually crude, appealing to the lowest common denominator. Toilet humor and pratfalls make his Servitors laughingstocks, often unwittingly.

Kobal: Plaster a mocking smile on your face, and grin or giggle periodically, sometimes without apparent cause. Interrupt anyone who goes on too long, and go off on seemingly irrelevant tangents. Never miss an opportunity to cast barbs. Smirk whether you hear good news or bad. Use liberal doses of sarcasm.

The Dark Side: Emphasize the *dark* part of Kobal's Word. Kobal is a malicious bully who's a genius at cutting people down, laughing when others cry. Leave aside puns and slapstick; Kobal's Servitors are sociopaths who find dead baby jokes amusing, and dead babies hilarious. The *only* humor they find worthwhile is that which destroys lives, and their pranks are usually fatal.

The Lighter Side: Emphasize the *humor* part of Kobal's Word. Kobal is a grinning clown, a perpetual wise-ass, the class cut-up who always manages to stay out of trouble. His Servitors may be mean-spirited, even cruel, but are rarely dangerous, except to one's dignity. As Hell's clown prince, Kobal is written off as a lightweight, but in social situations he and his Servitors can be more troublesome than their more violent peers.

Kronos: Don't say much; confine yourself to brief statements. Convey a great deal with a nod, a raised eyebrow, or a finger-wag. Remain impassive no matter what, but narrow your eyes when angered. Speak in a deep voice, taking your time with the few words you deign to utter.

The Dark Side: Kronos hates with an intensity few other Demon Princes can match. He's the monster who looks like any other grumpy old man, but secretly vivisects neighborhood cats and molests children in his basement . . . just because he enjoys the suffering. He doesn't rant or smash things like his peers do, but everyone who crosses his path

will be the worse for it. Behind every one of Kronos' Servitors should be a trail of promising lives ruined, loves turned to hatred, children sold into prostitution, and potential Nobel Laureates turned into self-loathing junkies. The damage he does should be heart-rending, and less easily combated than a murderous Calabite.

The Lighter Side: It's hard to lighten Fate, but if his Servitors often over-reach themselves, causing their victims to rebel at the last moment . . . Kronos' labyrinthine bureaucracy can be a terrible hindrance to his own Servitors, and while his organization is grim and humorless, his demons make excellent straight men. For humor, Kronos can be portrayed as a foul-tempered old codger, possibly even senile.

Lilith: Be gracious and elegant, but a little condescending. Your disdain is clear except when you want something . . . in which case rest your chin lightly on one hand and look faintly amused. Smile enigmatically, and play with baubles or focus your attention elsewhere when others speak, as if bored. If crossed, become much colder and less polite. You're not above flirting with those who interest you (or who possess something you want), and you're *very* good at it.

The Dark Side: Lilith is the mother of demons, a creature of the night who hates humanity – and especially children, whom she strangles in their sleep. Lilith is petty and vain, and cares only about herself. She *chose* to betray the human race and side with Lucifer. Her Lilim children are commodities – “Freedom” is only for Lilith.

The Lighter Side: Angels often regard Lilith as the best redemption candidate among the Demon Princes. Her Word is ambiguous, and she's as happy to see it wielded for good as for evil – she just needs to emphasize the selfish aspects to keep Lucifer happy. A humorous Lilith can be the ultimate femme fatale, or a campy über-feminist. She's very valuable to Hell because she has half the Infernal hierarchy (and many of the Host) wrapped around her little fingers, but she's so self-absorbed and frivolous, she gets left out of all serious politicking. If she's an airhead, she's still extremely *frustrating*; her desires range from the trivial to the absurd.



Malphas: Be unfailingly polite. Give your undivided attention to whomever you're speaking to. Nod gravely, and assure everyone you meet that you appreciate their concerns and their input.

The Dark Side: Turn warm, loving relationships into tragedies of misunderstanding and distrust, until children hate their parents, lovers become bitter enemies, and best friends plot each other's murder. All human relationships should be depicted as fragile things, easily torn apart by Malphas' agents. Riots and genocide are a hobby.

The Lighter Side: Malphas is an argumentative troublemaker, the kind of guy who always has an opinion and has to voice it. Malphas' Servitors are belligerent, argumentative, and unsubtle. They start fights just to cause discord, but are more an annoyance than a threat. They create secret organizations and collect conspiracy theories as a hobby – the more theories, the humorous.



Nybbas: Grin, gesticulate, and speak maniacally. Load your speech with buzz-words and media aphorisms. Rush from place to place: busy, busy, busy! Let your grin falter briefly when receiving bad news, then shoot the messenger (or make him a game show host on local cable access in Poughkeepsie), and clap your hands for a new scriptwriter.

The Dark Side: Nybbas' brainwashing methods are very effective, and his Word is ubiquitous in a modern society. Everywhere you turn, there's a radio, television set, or computer terminal, and every one is a Media node. Make PCs paranoid about how easily Nybbas can spy on them, and insert diabolical propaganda into *everything* they see, from television shows to billboards.

The Lighter Side: Outwardly, Nybbas is the least threatening of Demon Princes; all he wants is eyeballs. Destroy humanity? Hardly! He just wants to be applauded. For humor, *all* his schemes are devoted to increasing his viewer share, and his Servitors should all represent some well-known media archetype, speaking in trite dialogues and unable to distinguish between "on-camera" and real life.

Saminga: BWAHAHAHAHAHAHA! Rant and rave! Laugh evilly every time you make a threat or contemplate your latest scheme. Sound melodramatic, almost cartoonish – the archetypal Evil Dark Lord. You'd be a parody of yourself, except you take yourself so damned seriously. You have no idea how absurd and idiotic you really appear. Don't forget that everyone is out to get you – the slightest hesitation or doubt should have you narrowing your eyes, examining Servitors for signs of disloyalty. BWAHAHAHAHA!

The Dark Side: The key phrase is "body count." Saminga's demons kill people. They kill as many people as possible, as messily as possible, and the more horrifically the better. Women, children, and babies are all meat to be slaughtered. Whenever Saminga's Servitors are involved, expect a bloodbath. Saminga may be an idiot, but he's a *scary*, vastly powerful idiot. And if you *really* want to make Saminga scary, make him *smart* . . . his imbecilic reputation only an act.

The Lighter Side: As the archetypal Evil Dark Lord, Saminga would be funny if he wasn't so horrible. Make him and his Servitors less effective, and he becomes more of a camp arch-villain and a lot less scary. He can also be equally dangerous (or extremely comic) but less gruesome by making his Servitors focus on *death-traps*, rather than death.

Valefor: Act suave and debonair. Show a rakish grin, and elegant manners, but there's always something malicious about your smile. Treat your Servitors like your buddies, except when they screw up, and then there's Hell to pay. You'll be just as suave fitting vessels for cement overshoes, or tearing the wings off an Impudite.

The Dark Side: Valefor isn't *just* a kleptomaniac – even the smallest thing he swipes meant a lot to its previous owner. Valefor's demons are mean-spirited looters who steal the things most precious to their victims, including hopes and dreams. They ruin lives by taking whatever people need the most, whether it's money, food, or a beloved pet.

The Lighter Side: Valefor pocket things wherever he goes. He's cool, flashy, and affects a Robin Hood image, as do his Servitors. The image may be false, but his demons don't seem to directly hurt people. They just steal *stuff*. They're more interested in fast cars and cute women than in furthering the cause of Hell.

Vapula: Rub your hands together, or make notes on a clipboard. Nod frequently and mumble under your breath. Act distracted, and make people try to get your attention several times before you turn on them and snap "What?!" Cackle when you see an interesting experiment, or when you get an idea for something to do with a defective Servitor. And you're an *Archangel*.

The Dark Side: Vivisection and horrific mutations figure largely in Vapula's experiments. Terrible contagious diseases are a favorite side avenue of research. Vapula is the ultimate mad scientist, but he really, really likes his work, and the more painful, the better.

The Lighter Side: So long as Vapula is more concerned with (non-Earth-threatening) experiments than the War, he's a bit more harmless – or at least distractible. Humorously, Vapula's an absent-minded nutcase, mumbling nonsensical formulas when he's not ranting or throwing things across his laboratory. Vapula's laboratories are known for their explosions. His demons are used to having experiments blow up in their faces. Their bizarre inventions are reliable only in that you can rely on them to malfunction creatively. Most Vapulans are as nutty as their Prince, but many are essentially harmless.

PLAYING GOD

Except in an extremely satirical campaign, God should never be treated like an NPC. God, as the ultimate power in the *In Nomine* universe, should remain offstage. He doesn't manifest physically, and He's not likely to communicate directly with player characters. Indeed, depending on the nature of God in your campaign (see pp. 59-61), God may not even be *capable* of interacting in a meaningful way. But that doesn't mean His presence won't be felt in the game.

CONVERSATIONS WITH GOD

Supposedly, there was a time when God actually talked to the angels (usually through his Voice, Metatron). The older Archangels remember such a time, and Yves still communicates directly with the Supreme Being . . . or so he claims. Then there is Gabriel, who periodically channels information that no one *but* God could know.

While angels are literally Divine messengers, most religions feature instances of God speaking directly to mankind as well. He spoke to Moses from a burning bush, and pronounced His approval from the Heavens when Jesus Christ was baptized. You may be tempted to have God make announcements in your own game – admittedly, it's an unequivocal plot device.

If you do this, such events should be reserved for *extremely* important occasions. Between giving instructions to the Israelites, and putting in a good word for his Son a thousand years later, God doesn't talk much in the Bible. In the Quran, He doesn't even speak directly to Muhammad; He goes through an intermediary (Gabriel). He's obviously not a micromanager like some of the Archangels. He hasn't even spoken to *them* since the Fall.

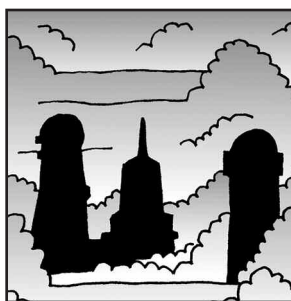
If your campaign revolves around mythic events, or you want to imbue it with sacred elements, occasional instances of God communicating directly with mortals, or angels, might be appropriate. These must be handled very carefully, however, lest God become less of an ineffable Presence and more like a meddling principal who occasionally calls people into His office. It's even worse if He speaks openly, like a disembodied voice over a cosmic intercom. Unless you're prepared to erase any doubt and uncertainty about God in your campaign, let His communications be *extremely* rare, full of grave import, and out of earshot of the PCs.

Note that prophets (*Corporeal Player's Guide*, p. 68) are among those humans who receive direct revelations from God. But the nature and frequency of those revelations – and of the prophets themselves – are up to the GM. Prophets make excellent plot devices, but their communications shouldn't be in the form of a personal dialogue with the Almighty.

DIVINE INTERVENTION

There are times when God *does* intervene directly in human (or celestial) affairs. He awarded Words, before the Seraphim Council took over that job. He recalled Uriel to Heaven, and elevated Laurence to Archangel and appointed him as Uriel's replacement. He's also rumored to be responsible for at least one Virgin Birth, and various and sundry other miracles, but celestials and mortals alike are a lot more skeptical about those. Still, *if* there is a singular entity that goes by the title "God," it seems that He hasn't completely followed His own rules about not meddling with the Symphony. (And if there is no such being, then the GM must decide who *is* responsible for Divine Interventions . . .)

Direct interventions by the Divine should be even rarer than direct communications. Having God interfere too much, even in events of earth-shaking importance, will diminish player characters, Superiors, and the entire premise of the War. If God "fixes" things on a whim, then why are Heaven and Hell bothering? That doesn't mean His presence isn't felt in the War, but it should remain ineffable enough that no one can ever be *sure* about God's role, and rare enough that it makes everyone take notice when it happens.



Intervention Rolls

Reconciling God's ineffable nature with the fact that He supposedly intervenes every time a character rolls a 111 takes some finesse. Just because God's presence is felt doesn't mean He's taking a personal interest in everything that happens and orchestrating the outcome. The *Angelic Player's Guide*, pp. 75-77, gives advice for handling Divine Interventions in play, but you should also consider what they *mean* in your campaign.

Even in a campaign with an active, personal God, a Divine Intervention may be regarded as a reflection of His will; the Symphony itself resonates to the mind of God, so events occasionally trigger a Symphonic response. In a campaign with a more remote deity, the Symphony may be reacting according to patterns laid into it since its creation; a Divine Intervention is a Symphonic reflex action triggered by ineffable stimuli. This can also be true if God, as such, does not even exist.

A final rationale for Divine Interventions is that they do *not* originate with God Himself, but from lesser Powers. These may be ineffable beings in the Upper Heavens, or perhaps it's the Archangels who actually respond to Divine Intervention rolls . . . opening up the possibility for customized Interventions (a Divine Intervention handled by Michael would be very different from one handled by Novalis . . .).



GOD'S PERSONALITY

The nature of God is discussed on pp. 59-61; whatever you decide for your campaign should have an effect on Divine communications and Interventions, though it may be subtle. The details are as varied as the possible explanations for God, but as with alternate interpretations of Superiors, the mood of a campaign can be altered a great deal by making God into a villain or a source of humor. Even if the player characters never *realize* God's true nature, Interventions can be very different with a nicer or nastier Supreme Deity.

The Dark Side

To convey the impression that God is a malevolent deity, or just a remote, uncaring one, Divine Interventions should be much less personal. They might result in good fortune for angels, but they never come with a spiritual message. They might even have negative side effects – the demon pursuing you is hit by a car, but while the demon's vessel gets splattered, so do the car's passengers as they go flying through the windshield. Divine Interventions are *never* benevolent in any sense to Diabolicals – no spontaneous redemptions, or foiling of Demon Princes in pursuit. Usually, they are arbitrary and unpleasant. Divine Interventions simply reinforce the demons' viewpoint that God is out to get them.

The Lighter Side

Presenting God in a better light means making Divine Interventions *good*. Their effects are always positive for everyone concerned, except those acting selfishly, and even then, a negative Divine Intervention will foil selfish schemes but rarely destroy the schemer. God doesn't *punish* demons with Divine Interventions; He just reminds them they're on the wrong side. The mysterious ways in which God works inevitably lead toward Heaven, if one is willing to follow His guidance.

In a humorous campaign, God may stick His nose into every adventure, and in an outrageous (or *extremely* mythic) campaign, miracles may be commonplace. They can also be silly; if you're going for blatant satire, make liberal use of stone tablets, burning bushes, and disembodied hands scribbling on walls.

PLAYING LUCIFER

*Pleased to meet you,
Hope you've guessed my name,
But what's confusing you
Is the nature of my game*

– Rolling Stones, "Sympathy for the Devil"

Unlike God, Lucifer *does* take an active and personal interest in day-to-day affairs. Lucifer *is* an NPC, though he is also a deus ex machina who should be used very sparingly. The First of the Fallen should be an enigmatic figure whose appearance is as rare as it is dreaded. The average demon in Hell won't expect to encounter Lucifer any more than the average American expects to meet the President (see box, p. 113). Player characters, of course, aren't average, but they should still be awed by the Darkest of Dark Lords, and more importantly, they should *fear* him. Reserve personal appearances by Lucifer for very important events. Alternatively, having him make unexpected and seemingly irrelevant cameos demonstrates the Lightbringer's quirky sense of humor, and the fact that he *is* watching what goes on in the War. Even these appearances should be infrequent, however – for the rest of the adventure, the PCs should wonder and worry about *why* Lucifer showed up to buy a paperback at the local bookstore. Don't overuse the Lightbringer unless your campaign is a humorous one and you want to treat Lucifer as a joke.

LUCIFER'S PERSONALITY

Unlike God, Lucifer has a well-defined personality. Most Superiors are familiar with him, and some know him very well indeed. Even rank-and-file demons have heard enough to know a little about the Dark Lord's demeanor, and his fearsome sense of humor.

That doesn't mean he's predictable – far from it. And while Lucifer's oldest friends (and enemies) may know him as an individual, no one truly *understands* the Lord of Lies.

Lucifer can be roleplayed in a variety of ways – indeed, he may manifest differently in the same campaign, appearing at first as a smooth, friendly conversationalist, the next time as a monster with a bone-chilling smile. The following personality traits are always evident when dealing with the Devil, however:

MEETING THE DEVIL

No sane person seeks out Lucifer's attention, and most demons would be quite content *never* to meet the Darkest of Dark Lords. But while Lucifer *wants* to be feared, he also likes to keep his troops on their toes. So he plays a little game with his demons. The very first time Lucifer meets a given demon – if he's not too busy, and if that demon isn't earning his wrath – the Dark Lord will usually offer to grant one simple wish.

It should be assumed that no beginning PC has ever met the Prince of Hell. Their "boon," if they ever get one, is still in their future, and they can dream of what they would ask for if they had the chance.

Assuming Lucifer offers a favor, here's how he is likely to respond to various requests. (A demon who begs a boon before Lucifer offers it is taking his life in his clawed little hands.)

Minor requests – a bit of information, or any Resource worth 5 or fewer character points – will be granted casually. Lucifer probably won't even bother to put his own spin on the gift.

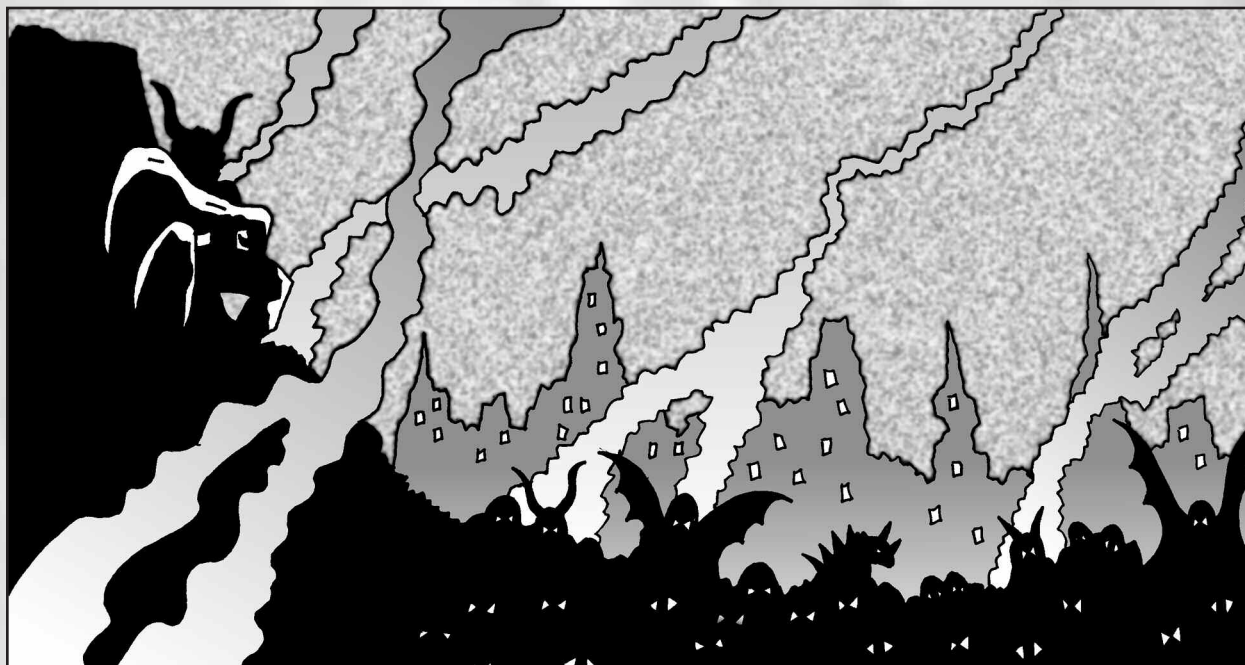
Larger requests – an added Force, a change of assignment, or character improvements worth 6 to 10 points – are riskier. Make a reaction roll for Lucifer; on a bad reaction, the supplicant will get some Discord instead. The reaction roll can be modified if the demon has a glib and respectful story of how this favor will improve his ability to advance the cause of Hell on Earth.

Unreasonably large or insolent requests will earn Discord or worse, of course.

Really off-the-wall requests, such as "Please make me a Calabite" or "Please afflict the Commissioner of Baseball with boils," will intrigue Lucifer. He may or may not grant them, but unless his reaction is very bad he will do something good for the supplicant. Requests to help *other demons* fall into this category.

Finally, there's the brass ring . . . a Word. A demon who asks Lucifer for a Word will get a hearing on the spot. He'd better have his story straight, because if he doesn't get the Word he wants, Lucifer may give him a really bad Word, or may just send him to fry in Sheol.

And yes . . . Lucifer has been known to offer a boon to *angels*. The safest thing is to refuse it. Big requests will be met with a sneer . . . or filled in a way that the angel will regret. Small requests may be granted, but if an angel accepts Songs, Forces, skills, and so on from Lucifer, his Archangel will be either horrified or enraged. Requests for intervention in the mortal world are fertile ground for the Prince of Lies to trick an angel. Occasionally, just occasionally, an angel asks a favor so straightforward it can't be twisted, and so small that Lucifer will be too proud to deny it. Rarely.





Pride

Lucifer is pride personified. The Son of Morning can laugh, but never at himself. He can admit defeat, sometimes even graciously, but *never, ever* humbly. (And rest assured, he *will* have his revenge, whatever he says to the contrary.) Lucifer suffers no offenses against his dignity. Showing him a lack of respect is the fastest way to earn an eternity of misery. There are some things Lucifer can overlook, but failing to pay the Devil his due is a terrible mistake. So is wasting his time.

Style

Maintaining his dignity means maintaining his cool. Lucifer doesn't rant and rave, he doesn't boast or threaten (except very subtly), and he hates resorting to brute force. He has perfected the art of enforcing his will while appearing to be a mere bystander offering casual observations. One raised eyebrow can make demons tremble; when Lucifer frowns, Demon Princes worry. (When he *smiles*, they begin sweating in earnest.) Lucifer likes to present the image of a reasonable and personable Devil, the better to disarm his opponents and seduce the uncommitted. He will rarely use obvious supernatural powers – he much prefers to make things happen seemingly by chance, or through intermediaries. If Lucifer smites someone directly with a pillar of flame, it means he's either in a hurry or in a *very* bad mood. Very few individuals have actually seen Lucifer show anger. Even fewer are still around to talk about it . . . and those who are, don't.

Deviousness

Lucifer gave meaning to the word “deviousness.” Clever, cunning, artful, sly, unpredictable, Machiavellian . . . all these words fall short of capturing Lucifer's genius for intrigue. There are at least three reasons for everything he does, and for each real reason, he has a dozen different explanations he'll give others. He hasn't kept the rest of Hell's royalty off his back for millennia by letting his motives and intentions be known.

As a mortal GM, you can't hope to match Lucifer's brilliance, but you don't have to. Just change the rules whenever PCs *think* they have a clue what Lucifer is up to. That's not fair, but neither is Lucifer. And remember, he's a Balseraph.

Humor

Lucifer, unlike most Princes (and many Archangels) has a sense of humor. But it's not a nice one.

Lucifer appreciates a good joke, especially a malicious one – that's why Kobal enjoys such a high position. He delights in hypocrisy and insincerity, and adores any joke that reveals others for the posturing fools they are. He especially enjoys jokes that point out mankind's “true nature.” One of the few ways to get out of trouble with the Darkest of Dark Lords is to make him laugh . . . of course, making him laugh is no guarantee he won't continue chuckling as he has your Forces gnawed apart in Hell for the next ten thousand years.

Just remember that you'd better laugh *with* Lucifer; never *at* him.

Evil

Lucifer can come off as quite a nice guy, when he wants to. But that's all an act. Lucifer is *not* a nice guy, ever. He may occasionally show benevolent tendencies, but they're always for his own benefit. If he's kind to someone, it's because that person is important to him somehow. If he does someone a favor, there's *always* something in it for him. Except in variant campaigns (see p. 63), Lucifer is a bad guy. A very stylish, entertaining, sometimes sympathetic bad guy, but make no mistake – he's Evil.

Lucifer is not merely evil in the selfish sense that most demons are. Lucifer is in active rebellion against God. He wants to see God and all His handiwork ruined. He conspires to drag the whole of the Symphony to its Fate – he actively desires an eternity of suffering, damnation, and eventual oblivion for all of creation. He is an enemy of humanity and all the angels, and he really desires nothing good for Diabolicals either.

Lucifer's evil is not the blood-drenched malice of Saminga or Haagenti, or the self-gratifying spite of Malphas and Kobal, or the death and destruction and suffering for its own sake beloved by Belial and Beleth. Lucifer's evil is pure, impersonal, and final – the very antithesis of all that is good. He may not *seem* as nasty as those Princes with more personal motives and gruesome methods, but he sponsors all of them because they all contribute a small part of his final solution for the Symphony. Lucifer encompasses all the evil in Hell, and more.

The Darkest of Dark Lords

God is love. I don't love you.
– Lucifer, *The Prophecy*

For an even darker Lucifer, downplay all the sociable aspects of his personality. When Lucifer shows up, Bad Things happen. Lucifer doesn't have to be a horned fiend with a brimstone stench to be very, very dark . . . evil can be just as horrible manifesting as a brooding figure in a three-piece suit. When a mass murderer is freed on a technicality, or an innocent woman's children are taken from her by the courts and awarded to her molesting ex-husband, Lucifer is in the back row, smiling. When soldiers are herding peasants into ditches and gunning them down, Lucifer is watching from a jeep, wearing an officer's uniform and smiling. In places where humans make preying upon their fellow man a way of life – the brothels of Bangkok, the casinos of Las Vegas, the slums of Calcutta, the ganglands of Los Angeles – Lucifer can be seen taking a quiet stroll . . . and smiling.

Make sure that every conversation with the Morningstar brings out his essential malevolence. He sneers when he smiles, and he laughs as mortals drop dead around him. Dealing with the Devil always results in damnation – he's not a gamesman wagering golden fiddles against souls.

Sympathy for the Devil

Lucifer has often been portrayed as a sympathetic figure, sometimes even as a tragically misunderstood one. If you want to make your campaign lighter, or Lucifer more sympathetic, emphasize Lucifer as an individual, a creature with his own motives, which may not be what everyone else assumes. If everything is preordained, then so was the Morningstar's rebellion, and it's often been speculated that Lucifer is just serving God's purpose Below, as he did Above. Muslims believe it is Satan's *punishment* to be banned from Heaven, nevermore to look upon the face of the One he loves above all others.

Lightening Lucifer doesn't mean you have to make him a nice guy. But making him more human will certainly make him a more complex character, and harder to write off as a pure incarnation of Evil.

A campier Satan acts like a politician, glad-handing demons he meets in Hell and patting them on the head on Earth. Perhaps he's off playing chess (or *Illuminati: New World Order*) with God when he's not holding fiddling contests on Earth.

INFERNAL INTERVENTIONS

Infernal Intervention rolls indicate Lucifer's meddling in the Symphony. This does not mean that every roll of 666 must be treated as a case of Lucifer taking a personal interest in the situation. The *Infernal Player's Guide*, pp. 76-77, gives advice on how to use Infernal Interventions, but you should also decide whether such an Intervention means the Lightbringer himself is watching the PCs right now, or if they're just benefiting from something he set in motion long ago.

Lucifer isn't as omnipotent as God, but his influence is pervasive throughout the world. Lucifer has amazing foresight, and he can manipulate the chords of the Symphony in more complex and subtle ways than anyone *except* God. Just as Divine Interventions may be regarded as a Symphonic reflex response to God's will (p. 111), it's entirely possible that some things happen because Lucifer wants them to, without him necessarily knowing about (or directly causing) them at the time.

As a general rule, player characters shouldn't *know* whether or not Lucifer is actually aiding or hindering them directly. The Lightbringer likes to be unpredictable, so he certainly won't advertise his interest, unless that suits his purpose.

The GM may also choose to have some Infernal Interventions trigger a response from forces other than Lucifer. If you're dealing with matters relating to a Demon Prince's Word and you roll a 666, perhaps it's the Prince who notices and responds. This may also be unclear to the characters, since the Prince probably won't appear in person, but it might result in considerable more variety in the nature of Interventions.

LUCIFER'S LIMITS

Lucifer is not God. (Of course, he claims God isn't God either, so to speak.) But while Lucifer transcends every other Demon Prince in sheer power, and can do things no other Superior can do, he's still a finite being himself.

While everyone knows Lucifer *has* limits, no one can be sure what they are. A common saying in Heaven is "God can do anything . . . and Lucifer can do anything except what God's forbidden him to do." (Some demons say that too, but with a lot more irony.) Archangels and Demon Princes are both profoundly interested in Lucifer's capabilities, so naturally, he has a profound interest in keeping everyone guessing.

From all of my readings on the revolt of the angels, two things are clear: God is omnipotent, and Satan is not a fool. There seems to be a contradiction here . . .

– Steven Brust (on the back cover of his To Reign in Hell)

Thus, a wise celestial doesn't say Lucifer *can't* do something – only that he's not *known* to have ever done it. Lucifer's limits are defined mostly by what he's observed to have done, and speculation regarding what he hasn't done. If there's a power he may or may not possess, Lucifer alone knows the truth; he's certainly not going to attempt something he's never done before in front of witnesses. That way, no one knows if he doesn't do certain things because he can't, or because he chooses not to.

That said, the following abilities are *believed* to be impossible even for the First of the Fallen. If Lucifer *were* able to do these things, it would have a significant impact on the War, so consider carefully before letting him have these abilities in your campaign.

Exert Unlimited Power

Lucifer has a *lot* more Essence than any other Superior, but he still has to use Essence to work his will; unlike God, he can't simply change the Symphony to suit his whims. Thus, presumably Lucifer cannot destroy the Earth, nor can he casually obliterate another Superior – though it would probably take little effort for him to destroy all but the mightiest of his peers. (Everyone remembers that Michael defeated Lucifer during the Rebellion, but not everyone would put their money on Michael in a rematch . . .)

Steal Souls from Heaven, or Dictate Fate

Other Superiors can't force a soul to go anywhere. Lucifer is believed to have more latitude; he can apparently do what he wants with the souls of the damned, and he's *suspected* to be able to make people reincarnate or disband, or go to the Marches, upon death. But the Devil can't claim a soul who's achieved its destiny, and he can't *make* someone damn himself (though few mortals can resist a concentrated effort by Lucifer to push them along the road to damnation).

Inflict Dissonance and Discord on Angels

All demons "belong" to Lucifer (p. 99), so he can inflict or remove dissonance or Discord (including Geases) on any diabolical at will. He can't do this to angels *against their will* . . . though he's very good at tricking them into inflicting dissonance on themselves.

Turn Corporeals into Celestials into Ethereals, etc.

With the inexplicable exception of Lilith, Lucifer isn't *known* to have altered anything's fundamental nature (p. 101) – and no one but Lucifer himself, and possibly Lilith, really knows *what* he did to her, if anything. The limitations that apply to other Superiors are more questionable where Lucifer is concerned – there are rumors of the Lightbringer doing such things as sending a damned soul back to Earth as a mortal, restoring an undead's soul, granting life to inanimate objects, etc. If he does appear to do those things, it may be mere trickery, or temporary. However, most Superiors are certain that even Lucifer can't turn a human into a demon or vice versa, or perform similar transformations. (It's also believed that if he did, it would spark a second Rebellion in Hell . . . which may be why Lilith remains a unique case.)

Create Tethers

It is surely galling to Lucifer that humans can do something he can't. However, as far as anyone knows, not even he can create a Tether by infernal fiat. He can create conditions which will, if not swiftly opposed, inevitably lead to the formation of an infernal Tether. But considering the tremendous advantage it would give Hell were Lucifer able to create Tethers when and where he pleases, most assume that if he could, he would, and since he doesn't, he can't.

Transcend Ineffability

Lucifer *is* ineffable, of course, and so is what he does and doesn't know . . .



BECOMING A SUPERIOR

Becoming a Superior is simply not an attainable goal in a normal *In Nomine* campaign. However, inevitably some players will ask: “How does one become a Superior? What if my character aspires to become an Archangel or Demon Prince?” Many celestials (especially demons) *do* dream of joining the ranks of the Superiors, and even the lowliest Servitors have been known to climb their way up the celestial hierarchy. While player character Superiors are beyond the scope of *In Nomine*, it *is* a reasonable (if not realistic) goal.

The usual way to become a Superior is to hold a Word that grows so powerful that the Seraphim Council or Lucifer is compelled to elevate you to Superior status . . . or put you down. No matter *how* powerful your Word becomes, *only* the same powers that grant Words can make an angel or demon a Superior. (Or so they claim . . . it’s rumored, especially in Hell, that a few celestials transcended their natures on their own, and were recognized as Superiors retroactively.)

Becoming a Superior is a quantum leap in status; Superiors exist and function on a level that’s simply out of reach of lesser beings. All the powers a Superior gains (pp. 99-100) are reliant upon this state-change; simply accumulating a massive number of Forces and a powerful Word (pp. 24-25) may make you the equal of a Superior in sheer power, but you still won’t be a Superior or have a Superior’s abilities.

While a celestial *must* have a Word in order to become a Superior, that Word doesn’t *necessarily* have to be very powerful. Becoming a Superior elevates you to a higher level, including the manner in which you can apply your Word . . . though a weak Word will have relatively weak applications, and require that much more power for the Seraphim Council or Lucifer to elevate. Either agency could simultaneously grant a celestial a Word and make him a Superior, though this is rare. Likewise, Lucifer *could* appoint a Demon Prince of Rancid Mayonnaise if it suited his whim . . . but even the Lightbringer’s humor has never run to that level of absurdity.

BECOMING AN ARCHANGEL

Most Archangels have held their positions since long before the Fall, and were originally elevated by God. God can still make anyone He likes an Archangel, though the only one He’s created since the Fall is Laurence. All other newer Archangels have been elevated by the Seraphim Council.

For the Council to decide someone is worthy of becoming an Archangel, he must hold a Word that has become indispensable to the War, and have enough power and influence to be indispensable to Heaven in his own right. Even then, many powerful angels are quite content to remain in the service of their Superior. Very rarely does an angel *aspire* to become an Archangel, and anyone who covets that rank would be found unfit for it.

The Seraphim Council would only consider elevating a worthy angel if it’s agreed that he would be more effective operating independently, promoting his own Word (instead of his Archangel’s), with Servitors of his own.

A character who aspires to become an Archangel must first divest himself of any unseemly pride. Assuming he possesses the necessary humility, but also the overwhelming drive to make his Word a fundamental part of the War, his service must be *beyond* exemplary; without his own Lord’s recommendation, his chances of being heard by the Council are negligible. Any past difficulties with Judgment will also be a major bar. At the level where angels are considered for Archangel status, they are usually of Master Rank or beyond, holding extremely powerful Words, and involved with the day-to-day planning of the War, in close consultation with their Archangel. They command lesser angels as servitors, to promote their Word (and their Archangel’s). Such angels often spend more time in Heaven than on Earth, and rarely have the opportunity to participate in the kind of front-line operations that player characters do. Any character on the path to becoming an Archangel should long since have been retired from active adventuring.



BECOMING A DEMON PRINCE

Only Lucifer can create a Demon Prince. He can make any Diabolical a Prince at will, but he does so only when he has an overwhelmingly good reason. It requires a *tremendous* amount of energy, even for the Morningstar, to elevate a demon to Superior status; he won't casually exert himself in such an effort. He has a more important reason to be choosy, though. A new Prince always changes the political landscape, and will certainly affect the balance of power between Heaven and Hell. While Lucifer has generally followed the principle of quantity over quality, creating *dozens* of Princes would tax his resources, and spread Hell's forces too thinly. The inevitable infighting between Princes works to Lucifer's advantage; they're too preoccupied with each other to conspire against him, and he has at times added a new Prince to the mix for just that reason. But too much division will weaken Hell to the point that even Baal and Asmodeus aren't able to organize a coherent campaign against the Host. (Indeed, it's whispered that Baal has believed there are too many Princes ever since the Fall.)

Thus, while Princes have always outnumbered Archangels (and been correspondingly weaker, on average), it is still a high and mighty station, to which everyone in Hell aspires but which only a tiny fraction will ever achieve.

Lucifer evaluates two things when considering the elevation of a new Prince: political advantage and strategic value.

Lucifer sees political advantage if a new Prince will balk his rivals without interfering with *Lucifer's* goals. The strategic value must enhance Hell's fortunes in the War; a Prince who will do nothing to bolster the diabolical cause is worse than useless.

Most Princes who have risen since the Fall climbed to positions of power and influence *before* Lucifer recognized them. The support of one's Prince is irrelevant (and highly unlikely!); Lucifer chooses Princes who demonstrate the ability to claw their way to the top on their own merits. Some have been powerful, high-ranking Word-bound Servitors, but some (like Haagenti) were nobodies before they burst onto the scene. A few (like Nybbas, and Furfur, Demon Prince of Hardcore; see *The Demon Prince of Rock and Roll* in *Night Music*) pulled off one audacious feat that so impressed Lucifer he decided to give them a chance to prove themselves in the infernal courts.

It should also be noted that the number of living Princes is exceeded by the number of *dead* Princes. Lucifer believes in evolution in action; your struggle for power only *begins* when you become a Prince . . .

A player character might aspire to earn the Lightbringer's favor, but to do so, he'll have to literally overcome the hordes of Hell first – and hold his own against the most devious opponents in the universe, who've been playing this game for eons. A campaign for a Principality is an epic tale, and all too often one with an anticlimactic end.



OPTIONAL ^{And} VARIANT RULES

IN NOMINE is intended to be rules-light and easily modified; many GMs enjoy fiddling with game mechanics or changing some rules. This chapter offers a few unofficial ideas for your campaign.



ALTERNATE MIND AND SOUL HITS

Ethereal and celestial combat aren't a major part of most *In Nomine* games, so the disparity between characters (particularly humans and celestials) is rarely an issue. However, you can use the alternate rule for Body hits (main text) with Mind and Soul hits as well. Substitute Ethereal or Celestial Forces for Corporeal Forces, and Intelligence or Will for Strength. This brings celestials down to a level more comparable to humans . . . and make ethereal and celestial combat *much* more dangerous.

Mental or Spiritual Toughness (4 points per level)

If ethereal or celestial combat is a major part of your game, you might allow characters to purchase two new advantages: Mental Toughness and Spiritual Toughness. These work exactly like Toughness (*Corporeal Player's Guide*, p. 27), except that celestials may purchase them also. You can have up to two levels of Mental or Spiritual Toughness.

Mental Toughness is added to Ethereal Forces when figuring Mind hits (*In Nomine*, p. 63); Spiritual Toughness is added to Celestial Forces when figuring your Soul number (*In Nomine*, p. 63). If using the alternate Mind and Soul hits rule, above, then Mental and Spiritual Toughness add 5 Mind or Soul hits per level instead.

COMBAT

The following optional rules are designed for Game Masters who wish to level the playing field in combat, using any or all of the following rules.

Reduced Target Numbers

Normally, hand-to-hand attacks are rolled against the character's skill level plus the applicable characteristic plus his Forces in the appropriate realm. For an alternate system, remove Forces from the equation. This reduces target numbers, and acts as a leveler; "combat monsters" aren't so overwhelming. Defaults should be raised, however, or characters with no skill and a low characteristic will be incapable of throwing a punch. It's recommended that all hand-to-hand default penalties (especially Fighting) be changed to -0.

Example: *Sibon, Impudite of the War*, has 4 Corporeal Forces, Strength 7, and Large Weapon/4 (Sword).

Using normal rules, his target number with a sword would be 15. With this rule, his target number is 11.

Improved Dodging

Normally, the check digit of a successful Dodge roll is subtracted from an attack's damage. . . which doesn't help much against huge attacking check digits. If an angel wielding a Fiery Sword has bonuses adding up to an automatic success with a +10 check digit bonus, a normal human opponent is probably dead with the first swing, no matter how good he may be at dodging.

Instead, if a defender successfully makes a Dodge roll, compare the *unmodified* check digits, *before* adding the Power of the attack (but after applying bonuses for Automatic Success). If the Dodge's check digit is higher, the attack misses. Otherwise, use the normal rules for Dodging.

Example: *Sibon has an Unholy Pistol/5 (Liber Reliquarium*, p. 63); *he's firing at the Mercurian Nicole, who's feeling outgunned. Using normal rules, her Dodge target number is 8, while Sibon's Ranged Weapon target number is 10, +1 for the Accuracy of the Unholy Pistol = 11.*

Sibon rolls an 8 with a check digit of 3. Sibon's Unholy Bullet will do 18 points of damage; no matter how well Nicole dodges, she's going to take damage. Using the optional rule above, if Nicole's check digit is higher than 3, she dodges the bullet completely. If her check digit is 3 or less, she still gets to subtract it from the damage.

BODY HITS

Normally, Body hits are equal to ([Vessel level or Toughness] + Corporeal Forces) × Strength.

This means celestials have 2 to 144 Body hits, and normal humans have 1 to 70 Body hits. This wide range is appropriate for a cinematic setting, but if you don't like some characters being able to take several dozen blows that would instantly kill others, try this alternate rule:

Body hits are equal to Total Forces + Corporeal Forces + Strength. Vessels and Toughness both add 5 Body hits per level. Celestials and humans fall unconscious at 0 Body hits, and die after taking additional hits equal to their (vessel level or Toughness) + Corporeal Forces + Strength.

A 9-Force celestial now has 16 to 57 Body hits (while an 18-Force celestial could have up to 66); normal 5-Force humans range from 7 to 28 Body. This levels everyone's Body hits to a more "realistic" level. However, characters with a low Strength get *more* Body hits, and Toughness and extra vessel levels are no longer a waste of points for weak characters.

Example 1: *Keebab the Habbalite has 7 Forces, 1 Corporeal Force, Strength 2, and a Vessel/3. Under the basic rules, she has $(1 + 3) \times 2 = 8$ Body hits. With this rule, she has $7 + 1 + 2 + (3 \times 5) = 25$ Body hits, and dies at $(3+1+2) = -6$ Body hits.*

Example 2: *Blastus, a Cherub of Flowers, has 10 Forces, 3 Corporeal Forces, Strength 8, and a Vessel/5. With the basic rules, he has $(3 + 5) \times 8 = 64$ Body hits. With this rule, he has $10 + 3 + 8 + (5 \times 5) = 46$ Body hits, and dies at $(5+3+8) = -16$ Body hits.*

STRONGER HUMANS

While several ideas for giving human characters an edge are suggested on p. 6, and in the *Corporeal Player's Guide* (pp. 24-25), you might want to change your campaign so that humans aren't much weaker than celestials. Maybe celestials have supernatural powers, but otherwise have to deal with humans on an almost equal footing. This makes human characters a lot more attractive in a campaign, and also compels celestials to be a *lot* more careful when meddling on the corporeal plane.

MORE FORCES

The easiest way to make mortals more potent is to give them more Forces. Instead of saying 5 Forces is average, let them start with 6 – or more, if you don't mind a world of supermen. Alternatively, keep the average at 5, but eliminate human restrictions on gaining new Forces (p. 49); every human has unlimited potential (though it's recommended they still be limited to 5 Forces in a realm).

Humans with lots of Forces should still be rare, but player characters and Soldiers can all be assumed to fall into this category. If every human organization has a few elite 10-Force agents running around, celestials will face *real* corporeal opposition.

The GM should consider how this affects Symphonic awareness (*Corporeal Player's Guide*, p. 22); he may raise the number of Forces required to be Symphonically aware, or simply allow *everyone* to be a potential Soldier.

UNRESTRICTED SKILLS

Instead of raising Forces, the GM may allow humans to gain skill levels above 6. This reflects their special ability to act *within* the Symphony rather than *against* it. High skill levels shouldn't be common, unless you want a *very* cinematic campaign, but if potent humans can boost their target numbers to celestial levels, high skills can compensate for superior celestial characteristics.

EXORCISM

The *Corporeal Player's Guide* gives rules for banishing and exorcising demons and ethereal spirits, but normally those rituals only work for sorcerers. If you want ordinary people (or non-sorcerous Catholic priests) to perform exorcisms, simply allow the Banishment and/or Exorcism rituals to work even for those who don't possess the Sorcery attunement. (The relevant skills and rituals must still be learned normally.) The GM may impose other restrictions (such as requiring exorcists to have 6 Forces, a minimum Will of 6, or Symphonic Awareness).



REALISM IN COMBAT

In Nomine favors a cinematic style, and many characters have dozens of Body hits, which can make it frustrating to play anyone who hopes to take out enemies with one precise attack. With this rule, if a character causes damage that would *seriously* harm the victim in the real world, the GM may double the check digit after any Dodge or Protection, triple it, or simply rule that with a minimum check digit (relative to the difficulty of the attack), the victim is mortally wounded, no matter what his Body hits are.

FREE WILL

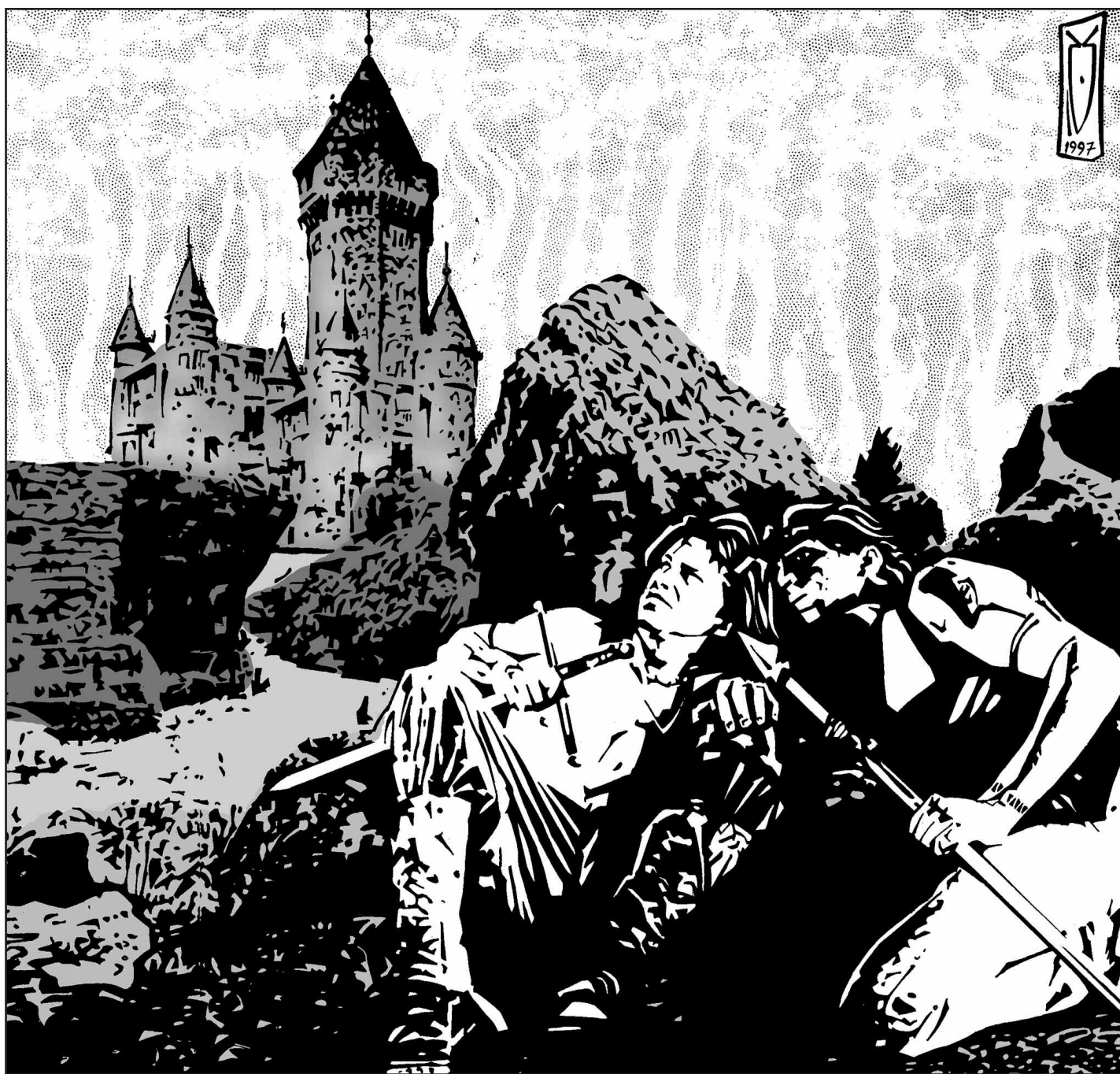
In a standard *In Nomine* campaign, a demon with a high Will can make a human with a low Will do nearly anything. No matter how virtuous the human, a Shedite can ruin his life in seconds, and a demon of Factions can destroy the most selfless love with a single application of his power. If you want to make life more difficult for Diabolicals – and make your campaign reflect certain traditions, in which demons can only *tempt* and *influence* people, but not actually subvert free will – try using these optional rules for Will-based resonances. Other powers, such as attunements and Songs (particularly the Song of Possession) may be similarly reduced in effectiveness or not, depending on whether the GM wants free will to be utterly inviolate, or simply more difficult to obstruct casually.

Alternate Rule: In a game where being a member of a particular religion gives one an advantage (such as a Christian game where those who are born-again are treated as being *Blessed* – *Corporeal Player's Guide*, p. 26), the restrictions below might apply only to believers, while unbelievers can be affected normally.

Kyriotates

Kyriotates can only possess *willing* humans. (This includes Saints and undead.) Their host must *know* and acquiesce to having an alien being take over his body. (The host doesn't have to know it's an angel, though most are unlikely to agree otherwise . . .) The Kyriotate must still make a Will roll to assume possession, but a willing host does not resist.

The GM may rule that under certain circumstances, a human will “accept” possession subconsciously – such as when a mortal prays for divine assistance. If the human *would* agree to be possessed if he had full knowledge of what it entails – such as a mother trying to lift a car off her child – then the Kyriotate may make a normal Will roll to enter the host.



Animals may or may not be considered “free-willed” for this purpose; the GM may decide that only Kyriotates of Jordi can possess animals. Other celestials can be possessed normally, and get to make resistance rolls if unwilling.

Balseraphs

Balseraphs can still dissemble with great skill, but can no longer *compel* people to believe them. Instead, the Liars *do* have to use the Lying skill (though they still don’t *believe*

they’re lying), but may add the check digit of a successful resonance roll to the target number *or* a successful check digit. This requires their dissonance conditions also be changed; now, a Balseraph suffers dissonance if he lies and has that lie *exposed* in his presence.

Habbalah

The emotions a Habbalite inflicts are now strong feelings, but not compulsions. Someone afflicted with Fury *will*

feel angry, but he doesn't have to lash out physically – he'll only do that if he would normally. This will require more roleplaying on the part of victims, since their emotions can be manipulated, but not to the point of overriding their volition. Emotional effects still reduce the victim's Intelligence or Precision.

Lilim

Lilim can sense needs normally, but now require the victim's *consent* before they can claim a Geas. The level of knowledge and consent necessary is up to the GM; a Lilim might be able to fulfill her victim's need just by offering what he wants, with his acceptance sufficing for consent, or she might have to spell out that he will owe her a favor, and an idea of how large that favor will be. For a very traditional game, she might have to *tell* him she's a demon, and make him sign a contract! (In light-hearted games, instantly producing contracts may be part of the Lilim resonance . . . blood signatures optional.) If the victim accepts the Geas-hook, he may *still* make a Will roll to resist when the Lilim attempts to invoke it.

Shedim

When Shedim possess someone, they are no longer in control of their host. There are no Contests of Wills (except the initial one to take possession). Instead, they become an "evil conscience," able to *suggest* actions, but not compel them. The victim at first perceives these suggestions as his own "inner voice," but if he makes his daily Perception roll (per the normal Shedite resonance – *In Nomine*, p. 152), he becomes aware that there's someone else in his head.

Since a Shedite can't *force* deviant behavior, he'll have to be a lot more clever about suggesting selfish acts. Under these rules, Shedim work better as crafty, subtle demons with an intimate knowledge of human psychology than they do as blood-spattered marauders. The GM may make things a little easier for them by requiring them to urge their host into at least one corrupting act a day, but not necessarily a worse one than before. He may also rule that the victim's Perception roll doesn't get a daily bonus. This will allow Shedim to "ride" their hosts much longer, and work toward a slow, gradual downfall, rather than a sudden descent into sociopathy.

Impudites

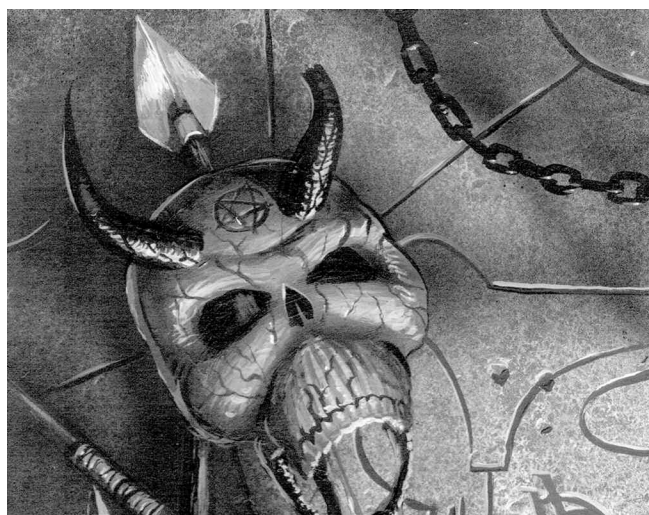
Impudites can no longer charm their victims into becoming their best friends. Instead, a successful application of their resonance simply acts as a positive modifier to reaction rolls – add the Impudite's check digit to his reaction roll target number (*In Nomine*, p. 44). Since reaction rolls are only applied when the GM calls for them, Impudites can't charm people who are predisposed to be hostile. On the positive side, they can attempt to drain Essence from *anyone* the GM rules is favorably disposed toward them.

THE D666

While the d666 is a very simple and convenient mechanic, some people find the check digit results too random, particularly in contests. Here are some optional variants:

Extended Risk

The *Risk* rules (*In Nomine*, p. 39) allow a character to modify selected d666 rolls by +1 or -1, with the GM's permission, resulting in an opposite modifier on the check digit. Extended risks allow characters to take a greater penalty on d666 rolls, for a greater bonus to the check digit (whether successful or not). This gives even low-skilled characters a chance to achieve spectacular results with a lucky roll (and equally spectacular failures with an unlucky roll), and highly skilled characters can risk failure even with an auto-success, in exchange for even larger bonuses.



This rule is only for taking extra risks; it can't be applied in reverse (i.e., adding +4 to your target number in exchange for a -4 to the check digit)! It's recommended that characters not be allowed to take a risk penalty greater than their skill level (or Forces in the appropriate realm, for non-skill rolls). All risk modifiers are still at the discretion of the GM, who should require an explanation of *how* the character is pushing his limits before allowing any extra bonuses.

Example: Zenan, Elobite of the Sword, is dueling with a demon, and decides that nothing less than an all-out attack will drop her foe before he overpowers her. Without warning, she tries to jump over her opponent so as to plunge her sword into his back with all her strength. The GM says he will allow this maneuver, with an extended risk, if she succeeds at an Acrobatics roll first, which she does. Zenan has Large Weapon/4 (Sword), so the GM allows her to take a -4 penalty on her attack. If she succeeds, she will add +4 to her check digit! If she misses, though, the GM might have her land on her sword – *the hard way*.

Margin of Success

If the character succeeds on his roll, use the *highest* of his check digit (not including bonuses, such as from auto-successes) or the amount by which he succeeded as his base check digit. This will benefit highly-skilled characters more, and result in larger check digits.

Example: *Ajaxias (a Seraph with a 6 Perception) makes a resonance roll. He rolls a 3 with a check digit of 1. Since he made his roll by 3, he gets to use a check digit of 3 instead of 1.*

Increased Margin of Success

Use the rule above, but *add* the character's margin of success to a successful check digit. This will result in *very* large check digits. You might want to apply this solely to combat rolls, if you feel damage results are too low with normal rules.

Example: *Nadzoreth, a Renegade Balseraph of Death, stabs a mortal with a dagger (Accuracy +1). She has 3 Corporeal Forces, Precision 7, and Small Weapon/3 (Dagger). Her target number is 14, and she rolls a 5 with a check digit of 3. Her damage is $(14 - 5) + 3 = 12$. Deadly!*

WHO HEARD THAT?

The most difficult part of calculating disturbance is trying to decide if anyone heard it. If the GM hasn't already decided exactly where every Symphonically aware being in the area is situated, he can only guess whether there's someone within range.

For such situations, you may wish to use the table below. *Frequency* is the likelihood that a celestial or Soldier is in the vicinity; you can base this on the celestial frequencies suggestions (pp. 46-47), adjusted for the area in which the disturbance takes place (celestials might be very common in a particular city, but very rare in the middle of the ocean).

The GM should make a d666 roll every time someone makes a disturbance. The Chance of Notice is the base target number. Add 1 per 10 *full* points of disturbance. If the roll is successful, *someone* heard it. Let the check digit indicate either how "bad" this is for the one who disturbed the Symphony, or how many people respond; a 1 might be an ally, while a 6 could be a triad of Judgment...

Frequency	Chance of Notice
Very Rare	0
Rare	1
Uncommon	2
Common	3
Very Common	4

DISTURBANCE

The concept of disturbance is integral to *In Nomine*; it explains why it's difficult for celestials to meddle on the corporeal plane, and as a game mechanic, balances powerful supernatural abilities by making them noisier. Disturbance can be tricky to implement, however. If you have difficulty with the principles or mechanics of disturbance, consider one of the optional rules below.

PERCEIVING DISTURBANCES

The disturbance rules in *In Nomine* (p. 55) are a little complicated; they require separate calculations for every individual who might hear a given disturbance. There are several very easy ways to simplify them.

Linear Scale

This rule replaces range increments based on the listener's Perception and Forces with constants – the maximum range at which a disturbance can be heard is based on the disturbance, rather than the listener.

At the point of the disturbance, the roll to perceive it is equal to Perception + disturbance level, as usual. At longer ranges, simply apply a penalty depending on how far you want disturbances to be audible. -1 per yard will make disturbances very localized; -1 per 10 or 20 yards is closer to the range they have in the basic rules. Alternatively, use the disturbance *squared* instead of a constant; -1 per (disturbance squared) yards or -1 per $10 \times (\text{disturbance squared})$ yards will make small disturbances less noticeable, but large ones audible for a great distance.

Echoes last for a number of minutes equal to the level of the disturbance. (This may also be adjusted upward or downward to suit your tastes.)

Simplified Disturbance

Instead of calculating range penalties, assume that disturbances are uniformly audible within a certain range. That range can be 1 to 20 yards per point of disturbance, or per point of disturbance *squared*. Within this range, let anyone make an unmodified Perception roll to perceive it. This means large disturbances won't be *louder* than small ones; they're just perceptible at a greater distance.

TREADING LIGHTLY ON THE SYMPHONY

Celestials aren't supposed to disturb the Symphony unnecessarily. Besides attracting attention, unnatural meddling on the corporeal plane causes problems (such as disrupting potential Tethers – *Liber Castellorum*, p. 8). This is why Superiors come down hard on gross violators. Unless the

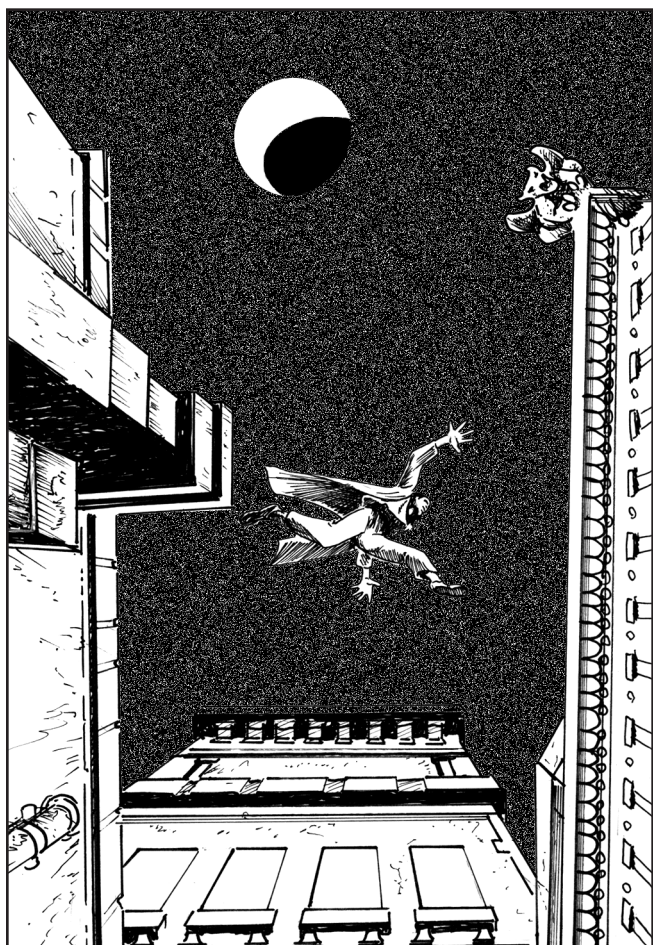
GM is strict in enforcing this, though, there's little to deter player characters from wreaking havoc in the Symphony. Since calculating the effects of random disturbances on the fly can be difficult, here are some optional rules to encourage quieter celestials.

Symphonic Feedback

The noise of disturbance interferes with resonances and Songs. As long as echoes are still audible, all resonance rolls and Song performances within range suffer a penalty of -1 per 10 *full* points of disturbance.

Symphonic Resistance

The Symphony resists those who disturb it; the more disturbance you create, the more difficult it is to meddle further. Characters will have to keep a running total of how much disturbance they generate. Every 10 points of disturbance results in a -1 penalty to any action that will create more disturbance. You lose "disturbance points" at a rate determined by the GM; 1 point per hour is reasonable for most games, while 1 point per day will mean that a celestial who makes a major disturbance is forced to act only within the rules of the Symphony for days or weeks afterward.



Symphonic Backlash

More severe than Symphonic feedback or resistance, *backlash* means the Symphony retaliates against disturbances by damaging or *removing* foreign presences! (This option doesn't work very well with humans . . . but you can say that humans are immune to backlash, making Soldiers even more valuable. Or you can say that celestials suffer backlash, while humans suffer one of the options above.)

Every time someone creates a disturbance, the GM should make a d666 roll, with a target number equal to the level of the disturbance. If successful, the character suffers some kind of negative consequence.

Options:

✧ **Damage:** Body hits equal to the check digit. Major disturbances can knock you back to the celestial plane in Trauma. If you make a disturbance while in celestial form, you take *Soul hits* instead!

✧ **Discord:** Disturbance warps celestials. The character must resist with a Will roll (possibly subtracting the level of the disturbance), or acquire levels of Discord equal to the check digit of the failed roll.

✧ **Dissonance:** The character must resist with a Will roll, or gain a note of dissonance.

✧ **Removal:** Celestials must resist with a Will roll, or be expelled from the corporeal plane . . . back to the celestial plane if they have a Heart, to Limbo otherwise. They are *not* put in Trauma, but will probably have to face a displeased Superior.

FALLING

Though the *Angelic Player's Guide* (p. 105-114) makes it clear that Falling does not happen at random, and dissonant behavior is a *choice* (pp. 16-17), there are other ways to handle Falling than by using the dissonance mechanics in the basic rulebook (*In Nomine*, pp. 57-58).

JUMPING

You may not want angels to Fall, ever, unless they make a conscious choice to do so. Angels can become dissonant and Outcast normally, but Outcasts simply continue to accumulate dissonance, until the angel is so disconnected from the Symphony he can no longer use his resonance at all (or must accept large amounts of Discord). Nonetheless, he remains an angel until he gives up and "jumps" . . . at which point all dissonance disappears. This option works best if players enjoy working through tragic storylines, and combines well with the *Perverved Resonance* option (below). The GM should emphasize the *pain* of dissonance, the *frustration* of being unable to hear the Symphony, and the temptation to simply *make* the Symphony clear again . . .

FORCE OF WILL ATTACK CHECK DIGIT RESULTS

Check

Digit	Result
1	Everyone in the area (GM's discretion how large an area can be affected) makes a Perception roll. Those who succeed find their attention drawn to you.
2	As above, but no Perception rolls are necessary – <i>everyone</i> notices you.
3	As above, plus people get an impression of your nature. Angels and Saints may radiate kindness and spirituality, or wrathfulness, depending on their disposition, while demons and undead will generate fear or uneasiness. Mortals do likewise, though not as strongly (even if they are Soldiers). Celestials also tend to bring Word-related impulses to mind . . . an angel of Flowers brings a sense of peace, while a demon of Gluttony in a theater has everyone craving popcorn.
4	As above, plus your presence is so strong that everyone must make a Will roll or hesitate for one round, just watching you. The impulses you stir are much stronger; angels radiate palpable holiness, while demons are intense malign presences.
5	As above, plus anyone acting <i>against</i> you, if they fail a Will roll, suffers a -2 penalty on all actions for a number of rounds equal to the check digit of their failed roll.
6	<i>Everyone</i> hesitates for 1 round, and must then make a Will roll or be overwhelmed by your presence – fainting, falling on their knees, or running away, whatever is appropriate. (Celestials are simply stunned for a number of rounds equal to the check digit of their failed roll.) Those who make their Will rolls will suffer a -2 penalty when taking action against you, for the duration of the encounter.

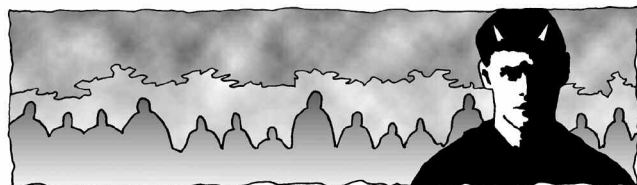
Celestials may add their Celestial Forces to all Will rolls.

PERVERTING YOUR RESONANCE

As diabolical resonances are simply angelic resonances turned inward, it may be possible for an angel to *choose* to pervert his resonance! A Seraph, instead of listening for the Truth in the Symphony, can try to impose his own truth upon it. An Ofanite unable to bypass an obstacle may lash out at it instead. An EloHITE, frustrated by the irrationality of his subjects, may attempt to impose an “objective” viewpoint on them.

Angels may use the resonance of their diabolical counterparts at will. (Malakim, of course, have no such counterpart.) Cherubim may attune themselves to someone *without* being responsible for any emotional harm to their charge. Kyriotates may *invade* someone's mind, sharing it with the host and gaining full access to his memories and skills, but being forced to roll Contests of Will whenever they want him to do something he doesn't want to do.

Doing so, of course, is a quick route to a Fall. Every time an angel uses a diabolical resonance, he gains a point of dissonance *which cannot be converted to Discord!* (The GM may even wish to inflict 2 or more points of dissonance for perverting one's resonance, or rule that *only* a Superior can remove such dissonance.)



FORCE OF WILL ATTACKS

The demon entered the room, and a cold chill swept through the crowd. Some people were unable to take their eyes off the newcomer, while others shuddered and tried to avoid his gaze.

Individuals with a powerful connection to the Symphony can command respect . . . or fear. A Force of Will attack is an attempt to impose your presence on others. Any Symphonically aware being can do it (or, as a further option, the GM may restrict it to demons).

It requires 1 point of Essence and a Will roll. Celestials may add their Celestial Forces. If successful, refer to the boxed table – but your check digit cannot exceed your Celestial Forces. If unsuccessful, you may not attempt another Force of Will attack for a number of minutes equal to the check digit of the failed roll.

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When God began to create the heavens and the earth the earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the Spirit of God was moving over the face of the waters. And God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness.

– Genesis 1:1-1:4

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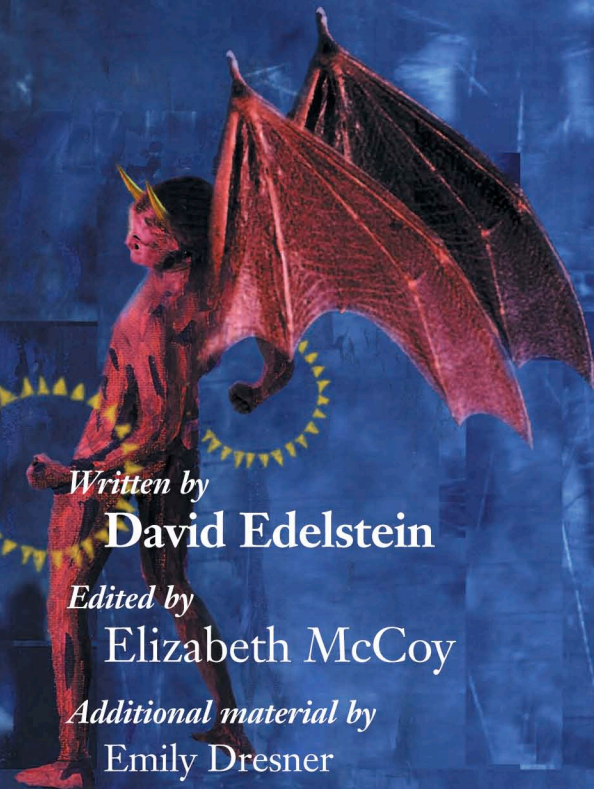
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STEVE JACKSON GAMES
www.sjgames.com



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FIRST EDITION – NOVEMBER 1999.

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

ISBN 1-55634-415-5



9 781556 344152

SJG01995 **3317**

Printed in the
U.S.A.