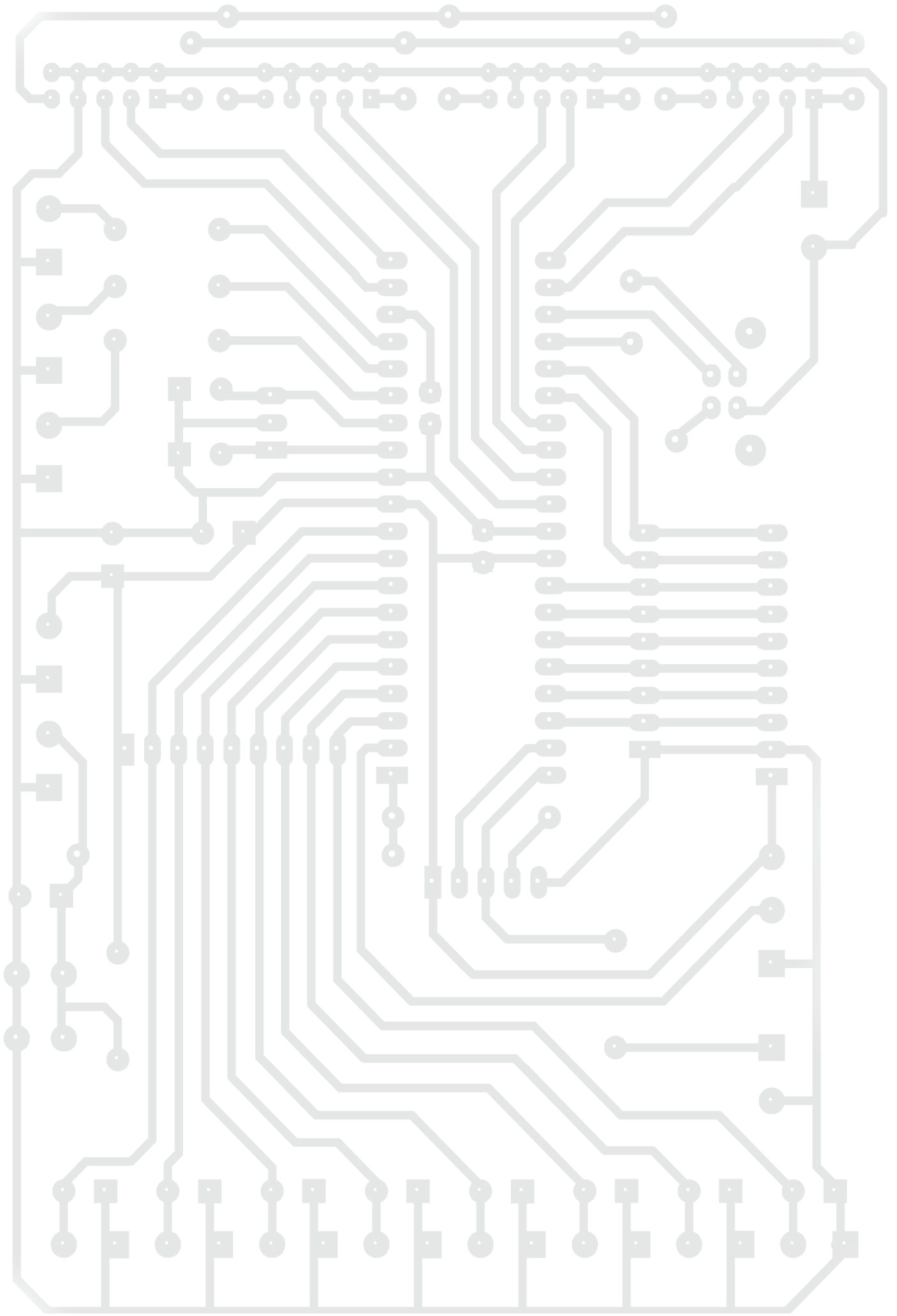


Plots of the Nephilim



Camelot
COSMOS



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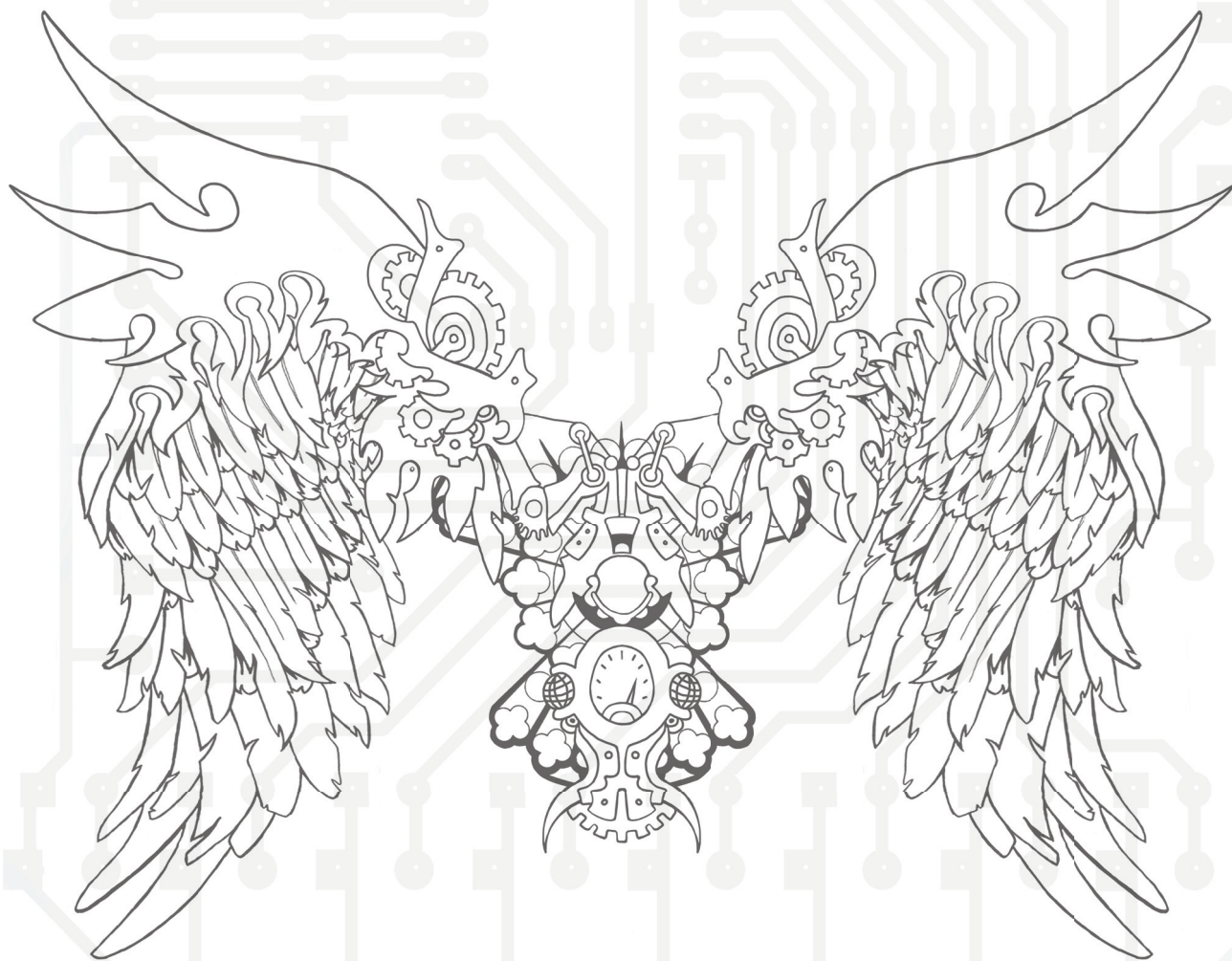
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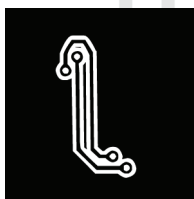
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Plots of the Nephilim is an Appendix to Camelot Cosmos. Mechanical content is designated open-source.



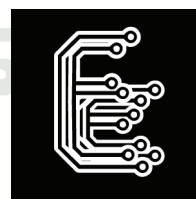
Plots of the Nephilim



In The Camelot Cosmos the followers of the Nephilim are the most likely source of opposition to the ambitions and plans of player characters. All of the Nephilim Ascended believe that humanity should either be corrupted and enslaved (the position adopted most famously by Lucifer) or utterly destroyed. The thought of a human society, let alone human individuals, who refuse to bow down and serve the Nephilim is hateful to them in the extreme, and in the case of powerful individuals who refuse to serve the situation cannot be regarded as anything other than a threat. The Nephilim remember the attempts of First Empire corporations to destroy them, and the myths and legends which have accrued over the centuries since have not lessened their hatred and fear. It is for this reason that every Nephilim Ascended seeks to recruit cults of followers and continually engage in schemes designed to increase their influence and power not only over humanity but also over each other. The Nephilim are not in any sense united, and employ cultists as disposable weapons in their schemes against their fellows. GMs should remember that any of these schemes are just as likely to be aimed at other Nephilim worshippers as they are to be aimed at followers of the Seraphim.

Whilst the Camelot Cosmos GMs Guide provided extensive tables for creating quests and adventures in the various Realms of the Camelot Cosmos, the tables made no distinction between 'ordinary' adventures and those directly provoked by the schemes of the Nephilim. The following tables seek to redress that missing element so that GMs can at very short notice create entertaining Nephilim plots for the players to oppose. A few simple rolls should be all that is required to create intricate plots representing the manner in which all of the Nephilic cults are busily infiltrating, spying on and murdering their rivals. With a little more thought, these tables can also be used to represent the various schemes of factions and evil individuals in other FATE settings or indeed within game worlds running under entirely different rules systems. Specific FATE references have been kept to a minimum in order to allow this flexibility of use.

Sponsor of the Plot 1D4



Every scheme has a mastermind or originator who may initially be hidden behind minions carrying out the tasks assigned to them but without whom the plot would never have got going at all. The origin of the plot should be considered capable of altering his or her plans according to developments (and player character interventions). Many of the Nephilim and their followers are brutal and barbaric, but very few of them are incapable of proper planning and unable to adapt their plans as circumstances alter. Keep that in mind as the situation develops and the player characters make their first moves in detecting and opposing the plot.

1. A Nephilic cult
2. An artefact
3. An Ascended
4. An individual

Nephilic Cult: One of the many cults which compose the Nephilic Church is directly responsible for the plot. Cults will have more resources at their disposal than individuals but are more likely to need to keep their activities secret or to provoke the rivalry and opposition of other cults and the Gawainite authorities. Add 1d20 minions to the plot, low-powered individuals who will be assigned simple tasks like following and tracking the movements of victims and player characters, sowing doubt and dissension in any public meetings or enquiries, intercepting reports and communications and threatening or intimidating witnesses as a collective mob. Most cults will also have a safe house or lair prepared where they can meet, make plans and conduct rituals. Finding this lair might be imperative if the activities of the cult are to be curtailed, but entrance to it will certainly be concealed, observed and guarded. See also the individual cult descriptions below for details on how the operations of various cults differ.

Artefact: A powerful artefact is the source of the plot. Artefacts can be generated using the table given below or by using the full relic generation rules from the Camelot Cosmos GMs Guide. The most important consideration when using an artefact as the originator of a plot is whether or not the artefact is active or passive. Is it merely a powerful object that provokes a reaction when villains ascertain its location or is it sentient and malevolent? An artefact which is sentient is likely to try to exert its malign influence without being recognised as such, and will at an early stage of its plotting acquire an 'owner' who might appear to be the actual threat (very much as the One Ring does in its relationship with Gollum in Lord of the Rings). Add a single mid-power villain to the plot to represent this proxy relationship. Artefacts are also likely to have special requirements for their destruction and can therefore act as a recurring threat unless properly disposed of.

Perhaps a villain is destroyed only for a copycat villain to emerge pursuing exactly the same agenda. Players might wonder if the original villain survived without realising that both are only the pawns of a malevolent object.

GMs should think about the conditions of the artefacts destruction before writing out the full plot. Write a physical description of the artefact, a short history, and a sentence describing the proper means of destruction. Then think about actions the artefact might take to prevent this destruction occurring. If only a certain bloodline can destroy the object, the artefact will try to engineer disasters and deaths in this family. If rare herbs are required, the artefact will have its follower/s purchase, steal and destroy such supplies. If an artefact has to be destroyed at a certain location, it will seek to control access to or awareness of that place. All artefacts will also attempt to bargain with or tempt opponents who become aware of its existence and sentience, but will betray such bargains at the earliest opportunity.

Ascended: In many ways the direct involvement of an Ascended is the most difficult feature of a plot for a GM to deal with. The Ascended are super-powerful beings who are unlikely to be troubled by anything an ordinary group of characters are able to achieve. They have had centuries to hone their combat skills and establish contingencies to ensure their continued survival. Any evidence of their destruction is likely to be false or deliberately created by the Ascended itself to deceive opponents. In this scenario the traditional 'win' of roleplaying fantasy games (the defeat and death of a monstrous being) is likely to be impossible to achieve. GMs should therefore think of encounters with the Ascended in terms akin to encounters with Great Old Ones in the fiction of HP Lovecraft or the Call of Cthulhu RPG. The objective becomes not to kill the Ascended but to end the encounter alive and unchanged. Ascended like nothing better than incorporating reluctant opponents into their plans, so think of ways in which the actions of the heroes can in fact help the Ascended's objectives. The end of a plot in the supposed defeat of the Ascended might actually have been intended all along as establishing the necessary conditions for some wider plot. This sounds difficult to contemplate but can actually be accommodated quite easily if a GM thinks about the plot he has generated failing. Assume the player characters succeed. Think about how that plot changes the characters, the area, and particularly the politics and allegiances of the people involved. Think about potential unintended consequences. Then imagine that an Ascended would have foreseen all of these possibilities and directed events towards the one outcome most pleasing to him.

Another means of dealing with an Ascended's involvement is to have no physical confrontation take place. The Ascended could appear in a vision to selected individuals. It could take possession of an individual operating on its behalf.

It could animate a First Empire machine and speak through a body of steel or through the security networks of an ancient installation. It could leave written instructions, clues or taunts. It could telepathically project its commands from a remote or unknown location. Actually meeting an Ascended should be a rare and awe-inspiring event.

Individual: A plot sponsored by an individual does not necessarily mean a confrontation involving a single opponent. It means a plot which does not have the official sanction or backing of any of the power groups described in the Camelot Cosmos GMs and Players Guides. The individual may still have ties to such groups he can call upon to a limited extent, or influence in his region, or a respected position in society. He can use whatever wealth and contacts he has to recruit followers or mercenaries, and if noble will be able to rely on the backing of the law until the point at which his sins are publically acknowledged. An individual may also be concealing his activities from family members or other associates, who may act against the player characters due to a mistaken belief in the central villain. GMs should consider exactly what allies and resources the villain may have at his disposal and use them accordingly. He should also consider the villain's motivation-vengeance, greed, power, jealousy etc, particularly with reference to the Individual Sponsor Traits and any Aspects assigned to the character. It is best to make the villain more powerful than any single character, and this can be easily accomplished by assigning 1D6 additional Aspects. 1D4 rolls on the Traits table should also create a well-rounded opponent.

Cult Sponsors 1d12

1. Cult of Morgana-Office of Conversion
2. Cult of Morgana-Office of Inspiration
3. Cult of Morgana-Office of Instruction
4. Cult of Morgana-Office of Internal Security
5. Cult of Morgana-Office of Morale
6. Cult of Morgana-Office of Relics
7. Cult of the Coingiver
8. Cult of the Ready Vessel
9. Cult of the Scarlet Hammer
10. Cult of the Second Dawn
11. Sisterhood of the Fall
12. Sons of Apocalypse

Office of Conversion: The Morganite Office of Conversion is responsible for the training and indoctrination of citizens. The missions they undertake within Kingsland are therefore likely to revolve around propaganda and education-perhaps they are running a secret training facility whose location needs to be concealed, or they need to inform the correct candidates of its location, or they are abducting children with specific talents in order to brainwash them. They might pose as a charitable or monastic group of some kind, particularly running homes for orphans and beggars. They also like to infiltrate schools and colleges in order to spread Morganite propaganda, or run secret printing presses churning out such material.

They will often disguise themselves as members of the Seraphic Church, and may even have genuinely infiltrated religious orders. They will offer specialist training or access to forbidden knowledge as a means of recruiting people to the Morganite cause, and they will likely be represented by individuals skilled in both persuasion and interrogation.

Office of Inspiration: The Office of Inspiration is responsible for the moral instruction of Queen Morgan's own troops. Members of this Office often serve as chaplains in the Fyrd, leading religious ceremonies and observances in her honour. As such they are the least likely members of the Morganite cult to be found within Kingsland, unless they are accompanying a significant raid or even an invasion force. They may be looking for shrines or locations sacred to Queen Morgan, attempting to establish a presence at these prior to a major attack. Whilst their own force may be extremely limited, perhaps if they succeed in their mission it will allow the arrival of a much larger contingent of Fyrd troops.

Office of Instruction: The Office of Instruction has the largest number of operatives working in Kingsland of any branch of the Nephilic Church. They are charged with the task of infiltrating the bureaucracy of Pendragon and other Kingsland Realms and are particularly keen to place their operatives in key strategic locations (near powerful Barons, significant trade routes, members of the Royal Family, key Bishops of the Seraphic Church, etc) often as trusted advisors and counsellors to respectable persons. An agent of the Office of Instruction should therefore be assumed to possess 1D6 Specialists or Favours he can call upon during a mission, for anything from a forger to create documents to a castellan allowing access to a castle. Their links to the bureaucracy also ensure that strong evidence needs to be provided against them to remove them from their positions of trust. Most of the missions they engage in will involve recruiting or blackmailing other members of the bureaucracy and stealing information to return to their paymasters on Morgan's Curse.

Office of Internal Security: The Office of Internal Security is charged with dealing with traitors to the Morganite throne. Their targets will therefore usually be individuals with links to the Morganite Realms or turncoats from those Realms. The GM should consider whether they are attempting to suppress some information that might be vital to the war, or retrieving or assassinating a double agent, spy or defected soldier. Perhaps the target has a secret past as a Morganite, or was a member of a Nephilic cult who has since left the organisation? He may have been supplied with a false identity by the authorities. Possible moral dilemmas could ensue from this, as characters discover that the person they are protecting is a former war criminal or mass murderer. The plots of this Office could also be fake ones intended to flush out suspected traitors within their own ranks, in which case surveillance will feature heavily as they seek to track source of a leak.

Since they deal with internal traitors other Morganites are quick to offer them assistance-assume that the agent of this Office can call in at least one favour per plot from other Nephilic cults.

Office of Morale: The Office of Morale deals with the public punishment of 'criminals' after they have been found guilty of crimes against the laws of Queen Morgan. In effect this means that they work very closely with the Office of Internal Security but that it is not their job to discover traitors. It is their job to punish them in spectacular and public ways. In Morgan's Realms they do this through mass beheadings, hangings and burnings (depending on the nature of the crime). Within Kingsland they may seek to replicate these events on a smaller scale or they may work with slavers in acquiring gladiators and victims for the popular arenas on Morgan's Curse which they also oversee. If bodies start appearing in very public places, especially with notes describing their crimes pinned to the bodies, then the Office of Morale is likely to have played a part. They are the most likely of all the cults to advertise their activities and to desire publicity. They may issue manifestos linked to outbreaks of violence, or stage spectacular and very noticeable raids on famous persons or landmarks. Their plots do not aim to be secret or subtle, they aim to be noticed and to inspire fear in their enemies.

Office of Relics: The Office of Relics exists to recover and study First Empire relics. Unfortunately for the Morganites, the largest repository of First Empire relics, the Realm of Arthur's Grave, is firmly under the authority of the Seraphic Church. The agents of the Office of Relics are therefore highly skilled spies (all of them possess the Spy Aspect) and explorers. Many are leading Morganite scholars and historians, and the Office is also keen to recruit First Empire Sleepers whenever they encounter them (individuals from the time of the First Empire awoken from cryogenic storage facilities).

Theft and Retrieval plots form the vast majority of the actions of this Office and they dislike personally getting involved in combat-they will often employ mercenaries or suborn other groups to take on this role for them. A favoured tactic is to reveal the location of an artefact to several rival groups and let these individuals fight it out before retrieving the item from their greatly weakened enemies. They will also pose as allied and helpful experts until they spot a good opportunity to steal the item they are interested in.

Cult of the Coingiver: The Coingivers have only two concerns, controlling sources of wealth and gaining access to the waters of the sacred rivers of Vortigern which are full of the nanotech of their patron. Plots involving them will usually be Theft, Blackmail or Seduction plots aimed at securing these resources. A villain who suddenly gains massive financial resources to fund his schemes may well have struck a deal with the Coingivers.

The items they seek to obtain often have a link to Vortigern, and the operatives they employ are often very expensive elite mercenaries motivated by greed rather than conviction. GMs should look at the potential problems the plot could face and plan a financial response—the Coingivers have no objection to simply bribing opponents or purchasing what they want. This can lead to those opposing them actually being on the wrong side of the authorities, since the Coingivers are skilled at bribing those in local positions of power. Trade deals and expeditions, corrupt merchants, and the supply of contraband or illegal goods also feature heavily in their activities. GMs should add 1D4 Resources (an expensive weapon, a fortified location, a useful relic etc) to the agent's plot to reflect the group's financial backing.

Cult of the Ready Vessel: The Cult of the Ready Vessel have the assistance of wraiths of Mordred and are therefore able to possess cult members or even opponents of the Cult. GMs will therefore require a reasonable explanation as to why the Cult's powers of possession do not work on player characters, or only work temporarily or intermittently. Ironically, this power can also provide a means of infiltrating the cult, if the leaders for example mistakenly believe that a character is possessed. Agents of the cult will display characteristics reflecting the fact that their bodies are only puppets being controlled by something else. They may be immune to pain or shock, and able to continue functioning with injuries that would halt a non-possessed person. Sudden changes of behaviour and allegiance will mark the recruitment of new followers to the Cult, and this recruitment will be far more rapid than occurs with other groups (this could provide a convenient hook to initiate a quest based around the Cult's activities). GMs should add 2D20 Minions capable of performing simple tasks to reflect this rapid recruitment.

Cult of the Scarlet Hammer: This cult is the most notorious and hated of all the Nephilic cults, but in many ways also the least effective. They will endanger the success of their own missions in order to engage in as much bloodshed as possible. At any point where the plot faces an obstacle, imagine the most horrifically violent response, and this will be the action that the plotters take. Scarlet Hammer plots often devolve into a brutal siege as the authorities respond to their murderous rampage, and it is only the rarest of Scarlet Hammer agents who survive more than a few of their missions.

Cult of the Second Dawn: Operatives and agents of Lucifer's cult will never appear as themselves. All of them will have fake identities and all of them will have already infiltrated other organisations. Any plots they undertake will be under the guise of being members of another Nephilic cult. GMs should roll again to find who the cult are masquerading as. They will also support or sabotage plots by other Nephilic cults so can appear as unlikely allies.

GMs should provide a cover identity for significant plotters and also envisage ways in which contingency plans could have been made responding to character actions. Lucifer is the most cunning of the Nephilim after all and promotes followers who share his own intelligence. Cult members will also seek to mock, discredit or humiliate anyone who suggests that their cult is a real, existent threat.

Sisterhood of the Fall: Guinevere the Fallen is an insane Ascended with a fanatical hatred of the men she blames for her downfall, and her followers seek to emulate these characteristics even if they themselves are sane. Guinevere is the Ascended most likely to appear to her cultists or to those opposing their plots, but ill rarely make any kind of coherent or helpful intervention. She will ignore combat and harangue both her followers and enemies whilst weeping hysterically, endlessly going over the causes of her disgrace. She might appear as a sobbing, ethereal figure in the distance, all of which detracts from any attempted stealth on the part of her followers. She will not however appear when these women are seducing or corrupting men, so her followers will often use this methodology in their plots. Seduction, Subversion and Blackmail are their favourite schemes. GMs should add the Insane and/or Seductive trait to her followers.

Sons of Apocalypse: The Barbed Knights were once far more powerful than they are today, but are still noted for their ruthless determination and savage melee skills. Their plots will frequently involve combat, but not the random slayings and civilian murders engaged in by the Scarlet Hammer. They will target those that respect as 'worthy' opponents, primarily renowned nobles, warriors, adventurers and generals. Their plots often involving assassinating such individuals or challenging them to combat after first ensuring that they cannot refuse the challenge (by kidnapping loved ones or otherwise holding them to ransom). They are highly active in the Realm of Castlekeep and any schemes they conduct elsewhere may lead back to the frontline.

A Son of Apocalypse will always be a powerful combatant, and GMs should add appropriate Aspects to reflect this (Strong, Muscular, Stoic etc).

Artefact Sponsors 1d20

The same questions arise with all Artefact sponsored plots. First, is the artefact sentient or not? If yes, how does it communicate its wishes and control events? Does it have owners or guardians, do these have any independence of action or are they the slaves of the artefact? Is it generally known that the artefact is sentient? (many will pretend not to be). An artefact can manipulate events by supplying or withholding its powers at critical junctions as well as just by issuing instructions. It has probably learned over centuries how to manipulate the greed or vices of its supposed possessors.

Second, consider the Artefacts history. Are any previous owners still around and searching for it? Do their fates provide any clues regarding how to deal with the Artefact, its nature, aims and schemes? Only after these questions have been answered should the GM then consider the appearance of the object and write a single paragraph description that hints at the history and the powers without directly revealing them.

1. Armour
2. Axe
3. Banner
4. Cloak
5. Crown
6. Cup
7. Eye
8. Heart
9. Helm
10. Mirror
11. Necklace
12. Orb
13. Sceptre
14. Shield
15. Skull
16. Spear
17. Staff
18. Statue/Idol
19. Sword
20. Exotic or First Empire Item

Armour: Who previously wore this? Is it fitted for a human figure or something else? Armour could be an entire set or a single piece such as a gauntlet, griebe, breastplate etc. What type of armour is it? Leather, padded, chainmail, plate or some First Empire futuristic combat suit? Is it actually armour or the shell of an android or robot?

Axe: Is this a hand axe, throwing axe or a battle axe? Is it decorative or deadly? Certain Ascended particularly favour axes, usually the most brutal and combat-minded. Is it associated with any of them? (Bathin, Barbatos, Lamorak).

Banners: Banners are especially associated with Mordred, who led the largest host of the Nephilim's forces. What symbols are on the banner, do they reference any other Nephilim or even the symbols of First Empire corporations? These can act as clues to connections when compared with markings on other sites and objects. Banners are also particularly associated with powers of leadership and the attraction of followers, or if captured banners with defeat and ruin. Is the banner cursed?

Cloaks: Cloaks should not just be thought of as items of clothing, but even if they are it still covers a lot of different types. Robes, half-cloaks, riding cloaks, even togas might be mistaken for robes by those unfamiliar with them. Cloaks might also have a more symbolic meaning, and actually reference a cloaking device from the First Empire. The Ascended Garlon is strongly associated with these.

Crown: Crowns are the most obvious symbols of rulership, and therefore appeal the most to the more vainglorious Ascended or those who wish to claim authority over others. The crowns of various Gawainite monarchs and Morganite queens are thought to be imbued with aspects of their personalities, so those who obtain them might start exhibiting similar traits to long dead rulers. Arthur's Crown is the most famous relic of this kind and is still in the possession of the Ascended Arthur, but if another could obtain it many would see this as a sign of their legitimate right to rule.

Cup: The most well known examples of this type of artefact are the Moon Grail and the Sun Grail, two of the most powerful artefacts in existence. Cups can also include wide variety of drinking vessels and their contents. Is the power in the vessel or the liquid it contains? Healing nanites were often contained in liquid form during the First Empire but many other seemingly magical effects are possible. Poisons, or transformative liquid nanite cocktails that reshape the drinkers body to adapt to different environments or to serve the needs of different Ascended rulers are all possible.

Eye: Eyes can be physical remnants of a being (which need not be human-think also of more gigantic or exotic varieties) or can be First Empire surveillance devices. If the latter, who is also receiving the information and images that the Eye transmits? Certain eyes of this kind might be mistaken for jewels or set in another object, such as a brooch, pendant or even the pommel of a weapon.

Heart: Hearts are linked with romance and passion, but also with human sacrifice. Lucifer and other Nephilim have historically enjoyed receiving such sacrifices and might request them again, particularly as proof that an opponent has been slain. Progressors might experiment on hearts as a means of controlling the body that the heart resides within, perhaps by including a bomb or poisonous device within it.

Helm: A helm is another item that might have a dual meaning based on the different understandings of the word present during modern times and the Days of Gedd. Any headpiece, headset, or protective covering of the head could be included in this term (a Stonedweller headdress or a knights full plate helm, or a robotic skull) but 'helm' might also refer to the helm of a ship. Lesser AIs were contained in the Helm of Firs Empire spaceships, and the ships now mistaken for Dragons would be very interested in their retrieval.

Mirror: Mirrors are symbolic of vanity and likely to be associated with female Ascended or their key followers. They can also represent surveillance devices capable of conjuring up images of remote locations. Perhaps they are even able to function as miniature portals between locations, like mobile versions of the Doors used for inter-realm travel.

Myths also link mirrors with the possibility of doppelgangers or mimics capable of assuming the shape of those who look into them, or as doorways to small interdimensional prisons. Finally what is today mistaken for a mirror could just as easily be a First Empire screen, allowing access to computer records and virtual worlds or televisual recordings. What dangerous secrets might be revealed by such a device?

Necklace: Again necklaces are most likely to be associated with female Ascended (as far as male and female mean anything to an immortal collection of nanites). A necklace might be valued purely for its financial worth if it contains multiple jewels. The First Empire love of embedding technology in items that appear to have no other function than the decorative however means that these jewels could be anything-explosive devices, listening or recording items, crystallised potions or poisons etc. Perhaps the 'necklace' is a control collar designed to strangle its wearer on a particular command word or in response to a particular type of action. First Empire executives sometimes gave such items to their wives and mistresses as double-edged 'gifts'.

Orb: Like crowns and sceptres, orbs are traditional symbols of rule, representing mastery of the world. The orb could also be a crystal ball or viewing screen, a holographic projector, or a spherical puzzle containing something else. An orb could contain a downloaded personality and fit into a computer console, or it could be an unusual key opening a First Empire vault.

Sceptre: Sceptres were popular with First Empire executives as handheld remote controls and operating devices. They are therefore likely to have powers which only manifest in interaction with other devices which they trigger and control. Quite often these are satellites in orbit used for surveillance or as weapons and defence platforms, ensuring that anyone who knows how to employ the sceptre has a very powerful First Empire weapon at their command.

Shield: Most of the Ascended possessed shields which they deployed in combat with others of their kind or the devices of the First Empire corporations. These may have the appearance of any kind of knight's shield from a buckler upwards, or they might be far larger and have shielded an entire area. Many shields generated protective forcefields against kinetic attacks, others could emit electromagnetic pulses, still others shielded against more subtle threats such as radiation. Some could create environmental 'bubbles' protecting their possessor from all sorts of harsh environments, including the vacuum of space.

Skull: Skulls are more often the relic-remains of saints or executives than items linked to the Ascended, since most Ascended still have non-destroyed physical forms. Lucifer often found it amusing to embed personality chips in the skulls of defeated enemies, keeping the slain rival as an advisor or pet long after their death.

Many of these skulls still exist, possessing who knows what First Empire secrets, but unfortunately many have also been driven completely insane by their prolonged but essentially helpless existence.

Spear: Spears may well be just what they appear to be, although those linked to the Ascended are still likely to have special martial powers and be nearly indestructible. Rifles and projectile weapons may also be mistaken for strange looking spears by those unfamiliar with such weapons. Others may actually be missiles, rockets or other explosives designed to pierce the body armour of the Ascended.

Staff: Staffs are primarily associated with mages, and many may belong to or have been owned by members of the Mages Guild. The Guild will always be interested in recovering such items, as will any surviving former owners. Staffs are the most likely item to possess entirely unique powers, since mages often embed a 'signature spell' within them, an effect which they have individually researched and which is unknown elsewhere. Staffs can also be attuned to receive signals or instructions, or to have powerful effects when planted in the ground.

Statue/Idol: The Ascended competed to encourage humans to worship them, and many crude idols remain from the period immediately after the Days of Gedd when this practice first took hold. A statue or idol might be significant as a container, having a hollow centre in which papers, documents or some other treasure is stored. They could also be significant in terms of what they depict, revealing secrets about a particular Ascended (its history, actions, rivalries and friendships) that were once common knowledge and which are now dangerous to know. Many of these idols also work as keys to the Doors between Realms, though the crudity of their construction can lead to random or unexpected results.

Exotic/First Empire: The final category of artefact is also the broadest, since it covers any item that might have been extant during the First Empire. This includes vehicles and vehicle parts, engines, tools, household objects, artworks, machinery, clothing etc not covered by any of the sections above. GMs should try to think of a purpose for the item first then only secondarily consider its shape. The link between the two might not be in any way obvious, and lengthy examination (with possibly dangerous consequences) might be necessary to ascertain a device's purpose and powers.

Ascended Sponsors 1d12

1. Barbatos
2. Bathin
3. Bruinis
4. Garlon
5. Guinevere the Fallen
6. Hue
7. Lamorak
8. Lucifer
9. Mordred
10. Morgan
11. Tarquin
12. Vortigern

Barbatos: The Black Knight prefers to work through corrupted knights and assassins. His plots will therefore often feature members of the Assassins Guild. Assassination, Conquest, Purge and Terrorism plots will dominate. Wars between criminal gangs often provoke his interest as well as dynastic struggles within noble families. He will seek to recruit embittered, disgraced or exiled nobles and promise them a return to power. He will also seek to recover artifacts from the days of the Barbed Knights, when his power was at its height. Interestingly, though, he is also prepared to sell the services of his cult to other Nephilim or even to the Seraphim, so followers of Barbatos could be found providing 'muscle' for all sorts of schemers.

Bathin: The Brutal One wants his followers to display the same direct approach that he himself favours. Conquest and Terrorism plots will dominate any actions of his cult, and the death count will be high. His followers will never take prisoners except with the intention of executing or torturing them soon after. They will also actively seek to involve innocents and bystanders in any confrontation. Some have learnt how to bottle the transforming gas of the Realm of Guinevere, and will release this in explosions which turn ordinary people into ravaging ogres. They also seek out alchemists and the most destructive First Empire weapons, so their plots may feature other gases, explosives and even poisons.

Bruinis: Bruinis the Pitiless is the most coldly calculating of the Nephilim. His plots are the exact opposite of those involving Bathin, in that they are always precise and targeted against specific opponents. He is particularly interested in the technology of the Progressors and will seek to abduct Progressors or steal their technology. Infiltrating the Possessors would be extremely difficult, but Bruinis will also extend offers of alliance to them.

Other missions might involve obtaining things to trade with the Progressors. As a lesser aim, Bruinis seeks to remind his fellow Nephilim of their machine origins, so any ruins, relics or First Empire evidence that will allow him to do this will provoke his interest.

Garlon: Garlon is not called the Hidden Knight without reason. Like Lucifer, he prefers that his activities remain secret.

His cult will therefore never engage in large-scale or obvious assaults (discount any Conquest plots). He has also betrayed virtually every other Nephilim at one point or another during his chequered history, so will be very cautious around their operatives. Quite often his cult specialises in surveillance, gathering evidence of the activities of other groups and then selling it or exploiting it in some way. He also likes to provoke conflict so will use Deception plots to pin blame on innocents or stir trouble between already antagonistic forces. Obfuscation and Abduction plots will seek to remove any threats posed by sources of information about him, and his cult are continually searching out and destroying descriptions of their leader. The most closely guarded secret in the entire cult is the current whereabouts of their master, and Garlon and his agents will go to any lengths to keep this hidden. As well as destroying real evidence, they will plant false evidence...many cult members are skilled forgers.

Guinevere: In the majority of cases the other followers of Guinevere the Fallen behave in the same manner as the Sisterhood of the Fall (outlined above). They are more likely however to be pursuing a plot connected to a personal grievance or vengeance and many have been the victims of some kind of assault which has embittered them against men. GMs should consider what background the villain has and whether the violent vengeance the plotter has constructed is in any way justified as this can lead to interesting moral quandaries for the player characters (although care should be taken regarding players feelings if dealing with sensitive issues).

Hue: Hue the Perilous is in many ways the exact opposite of the paranoid Garlon. Whilst Garlon keeps his location hidden, Hue's appearances are obvious. He might wander into a tavern in the middle of a town in Pendragon, making no attempt to conceal who he is. He will also sponsor or become involved in plots which seem to have absolutely no hope of succeeding, and will not care if those plots favour other Nephilim, Seraphim or even Druidim. This is because Hue has a suicide wish and engages in plot whose sole purpose is to provoke some other power to destroy him. The most simple means of accomplishing this is by ludicrous attempts at Conquest, suicidal missions aimed at the very heart of another Ascended's power base. Hue does however have one other interest-the possibility of reviving his dead wife. Any technology that might promise such a miracle will be subject to Theft plots from Hue's followers.

Lamorak: Lamorak the Mighty sees himself as a powerful warrior and likes to portray himself in this guise but is fundamentally a rather cowardly creature, despite the enormous power that comes with being an Ascended. His plots are unusually patient and often involve manipulating others to fight on his behalf.

He will often place agents within the Fighters Guild who are tasked with developing mercenary teams he can call upon, but will betray or destroy these groups if they learn of their ultimate sponsors identity. He is also interested in Lucifer's dungeons as he knows that a great deal of experimentation was conducted within them on developing particularly fierce lifeforms. He hopes to recover any technology that can augment his own capabilities and therefore also uses the Tomb Robbers and the Dungeoneers Guilds towards this end. He will seek to avoid any direct confrontations with other Nephilim though.

Lucifer: All of the notes given above regarding the Cult of the Second Dawn apply when Lucifer is personally behind a plot, only moreso. He will establish an entire nest of cover identities and plausible motivations for his actions (rolling several more times on the tables should supply these alternatives). Ultimately, though, his greatest priority remains the need to break free of his prison. All technology (or 'magic') to do with security systems will arouse his interest, as will Sleepers familiar with First Empire hacking. Transfer of consciousness is also of great interest to him, as this would provide an alternative means of escaping his confined state. He specialises in Deception, Seduction and Subversion plots, continually recruiting hidden allies in order to slowly build his power towards the day of his escape.

Mordred: Mordred's plots are constrained by the fact that he has no physical form. Obtaining weapons and artefacts that require a physical form to employ therefore has little appeal to him and he will more willingly use artefacts as bribes or bargaining chips with others. What he is interested in is any technology that could allow him to rebuild a physical form—First Empire robotics is of particular concern to him and any chances to investigate ruins that contain such information will attract his interest (factories, workshops, sales rooms and corporate headquarters might all fall into this category). He is also interested in recruiting the Great Host who served him during the Days of Gedd so will try to encourage visitors to the realm that bears his name. False rumours of treasure are often deployed for this purpose.

Morgan: Most of the information given above for the various Morganite Offices applies to pots she initiates herself. The vast majority of her efforts will be devoted to winning the war and conquering Pendragon, so the Pendragon Legion and the Gawainite monarchy are frequent targets. For the last three hundred years Morgan has also engaged in a secret but highly active breeding programme, designed to create the perfect vessel for her to possess, one whose own potential will combine with her to create an unstoppable being. In furtherance of this breeding plot, she may be encountered helping those who might otherwise be her enemies, or showing an unusual care for a child or infant completely out of keeping with her normal ruthlessness.

Tarquin: Tarquin has a particular interest in First Empire artwork and his plots often involve acquiring pieces that reflect this interest. He is said to have established a secret base called the Great Gallery where he stores a huge quantity of plundered treasures. He plans elaborate Retrieval and Theft operations to obtain works of art and maintains ties with the Thieves Guild in order to help him locate and steal these items. Unlike other Nephilim he tends to honour any agreements to pay his fellow thieves or obtaining the pieces he is interested in. This is not out of any sense of morality, but simply to ensure that the Guild keeps supplying and aiding him. Conversely, rumours of the enormous wealth held at the Great Gallery ensure that he must also plot measures to conceal the location of this lair or sometimes to punish those who have stolen from him.

Vortigern: Vortigern is one of the most intelligent of the Ascended, and also rare in possessing completely human origins. His plots therefore show greater understanding of human weaknesses and frailties than those of his fellow Ascended, and he is a master of Deception and Discredit plots. Those who oppose him find that negative rumours and even evidence of wrongdoing quickly accrue to their names and that even their natural allies turn against them. Vortigern will plot simply to amuse himself, but will also often try to discover and subvert the plots of others. His long-term aims include the complete conquest of the realm that bears his name and the freeing of his former master Lucifer. Any information or power that will help achieve these will provoke his interest.

Individual Sponsors 1d10

1. A craftsman
2. A knight
3. A lady
4. A merchant
5. A monk
6. A monster
7. A noble
8. A peasant
9. A priest
10. An adventurer

Craftsman: A craftsman could be a gold or silversmith, a jeweller, a toymaker, a blacksmith, or a member of any other profession that crafts, repairs and creates items. He will likely have a storeroom and supplies of such items, merchant contacts and allies, perhaps a prominent position within a Guild and the ability to draw on the resources of the Guild for his personal schemes. He may well have a social or artistic reputation to defend and maintain, which could colour or inspire his actions.

Perhaps his work has been slandered and he seeks revenge, perhaps he has a rival or competitor he wishes to discredit or harm, or a noble has failed to pay him for his work. He might have unwittingly been duped by a client into creating something dangerous.

Knight: In the figure of a knight the GM has a combat ready opponent for the characters. The knight's usual allegiances and loyalties should be considered. Is he betraying his lord or acting on his instructions? Either way he is likely to have access to castles, fortifications and noble estates. He may have powerful relatives against whom he is acting or whose support he can rely on. He could have had combat experiences or encounters with the Nephilim already that may explain his actions.

Lady: Noble ladies have the advantage of being ubiquitous in noble households, but also in some senses invisible. They are likely to be underestimated or not perceived as a threat. Knights, nobles and peasants may unwittingly assist them for romantic motives or simply out of courtesy and chivalry. They can fascinate, manipulate and control without ever risking the dangers of combat or the risk of being exposed for their treachery. They have ready access to rumour and gossip and the ability to spread the same. They may chafe at their lack of direct power or be drawn to the schemes of the Nephilim out of frustration, decadence or boredom. They may be in arranged marriages which are not to their liking, or have secret lovers who do their bidding.

Merchant: Merchants have a great deal of freedom of movement but are also crucially free of many of the responsibilities which burden the nobility. They may well have commercial contacts in other towns or villagers and can call upon these if needed for places of shelter and storage. They do not attract suspicion when travelling or transporting goods, and they may have the backing and support of the powerful Merchants Guild. They can also have more liquid assets than the nobility and can hire mercenaries or thieves to do their bidding. They can move between different social circles without attracting undue attention and can therefore serve as the lynchpins of a plot involving different classes of society.

Monk: Like merchants, monks are a common sight on the roads and pathways of the Realms, and can travel without raising suspicion. They can also request lodging or assistance from the peasantry and from other members of the clergy. They have access to churches and church run facilities such as schools and hospitals. They can consult the libraries of pious scholars and church officials, and are aware of trends and developments within the church. Their role in the Seraphic church will potentially warn them of impending threats from this source, and they are effectively already infiltrators of one of the Nephilim's most powerful foes. Their clerical calling can disguise their perfidy and make the authorities and the pious trust them.

Monster: A monster must either be capable of disguising itself amongst men or have a stealthy nature and possibly the use of a lair or sanctuary to retreat to. Monsters will have special abilities linked to their monstrous nature, and will be tactically astute in using these to their best advantage.

Revealing their true nature would allow them to terrorise and intimidate others into compliance with their schemes, so they may have unexpected allies. They will be able to negotiate with beings that would not negotiate with men, and have less to fear from dungeons and their inhabitants than do others.

Noble: A noble will be able to call upon several sources of support. His own family will represent a network of alliances, and may have properties and resources which he can share. Local serfs and peasants will obey his commands and not question his practices, whilst ambitious commoners will seek to ingratiate themselves by doing favours or facilitating connections. The noble will be used to interacting with powerful people and may overhear or be privy to their plans and actions. He will have a regular income from the land he owns and may have inherited weapons or gear from his ancestors. He will have been trained in fighting and in arts such as diplomacy and military tactics.

Peasant: Peasant sponsors might not at first seem an obvious choice as patrons of any plot, due to their lack of resources and power, but with a bit of imagination they can offer intriguing possibilities. The disgruntled peasant firebrand, chafing against the oppressive rule of a local lord, could lead a peasant rebellion which requires assistance. The village which offers shelter and food in return for protection is a common theme of fantasy and westerns, but what if the villagers are all Nephilim worshippers? A Stonedweller slave or shaman could have turned to the Nephilim to free himself or his people, or a bandit group could have the loyalty of a local community (Robin Hood style). Peasants conducting Nephilim plots may be better placed to be overlooked or ignored than any other plotter, for who would think that the simple farmer, fisherman, blacksmith or village elder could be behind a deadly scheme?

Priest: A priest could be anything from a barely literate peasant custodian of a village church through to an immensely powerful Bishop or Cardinal. The more powerful Church figures will have enormous resources at their disposal and exposing and defeating them may require lengthy campaigns. The higher up in the Seraphic Church a cultist is, the less likely are the authorities to believe any slander against them—characters may face assault, imprisonment and punishment from the very people they are trying to save as the priest brings his reputation to bear against them. Finding incontrovertible evidence of their plots therefore becomes a vital requirement. Until that is presented the priest will be able to call on support from the rest of the Church, from pious nobles, and from a superstitious peasantry.

They may dwell in official residences only open to members of the Church or invited guests, they may have access to Icons and Relics or to storehouse libraries of occult knowledge, and they will not hesitate to use these advantages.

Adventurer: An adventurer will by definition be an opponent who is used to personally dealing with problems. He or she is likely to be combat ready more than most plotters, and not lacking in personal courage or the kind of cunning that aids survival. He may have access to exotic weaponry, armour or tactics picked up during his adventuring travels, and have a good general knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of different opponents. He will have equally skilled allies in the form of old adventuring companions (though he may also have old enemies and rivals as well). Resources from previous adventures might include wealth, a castle or stronghold, and local fame or respect. He is free of the responsibilities of nobles and clergy but suffers none of the restrictions of the peasantry, so he can pursue schemes with greater independence than any of these. A known adventurer has social mobility and respect for his talents-some mercenaries and allies might be wary of taking him on.

Individual Sponsor Traits 5d10

A few rolls on the individual sponsor traits can flesh out the personality of a plotter and also provide clues regarding their motivations and the reason for the plot. First, each of them can be considered as an Aspect granting specific skills (many of the traits given below are already listed as Aspects in the Camelot Cosmos Players Guide, for those that are not GMs should determine appropriate skills). Second, is there a logical reason to link the trait and the plot? An Addicted plotter, for instance, could be being blackmailed by someone aware of his addiction, or by the supplier of whatever exotic substance or experience he requires. Perhaps he is addicted to a drug supplied by a Nephilic cult, or even addicted to a temptress who is a Morganite spy? Perhaps he will die if he does not continue receiving his supply, something which could act as a powerful motive as well as giving a time-related urgency to his plot.

With other traits, such as Cowardly, the plotter could be seeking to cover his tracks or eliminate those who have witnessed his weakness. Think of how knowledge of the trait would affect his standing and reputation. Think of crimes he may have committed under the influence of the trait, and who might manipulate this. Even a positive trait like Charming might explain much-everything has come too easily to this character, he has made unsavoury friendships, he always thinks he can do what he likes and charm his way out. Traits can also provide motivation if they go unrecognised or unrewarded-perhaps a Brilliant character is embittered by his failure to rise within Gawainite society, or his inventions have been stolen or suppressed?

In all of these cases GMs are advised to use the traits to flesh out the plotters background before the plot itself, to explain how and why he came to the point of working towards nefarious purposes. If these motivations are sympathetic ones, he will have greater depth as a villain and be a more memorable opponent.

5. Addicted
6. Brilliant
7. Charming
8. Cowardly
9. Cruel
10. Cunning
11. Cursed
12. Deadly
13. Depraved
14. Depressive
15. Dispossessed
16. Dying
17. Educated
18. Exiled
19. Famous
20. Fanatical
21. Foreign
22. Gilded
23. Greedy
24. Half-Breed
25. Hated
26. Impoverished
27. Imprisoned
28. Influential
29. Inhuman
30. Injured
31. Insane
32. Lecherous
33. Military
34. Misanthropic
35. Mocked
36. Monstrous
37. Possessed
38. Powerful
39. Proud
40. Racist
41. Rebellious
42. Reclusive
43. Respected
44. Rich
45. Sadistic
46. Sadistic
47. Seductive
48. Stonedweller
49. Vengeful
50. Violent

Nature of the Plot 1d20

1. Abduction
2. Assassination
3. Blackmail
4. Conquest
5. Deception
6. Destruction
7. Discredit
8. Infiltration
9. Interrogation
10. Obfuscation
11. Purge
12. Retrieval
13. Ritual
14. Sabotage
15. Seduction
16. Subversion
17. Summoning
18. Surveillance
19. Terrorism
20. Theft

Abduction: The target of the plot is an individual who will be captured and transported elsewhere. This may be because they have information or skills that one of the Nephilim require. A mage working on a new spell, or a monk who has discovered a relic, or a soldier or messenger carrying battleplans, could all be targets of abduction. Perhaps they intend to brainwash the individual, or replace them with a doppelganger. Even if characters become aware that the victim has been abducted, they must also find his captors and location. The most obvious plotters regularly involved in abduction are of course the Slavers Guild, who will often lend their assistance and expertise to others or a suitable fee.

Assassination: Targets of assassination are usually powerful figures, leading nobles, generals, and monarchs. Plotters will need to ascertain details of the targets security and routines, so will often do this first via bribery or infiltration. In rare instances confident plotters might announce their intentions first, sparking a hunt to find them before they can carry out their threat. Characters could be hired or ordered to conduct this hunt, or could be unwitting suspects themselves, or set up to appear as the assassins after the event. The target could have secrets that explain the 'hit', or vices that make him harder to protect. GMs should also consider the political consequences-most assassinations are performed for a reason, so what happens differently if they succeed or fail? A important treaty or alliance doesn't take place, or reprisals create division and chaos?

Blackmail: With blackmail plots the plotters have to identify the secret that they can use against the target, then notify the target of their awareness, then receive whatever aid, payment or favour they require from the target, all without being obstructed or exposed.

GMs need to be sure what the secret is (some crime or misdemeanour perhaps, an old murder for example, or a sexual or cultural taboo, perhaps an affair or bastard child) and why it is damaging. What evidence do the plotters have? Can this evidence be retrieved? What do the plotters want from the target? Information, access to a restricted area, a particular item? Or an action, like leaving a door or gate unguarded and unlocked? Blackmail plots therefore often link in to subsequent plots.

Conquest: The plotters intend to take control of an area. The GM should consider what makes this area significant? Is it a strategic pass or route required by an invading force, or a keep or government building? Is the conquest intended as a temporary thing, to achieve some limited aim (like breaking prisoner out of a captured prison), or as a permanent shift in the frontlines of the war between Gawain XXIII and Morgan le Fay? How does the conquest benefit the Nephilim? If intended as a permanent thing, then plans for swift reinforcement and expansion must also be in place.

Deception: Deception plots are intended to make an enemy believe falsehoods or react in ways beneficial to the plotter, and share much in common with Obfuscation plots (outlined below). A false appearance of weakness, perhaps by hiding some of the forces available and therefore inviting attack, is a classic military example of a deception plot. Luring an opponent into an ambush is a deception plot, it relies upon the enemy not realising they are in danger until it is too late, and is facilitated by ingratiating or flattering behaviour prior to the attack. GMs should think of a central falsehood which is the key to the deception, and what will be achieved if the deception succeeds. What clues or giveaways might reveal the deception plot?

Destruction: A destruction plot intends to break an object or destroy a person. It makes most sense in connection with objects, particularly powerful Relics or Ikons that have powers that might endanger the plotters other plans. In the warfare of the Days of Gedd all of the Ascended faced the weapons of their opponents and were injured by them. The Nephilim in particular like to destroy these items to ensure that they will never be hurt by them again and that the memory of any previous defeat will also fade. Most of these items may require specific ingredients, rituals or circumstances to destroy them (obtaining and fulfilling these prerequisite steps can form several connected quests).

Discredit: The plot is intended to ruin the reputation of an individual or an organisation. The plotters must either obtain and reveal information about some past crime or misdemeanour or fabricate some evidence that will reflect badly upon the intended victim. Using a doppelganger, actor or mimic to commit crimes or provoking the victim to attack innocents are frequent tactics in such a plot. Spies and bribery may reveal past misdeeds and town criers, newspapers, pamphlets, gossips and bards may be used to spread negative news.

This is often timed to prevent the victim taking other actions which become impossible given public responses to their shaming. Planting incriminating evidence may involve the exact same skills as a theft plot, only with opposite intentions.

Infiltration: This type of plot is geared towards obtaining membership in some exclusive group. The extensive lists of organisations given in the Camelot Cosmos Players Guide and the Camelot Cosmos GMs Guide can give targets for such missions, but even infiltrating the household of an individual counts as such a plot. GMs should think of events and locations that can heighten the drama of an infiltration plot-perhaps the plotters need to gate-crash some exclusive event, a ball held at a noble's private estate or a ritual conducted by a reclusive group of monks. False references and stolen invites may feature, as can murdering genuine recipients in order to take their place.

Interrogation: The plotters intend to conduct the interrogation of an individual. This could be to obtain a confession of guilt or vital evidence preventing a rival plot from succeeding. There may be a time limit within which the information needs to be discovered to prevent some other disaster. Moral questions and roleplaying opportunities can derive from the nature of the interrogation and the issue of the use of torture. Getting to a defended target in order to interrogate them could involve direct action elements such as storming a secret lair or hidden base.

Obfuscation: The plot is designed to spread misinformation or to hide information. This may involve planting false rumours or evidence. Classic examples from real history of this kind of plot can be seen in the false invasion plans fed to the Nazis by Allied spies and double agents prior to the Normandy landings, these had the purpose of obscuring the real plan of attack. Obfuscation plots therefore often work in conjunction with another plot they are intended to distract from or disguise. These plots also benefit from illusions, particularly magical or practical concealments of a base of operations. Characters might need to replace real documents or orders with false ones, or try to make a barely defended castle look heavily occupied, or pretend that a trusted figure has fallen from favour.

Purge: The plot is aimed at the individual or organisations own allies. This will usually occur as a power play between rival factions after the failure of previous plots or the deposal of a weakened leader. Characters might have a moral issue regarding whether to intervene as they see old enemies under threat or disappearing. Imprisonment, swift rigged trials and kidnapping prior to execution are features of such plots. Characters not directly participating in these events may be drawn into them when the bodies start turning up or when old hideouts and haunts empty or fill with new owners and patrons. An interesting twist is to lead up to a point where a former hated villain is a required ally to defeat a newer, fiercer menace.

Retrieval: The plot intends to regain something that has been lost. This could be an object with real significance or it could be something worthless that is mistaken as important. Retrieval plots will involve locating the desired item, breaking through whatever defences protect it, and escaping without losing it. The classic heist movie follows a retrieval pattern, if the thief previously had ownership of the item required. These plots need not be limited to objects though-they can include retrieving abducted or missing persons. GMs should consider what consequences would follow from losing the item, who wants it and why, and what will happen if it isn't retrieved.

Ritual: This plot is a favourite of cults intending to summon an Ascended or its powerful servants to a specific location. Certain very specific conditions usually need to be met to achieve this, and GMs can have fun devising bizarre preconditions or ingredients required for the ritual's success. Items which are difficult to obtain may need to be in place (a specific sacrificial knife, a certain kind of victim as sacrifice, special herbs, unguents or drugs). Participants may need to purify or prepare themselves for the ritual, or meet in secret, or undergo tests and tasks to ensure they are worthy. Whilst summoning rituals are the most popular kind, other possibilities exist-rituals that will grant set powers to those who take part (immunities from pain, fire, time, swords, etc, or increases in strength, wisdom, knowledge, size, charisma, or access to spells or forbidden lore, or major secrets of the setting...the possibilities are infinite) or take powers away from designated targets are also possible. Rituals might also be needed to break an Ascended free of its prison (Lucifer or Mordred for example).

Sabotage: An item needs to be destroyed or broken in such a way that its original function is subverted. This could include anything from poisoning a castle well to blowing up a bridge or breaking a cryogenic chamber. The ideal sabotage will go undetected until the item is used with dire consequences. The Brotherhood of Progression are particularly skilled at such plots when they involve First Empire technology. Possible targets are often features of an enemy's infrastructure or resources-as well as attacking transport routes or vehicles (such as the zeppelins used by noble families) the remaining weapons and armour of the First Empire, or even the defences of cities and towns, could all be undermined.

Seduction: Seduction plots refer most famously to the entrapment of opponents through the lure of sexual gratification, such as in the case of the 'honey trap' tactics deployed at times during the Cold War. Such plots usually intend to gain trust and information, either unknowingly or willingly from the victim of the lot, but can also be a preliminary step in for example an assassination plot.

Seduction also does not have to refer to sex-it could also be a case of instilling a passion or addiction in the victim which only the plotter can sate (a depraved activity like killing or gladiatorial combat, or the consumption of a drug, or an unusual experience).

Subversion: Subversion plots are designed to take an action of an enemy and redirect it to be of benefit to the plotter. They often require the assistance of a group of insiders who must first be convinced to change their allegiance. Finding out how these people can be bought might be the first step in the plot. Usually the number of victims distinguishes this from a seduction plot, whilst the temporary or knowing nature of the subversion distinguishes it from genuine recruitment. The printing and dissemination of subversive pamphlets forms a large part of the plots conducted in the Long War.

Summoning: This is the attempt to gather forces to a particular location. It can take the form of a ritual or invocation, but is just as likely to involve a more mundane call to arms. Summoning plots also often involve an attempt to seize an area through which soldiers or other troops intend to travel, such as one of the Doors between realms. GMs should consider who is being summoned and how and the effect that these forces might have when they arrive. It's also wise to have previously determined any special acts required to end the summoning.

Surveillance: The intention of such a plot is to observe without being observed, and stealth skills and related items will dominate the determination of the outcome of the plot. If the plotters can remain hidden their success is almost assured. All of the nephilic organisations employ small teams or loners for such work, hoping that the eyesight or prowess of such agents has not been explained.

Terrorism: Regrettably, all are aware of the nature of these plots. The intention behind such attacks is the desire to strike fear into the hearts of the victims families, friends and the wider society against which the attack is aimed. Acts carried out in this fashion could include the explosive destruction of a building, statue or otherwise large artefact, or the release of creatures, spells, or weapons that could inflict massive casualties.

Theft: A theft plot often intends to obtain a religious or spiritual object. This could be on behalf of the Seraphic Church. It could also be aimed at transferring credit, funds, or precious items without the owner's agreement. GMs need to determine the nature and value of the thing being stolen, as well as the measures taken to prevent or respond to the threat. The family vaults of many nobles are often a target for theft, as are of course banks and cathedrals. Is the item guarded or neglected, and who else might be searching for it?

Hook to the Plot 1d12

The Hook explains how the characters first learn about the plot. As such it represents the 'opening scene' in their fight against it.

1. Aftermath
2. Anonymous Letter
3. Disappearance
4. In Media Res
5. Murder
6. Patron
7. Rumour
8. Strange Behaviour
9. Traitor
10. Vision
11. Warning
12. Witness

Aftermath: The plot has already taken place, and the consequences are being felt. The characters are hired or ordered to discover who set the plot in motion and to capture and punish the offenders or return them to the authorities. This gives a good opening scene where the results of the plot can be viewed and the scene of the crime examined.

Anonymous Letter: The characters receive a secret message from an unknown source. The message is unlikely to contain the full details of a plot, only a warning of its intentions and perhaps the name of a single suspect. The GM should consider who would want to issue such a warning and why (an internal rival of the plotter, a spy for some other group, even the plotter himself giving false leads?).

Disappearance: Somebody has gone missing, and the characters need to find out what has happened to them. The missing person could be a friend or relative of the characters who was somehow witness to part of the plot, or may even be the direct victim of the plot. Alternatively, the missing person is a stranger and the characters are hired or asked for help (by a distraught relative or a suspicious authority or patron).

In Media Res: The characters are somehow caught up in the middle of the plot. They are present when the villain takes his first action and must decide to intervene, or are attacked by the villain's minions. Perhaps they are mistaken for the target of the plot, or are visiting the target when the plot goes into effect. The GM should present characters with an initial threat or mystery that may be confusing but which they will be motivated to unravel.

Murder: Someone has been killed. The characters could accidentally discover the body, or evidence of the murder (a trail of blood, a severed body part, or they could hear a scream). Or they could be called to investigate by the authorities (a noble, Church official, agent of the Crown, patron, or a member of the Pendragon Legion). In most instances the murder victim will have been killed in order to silence them as a witness or because they somehow stood in the way of the plot (a guard, for instance).

Perhaps the murder is an opening 'message' to the ultimate target?

Patron: An established patron asks to see the characters and explains their initial suspicions. The patron may know a minion or who the main plotter is or have some of the details of the plotters intentions but he will not know everything. Some of his information may be misleading or wilfully false (for example he may underplay the level of threat posed by the plot).

Rumour: The characters overhear a rumour concerning the plot or a hint regarding it or a key plotter. The classic fantasy version of this hook is the 'tavern rumour', but other possibilities present themselves. Rather than just overhearing conspirators whispering in a tavern, the characters could hear a bard telling a strange tale that hints at the plot. Other locations to overhear rumours can include prison cells, law courts, restaurants, the corridors of an abbey, outside a nobles private chambers, in a garden or in a lords audience hall. Characters could hear the rumour from conspirators (usually minor minions with only enough information to spark an investigation) or from people who have no personal involvement (the peasant ruminating about the number of foreigners visiting his lordship lately, for example).

Strange Behaviour: Someone begins behaving in a suspicious manner. Is this one of the plotters, driven by guilt and nervousness? (a great hook if the guilty party is a friend or ally of the characters). Or is the strange behaviour on the part of a terrified witness or intended victim? The GM should consider what actions a plotter might have to take which would appear strange (keeping odd hours, ordering strange boxes of equipment, having clandestine meetings, being surly or dismissive of social matters, warning people away from key areas etc). If the strange behaviour comes from an intended victim or witness, what might that consist of (becoming reclusive, stockpiling resources, going armed at all times, fleeing his home or regular haunts, seeming depressed or anxious etc).

Traitor: A traitor in the plotters organisation or employ releases information to the characters or to a patron. The traitor will have demands of their own and obtaining the information may require negotiation. Any information the traitor supplies may also be inaccurate due to the villain becoming aware of the treachery or the traitor adjusting the facts to suit his own purposes or reputation. Moral dilemmas could ensue due to the unpleasant nature of the informant. Sometimes the traitor will be a member of the plot who has been captured and interrogated, or he may be a rival for advancement within the Nephilic movement who wants to see the plotter humiliated or defeated. There is also the possibility that the traitor is actually working on the plotters behalf to lure the characters into a trap.

Vision: The characters are directly contacted by one of the Seraphim or saints in a vision. This can come as a waking hallucination or in a dream. Alternatively someone they know and trust can receive the vision and pass on the details to them, such as an existing patron or a member of the clergy. Such visions will often include a warning of the consequences of failure, a grim or apocalyptic sighting of the consequences of Nephilic success. Difficulties may include persuade the authorities to give the vision any credence, assuming that the characters themselves do.

Warning: The characters are provided with a warning regarding the plot. These may come from spies or operatives within the plotters organisation or within a group allied to them. In rare instances a gloating villain may provide the warning themselves. Other possibilities include the plot being foreshadowed by similar successful or foiled schemes, or a pattern being detected in Nephilim activity which suggests the nature of the plot or its next target.

Witness: A witness comes forward who has seen part of the preparations for the plot. This could be a former associate, friend or family member of the plotter or one of his minions, or it could be the victim of an associated assault or crime. If the witness possesses any key information the villain will undoubtedly take actions designed to silence them.

Plot Locations 3d10

Three rolls on the following table should provide suitable locations for at least three 'scenes' unfolding the plot. The first of these should be the place where the characters first encounter the plot by receiving information concerning it or encountering the 'hook' that draws them into the action. The second should represent where the plot itself is going to take place, and the third can be used as the base of any final confrontation with the plotter. If GMs wish for a more complicated or travel-rich plot, additional rolls can be made to reflect this.

3. Abbey
4. Bedroom or Private Chamber
5. Camp
6. Castle
7. Cathedral
8. Cave
9. Cellar
10. Church
11. Crypt
12. Dungeon
13. Fair
14. Farmhouse
15. Guildhouse
16. Hunting Lodge
17. Inn
18. Market
19. Prison
20. Private Gardens
21. Ruin
22. Ship
23. Shop
24. Slum or Ghetto
25. Study or Library
26. Swamp
27. Tower
28. Town Square
29. Townhouse
30. Wood

Do their lives previously intersect in any way? Former defeats, humiliations, jealousies, love affairs, professional rivalries can all figure as motivating factors in the plot and describe why that particular victim was targeted. The same applies with locations—perhaps the plotter hates a particular castle because he was incarcerated there, or targets the possessor of a property that once belonged to his own family? Victims will also have access to different things that a villain may require—a Baron could be targeted because of something stored in his family vault, for example, or because of his friendship with the Crown.

3. A Baron
4. A castle
5. A church
6. A Cult Rival
7. A druid
8. A lesser Guild
9. A mage
10. A Monster
11. A noble
12. A Noble Family
13. A peasant leader
14. A priest
15. A Progressor
16. A soldier
17. A Stonedweller
18. A thief
19. A traitor or spy
20. A village
21. A widow
22. An adventurer
23. An artefact
24. Another Cult
25. The Gawainite Crown
26. The Mages Guild
27. The Merchants Guild
28. The Pendragon Legion
29. The Seraphic Church
30. The Thieves Guild

Target of the Plot 3d10

Roll on this table to determine the intended victim of the plot. In cases of plots such as Assassination, the action taken against the victim will be obvious. In more abstract instances, such as Sabotage, the interpretation of the results might require more imagination. Sabotaging a castle, for instance, might mean poisoning a well or digging tunnels that undermine the walls. But what if this result is applied to an individual, how does one Sabotage a druid? In these cases the result must be interpreted more poetically. Perhaps it means destroying a sacred grove the druid cherishes and protects, or undermining the druids reputation, or encourage ecologically destructive actions by those living near the druid? When interpreted in this poetic or symbolic fashion, even the most unlikely combinations can yield interesting plots.

It is useful in every instance for the GM to consider the history of the target as well as the villain.