

IN NOMINE

SUPERIORS 3

HOPE AND PROPHECY



STEVE JACKSON GAMES

TAKE THE LONG VIEW . . .

WORK IN THE PRESENT TO CREATE THE FUTURE.

Herein find four Archangels who are more concerned with the future than the present. Meet Gabriel, Archangel of Fire, living in her self-imposed seclusion, searing mortal minds with divine inspiration. Khalid, the newly-returned Archangel of Faith, certain his cause is right yet unsure of his place in Heaven. Blandine, Archangel of Dreams, who has forsaken the councils of angels to explore the mysterious Marches. And Yves, the enigmatic Archangel of Destiny, who knows the potential for good in mortals and celestials alike.

Superiors 3: Hope and Prophecy includes:

- ✠ New attunements, Distinctions, and Rites for each Archangel.
- ✠ The Truth about each Superior . . . explained by both friends and enemies.
- ✠ The duties and organization of the Servitors of Fire, Faith, Dreams, and Destiny.
- ✠ How each Archangel interacts with his peers, both in Heaven and in the Realms Below.
- ✠ Alternate versions of each Superior for non-canon campaigning.
- ✠ Adventure seeds, from the most glorious cities of Heaven to the most squalid slums of Earth.



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FIRST EDITION – JUNE 2000.

You will need the *In Nomine* basic rulebook to play.



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



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www.sjgames.com

ISBN 1-55634-428-7



9 781556 344282

SJG02095 3322

52095



Printed in the
U.S.A.

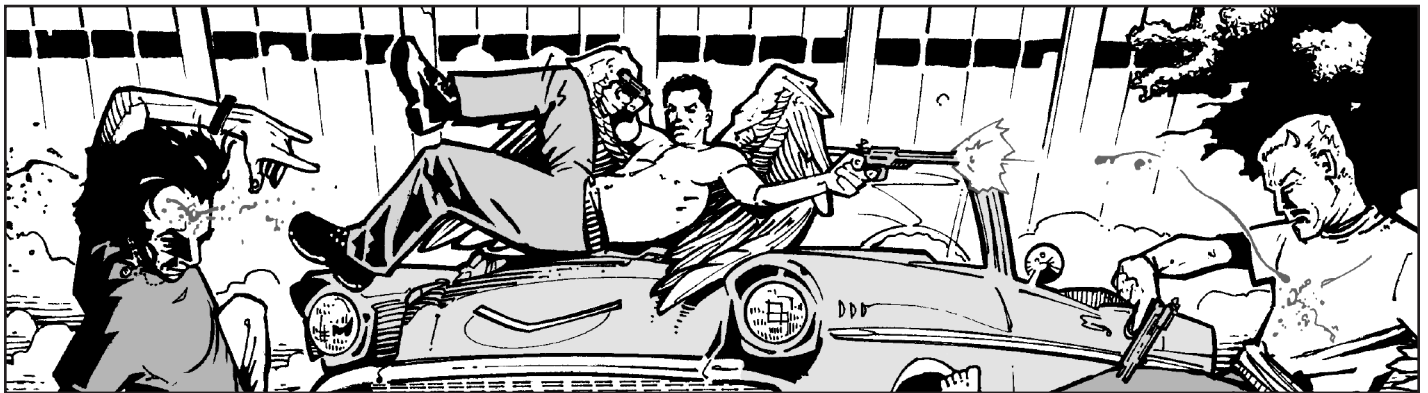


IN NOMINE

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SUPERIORS 3

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ISBN 1-55634-422-8

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STEVE JACKSON GAMES



SUPERIORS 3

Hope and Prophecy

About In Nomine 3

INTRODUCTION..... 4

BLANDINE – CERUB
ARCHANGEL OF DREAMS 5

Dissonance 6
Choir Attunements 6
Servitor Attunements..... 7
Bright Lilim 7
Distinctions..... 8
Songs of Dreams 9
Higher Distinctions..... 9
Relations 9
Basic Rites..... 9
Expanded Rites..... 9
Chance of Invocation..... 9
Invocation Modifiers 10

SUCH STUFF AS DREAMS ARE

MADE OF: BLANDINE IN DETAIL..... 10
Names, Appearance, and Manner 10
The Word of Dreams 10
Common Malakite Oaths..... 10
History 11
Myths and Misconceptions..... 12
Personality and Outlook 13
If I Should Die Before I Wake 14
Politics..... 15
David 15
Marc..... 16
Fate and Dreams 17
Dreams and Debauchery..... 17
Blandine through the Looking Glass –
Variations on a Theme..... 19

BLANDINE'S DOMAIN 20
The Tower's Dual Nature..... 21

THE VALE OF DREAMS..... 23
Whispers from the Asylum 23
Dreamscapes..... 24
Overpopulation in the Marches..... 24
Dreams on Earth 25
Tethers to Dreams..... 25
Dream Scenes..... 25

IN RESTLESS DREAMS,
I WALKED ALONE:
SERVITORS OF BLANDINE 26
Organization..... 27
Dream Interpretation 27
Spirits in the Material World..... 27

Choirs 29
Word-Bound Servitors 29
Shamans and Soldiers of Dreams 30
Jobs 32
Creators in Service to Dreams 32
The Incorruptibles..... 33
Sample Servitor: Aliah..... 34
Sample Servitor: Joe Johnson 34
Dealing With Outsiders 35
Dealing with Judgment 35

MENUNIM –
MESSENGERS OF HOPE..... 36
Resonance..... 36
Dissonance 37
Manner and Appearance 37
Game Mechanics 37
Menunim Check Digit Results 37



GABRIEL – OFANITE
ARCHANGEL OF FIRE..... 38

Dissonance 39
Choir Attunements 39
Servitor Attunements..... 40
Distinctions..... 41
Songs of Fire..... 41
Bright Lilim 41
Higher Distinctions..... 42
Relations 42
Basic Rites..... 42
Expanded Rites..... 42
Chance of Invocation..... 42
Invocation Modifiers 42

GABRIEL IN DETAIL..... 42
The Word of Fire 42
Common Malakite Oaths 42
History 43
The Religion Plan..... 43
Convenient Criminal 44
Gabriel and Uriel..... 44
Holy Mysteries..... 45
An Analysis Of Gabriel's Psychosis 45
Personality and Outlook 46
Aluriel and Mordekial 46
Politics..... 47
Destiny's Intervention 47

Elemental Understanding..... 47
Two Mighty Principles 48
Laurence and Gabriel..... 49
Jean's Plans 49
Variations on a Theme 52

THE VOLCANO 53
Male or Female?..... 53
Gabriel's Tethers 54
Sample Tether:
The Convent of San José, Avila 54

SPARKS TO A FLAME:
SERVITORS OF GABRIEL 56
Soldekai, Chamberlain of
the Legions of Flame 57
Organization..... 58
Word-Bound Servitors 60
Choirs 61
The Ignes 62
Jobs 64
Working With Faith 64
Living in Fire..... 65
Sample Servitor: Jabesh 66
Sample Servitor: Bernard..... 67
Associations and Societies 68
Dealing With Outsiders 69
Creators in Service to Fire 69
Dealing with Judgment 70
Modes of Address..... 70

KHALID – ELOHITE
ARCHANGEL OF FAITH..... 71

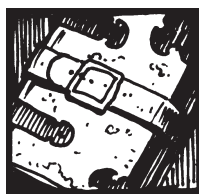
Khalid – Before and After..... 72
Dissonance 73
Choir Attunements 74
Bright Lilim..... 74
Servitor Attunements..... 75
Distinctions..... 76
Higher Distinctions..... 76
Relations 76
Basic Rites..... 76
Secret Songs..... 76
Expanded Rites..... 77
Chance of Invocation..... 77
Invocation Modifiers 77
Common Malakite Oaths..... 77

KHALID IN DETAIL 78
Names, Appearance, and Manner 78
The Word of Faith 78
History 79
Legends and Rumors..... 81
Personality and Outlook 82
Revealed Religions..... 83
Politics..... 84
Variations on a Theme 89

KHALID'S MOSQUE 90
Angels and the Faithful 90



SERVITORS OF KHALID	91
Organization.....	91
Tethers.....	91
Sample Tether: <i>The Kaabab</i>	92
Choirs.....	95
Word-Bound Servitors.....	96
Jobs.....	97
Keeping the Faith.....	98
Khalid in the Middle East.....	98
Faith and Inspiration.....	99
Dealing With Infidels.....	100
Muslim Angels.....	100
Dealing with Judgment.....	101
Servitors of Creation	
in Service to Faith.....	101
Modes of Address.....	101
Sample Servitor: <i>Rashid</i>	102
Sample Servitor: <i>Asim</i>	103



YVES – ARCHANGEL OF DESTINY	104
Dissonance.....	105
Choir Attunements.....	105
Servitor Attunements.....	106
Bright Lilm.....	106
Distinctions.....	107
Higher Distinctions.....	108
Relations.....	108
Basic Rites.....	108
Expanded Rites.....	108
Chance of Invocation.....	108
Invocation Modifiers.....	108
Secret Songs.....	108
YVES, GIVER OF NAMES	109
Names, Appearance, and Manner.....	109
The Word of Destiny.....	109
Common Malakite Oaths.....	109
History.....	110
Destiny and Choice.....	111
Singularity of Vision.....	111
Personality and Outlook.....	112
Politics.....	114
Yves and Gabriel.....	114
Yves and Michael.....	115
Yves and Kronos.....	115
Naming Things.....	117
Variations on a Theme.....	118
Philosophy.....	118
YVES' CATHEDRAL	119
The Library.....	119
Yves' Gateways.....	120
Locations of Interest.....	121
Knowledge and the Library.....	121
The Book of Names.....	122
Tethers of Destiny.....	123

ABOUT *IN NOMINE*

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

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

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Gamer input. We value your comments. We will consider them, not only for new products, but also when we update this book on later printings!

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Mailing List. Much of the online discussion of *In Nomine* happens on our e-mail list. To join, send mail to majordomo@lists.io.com with “subscribe in_nomine-l” in the body.

In Nomine IRC. We also support online roleplaying channels for *In Nomine*. If you'd like to start a MOO or similar Internet environment for gaming *In Nomine*, please check out our policy information at www.sjgames.com/in-nomine/angelmush.html.

<i>Sample Tether:</i>	
<i>The Church of St. Tobias</i>	124
<i>Pushing the Symphony</i>	124

THE HAND OF DESTINY:

SERVITORS OF YVES	125
<i>Being Enigmatic</i>	125
<i>Dissent</i>	126
Choirs.....	127
True Names.....	128
Yves and Raphael.....	128
Kyriotates and Hosts.....	130
Jobs.....	131
Word-Bound Servitors.....	131
Serving Yves.....	132
Sample Servitor: <i>Tarshish</i>	133
Sample Servitor: <i>Megeles</i>	133
Societies of Destiny.....	134
Dealing With Outsiders.....	136
Dealing with Judgment.....	136
Observers.....	136

ADVENTURE SEEDS	137
DREAM SEEDS	137
Waiting for the Barbarians.....	137
One Night in Dreams.....	138
SEEDS OF FIRE	139
The Play's the Thing.....	139
Lost, Stolen, or Strayed.....	140
Fire Insurance.....	140
SEED OF FAITH	
The Next Holiest Man on Earth.....	140
SEEDS OF DESTINY	141
The Enemy Within.....	141
To Err is Human.....	142



INDEX..... 143

3

CONTENTS



INTRODUCTION

Faith. Fire. Dreams. Destiny. At first glance, these Words might seem insubstantial and fleeting, slipping away from any attempts to understand them like sand through a fist. But these Heavenly Words have profound effects on humanity. Faith, invisible and indescribable, but with the power to bring peace or send whole nations to war. Fire, unpredictable, immolating the cruel, shining the light and warmth of Heavenly inspiration on those whom madness dictates. Dreams, often forgotten, but able to unlock humanity's hopes and fears and drive them to greatness. And Destiny, silent and knowing, helping people make the climactic choice in their lives.

The history of these four Superiors intertwines, drawing them together over time in ways that only Yves can fully comprehend. Blandine has an ember from Gabriel's Volcano shining from the top of her Tower, lighting the way to Heaven. Yves gave Gabriel the Quran, touching off a massive schism which ended in Gabriel's flight from Heaven. Khalid followed Gabriel's example, forsaking his peers in order to fight for his Word on the corporeal plane.

Their methods are as disparate as their Words. Khalid and Blandine agree that humans are the key to the War, but differ completely in their methods of waging that War. He crushes the opposition on Earth; she guides and instructs from the Marches, never presuming to intrude in the realm of the physical. Yves is subtle, preferring to let the Symphony lead him where it will, taking no action without due consideration; Gabriel strikes without thinking, letting God and her whims guide her aim.

This book offers detailed descriptions of the Archangels of Faith, Fire, Dreams, and Destiny, combining material from the *Revelations Cycle*, the *In Nomine* rulebook, the *Liber* series, and many others. In the few instances where there is a conflict, the information in this book supersedes any presented in earlier publications.



Mommy, Do Angels Sleep?

A note about sleeping – angels, being celestials, do not sleep or dream the way humans do. The vessels of angels in the corporeal realm may sleep, and as they “dream,” the angel enters the Marches without having gone celestial while on Earth. This is very handy for avoiding Blandine's dissonance conditions. Any time a “sleeping” angel is mentioned in this book, the text is referring to the angel's vessel.

Enjoy the book, and sweet dreams . . .



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CHERUB ARCHANGEL OF DREAMS

The world is a dream, nothing more.

5

BLANDINE



Some dreams are more solid than others, and Blandine's servants are charged with protecting dreamers and helping them battle their fears. The minions of Beleth, Princess of Nightmares, are her dire enemies.

Blandine is a Cherub, and something of a loner. As such, she prefers to avoid Archangelic politics . . . but just because she's removed herself from the planning of the War doesn't mean she's not fighting. It's generally (if grudgingly) agreed that, of all the Archangels, Blandine has done the most measurable good for mankind. She humbly carries out her orders and follows her Word, helping the human race achieve its goals and dreams with as little celestial interference as possible.

Blandine's servants are rarely combat monsters. Like their mistress, they prefer subtle background manipulations to force, and seldom involve themselves in outright violence.

Every evening is an adventure for the servants of Blandine, who must use caution during the day, saving their Essence for the night in dream-worlds far from Earth. After a long night of walking the ethereal Marches of Dreams (*In Nomine*, p. 51), her angels typically spend a few lonely hours nursing their empty souls before reaching the morning light and its rush of rejuvenating Essence.

On the few occasions when she manifests in the corporeal world, Blandine prefers to appear as a beautiful woman in her early 20s with black hair and green eyes, wearing gray clothing with elaborate embroidery.

DISSONANCE

An angel of Blandine may not take his celestial form in the mundane world, nor use Celestial Songs on Earth. To do so generates dissonance.

Most of Blandine's angels have been assigned specific dreamers to guard. If one of her servants knows his charge is in danger, he must warn him in his next dream or suffer dissonance until either the dreamer has been adequately warned or the dangerous situation is resolved.

CHOIR ATTUNEMENTS

Seraphim

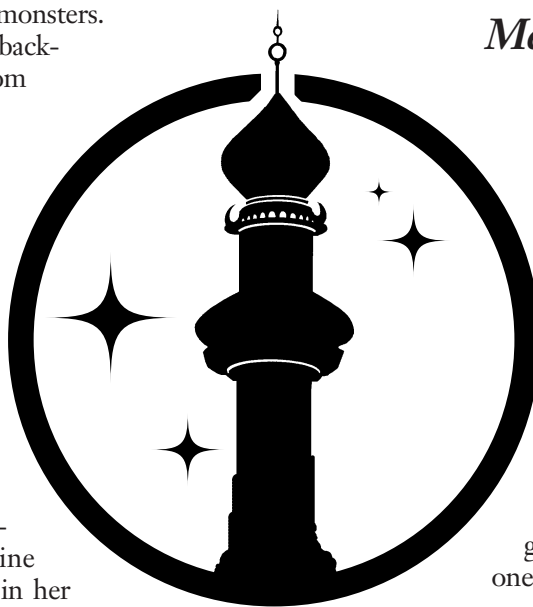
Blandine's Seraphim see truly in the Marches. While in the ethereal realm (or anyone's dreamscape), they add their Ethereal Forces to any Perception rolls (except for resonance).

Cherubim (restricted)

Cherubim of Blandine may automatically enter the dreamscape of a sleeper to whom they are attuned and remain until the dreamer wakes.

Ofanim

Ofanim feel at home in the Marches, moving comfortably through ethereal versions of reality. When Dream Walking (see below), or using the Corporeal Song of Dreams, they can stay in a dreamscape for a number of minutes equal to the normal duration multiplied by their Ethereal Forces.



Menunim (p. 36) (restricted)

The Menunim, Blandine's angels of Hope, automatically know how to inspire a flicker of hope in the heart of anyone they see. They may cause a target in the waking world, who must be within the angel's line of sight, to enter a momentary uplifting daydream. This may be all it takes to encourage someone who had given up on a problem to try one more time.

Elohim (restricted)

In the Marches, the natural resonance of Blandine's Elohim for emotion is constantly active; no resonance roll is needed. Consider the "check digit" as being equal to the angel's Ethereal Forces. They may make resonance rolls in an attempt to improve this check digit.

Malakim

Blandine's Malakim are not noticed in the Marches unless they want to be. Lower the target number of any Perception roll to notice one of these Malakim by the Virtue's Ethereal Forces.

Kyriotates (restricted)

While his host is asleep, a Kyriotate may be in more than one part of the Marches at a time. His consciousness may simultaneously extend to a number of dreamscapes equal to his Ethereal Forces. Once it has entered the Marches via a sleeping host, it may relinquish all its hosts.

Mercurians

Blandine's Mercurians can use dreamers as conduits, moving from one person's dreamscape to another without needing to roll – but only if the two people are emotionally close to each other (GM's discretion) and currently on the same side of the Marches (either Blandine's or Beleth's).

SERVITOR ATTUNEMENTS

Bounded in a Nutshell

Usually, a celestial or ethereal must make a successful Will roll to enter or leave the Marches. An angel with this attunement can spend 2 Essence to temporarily strengthen the "barriers" between the corporeal and ethereal realms for a number of hours equal to his total Forces. During this time, his target (who must be within the line of sight when the attunement is activated) makes all rolls to enter or leave the Marches at a penalty of the angel's Ethereal Forces. The angel can lift the restriction at any time before the duration expires, with a successful Precision roll.

This does not apply to any situation in which a Will roll would not normally be made (i.e., being defeated in Ethereal combat), *except* in the case of mortal dreamers.

If it proves necessary to instruct or scold a mortal within his own dreamscape, angels find this attunement useful in ensuring a captive audience for the duration.

Dreambook

This attunement allows the angel to create a corporeal recording of a dreamer's experiences in the Marches. The angel must have a blank book in hand, and the angel must be in physical contact with the dreamer while he sleeps. A complete record of the dream will appear on the pages of the book, seemingly written in the dreamer's own hand. The exact style in which it is written (straight-forward prose, high-flown poetry, etc.) depends on both the nature of the dreamer and the nature of the dream. A few dreambooks have become classic works of literature.

In recent years, this attunement has been used successfully to create dreambooks in other media as well – videocassette, 8mm film, CD-ROM, DVD (region free), and so on (the name of the attunement is traditional). However, audio or visual dreambooks can only be seen and heard for what they are by celestials, Soldiers, and others able to perceive the Symphony. Normal humans (including the dreamer, if he is one) will simply see a video of the dreamer lying in bed asleep, or hear a tape of soft snoring.

BRIGHT LILIM (RESTRICTED)

In the Marches, a Lilim of Dreams' natural resonance to perceive Needs would always be active and successful, with a check digit equal to the angel's Ethereal Forces. Like Elohim of Dreams, Lilim might make resonance rolls in an attempt to improve the check digit.

If Blandine has redeemed any Lilim (in addition to Mira in *Fall of the Malakim*, p. 63), she will treat them as individuals – individuals who have dared to deny everything they knew to chase one impossible dream. If the Gifter truly wishes an assignment on Earth, then however dangerous to her redemption, her dreams will be answered. Although Brights may not last long in Blandine's service, their Heavenly duties are happy, fulfilling ones. While the Archangel grieves each loss, she never regrets the hopes which a Bright Lilim may have realized in her service, or passed on to others.

Dream Sight

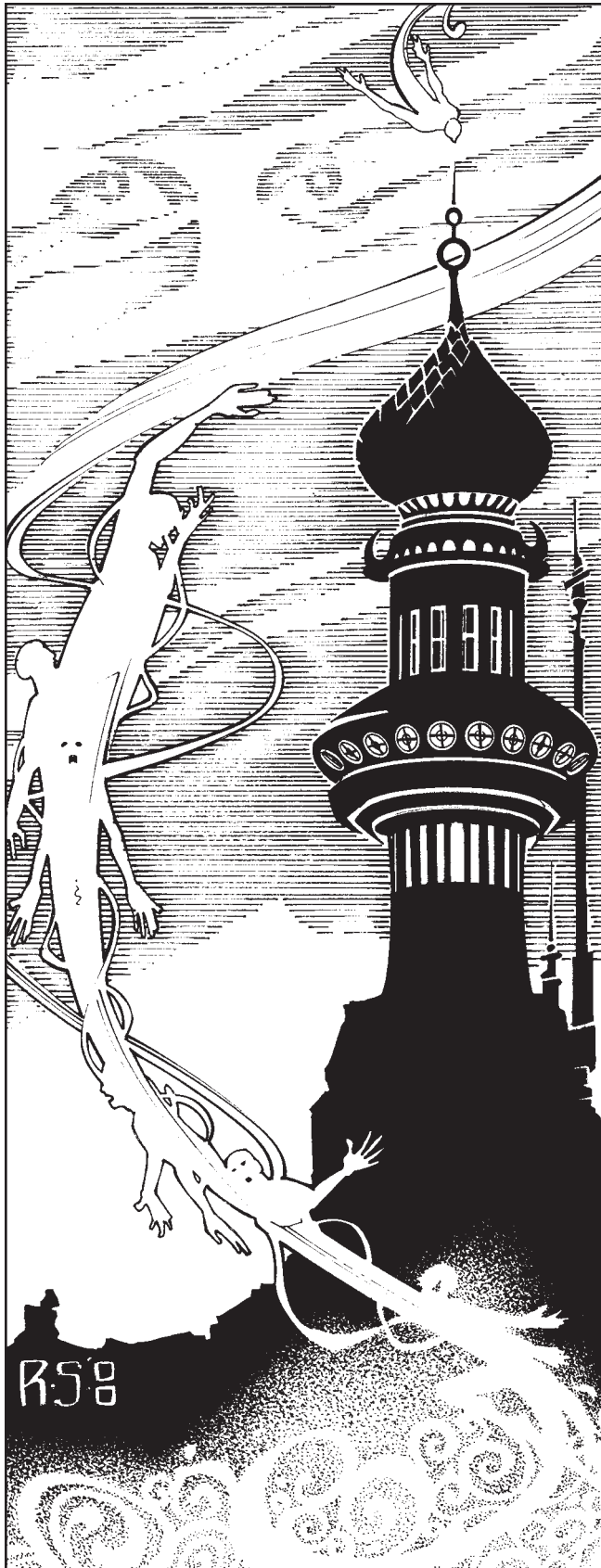
This attunement allows a Servitor of Blandine to touch a sleeping dreamer in the corporeal world, and obtain a mental image of his dreamscape. At the GM's discretion, it may occasionally allow brief, enigmatic glimpses into the daydreams of a creature that is awake (and daydreaming).

If the angel is in a Tether that leads to the Marches from any other realm (e.g., Blandine's Tower, or one of the rare Tethers to the Far Marches), this attunement allows him to glimpse the ethereal locus of the Tether.

Using this attunement requires the user's full attention. While doing this, he will be unable to attempt any action other than concentrating on the vision.

Dream Walking

A servant of Blandine in a corporeal vessel may enter the Marches through the mind of a human dreamer. He must have seen the person before, but the two can be anywhere in the world. The angel's vessel must be asleep, and the angel must make a successful Perception roll, at +2 if he and the subject are physically touching. The subject must also be asleep, and his dreamscape must be in Blandine's realm. The check digit gives the number of minutes the angel may stay in the subject's dream – or, if the roll failed, the number of minutes before he may try again.



Healing Dream

This attunement allows its user to scan a human's memory for a specific topic, and then modify it. The user must be in contact with the target's sleeping body or dreamscape.

Some parts of a person's mind are blocked from tampering: firm convictions, phobias, insanities, and other major traumas. However, an angel may attempt to *soften* the impact of such memories, making them less painful and more dreamlike; this approach is most effective for memories that originated many years in the past.

Using this power costs 4 Essence and takes an hour. It also requires a successful Contest (*In Nomine*, p. 39) of Will. If the attempt fails, the patient wakes up, and remembers a vivid dream about the subject the angel tried to modify.

Memory alterations are limited to minor, subtle edits that don't challenge the patient's sense of disbelief – attempts to make major changes may require a penalty to the angel's Will roll, at the GM's discretion.

Lucidity

For a cost of 3 Essence, this attunement allows the angel to grant *lucidity* to a dreamer for the duration of a single dream. A lucid dreamer has total control over the events of his own dream – he determines what elements come and go, and doesn't roll dice against skills while in his own dreamscape. Rather, his successes and failures in his dreamscape are determined by his own self-image. Lucidity given to the wrong dreamer can vault him instantly into Beleth's hands; this power should be used with caution! Lucidity granted to the *right* dreamer can provide an almost absolute protection against suffering a nightmare.

The angel need not be in the dreamer's dreamscape to use this attunement; contact with the dreamer's body is sufficient. If the angel *is* within the dreamscape, the Lucid dreamer can eject the angel at will, if his presence is noticed, and the dreamer doesn't want the angel to be present.

DISTINCTIONS

Vassal of Dreams

The angel can send blissful dreams to any given sleeper within 500 yards, who will be drawn into Blandine's side of the Marches. Both the user and his target are drawn into Blandine's dream world for the rest of the night.

Friend of Sleepers

The angel can detect when someone in his presence is the target of a celestially-inflicted dream or nightmare.

Master of the Realms of Night

A Master has a +2 bonus to succeed on any roll made while walking the Marches.

SONGS OF DREAMS

Angels of Blandine favor the Songs of Dreams, Harmony, and Sleep (*Liber Canticorum*, p. 55), all of which aid in their work. They prefer Songs that cause as little disturbance to the Symphony as possible.

In addition, favored Servitors may be granted the Song of Daydreams (*Liber Canticorum*, p. 66), which is particularly popular among Menunim (p. 36).

HIGHER DISTINCTIONS

Beyond Master of the Realms of Night, Blandine grants higher Distinctions to those who have distinguished themselves in her service, furthering the Word of Dreams in all of its permutations, particularly angels who have helped many humans achieve their dreams and overcome their fears.

Blandine's higher Distinctions carry with them no special powers, such as those of the lower Distinctions. Rather, they are typically awarded along with several unique Rites . . . and a new level of responsibility.

Sentinel

Blandine's Sentinels are each responsible for intensive work against Beleth's servants, and are each Word-bound angels of great personal power, dedicated to both their own Words and the greater Word of Dreams.

The full title of angels bearing these Distinctions is derived from their Word. The Angel of Dreams of Peace, one of Blandine's most favored Sentinels, is titled the Sentinel of Dreams of Peace – a powerful force protecting the aspirations of mankind.

Warden of the Marches

Warden is not a distinct rank, but an additional responsibility which can be granted to an angel who has already proven himself, and earned the rank Master of the Realms of Night. Blandine's Wardens receive autonomous control of stretches of her Marches, wandering like holy shepherds among the dreamscapes. Within their own regions, they are responsible for keeping the peace, for greeting and directing other

angels who ascend to the Marches, for driving out ethereals, and for organizing such action as may be necessary against demons.

The Wardens of the Four Quarters are the most senior of these local administrators, going by the traditional titles "Warden of the Western Marches," "Warden of the Southern Marches," etc. (although absolute direction has little meaning in the ethereal realm).

RELATIONS

The Archangel of Dreams considers the other Archangels too political and not sufficiently dedicated. Like Jordi, she strongly prefers that her servants avoid the complexities of Heavenly politics. She is listed as hostile to four other Archangels, but this is merely because they often work against her Word. "Coldly neutral" might be a better description. Her agents will not sabotage other divine servants except to protect the Word of Dreams. They might heed a genuine call for help from any angel, even a servant of violent Michael, if it did not interfere with their duties.

Blandine herself never leaves the Marches for matters of merely political concern. Traditionally, one of her angels of Hope, the Menunim, carries her sigil to the most important meetings, where her vote is cast at the discretion of Yves.

Allied: No one

Associated: Yves (*Eli and Yves are Associated with Blandine*)

Hostile: David, Jean, Marc, Michael (*Michael is Hostile to Blandine*)

BASIC RITES

- ✘ Sleep for four hours without visiting Beleth's realm.
- ✘ Spend eight hours successfully protecting a sleeper from active forces of danger. (+2 Essence)

EXPANDED RITES

Blandine may also grant additional rites as rewards.

- ✘ Tell a story to a group of ten children.
- ✘ Defeat a demon in ethereal combat, ejecting it from the Marches. (+2 Essence)
- ✘ Spend four hours daydreaming.
- ✘ "Talk down" a potential suicide.
- ✘ Enable someone to overcome their own greatest fear. (+2 Essence)
- ✘ Destroy an ethereal's vessel.

CHANCE OF INVOCATION: 2


COMMON MALAKITE OATHS

Malakim of Dreams frequently profess loyalty to ideals. The evils which they are sworn to destroy include demons (of course), especially Nightmares, but also those intangibles which destroy dreams on Earth – poverty, hatred, bigotry, and fear. Oaths may be phrased in flowery words, rich in imagery. Typical oaths include:

- ✘ I will serve Blandine with perfect obedience to her commands.
- ✘ I will spend at least 6 hours a night patrolling the Marches.
- ✘ I will honor the Sabbath Day as a day of rest, and keep it holy.
- ✘ I will rescue those lost in nightmares.
- ✘ I will destroy ethereals on Earth wherever I find them.
- ✘ I will not lose my temper when there are ladies present.
- ✘ I will not allow an enemy to escape me by fleeing into the Marches.
- ✘ Under no provocation will I forget my manners.
- ✘ I will spend at least 1 hour a week teaching mortals to overcome their fears.

INVOCATION MODIFIERS

- +1 A book of fairy tales.
- +2 A sleeping potion, or sleeping pills.
- +3 A handwritten collection of lullabies.
- +4 A bed in which a demon's vessel slept while in the Marches.
- +5 One person, dreaming peacefully while traveling in a car, train or airplane.
- +6 Ninety living creatures in a room, peacefully dreaming.
- +8 At the top of Blandine's Tower.

od gave us memories that we might have roses in December.

–Sir James M. Barrie

SUCH STUFF AS DREAMS ARE MADE OF: BLANDINE IN DETAIL

And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions. . .

– Joel 2:28

NAMES, APPEARANCE, AND MANNER

Blandine is the most aristocratic of Archangels. Her bearing is regal, even in defeat. Her voice is sweet, and grave, and calm. A quiet sadness is so much a part of her now that she wears it like a cloak. She likes to appear to her Servitors via Songs of Projection, as a pale image against a dark background; or her face might shimmer as a reflection in a mirror or a puddle. She may also choose to talk to her Servitors in their sleep, appearing before them when they walk the Marches, or sometimes while they are in the dreamscape of a sleeping mortal. For less urgent communications, she sends her Menunim. Blandine is polite but reserved when speaking to lesser angels. She treats them with respect, but expects them to humbly accept their orders, just as she accepts the orders she is given.

Her favored vessel is young and female, but she may choose to appear as a woman of any race, or any age. There is a radiance about her, even in a physical vessel; a sense of undimmed hope which has never been worn down by the cares of life. She often gives the impression that part of her attention is elsewhere.

Blandine has been given many names through the ages, by her Servitors and by mortals. Some of the most widely used are “The White Lady,” “The Guardian of the Marches,” “Queen of the Night,” and “Keeper of the Flame.”

THE WORD OF DREAMS

The Word of Dreams has two principal facets. The first is its most literal – the trip each sleeper takes into his private dreamscape when he sleeps. The second is a little more metaphorical – usually. Those dreams that the dreamers carry with them while waking are also under Blandine's care – all of their hopes, aspirations, and goals, noble and ignoble alike. Blandine is not judgmental; the dreams of the selfish side of humanity deserve

protecting as much, she believes, as their selfless and noble dreams. Provided, of course, that those dreams are truly *theirs*, and not the work of diabolical manipulators. The power to manipulate human dreams is great, and Blandine does not use it casually, or brook casual uses by her servants. If the War is to be won, Blandine firmly believes it must be won by letting the humans exercise the free will that God has given to them.

This attitude gets a mixed response from the Seraphim Council. Most of the Archangels agree that humans must ultimately make their own path; *all* of them agree that demonic manipulation must be wiped out. But some disagree strongly about the dreams of the selfish, seeing the Host as a body meant to punish humans as well as shepherd them. Disagreements or not, though, most of the Archangels are content to leave Blandine to her work – she is very, very good at it.

Little Dreams

Blandine is a patron to dreamers of all kinds, and she interprets her Word to include every manner of human artistry and creativity: dreams given form. Few humans have their own personal dream-guard, but those dreamers who make their dreams open to others are given special priority. Almost every poet, painter, musician, actor, and writer has one of Blandine's angels looking over his shoulder.

Another type of dreamer especially favored by Blandine is the ambitious madman. Any human who dreams of building an empire, making a new nation or toppling an old one is likely, too, to be favored with an angelic guardian.

This isn't just Blandine letting her personal tastes interfere with her use of power. Such people are often capable of making vital changes on Earth, frequently through inspiration alone. A charismatic satirist can bring about a revolution, and millions of lives can be saved or lost by keeping close watch on such matters. Demons often stalk those capable of making such changes, and the angels vigilantly keep watch.

HISTORY

Millennia ago, when the universe was still in its infancy, Blandine and Beleth loved one another. Among the first angels made by God, they were young and full of wonder and innocence – and one of the earliest triumphs of God.

God loved His creations, but Blandine and Beleth were the first of His creations to love one another. The Host followed suit, exploring their feelings for one another, for God, and for the humans below on the young Earth. It was a good time to be alive.



Then Lucifer led the rebellion that led to the Fall, taking a third of the angels of Heaven and convincing them that he was right and God was wrong . . . that angels were too fine a thing, too *glorious* a thing, to be mere instruments of a greater symphony, servile to God while the humans were permitted to find their own paths in their brief lives. Lucifer was beautiful, charismatic, and used his own logic like sweet bait on those he wanted on his side. It deeply satisfied his sense of irony to separate Beleth and Blandine, the two angels who had in many ways come to symbolize the beauty of selfless devotion amongst the creations of God. And furthermore, it served the ends of his long-term goal . . . the taking of the Symphony for himself.

Beleth was, in those days, the Angel of Fear, working in tandem with Blandine's Word of Dreams. They complemented each other, using mankind's own aspirations and apprehensions to mold people of great potential, helping the humans advance. It seemed that their work – their very existence – was a single thing with two facets.

At first, Blandine didn't even suspect Lucifer; no one did. When Lucifer and his followers would gather in the Groves, Blandine observed from a distance. Nothing seemed wrong at first, and Lucifer seemed to be nothing more than a kind of fact-advocate. Since he was the Lightbringer, and favored by God, no harm could come from a little examination of the truth . . .

Beleth received an invitation to come and listen, to see what Truths she could find in what he was saying in the Groves. Lucifer asked her himself, and he was every bit the dashing radical, the passionate philosopher. Beleth accepted.

Blandine had always been both more aggressive and optimistic than Beleth, as suited her Word. Beleth was much more fragile, less secure; her mastery of the concept of Fear was anything but an abstract one. She knew fear, herself. The two complemented each other, giving to one another what the other lacked. Blandine lacked any sense of the possibility of failure. Beleth needed reminding of the possibility of success. Lucifer knew this, and used it.

The Lightbringer pried deep into Beleth's insecurities. "Your own fear," Lucifer explained, "stems from wielding your Word incorrectly." Beleth became convinced that her approach to her Word was too soft, too giving . . . too influenced by Blandine. Blandine, explained Lucifer, *envied* her, which is why ultimately the humans that both of them touched *overcame* their fears. Over a short period of time, Lucifer inspired hatred in Beleth – hatred for humans, and resentment of Blandine.

Blandine tried desperately to convince Beleth that Lucifer was manipulating her, but every word she spoke could be interpreted as jealousy, and it was. By the time Blandine approached other angels about the problem, the Rebellion was beginning, and Beleth stole away into the crowds of dissenting angels, out of reach at Lucifer's side.

Heavenly time has a lot more to do with the *nature* of events than with linear measures of their duration. A hundred years can see the rise of a great nation of humans, but pass like a lazy afternoon in Heaven. By the same token, the indivisible instant between the life and death of an ordinary man can be a century of mourning to the entire Host. Time is strange, to an angel.

The Fall was millennia ago, but Blandine feels the pain and frustration of her loss as if it had happened this morning. Beleth's dark Tower of Nightmares remains visible across the Marches, a constant reminder of Lucifer's theft – and the servants of Beleth and Blandine fight a quiet, bitter war.

MYTHS AND MISCONCEPTIONS

On the Seventh Day

On the first Sabbath, all of Creation rested; for the first time the dreamscapes of living beings appeared in the Marches. According to many angels who like to interpret the Bible literally, this was when Blandine was assigned her Word.

Keeper of the Flame

After the Fall, Blandine walked from her ruined tower to Gabriel's Cathedral. It was the first time she had left the Tower since Beleth's final assault and challenge – when Blandine had refused to come out and fight her former lover. In the Citadel of Fire, Blandine rubbed ashes on her face and arms as a symbol of mourning, and begged Gabriel to loan her a spark from the Cathedral's heart.

When he asked what use Dreams might have for Fire, she said simply that Beleth and a third of the Host had fallen into darkness. When they wanted to return, they would need a light to guide them home across the Marches.

He granted the request and she carried the ember back between her bare hands, setting it inside the great glass lamp which still shines from the top of the Tower. Other stories say that Gabriel gave her his own Heart to keep, and that is the source of the Tower's light.


The First Redemption

Blandine was responsible for redeeming the first Fallen angel to re-enter Heaven, although she humbly admits that God showed her what she needed to do. All of the ancient Archangels remember the moment when she brought the new Cherub into the Seraphim Council and demanded silence so that he could recount his own story for them to hear. Even proud Michael admits that this was the point when the Archangels realized *en masse* that those who had fallen prey to Lucifer's lies need not be lost forever.

If Heaven can be said to have a "Peace Faction," this was when it formed. Blandine herself played no further part in the politics that followed. She has admitted to her closest friends that she had asked God to tell her if all her hopes were in vain. Later on the same day, Oresto, the first redemption, had collapsed at the base of her tower.

Secret Allies

Of all the ethereal spirits, there were some who were friendly toward mankind, and were more than willing to help Heaven's cause. Not all of these creatures were



destroyed, driven out into the Far Marches, or converted to Nightmares by the Purity Crusade. It has long been suspected that behind her quiet assurances, the Archangel of Dreams permits a few rare ethereals to serve in her ranks, protected by corporeal vessels.

Rumored allies have included unicorns, minor ethereal gods who converted to Christianity or Islam, and even a dragon, who is said to be the greatest living dragon-slayer of all time.

PERSONALITY AND OUTLOOK

Those who work with Blandine rarely deal with her directly; she keeps to herself, engrossed in the unfathomable complexities of the dreams and hopes of all humanity.

Most first impressions of Blandine peg her as well-versed in her own powers (she is), humble (she is), and busy in order to keep herself from thinking too much about her own feelings. She is too genteel to keep her pain on public display, as if it were a trophy or a war wound; instead she has closed herself up, become more aloof from the other Archangels, and plunged herself into her work.

Despite her lingering pain over Beleth, Blandine is optimistic when it comes to humanity. Studying the valley of human dreamscapes as if it were a vast game of chess, she takes her part in the War very seriously.

Her moods are often contradictory, running the gamut from bright Pollyanna to grim self-absorption. She is determined that every human she can touch will experience their dreams to the fullest, finding their potential and true happiness in a kind of fairy-tale ideal, but her own smiles are rare and slight. Blandine believes that human dreams are the key to everything, that the hearts of mankind carry the solution to all dilemmas and the strength to see them to an end.

How Blandine will behave toward anyone else depends on how close she is to them. To her Servitors, she is kind but brief, delivering more commands than compliments (though when she rewards exceptional service, the rewards are great). To her few friends (a category which is rumored to include a small number of humans), she is warmer, letting both her optimism and great weariness become more visible.

The Hope that Dares Not Speak its Name

Despite having seen the glories of Heaven twisted toward bitter, self-destructive war; and humanity – God’s highest creations – turned into a part of that battleground, Blandine still believes. She trusts that the War

will not last forever, that one day Evil will be defeated, the Fallen will return to God’s grace, light will illuminate every shadow, and grass will grow on each grain of sand.

Even if these ideals seem delusional and futile to others, she cannot stop holding onto that last thread of hope. For if no one hoped for these things, the War would be over before it had even begun. If even one person dares to dream, then who knows? Anything is possible.

And her own dearest wish, for Beleth’s return? Even as she prepares her troops for the nightly assault, the Archangel of Dreams dreams on . . .

Priorities

Blandine’s efforts are among the most vital in the War. All of the six billion human souls enter the Marches when they sleep, bringing with them their secrets, their troubles, their concerns, and their hopes. The vast valley between Blandine’s and Beleth’s Towers is an ocean awash with glittering fragments of humanity.

Personal issues aside, Blandine is among the most ancient of Archangels, a powerful primal force. She’s out to end the War, wipe out the Diabolicals, and return the Symphony to where it once was: humans pursuing their dreams, and angels guiding them when necessary, and leaving them alone when possible. To this end, she heads one of the largest angelic networks of the Host (and one of the least visible), along with a variety of human servants and Soldiers as well. She is also a vigilant guardian between the Marches and Heaven, standing watch with her Wardens against incursion by the spiteful remnants of human myth, living out their exile in the wake of Uriel’s final crusade.

Conflict with Beleth

The servants of Beleth and Blandine are worked to exhaustion, every night, in subtle warfare among the dreamscapes. Both are working to influence humanity through dreams – and the conflict has traditionally been strategic and indirect. Recently, however, Beleth has been playing a stronger game, engaging Blandine’s angels directly. Blandine believes that Beleth is trying to force her to take a more militaristic tack – to join the War on Earth as much as in the Marches. Blandine has opted not to take the bait, and is suffering some heavy losses for it. Rather, she is redoubling her efforts in the dreamscapes, working to fight Beleth indirectly.

It’s a tricky struggle, the outcome always in doubt. If either Beleth or Blandine should gain a significant advantage, it could tip the balance of the entire War.

Currently, the mistresses of the Marches hold one another in check.

Views on God

Blandine is one of the ancient Archangels, created when the world was young. Despite the Fall, and everything that has happened since then, she can't hate God. She loves Him. If it would help God's plan for Creation, she would happily put her soul on the line night after night after night . . . and she does.

Views on Lucifer

No other Archangel hates the Lightbringer as coldly, as stubbornly, or as *personally* as Blandine. He stole Beleth away, and poisoned her mind against the celestial who loved her more than anything in creation, and he did it deliberately, to make a political point. He betrayed his own dreams, and those of millions of mortals yet unborn. Blandine is past any jealousy that she may have felt, but her hatred for the First Balsraph and all of his works endures.

Views on Humanity

The Archangel of Dreams is closer to humanity than anyone can imagine. She knows the starving millions who can only dream of food. She knows the hopes and fears of children who are born in the gutter and will die in the gutter. She knows the lost ideals of men in high places, and the selfish dreams of lovers. The hopes and aspirations of mankind are what allow them to rise above mere physical existence, and to be greater than the animals. To the Archangel of Dreams, every human hope is like a small, unvoiced prayer that has the potential to bring them closer to God. In these dreams lie the hope for all creation.

She doesn't see all mortals as equal, though. Some are more important than others – the artists, writers, and idealists who can communicate their dreams, encouraging others to dream along with them, are particularly important to her. She views humanity as a vast and rich tapestry, in which the brightest and most talented dreamers shine like golden threads, illuminating the rest. She concentrates her efforts on these mortals.

But she also strongly opposes intervention in mortal affairs. Celestials should not interfere on the corporeal world with the lives of mortals, except where necessary to combat infernal forces. There are many times and places on Earth where an angel may wish to act to prevent pain and suffering, but Blandine believes that it is not the function of angels to prevent mortals from living their own lives. At night, her Servitors may act – they may warn their charges, help them to fight their battles, heal those who are sick in spirit . . . but then the mortals must live for themselves.

IF I SHOULD DIE BEFORE I WAKE . . .

As a rule, humans and animals that die peacefully in their sleep simply move on to their final destinations. But for some, confused by dying within their own dreams, the temptation to stay in the comfortable dream world is so great that they instinctively cling to it, being drawn out toward the Far Marches. It is the responsibility of the Archangel of Dreams to ensure that these Dream Shades (*Corporeal Players Guide*, p. 82) are freed from their own illusions, to reach the destinations which God intends for them, and meet with their final reward (or punishment). Whatever they once were, they are intruders in the Marches now.

If a Dream Shade appears to be truly happy in the Marches, and isn't harming any dreamscapes, Blandine's Servitors may decide that all he needs is a little more time to make up his mind – especially if the Shade seems more likely bound for Hell than Heaven. It's not even unknown (although frowned upon severely by the Inquisition) for willing Dream Shades to be recruited to help watch over the dreamscapes of the living. As an added inducement, angels of Dreams can offer such beings the chance to visit a close friend or relative in his dreams, and pass on any last messages. For many, this is enough to satisfy the desperate need that has prevented them from letting go of their lives and their dreams, and they move on.

Views on the War

Blandine dislikes the necessity of fighting, but she believes that the War is a moral imperative. For her, the moral dimension of the War is at least as important as the results of any minor skirmishes, because it is in human hearts and human souls that the true War will be fought and won. She is quietly determined that she will not fail in her duties, and that humanity must be protected against the evils which demonkind promotes.

More and more, the War fought on Earth has become an abstraction for her. The conflict with Beleth has grown to encompass her entire world. She hates the conflicts that interfere with humanity directly, and disapproves of the unsubtle tactics favored by more warlike Archangels.

The Marches welcome careful Dream-Shapers

Views on Ethereals

Before the crusade, some ethereals were on almost friendly terms with the reserved Archangel of Dreams. Now, that is true of very, very few. Many more hide in the Far Marches or Beleth's side of the Vale, filled only with a blazing resentment against humans and the angels who guard them.

Blandine despises ethereals who stalk the mortal world, filled with malice or mischief. She also acts when necessary to protect the Near Marches from their schemes and predations, as she would with any other intruder. Humans were not *meant* to interact with their own "dreams given flesh," even if the ethereals have no intention of stealing Essence, perverting true believers, or treating humans as playthings. She understands, more than any other Archangel, how much harm they can inadvertently do.

DAVID

David's angels see all humanity as part of a group. For them, unity is strength, and individuality is weakness. But every dream is individual, and those personal dreams and hopes which Stone sees as weaknesses become the most precious things in creation to Blandine and her Servitors. David's preferred tactics on Earth are also so direct (crueler commentators might say "stupid") as to make Blandine wrinkle up her pretty nose in disdain. It isn't surprising that two such different worldviews have difficulty in seeing eye to eye.

Blandine feels no dislike for David personally; he has made his decisions, and serves his Word faithfully. She also cares nothing for what he might think of her work – if he dismisses it, then he is simply wrong. She doesn't prevent her angels from occasionally working alongside Stone, with due caution; both Superiors approve of charismatic leaders, and believe that humanity should be encouraged to live and die on its own terms, without angelic hand-holding.

POLITICS

Blandine is one of the least political angels in the Seraphim Council, keeping her methods, her moods, and her plans to herself.

While she will (very occasionally) take action or speak out against the more flying-fire-and-machine-guns factions of Heaven (twice recently, she's lost patience with Michael), she normally keeps a quiet vigil over the Marches, knowing full well her importance to the War.

Archangelic Opinions

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

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

Eli: Hey, she's great. No, really. She stays *out* of the bickering. She dedicates herself to helping humanity bridge the gap between what they want to be and who they *are*. And who they want to be with. That's an important dream, the best. Her Word embodies a point that a lot of the angels miss . . . It's *okay* to be motivated by what feels good. It's a damned shame about Beleth. (*I have learned a lot from Eli, and he is a good friend. He sees something wonderful in every part of Creation; and he understands that it's necessary to rest and take stock, and take pleasure in the glorious things that God has made.*)

Gabriel: I liked her, I think. I think she has visited me recently, in another guise. She sparks fires, and fans embers to flame. Yes, I'm sure I liked her . . . (*She has a great Dream, but I fear that it has consumed her . . . I've tried reaching out to her, but don't know if I ever penetrated her madness to the hope I know lies within. She can be destructive, dangerous, insane. Still – every child fears the dark, and she does bring Light . . .*)

Janus: Her Word is so unreal . . . I love it, the power it has. In the Marches, the humans are free to fly from truth to truth and slip through walls and over mountains in the blink of an eye. She does a good job. (*His nature can be very close to mine. He "inspires" quite literally, acting as the breath of God, scouring away the old and heralding the new. He understands that we must indulge wild flights of fancy, for who knows where they might lead?*)

Jean: She gives a little too much, a little too quickly, to those who send her their entreaties . . . And she encourages a kind of false optimism, I think. She is valuable to us, but in a way that is so far afield of my own work that it's probably best that she keeps her distance from us the way she does. *(Jean sees life as a linear progression from A to B, and will trample over anything which stands in his projected path. While he persists in trying to direct the human heart instead of understanding it, he will always be fighting a losing battle to hold back the tide. He meddles too much.)*

MARC

Since the Fall, the aristocratic Archangel of Dreams has been quick (maybe too quick) to disdain politics as a tool of the Adversary. Wasn't it Lucifer who came with guile and honeyed words to lure her beloved into damnation? Wasn't it his personal charm and reasonable arguments that caused the War in the first place? Even on those rare occasions when she graces the Seraphim Council chamber with her presence, she is icily disdainful of any moves which she suspects to be politically motivated.

Marc is the only Archangel who is persuasive enough to be able to lure her to Council meetings when he feels it is important that her voice is heard, but she doesn't love him for it. Pragmatically, he shakes his head at her Cherubic intransigence, and accepts her disdain as one of the prices he has to pay for getting the Archangels to (occasionally) all move in the same direction.

The fact that Blandine stubbornly persists in viewing him as obsessed with hard cash and materialism – something which dreams have ill-equipped her to understand – doesn't help the relationship.

Jordi: Animals dream too . . . And Blandine doesn't ignore them; she tends to them as vigilantly as to the humans. I've seen her bring peace to beasts in pain, even if it had nothing to do with the War in a way that the Council recognizes. *(The dreams of animals are pure and honest. Jordi is always true to his own nature, and the trust that has been placed in him. His animals remind us all that the humblest insect is as much a triumph of God's creation as we.)*

Laurence: She is the general on the broadest beachhead of the human soul. I let her do what she does best; she always, *always* comes through for us. Sometimes *we* fail her, and I regret those times deeply. *(His influences on men shapes more dreamscapes than he knows. Some of them aren't on*

my side of the Marches, but Yves trusts him, and I trust Yves. I prefer him to Uriel.)

Marc: Well, people are going to dream about money whether Blandine is overseeing the Marches or not. She keeps Beleth in check, and that's about all. *(He has taken his Word and turned it into greedy bean-counting; and because the mortals seem to enjoy this, it is apparently a great success. But the War is not a balance sheet, and we are fighting for greater things than the bottom line.)*

Michael: Is it really a good *idea* to quell the fears of mankind in a world of false imagery? How does *that* prepare them? I often wonder if Nightmares aren't better for our cause; I'd like to see Blandine take the initiative to control the *entire* realm of Dreams. Contentment isn't an attribute of a good soldier. *(So many humans dream about a warrior or champion to protect them. This is Michael's role, and I must admit he serves it well, though he often acts in a more brutal manner than I find appropriate.)*

Novalis: She's a friend, a good one. She's one of the few that really gets it – that violence isn't the way to win hearts, and that it's *hearts* we're trying to win. We don't see each other as often as we used to, but whenever I get a chance to visit her, she always makes me feel welcome. *(A dear heart, and a gentle soul. I used to speak with her often in the past. We agree about so many things, but I fear that humans would become complacent if all their needs were attended to by angels.)*

Yves: When the trouble with Beleth came, Blandine, dear friend though she is, was angry with me for not warning her. But I had, in so many ways. In every way that I *could*. That was a brief flash, though; she was still quite young, and she has since accepted the complexities of her destiny with elegance. She is one of our brightest, and I miss the days when we could talk more often. *(Kind, sweet old Yves . . . When I was younger and understood less, I was foolish enough to be angry with him. Never since. He is a mentor and a friend, and does as much to bring the bright dreams of mankind to reality as I do.)*

Princely Opinions

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

Asmodeus: Dreams are nothing but foolish, distracting delusions. If I catch any demons wasting time in *dreaming* there will be Hell to pay! *(He is nothing to me; there are no rules that can restrict the human spirit.)*

Baal: I wouldn't take her on her own home ground, but she's almost defenseless anywhere else. At least she keeps Beleth occupied, and once Nightmares get their act together, the Marches *will* be the most direct line of assault for us into Heaven. *(He still dreams of glory and conquest, and refuses to see that his allies are anything but glorious. But how many more mortals must suffer to satisfy his pride?)*

Beleth: Bitch. She's always wanted everything that I've ever had, or ever been – but those dreamers are *mine*. She's a weakling, who could never face any facts she didn't like. I'll see her crushed and mewling in terror at my feet, begging me for a moment's respite. And then I'll walk away, and lock her alone in the dark forever. *(Oh my love, once we were like two wings on one bird, two horns on one deer, two eyes in one head. And now I am half of what I was. Everywhere I see footsteps in the sand, imprints from times which are so long ago that only you and I remember, and one day those shared memories will bring you back . . . for I will not come to you, my love.)*

Belial: I often dream of flames. Crackling, hissing, burning down the world. What I'd like to do is set fire to the Marches. All of it, Beleth and Blandine alike . . . then everyone would dream of burning. Forever. *(I know the misery that he causes, echoed through the dreamscapes of those who suffer and burn. But simply being destructive in the corporeal realm does not win souls from Heaven.)*

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

Kobal: How noble, how grand. Blandine offers more potential for cruel irony than she realizes. I hope she never does. *(Scorn, mockery, ridicule. These are not the things of dreams; they belong more to Beleth than me. Kobal does not*

FATE AND DREAMS

Like Blandine, Kronos concentrates his efforts on the few mortals who he considers to be *significant* to the War, such as leaders, idealists, or artists. Both Superiors also favor a subtle approach. Servitors of Fate and Dreams are often assigned to guard or influence the same mortal. It isn't unknown for a demon and an angel to battle silently for one human soul, every day and every night, over a period of years. The main antagonists may never meet, or even realize that another celestial is involved.

DREAMS AND DEBAUCHERY

Blandine despises those Princes who have enthralled themselves to corporeality. On a gut level, they nauseate her. Her existence is spent immersed in dreams, and in promoting higher ideals. To dream of gorging oneself, or sating one's lusts, is one thing – the human mind works out its kinks in any number of strange ways. But to spend ones waking hours chasing after such abysmal gratification is unforgivable, incomprehensible. The only reason she can see for any mortal to do these things is the influence of a Demon Prince. From her splendid isolation, there is no other explanation that makes sense – and no Servitor has dared try to explain how debauched mortals can be with no encouragement at all.

Andrealphus is particularly repulsive to her. She knew him before he Fell, and sees how he betrayed his high ideals. She still harbors the private belief that Beleth *surely* has never lowered herself that far . . . and if there is still one Demon Prince who is farther from redemption than Beleth, there must be hope for her love.

understand what his Word does to humanity and for that I cannot forgive him.)

Kronos: As much as Yves, she is the true enemy. Foolish dreams have stood between more than one mortal and his fate. But her futile hopes, and the strength she gives Heaven, are draining away like water in the desert. *(I hear his voice sometimes, whispering like dry dust. His dreams involve the quiet destruction of all other dreams, and the death of all hopes. He is a reminder of why we must not fail.)*

Lilith: I know what she Needs, but I can't give it to her. Her Needs scream at me. Maybe that's why she isolates herself in the Marches. *(She is a Princess; what more need be said? It is a pity that such a noble Word is twisted to infernal use. But oh, she can be tempting.)*

Malphas: In their dreams, humans are most utterly alone, and separated from others. Blandine is also very distant from her allies, and becoming more so. *(He is neither gross nor violent in the way of some of the other Princes. But he is intelligent, and utterly dedicated. I find him dull.)*

Nybbas: She's a living chick movie. I can sell that syrupy hope crap to dull-witted housewives, but you wouldn't catch me watching it. My dreams are much more entertaining than what plays in **her** theaters. *(He corrupts people's dreams, making them cheap and tawdry, and ultimately empty. His influence rots away at people's souls a little bit at a time, until they have nothing left, and they don't even notice what he took from them.)*

Saminga: Dreams aren't alive. Who cares if humans dream about death? Better if they just die. *(That which is dead does not dream, and death is all he has. He is disgusting, and accomplishes nothing of any importance.)*

Valefor: Blandine, ice queen – I should take up poetry if I ever get bored of this Demon Prince business. Joking aside, stealing dreams takes a very light touch and no small degree of skill. Did you know that there's a back-door entrance into Heaven through her Tower? *(Behind his bluster, there is nothing but a hunger for attention, and a desire to ruin anything that isn't his. But given the attention, he can be very charming, and very polite.)*

Vapula: All beings should dream of the technological glories to come! How dare she oppose me? *(Technology has turned so many dreams into nightmares. Pity the mortals who fall under Vapula's influence.)*

Humans and Others

Etherials: Fragments of dreaming given a semblance of life. If they have a place, it is in the Marches. Still, I miss those I once knew – and perhaps I should have intervened sooner when they were hunted. Those who steal Essence or harm the mortals must be stopped.

Soldiers of God: We should be gentle with those who dedicate themselves to help our cause. Our Soldiers also have lives of their own, and as far as we can, we should not interfere with that.



Sorcerers and Hellsworn: Poor defrauded fools who have sold their souls to Hell for a few minor powers. But if they endanger the dreams of others, they may meet their infernal masters sooner than they had expected.

Humans: The dreamers. I have never seen a dreamscape that did not contain something of beauty, and something of hope. If our pain, our battles, and our dedication are not to be pointless, then we *must* not fail

She's very beautiful, and very sad. Sometimes you just want to do something, anything, to cheer her up. You learn to get by on not much sleep, but what you're doing feels important. It's like having a link to the past, to something that people have been doing since the dawn of mankind.

– Joe Johnson, Soldier of Dreams

So much for all those friendly “chats” about the Homeric tradition of oral poetry! Where was she when the Crusades came? Where was she when the lights went out? It’s clear where her loyalties lie. I tell you, never trust a woman . . .

– Phæbus Apollo

them. For if this War is ever to be won, it will be ultimately won by them.

Undead: Their existence is in opposition to God’s laws of life and death. Only the living have dreams, and belong on Earth. The dead should move on to the celestial realms.

BLANDINE THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS – VARIATIONS ON A THEME

The Insufferable

In a light-hearted game, Blandine is pure Pollyanna. She doesn’t have a very good understanding of the corporeal realm, but that doesn’t matter! She knows that all you need to do is think happy thoughts, and everything will work out right. Her Servitors are encouraged to go out, think six impossible (but happy) thoughts before breakfast, and shine disgustingly upbeat rays of joy and hope into every life that they touch. Dreams influenced by her angels can be easily spotted because they often contain fluffy animals, butterflies, or morally uplifting songs. If bad things ever happen to Servitors of Dreams, they are supposed to look on the bright side – otherwise Blandine might stamp her foot and pout.

So Far Away (so Close)

Although Blandine may seem distant, she is closely bound up with her own work – watching over the hopes and dreams of creation. But if the long millennia had taken more of a toll on her reserves, the grief had driven her to distraction, and she had chosen to retreat within herself, it might be a very different story.

In this setting, Blandine is rarely seen, even by her own Servitors. It is assumed that she is often in her Tower or wandering the Marches alone, but no one truly knows. She may refuse to give audiences for decades at a time, and takes no great interest in the nightly battles that her angels fight in her name. Even when she descends the great stair-

case from her balcony, she looks lost and confused, and has no grasp of time or current events. Her smile is achingly sweet, but it’s the innocent smile of one who has lost all grip on “reality.” The reason that a Menunite carries her sigil to the Seraphim Council is that the Archangel (say it in whispers) is no longer competent to carry out her allotted role. If she still has a reputation for calm competence, it is a reflection on the senior angels who have stepped into the gap, covering up for her . . . so that the rest of Heaven should never know.

She-Who-Must-Be-Obeyed

What if the long years of splendid isolation had made the Archangel of Dreams bitter, and mistrustful of the other Archangels, who are happy to use her as a tool when it suits them?

Blandine might become truly the ice queen, never deigning to descend from her Tower in the Marches. It has become clear to her that Heaven cares nothing for her pain, or her endless battles, or the dreams she guards. This Blandine cares nothing for them either. She rules her side of the Vale as an absolute monarch, disdainful operations on Earth unless they will directly increase her power in dreams. Servitors of other Archangels who are found in dreamscapes or in the Marches will be arrested by Blandine’s angels, and treated little better than if they were demons.

To her own Servitors, she is a figure to be adored and dreaded. Insubordination is not tolerated. Loyalty to anyone, including God, more than to the Queen of the Night is viewed as treason.

Whispers say that she is falling into the same heresies as the ancient ethereals – draining Essence by encouraging mortals to worship her through their dreams. She already controls more ethereal real estate than any other Archangel, and could easily be building up a hidden army of celestials and ethereals. Is she deliberately diverting souls from Heaven to her own secret Essence farms in the Marches? Does anyone dare try to infiltrate her dreaded “Dream Police” and find out?



BLANDINE'S DOMAIN

A TOWER ON THE EDGE OF HEAVEN

“... *And there are those who ask how the Tower may be encompassed by walls, yet still span two realms. To those I say, who are we to judge the relative sizes of places? A dreamscape may be small from the outside, but within it are contained universes. The Tower is as large as it needs to be.*”

— Blandine, *Interview with the Archangel*

Rising out of the mists at the edge of Heaven, Blandine's Tower is more than just a landmark. It is a physical symbol of Hope, and of the aspirations which even angels can feel to be closer to God. It casts no shadows, instead it bathes its surroundings in a pool of gentle light. In this umbra, the Tower stands as an unspoken promise of solace and protection to all who pass beneath it. Despite any appearance of fragility, there is no doubt that Blandine built the Tower to be defensible. Patient guards watch at the carved windows, a living sign that the Guardian of the Marches never sleeps, or lets down her guard.

A dazzlingly bright lamp hangs from the topmost parapet, tinged with the roseate colors of the dawn. It is this light which shines out as a beacon across the Marches, guiding angels and dreamers back toward Heaven.

Angels suspect that the dreams of humanity help to raise the Tower higher, as if each mortal who dreams of Heaven lends strength to the fortifications. Servitors of Dreams who have watched the enemy for unending millennia report sadly that Beleth's Tower keeps pace.

The History of the Tower

Blandine and Beleth originally built their towers together, with one watch-post in the Marches and one Cathedral in Heaven. They were delighted when the two towers twined and merged, and the small Tether between them grew stronger and flourished. It was as if the very universe was trying to reflect the great love that they felt for each other. Before the Fall, the Tower was breathtaking. It was beautiful, and terrible . . . and fragile. There was no need to shore up its defenses; there was nothing from which to defend it. It was to be an eternal link between Heaven and the dreams of all creation.

During the Rebellion, Beleth killed the first Seneschal of the Tower and ordered her own Servitors out into the Marches, terrorizing into obedience those who would not follow freely. Many Servitors of Dreams who worked alongside angels of Fear were included in Beleth's

THE TOWER'S DUAL NATURE

The Tower is a marvelous contradiction in terms. It exists in two realms simultaneously. It can be seen from two realms simultaneously. It is possible to climb *down* from Heaven and reach the ethereal realm, physically as well as metaphorically. An angel can look out over the Marches from the uppermost balcony in Heaven, and the great light that shines from the Tower's apex casts a wide pool of radiance down on the dreamscapes. Similarly, the topmost spire can be clearly seen from the Marches. For mortals, this brief glimpse of Heaven that weaves into their dreams may be the closest that they get to the divine before they die.

Within the Tower, metaphors are as powerful as any laws of nature on Earth. If a stairway leads up, then eventually it will wind into Heaven. If it leads down . . . who knows where it may end? A visitor who knows where he wants to go is likely to find the way there eventually, as long as his mind is fixed on the goal. However, it is the Tether between Heaven and the Marches, embodied by the Tower, which allows celestials to enter the Tower in one realm and leave in another.

The Tower contains one of only two Tethers between the ethereal realm and Heaven (the other is Gabriel's volcano), and is the strongest Tether known to Heaven. The

Seneschal of Blandine's Tower, also known as the Castellan, is Azariah, an ancient Cherub who served Beleth before the Fall. He is now one of the quiet Archangel of Dreams' most trusted friends and confidantes.

The Tether-locus (*Liber Castellorum*, p. 14) is to be found within the Tower. Servitors joke that it's located "just when you thought you couldn't climb any further." Any celestial visitor reaching this point may make a Will roll to step through to the far realm. To those who cannot pass through the Tether, the Tower seems to simply rise forever.

If an angel has left a sleeping vessel on Earth, he may be able to dissolve it back into potentiality when he steps through the Tether into Heaven; this requires an additional Will roll, since he had left his body on "automatic pilot" to enter the Marches in the first place. As this does not require taking celestial form in the corporeal realm, it is a road to Heaven that is favored by many Servitors of Dreams. Note that if the angel fails the roll or chooses to leave his vessel "sleeping", he *must* descend back to his vessel when he returns to Earth. If his body was successfully returned to potentiality, he may use a Tether or follow someone else to their last corporeal location.

harrowing. From the Marches, they laid siege to the very tower that many had helped to build. As angel fought against angel, they also learned to hate. When the fighting was done, and the Rebels had Fallen, the Tower in the Marches was left a ruined shadow of its former glory.

Blandine sat and wept in the ruins, comforted by those faithful angels who had fled, fought, or hidden. She had

lost almost half of her own Servitors that day. Many dreamscapes drifted toward the shattered Tower also, where the living had felt the aching loss in their dreams, and dreamed only of trying to help heal the pain. With the help of her Servitors, and of those ancient dreamers, the Tower was rebuilt to be stronger than it had been before. Some whisper that it is even more beautiful now, for having had its perfection touched with sorrow.

If we shadows have offended,
Think but this, and all is mended,
That you have but slumber'd here
While these visions did appear.
And this weak and idle theme,
No more yielding but a dream . . .

— Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

So Difficult to Get Staff, These Days

The Castellan (the Seneschal of the Tower), is responsible for the day-to day organization of life within the Tower. He has a staff of angels and relievers to help him with this work, which involves directing visitors, assigning the Archangel's audiences, and taking reports.



The Tower's staff are spread out between the ethereal and celestial sides of the Tether. On the ethereal side are located most of the military planning and debriefing rooms – where Blandine's lieutenants keep track of the ebbing and flowing of boundaries in the long struggle with Nightmare.

A constant stream of tired angels trails through the open entrance from the Marches, reporting any incidents which might be useful to other Dream Servitors, and then heading for the quiet rooms – where angels or blessed souls alike may simply rest, and lose themselves in their dreams.



ur waking mind is only the smallest part of us; the greater part of our being inhabits the dark continent of the self we know only in dreams or sometimes catch sight of out of the corner of the eye.

–Madeleine L'Engle

The Encyclopedia Somniorum

The Encyclopedia was presented to Blandine by Uriel, as a gift (albeit in slightly questionable taste) to aid her Servitors in hunting and destroying the ethereal threat. The Archangel of Dreams accepted the gift graciously, and placed the book in its current location – on a carved ice podium, in a simple room with one window that looks out toward the Far Marches. The book itself contains comprehensive descriptions of all the ethereals known to the angels. It is a large, bulky volume, bound in silver. The reason for the bulk is obvious as soon as the book is opened – the pages are not made of paper.

Instead, each page is made from part of the ethereal which it describes – a sliver of obsidian wing from an Aztec goddess, filigree bone carvings made of dragon's

teeth, cloth woven from the iridescent fur of creatures who fled human dreams and will never be seen again. Over the years, daring well-wishers have sneaked in candles, flowers, and other small, sad tokens to commemorate the dead. The butterfly-winged Cherub who guards the book is good at tactfully “looking the other way” if any visitor wishes to leave a tribute which might indicate a sympathy with the victims of the Crusade.

The Ephemera

The Ephemera is a library and a gallery, containing all the works of art which have been dreamed or imagined by humanity, but never realized. Occupying myriad floors in the Tower, the Ephemera is more than simply large; it is unending. Sculptures and paintings cram into every spare inch of space; vague dream-images which show only the potential for greatness that the works might one day possess.

As with all libraries, the Ephemera links to Yves' Cathedral in Heaven. Whenever a writer finishes a book that he had dreamed of starting, angels dutifully transfer the volume, and reclassify it. Servitors of Dreams have proven to be painfully bad librarians over the years, and Yves finally suggested to Blandine that he should provide some skilled assistants to put the shelves into order. These librarians serve both Destiny and Dreams – but still spend far more time in reading (sharing the dreams) than they do in cataloging, or helping users.

On a Clear Day, You Can See Forever

At the very highest point of the Tower is an open balcony with a parapet. It is a solitary place, where the air is cold, and clear, and bright. It is well known that Blandine herself chooses to spend much of her time here, reflecting on her duties and watching the Marches. The balcony stands high above any mists that drift across Heaven or the Vale. From its edge, it is possible to see the dark smudge of Beleth's Tower against the horizon, casting long fingers of shadow into the Vale. All angels are invited up to the balcony when they fledge, to be shown the shape of the enemy.

THE VALE OF DREAMS

The Near Marches, also known as The Vale (*The Marches*, p. 86), is that part of the ethereal realm closest to the dreams of living beings. Stretching between the two Towers of Blandine and Beleth, and toward the Far Marches, it covers a vast expanse of space. It is easy for a celestial to spend a whole night patrolling the Vale amongst the dreamscapes and never catch sight of any other being. Unfortunately, this also makes it easy for ethereals to sneak into the dreamscapes without being spotted.

Everywhere, the bubbles of dreamscapes can be seen as they drift between the two Towers. They cannot be herded or captured. The only way for a celestial to control a dreamscape is by entering it, and successfully influencing the dream.

Over the millennia, Blandine's influence has shaped her side of the Vale into a bright and peaceful place. Dreamscapes drift and bask in the reflected light of Heaven, and some even float into the Tower itself – the guards on the ethereal archway stand to attention and lower their heads respectfully as such favored dreamscapes pass by. Fields of dreams, planted with ethereal poppies, are set aside for Dreams' Servitors to retreat and rest after their long night's toils. There are always angels to be found here, although many are too tired to speak.

Servitors of any Archangel who have had a rough day on Earth or seen one too many atrocities for one lifetime are always welcome to rest and regain hope. Any behavior that breaks the tranquility is not tolerated, and the offender will be politely asked to move on.

We Live in Eternity

The peaceful sleep which Blandine offers brings solace to those who are suffering a sickness of the mind. Set in the Vale, a short distance away from the Tower, is a quiet hillock. To a casual observer, it seems unremarkable. But hidden inside this hill is the Asylum, a place of healing for



ever tell a young person that anything cannot be done. God may have been waiting centuries for someone ignorant of the impossible to do the very thing.

–John Andrew Holmes

WHISPERS FROM THE ASYLUM

Many of the troubled angels who are treated in Eternity have acquired strange delusions which make them dangerous to humanity, or to Heaven. Some refuse to believe in the Fall, claim to hear messages from long dead comrades, or believe that they are mythical figures – either celestial or mortal.

A rumor around some parts of Heaven suggests that one of the delusional angels who claims to be Uriel may be telling the truth. They murmur that it would have been so easy for Blandine to have used her control and knowledge of the Marches to have trapped the Archangel of Purity, and left him to rot in Eternity. Certainly she had the motivation – her opposition to the Purity Crusade is well known.

those angels who have been driven out of their minds by the stresses of the millennia. Servitors of all Archangels may be sent to this secure facility, where carefully picked angels of Dreams attempt to minister to them, helping each patient to readjust. Some of the treatments can be . . . a little exotic.

It has been claimed that Blandine also uses the Asylum, known as “Eternity,” as her own private prison and interrogation facility, but this has never been proven. Those who are released from Eternity have nothing but good to say about it. If a fleeing inmate is considered a danger to himself or others, emergency powers are granted to Eternity's guardian Cherub to fetch the escapee before he can cause any harm.

Ruins of the First Tower

The first of the Towers of Dreams was attacked and ruined during Lucifer's Rebellion. Although the Tower has since been rebuilt, some ruined segments of the earlier structure are still scattered about the Vale of Dreams. Despite rumors that there may still be powerful artifacts or relics in their vicinity, the ruins are usually avoided. It is known that some are also close to burial grounds – where surviving angels who were loyal to Blandine buried the shattered Hearts of those who were once their comrades.

The best known of the ruins is the broken statue, called “And Thou Shalt Walk in the Terror of the Lord,” that once stood at the apex of the ancient Tower. Malakim of Dreams still take the long trip out to this ruin alone to swear their vows, when they are newly fledged.

OVERPOPULATION IN THE MARCHES

Centuries ago, it was possible for Blandine's Servitors to watch over every single dreamscape in the Marches. Battles between angels and demons were more common then, with almost every dreamscape becoming a battle zone sometime during that dreamer's life. Each dreamer was known personally by at least one angel – and although some conflicts were lost, the battle lines were clearly drawn.

Since then, the number of dreamscapes has increased by more than a thousandfold, matching population increases on Earth. However much the angels try to keep up, they are now only capable of monitoring a tiny proportion. The Vale itself is infinite in size, limited only by human imaginations, but the areas close to the Towers can become very crowded with dreamscapes these days.

Some old angels find this stressful, as they can no longer perform their duties as comprehensively as they would like. There is a persistent rumor that a small clique of these celestials, in concert with some of Beleth's demons who feel similarly, plan to drastically reduce the number of humans on Earth – so that the dreamscapes will fall to a manageable quantity again.

DREAMSCAPES

What if nothing exists and we're all in somebody's dream? Or what's worse, what if only that fat guy in the third row exists?
– Woody Allen

The real conflicts between Dreams and Nightmares are fought every night, in myriad battlefields of the human soul. Every living creature is capable of containing entire worlds within his imagination, that may surface as daydreams during the day, and come to life in their dreamscapes (*The Marches*, p. 84) while they are asleep. To many of Dreams' Servitors, these dreamscapes are the most miraculous part of all creation. Using the Dream Walking attunement or the Corporeal Song of Dreams, a celestial is granted the ability to step *inside* the dreamscape, and become part of that pocket universe for a short period of time.

Within a dreamscape, celestials can encourage the dreamer away from nightmares, by altering elements of the dream with a successful Will roll (*The Marches*, p. 85) or the Celestial Song of Dreams. Angels may also try to

heal the effects of any trauma or mental anguish, or use the dream as a way to talk to the dreamer directly, without hiding behind a Role. In dreams, humans will accept many strange ideas at which they would scoff in the waking world. It may be the only way to tell a cynic, honestly, that he is in peril of his immortal soul.

But if a demon or an ethereal is already at work within that dreamscape, the angel will find himself in a combat situation, against opponents who are as capable of altering elements of dreams as the angels are. Reality itself within the dreamscape becomes weapon, camouflage, and defense for the combatants. The object of dream combat (for Blandine's Servitors) is to nudge the dreamscape toward the Tower of Dreams and away from Nightmares, and to eject the enemy. Soldiers of Dreams are told to imagine themselves as sheepdogs, herding the flock toward the safety of the sheep-pen, and keeping the wolves away.

Perils in Dreams

Dreamscapes can also be dangerous to the unsuspecting visitor. Humans can dream of floods, fires, stampedes of polka-dotted cows, and other life-threatening conditions just as easily as they can dream of more harmless pursuits. (A dream threat of this type is resolved as ethereal combat, in which the dreamer is unconsciously attacking the intruder.)

Destroying any part of a dream is considered to be dangerous to the sleeping mortal who created it – because all elements of the dreamscape are connected to the dreamer. Cherubim have even been known to take dissonance if significant parts of their charge's *dream* were destroyed by anyone other than the dreamer.

So if a dreamscape turns nasty, an angel is expected not to attack in response! Experienced Servitors try to give the dreamer the help he needs to combat the menace himself. Alternatively, celestials can use their own dream shaping skills to modify the threat, or negate it.

Fitting In Too Well

By force of Will, it is simple for a visiting celestial to alter his own appearance within a dreamscape. This can be useful as camouflage while he watches a dream scene, or stalks his prey; but it can be dangerous for a visitor to fit in too perfectly with a dreamer's vision. Stories have been told of angels who forgot who and what they truly were, and stayed in the dreamscape even when the dreamer awoke, as part of his daydreams (something which is normally impossible). If an angel who is lost in this state is not rescued, he will never leave the dreamscape – and will be thrown into Trauma when the dreamer actually dies.

TETHERS TO DREAMS

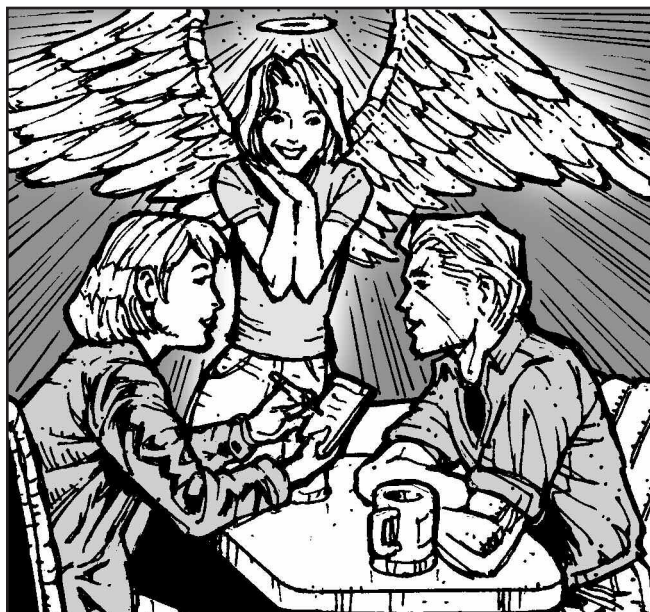
Blandine has fewer Tethers than any other major Archangel. She doesn't actively seek such places out, and has often in the past ceded potential Tethers to allies such as Destiny or Creation, who pay more attention to the corporeal realm. All of Blandine's Tethers have some "crash space," where visiting celestials or Soldiers can safely leave their bodies to sleep while they wander the Marches.

Tethers include locations associated with particularly important dreamers, or where visitors remember an

influential dream – but may also be formed where a single dream has come true. Well known Tethers to Dreams (*Liber Castellorum*, p. 73) include the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington D.C. where Martin Luther King Jr. made his famous "I have a dream" speech, the *Field of Dreams* baseball park in Iowa, Napoleon's tomb, and the oak tree at Merton College, Oxford, under which J.R.R. Tolkien scribbled the first few notes for *The Silmarillion*.

DREAMS ON EARTH

Blandine doesn't foster links between her Word and the corporeal realm with any vigor. Her work is in the Marches, and that is also where she feels most comfortable. However, there are places on Earth where dreams mingle with the mundane so strongly that angels can *taste* it, and these are precious to Servitors of Dreams. These include concert halls, theaters, and art galleries – where talented dreamers share their dreams with others. Angels also seek out the coffee shops and cheap restaurants where young revolutionaries and students meet to discuss how they'd like to change the world. They sit in the parks and playgrounds where generations of children have played at "let's pretend," and walk gravely, heads bowed in respect, in quiet cemeteries where people come to honor their heroes, and the dreams which they inspired.



In modern times, younger angels have considered it a challenge to prove that dreams can be fostered *anywhere*, choosing to personally oversee sites as unlikely as battered housing projects and unctuous advertising agencies. Although most of these locations will never become Tethers (however much a young Cherub likes to hope), and Blandine is known to pay little attention to them, these angelic protectors are continuing Dreams' grand tradition of fighting quietly to nurture all that is best in humanity.

DREAM SCENES

Normal dreams are made up of a number of scenes, which flow into each other sequentially. They may be related or even repetitive – or the entire nature of reality within the dream can change, if the new scene is completely unconnected from the previous one. Although any single scene may *seem* to those within it to last eternities, in reality each one lasts only a few minutes. An angel who succeeds in the Corporeal Song of Dreams with a good check digit will have plenty of time to work through at least one complete scene, and possibly even more than that. So in one night's hard work, an angel might have lived through what feels like millennia . . .

But the dreams of those who are sick of mind, or suffering from a sleep disorder, can follow different patterns. The dreamscapes of mortals who are in comas in the corporeal world may persist in one beautifully detailed dream scene, which lasts for months instead of minutes.

SAMPLE TETHER – THE HILLTOP PLAZA 3

In 1930, when it was built, the Hilltop Plaza promised visitors the grandest, most up-to-date cinematic experience of their lives! It was the heyday of the cinema, and the Plaza was a magnificent structure, both inside and outside. In 1939, Harold Parks and Susie Arnold met there and fell deeply in love. The cinema was where they courted, avidly watching the latest films every Saturday evening, when they weren't watching each other. It was where they first kissed, as the credits rolled on *Casablanca*. But war had already broken out in Europe. Harold left on his 18th birthday to volunteer in France, promising to return when the war was over. His childhood sweetheart waited and waited for him – until her parents died, and she moved away to live with her brother. But still, sometimes, she would look out of the window, remember those nights in the old Plaza, and think of the man she'd loved . . .

50 years later, the Plaza was no longer the ritziest cinema on the block. The walls were scrawled with graffiti, and junkies shot up in the ramshackle toilets, between screenings. It was surely only a matter of time, people said, before the Plaza went out of business. Harold Parks, newly widowed, stopped by the old cinema on an impulse. Leaning on a stick, he lit a cigarette and

remembered. By a stroke of chance, Susie had also returned to the city for an old friend's funeral, and had also come to honor her memories. They hadn't met for 50 years, but they recognized each other instantly. In halting tones, he finally asked her to marry him. In the Tower, one of Blandine's Servitors sensed the forming Tether without knowing the cause, and was able to call her Archangel to stabilize it. The Hilltop Plaza, which had been responsible for keeping two old people's hopes alive, became a minor Tether to Dreams.

Since then, the cinema has undergone a complete renovation, with money funneled in from angelic sources. The Mercurian Seneschal, Abigail, has introduced a cafe, a specialist film bookstore, and a program of talks about the films that are shown. The Tether is particularly sensitive to "young love" and several couples have proposed to each other within its walls. None of those marriages has yet failed . . . But recently, Andrealphus has been made aware of the Tether's existence. The types of dreams that it fosters run uncomfortably close to his old angelic Word, and he has decreed to his local Servitors that whatever the cost, the Tether must fall.

IN RESTLESS DREAMS, I WALKED ALONE: SERVITORS OF BLANDINE

DREAMERS, FANTASISTS, DREAMWALKERS

"A dreamer is one who can only find his way by moonlight, and his punishment is that he sees the dawn before the rest of the world."

– Oscar Wilde

Almost as misunderstood as Dominic's fanatical inquisition, the Dreamers have a reputation for being idealists who are out of touch (some would say *dangerously* out of touch) with the realities of life. They have been accused of over-tolerance for pagan religions and ethereal activity on Earth. Others view them, not unkindly, as light-

weights, easily distracted and too wrapped up in their own affairs.

But it is the Fantasists who feel that they have been charged with keeping the dreams of Heaven alive. Many are intelligent, passionate idealists who can plant bright dreams in hearts and minds with a few murmured words (when they can be persuaded to focus on the matter at hand). Like their Mistress, many of her Servitors prefer to keep their own company or that of mortals, rather than politicking with other angels.

There is a definite split between those angels who have spent long periods on Earth (long enough to adapt) and those who haven't. The former tend to be more pragmatic, more patient, and more realistic in their assessment of mortals – although they politely choose not to disillusion their less practical colleagues. Angels who are "old hands" at the corporeal game will help out those who are newly arrived on Earth, and may even be asked to advise their Archangel on Earthly matters.

Some angels never feel comfortable on Earth, in heavy mortal flesh, and live only for the nights when they can fly free in dreams. Others marvel constantly at the corporeal realm, finding something wondrous in even the

DREAM INTERPRETATION

“Say, whoever you are. Do you know what Freud said about dreams of flying? It means you’re really dreaming about having sex.”

“Indeed? Tell me then, what does it mean when you dream about having sex?”

*– Neil Gaiman, **The Sandman***

Anyone can try to interpret other people’s dreams. It’s been fashionable for centuries – although where dreams were once seen as messages from the gods, they are now more likely to be interpreted as signposts to the inner psyche. Servitors of Dreams are especially apt with their

own interpretations. Well-read Servitors discuss the theories of Freud and Jung (among others), and their own readings may be colored by their preferred theories.

Any Servitor of Dreams may make an Intelligence roll to interpret a dream which is described to him in detail (including one which he has witnessed by being inside the dreamscape for the duration). If successful, the angel will be able to make an educated guess at whether the dream was influenced by celestials or ethereals, whether it is a genuine vision of the future, or if it really does point to some unspoken internal conflict.

most mundane things (and people). Abstraction and symbolism flow through their veins like liquid fire, making everything they see pregnant with possible meanings. They may even attempt to interpret reality as if it were a dream. That can lead to alienation – leaving an angel

feeling uncomfortably out of place in any of the realms. Other Dreamers understand this sense of displacement, although they rarely discuss it.

Those who accuse them of being arrogant or solitary fail to understand that in dreamscapes, Blandine’s angels fight alone – and know that when it counts, they must be able to rely upon their own skill and their own judgment. Each Dreamwalker feels personally responsible for guarding the long watches of the night. If he had not been there for the mortal dreamscapes that he patrolled, it is likely that no one else would have been.

SPIRITS IN THE MATERIAL WORLD

Blandine’s Word and her priorities focus on the Marches. This is more than simple pragmatism – it is an expression of her deeply held belief that Earth was meant for God’s living creations. Angels, who are more spiritually pure, were intended to sing His praises in the “higher” realms. Just as it is bad for humanity to interact with ethereals, it is also bad for them to knowingly interact with angels unless there is a greater cause to be served.

Forcing the Symphony to recognize his “higher” celestial nature while on Earth stains a Dreamer’s soul with dissonance. It is a defiance of the corporeal nature of that realm, and of the Fantasist’s true calling. Angels of Dreams may not assume their celestial forms on Earth, and are also banned from using celestial versions of Songs; the association is symbolic.

In Tethers, Blandine’s angels may take celestial form in order to ascend. Even so, many go through a quiet personal ritual first, to divest themselves spiritually of Earth’s trappings.

ORGANIZATION

“Yes, you can be a dreamer and a doer too, if you will remove one word from your vocabulary: impossible.”

– Robert H. Schuller

Dreamers are adventurous spirits, who find a great freedom in the lack of restrictions inherent to Blandine’s organization. They enjoy using their own initiative. While it is accepted etiquette that an angel assigned to the dreams of a single Air Force pilot defers to the Angel of Dreams of Soldiers, Blandine’s “hierarchy” begins and ends with such relationships. Even in cases like these, the senior angel accepts the junior as an equal, and is more likely to provide mentoring than to expect total obedience. Any Servitor may request permission to work with a Word-bound or Warden whom he personally admires. Each angel also has a relationship with Blandine herself that is distant but personal. They answer to their Archangel, to their calling, and to God (but not necessarily in that order).



Although Blandine's angels are used to working without direct supervision, only a small minority are truly antisocial. These angels, humble knights-errant or scintillating dandies alike, prefer to spend the long millennia wandering alone, and acquire a semi-mythical status amongst other angels. They may be better known, by ethereals and mortals as well as Dreamers, by nicknames such as "the seamstress" or "the traveling man" (taken from their preferred appearances in dreamscapes) than by their real names. They are known, in the collective, as soloists. A Dreamwalker who makes a successful dream interpretation (p. 27) roll will recognize when one of these soloists has visited a mortal's dreamscape.

Most Dreamers are happy to interact with their peers. New ideas meet with an eager reception amongst other angels at the Tower. While Dreamers respect those of greater age and experience, a younger celestial can also earn a good reputation if he is a talented poet or thinker. Lateral thinking and quick wits are invaluable when fighting in dreamscapes, and also shine in the cut and thrust of spirited debate. Sociable Dreamers gather around the most brilliant of their numbers each night in the Marches, after their duties are done, forming discussion groups where the imagery flows like champagne, and members fence verbally with dazzling witticisms. Quieter angels, who are too weary from their work to take part in the debates, are welcome spectators – and may even be asked to keep score.

Among themselves, the Dreamwalkers are formally polite. Many favor stylized forms of etiquette, and the trappings of aristocracy and *noblesse oblige* which go with it. Dreamers value their own privacy, and may seem reserved to more forthright angels. They are also encouraged to cherish their own private hopes and dreams, and those of others. Personal motivations and feelings are *sacrosanct*, and will rarely be discussed unless the angel brings them up himself.

Rewards and Punishments

Angels are expected to perform their duties humbly, to the best of their ability, and without hope of reward. But Blandine is aware of both her most feverish demon-hunters, and her quiet, unsung heroes. Rewards are subtle, but personal. An angel may find that his Superior invites him to escort her to an evening at the ballet, or unexpectedly grants him a month's sabbatical "to spend time with friends." Angels who have sacrificed a personal goal to help others achieve theirs may be granted long-term rewards, such as an assignment to a task in which the angel can prove his worthiness to be given a Word. Permission to wear one of the Archangel's scarves (which may or may not be a relic) in the Marches, or to guard her sigil, is also a signal honor.

Blandine hates punishing her angels. However, she does expect her commands to be carried out, in spirit if not to the letter. A Servitor who repeatedly dishonors her dissonance conditions may simply be handed to the Inquisition. Otherwise, punishments are "for the angel's own good." An angel may have his vessels removed, or be required to report regularly to an older Dreamer. Such punishments are rarely made public knowledge.

Changing Superiors

An unhappy angel is unlikely to find help among fellow Servitors *unless he asks for it*. Even Blandine may continue to assume that an angel is content, until he takes it upon himself to seek a personal audience. However, once a problem is raised, she gives it her full attention. If an angel truly wishes to leave her service, she will give her blessing even if he seeks to serve a Superior with whom she is at odds. Also, if an angel seems particularly ill-suited to her methods, a transfer may be strongly suggested, or arranged without prior discussion.

Since it is never clear whether a change of Superiors was by request of the Servitor, or as an end-of-the-road punishment, other Dreamers consider it to be too delicate a matter for conversation. The subject is taboo.

The Redeemed

Redemption is held by Fantasists as the holiest of sacraments, a living symbol of the brightest of dreams. It is an important part of this that a demon must *prove* the sincerity of his intent. Just idly expressing an interest is not enough. While Servitors are free to attempt to plant the seeds of hope within the Hearts of demons who seem promising candidates, Blandine prefers that they do not reach out to these demons. Dreams are utterly personal things, and the path of dreams is one that a redemption candidate must ultimately walk alone.

All those who have searched their own hearts and found the call to redemption are welcomed gravely at Blandine's Tower. While Dreamers may attempt to test the strength of a demon's resolve by reminding him several times of the risks, no demon who is resolute will be turned away. Blandine receives supplicants graciously, and the demon who has proven his intent will not be put through further tests, or forced to kneel and beg for Heaven's mercy.

Because her only requirement for redemption is that a demon should seek her out of his own accord, many of the demons do not survive the attempt. Blandine regrets the loss of those whom the Symphony rejects, but each one of them had willingly chosen death over remaining as they were – and that in itself is cause for hope. (Others say that if she made efforts to test them first, the casualties could be reduced.)

She takes a special pleasure in welcoming the children of her enemy to her camp. Newly redeemed demons of Nightmares are greeted warmly, as if they were coming *home* at last. They are especially dear to her, as are those angels who have Fallen but then redeemed. These successes fuel her own dearest hopes.

Humans

Blandine's commitment to non-intervention in human affairs can place her Servitors in a delicate situation when it comes to recruiting servants and soldiers. Few angels doubt that mortal assistance can be helpful, but how does one justify the interruption to mortal life inherent in becoming a knowing participant in the War? Many angels choose to instruct their mortal allies via dreams, and may never meet them "in the flesh" while they are alive.

Angels prefer to pick out people who have shown some talent at lucid dreaming, or have marvelous dreamscapes. Thus, servants may be recruited who have skills that don't remotely match the angel's needs. The Dreamers seem happy enough with their mortal aides, and fortunately, many of the Soldiers are quietly competent. They are often taught to use Ethereal Songs, or granted the Dream Walking attunement, and left to help watch over humanity's dreams on their own initiative. Often, it is the Soldiers who take the lead in picking out potential new recruits, which has resulted in a recent recruitment drive among publishers and media production companies. Those who believe that Blandine's agents are inactive on Earth simply because she assigns most of her angels to the Marches are underestimating her mortal network.



Here we all are,
by day; by night we're
hurled by dreams, each
one, into a several world.

—Robert Herrick

WORD-BOUND SERVITORS

Word-bound may be responsible for an entire *type* of dream, or an entire *type* of dreamer. They include Io, Angel of Dreams of Flight, Oresto, Angel of Dreams of Love, and Yrian, Sentinel of Dreams of Artists. Other known Word-bound are the Angel of Dreams of the Dying, the Angel of Dreams of Soldiers, the Angel of Dreams of Contentment, and Lissah, Angel of Dreams of Children – the last "child" created by Beleth and Blandine together and the only one of her siblings who didn't Fall. Other Words relate to Blandine's patronage of hopes, daydreams, and ideals. The first Menunite, Emmanuel, holds the word of Hope. The angels of The American Dream and Half-Baked Student Idealism are also within Dreams' ranks.

Blandine's Word-bound may hold "shadow" words, which mirror those promoted by another angel in the waking world. Often, the two Word-bound will work together, even if they serve unfriendly Superiors. The Angel of Dreams of Computer Networks is friendly with Orc (*In Nomine*, p. 194), and the Angel of Dreams of Winning the Lottery has a good working relationship with Marc. Conversely, Word-bound of Dreams sometimes have an opposite number in the ranks of Nightmare, whom they fight directly.

Humans find it very easy to sympathize with the aims of the Archangel of Dreams, and her Soldiers capitalize on this with unwavering determination.

Many mortals associated with Dreams must learn to get by without much rest, rarely getting the chance to spend a whole night peacefully within their own dreamscapes. Still, Fantasists try to understand a mortal's need to spend time on his "real life." Angels are unduly proud if one of *their* servants chooses to settle down with another mortal – it is proof that the angel did not disrupt their life (even if a certain amount of matchmaking took place in dreamscapes).

CHOIRS

There are many more Cherubim in service to Dreams than any other Choir, including the Menunim (p. 36). As many as a third of all Blandine's Servitors may be Guardians like herself (estimates are mixed, due to the difficulty of locating her Malakim for census-taking), and the same proportions are reflected amongst the Word-Bound, and angels with Distinctions.

SHAMANS AND SOLDIERS OF DREAMS

The Shamanic tradition is an ancient and honorable one. For millennia, men and women who followed these paths learned to guide their own dreams and trances, to speak with spirits, and to watch over the souls of their fellows. Originally, many of these people were taught by ethereals who wanted to foster groups of worshippers on Earth, and to encourage Dream Shades to serve them in the Marches. Not all shamans were pagan Soldiers or sorcerers, but many fell into this category, and almost all were lucid dreamers.

Since the Purity Crusade, Blandine's angels have recruited or fostered many of these talented individuals. Cherubim are placid about appearing to potential Soldiers as "animal spirit guides" – it isn't a wildly incorrect term, after all. The Archangel of Dreams instructs

her Servitors to be tolerant of mortal beliefs; if a human truly wishes to aid others through dreams, then he is supporting Heaven whether he knows it or not! Some practitioners have been suspicious of the angels, knowing too well that spirits can be tricky. Others are only interested in gaining power over others, or punishing their foes with nightmares. Still, there are those who have been willing to help the angels, gravely accepting the realities of the ethereal campaign.

In recent times, the upsurge of New Age philosophy has given Dreamers a wider choice of open-minded mortals. Although much of Heaven gripes at the mortal fashion for turning away from the organized Church, angels of Dreams smile, saying that it's an ill wind that blows nobody good.

Choirs which are closest to humanity are expected by colleagues to be more "down-to-earth" – Dreams' Seraphim are alleged to be so abstract in mindset as to be almost incomprehensible. However, angels are also encouraged to view themselves as individuals, and to follow their *own* greatest dreams, so it is dangerous to make too many assumptions. As with all stereotypes, there are many who refuse to fit the mold.

Most Dreamers are either granted the Dream Walking attunement, or have high levels of skill with the Corporeal Song of Dreams.

Seraphim

Blandine's Seraphim have a better understanding of the truths that may lie behind metaphors than any of their Choir. They adore similes, and finding obscure True Connections between ideas, which they like to share with the world. Their idealism is as honest as it is intense, and it is their duty to show people when their fears are based on lies and misunderstandings. Although Dreams' angels most often work solo, when a Seraph is assigned to Earth, it is not uncommon for a "translator" – either another celestial, or a mortal poet – to accompany him.

Sadly, the ethereal emphasis of Blandine's Word means that some of the Most Holy are too accustomed to the "higher" realms to adapt well to Earth. They may even grow to hate corporeal things (such as vessels, or humans), finding them disgusting. Others politely shun the corporeal for a different reason: because they prefer to seek out deep truths about the nature of humanity in dreams.

Cherubim


As well as guarding someone during their waking hours, these angels protect the dreamscape of an attuned while they sleep. Some choose to be distant from their charges in the corporeal world, watching quietly from afar – but become very close within dreamscapes. Others obsess over a single attuned, spending every moment of every day and every night with the beloved. When assigned to great dreamers (a common occurrence), the Cherub will also seek ways to increase the dreamer's audience on Earth, and to spread "legends" about *his* dreamer amongst the mortals.

All of Blandine's Cherubim face a common dilemma – how to best protect their charge without interfering too much in the corporeal world. As a Cherub herself, Blandine understands their troubles, and does not expect her angels to court dissonance in her name. However, if an angel can find a way to both protect an attuned *and* avoid direct interference, he rarely goes unrewarded.

Unlike other angels of Dreams, the Guardians hunt in packs. If one Cherub's charge is threatened in dreams, he can easily recruit a posse from Blandine's Tower to exact retribution. Cherub Servitors of other Archangels who ask for this type of assistance in the Marches are also greeted enthusiastically.

Ofanim

In ways which no other Choir can fully fathom, the Marches suit Ofanim, satisfying their shivering thirst for motion. It is the nature of the Marches to be in constant flux, but only the Wheels of Dreams can consistently ride



the waves of change. Instead of the angel speeding through the outside world, he stands still (or relatively so) and allows the world to flow around *him*.

The Ofanim delight in simply wearing an opponent into submission, running rings around him inside the dream. They rarely succumb to the urge to fit in too well with a dreamscape (p. 24), being always driven by the need to change and to move on from one idea (one image) to the next. Although adventurous, they are more likely than many Choirmates to be prudent in their corporeal dealings – they can release their wilder urges in the Marches, every night.

Menunim

The Menunim (see p. 36) are often (incorrectly) viewed by Blandine's other Servitors as being delicate creatures, who must be shielded from the harsh realities of the "real world." In fact, many of them harbor a childlike curiosity, and seek opportunities to "taste" the hopes and anxieties of all creation – including demonkind. Inhabiting the corporeal world without really interacting teaches them to be polished observers of human (and celestial) nature.

These angels also serve as Blandine's personal emissaries. Any Menunite may receive a personal request from his Archangel at any time to deliver a message. This is the only circumstance under which they may interact directly with a mortal in the corporeal realm without incurring dissonance. Their other task is to breathe hope into the hearts of those who once held great aspirations, but no more – people such as priests who are losing their faith, politicians who have turned cynical, or jaded teachers.

Elohim

The calm and considered Powers of Dreams are tasked with teaching humanity how to balance their dreams with their real lives, and the importance of leavening their real lives with dreams. Their duties on Earth often take them to places where it seems that all hope is lost – where other angels might become depressed and lose heart – such as war zones, direst poverty, and oppressive regimes.

The extent to which the Elohim will go to foster dreams should not be underestimated. Some have been accused of using Roles as historians to deliberately create myths about mundane events, in order to inspire generations of the future. Whispered suspicions even connect members of this Choir to assassinations of figures who became legends after (or even due to) their untimely deaths.

Malakim

These angels are solitary hunters and spies, daring to travel into parts of the Marches where no other angel would willingly tread. Some are overconfident, trusting in

their ability to become invisible in the ethereal realm to get them out of any trouble. They also take their honor very seriously, in a stylized way, and frequently challenge each other to non-fatal duels over such minor points of etiquette that even other Malakim are puzzled.

Many of Blandine's Virtues believe that it is quite wrong (some would use the term "evil") to punish a mortal in his dreams for acts committed in the waking world. They will not torture or harm a dreamer within his dreamscape, or allow any ally to do so. But when a Malakite is granted permission from Blandine or one of her Incorruptibles (p. 33) to pursue some mortal wickedness into the corporeal realm, all bets are off.

Kyriotates

Dominations of Dreams often bring mighty Celestial Forces to bear in support of their conflicts with infernal powers. They are amongst Blandine's most fearsome warriors in the Marches, and are proud of their reputations as the masters of dream shaping (which many view as the ultimate art). Some skilled Kyriotate dream shapers like to add a personal touch to their work (e.g., a particular symbol, or color, or scent), as a "signature."

While these angels are capable of shaping multiple dreamscapes at once, each dreamscape must be entered separately – the angel must use a Song or Attunement to enter one dreamscape first, and may then use the same method for each additional dreamscape he wishes to enter.

In the corporeal realm, a Kyriotate is more likely to be assigned to an area than to a specific dreamer. Some colleagues suspect that the only reason these angels are ever assigned to Earth at all is because they seem to enjoy it so much – but since they work double, triple, or quadruple time in the Marches, no one holds it against them.

Mercurians

The majority of Blandine's Mercurians enjoy spending time on Earth, preferring Roles which allow them to mix with a close-knit group of mortals. Musicians in an orchestra, teachers, and junior nurses are all Roles that suit them well. They like to encourage human friends to "think outside the box," and find that their skill at dream interpretation makes them popular amateur counselors to their mortal peer group.

While they love humanity, the Intercessionists wax romantic about all the things which humans *could* be, rather than the reality . . . which may be less endearing. Although tapped by other Dreamwalkers as a source of pragmatism, these angels still see the world through rose-colored spectacles. Fortunately, mortal colleagues and servants are able to provide a more practical perspective, on behalf of their daydreaming friends.

CREATIONERS IN SERVICE TO DREAMS

Many of Eli's angels are in service to Dreams. Blandine is one of their Archangel's oldest and fondest allies, and her aims fit well with those of the Creationers. It has been difficult for some angels to adjust to a Superior who is so distant (unlike Eli, before he left his Cathedral), and who seems to rarely take a personal interest in Servitors and their problems. Some claim that they are being discriminated against and forced to work tasks that they hate, without realizing that Blandine expects her Servitors to speak up if they are unhappy.

Those Creationers who enjoy working with little supervision flourish under Dreams, and Blandine extends to them the same trust as she does to her own. However, the reputation of Creationers in service to Dreams has been tarnished by a few who have been prepared to repeatedly flout Blandine's dissonance conditions to get the Archangel's attention. Or any attention. Since she considers herself to be responsible for them, these angels are rarely transferred to other Superiors.

In the ethereal realm, Mercurians try to check up briefly on the dreamscapes of as many of their friends as possible every night. They are not above such underhanded tactics as encouraging mortals who are connected by a shy mutual fondness to dream of each other . . .

JOBS

The majority of jobs assigned to Dreamers take angels into the ethereal realm, with a sizable minority assigned to the corporeal realm too. All celestials are expected to spend much of their time patrolling the Marches. One result of this is that Blandine's angels spend very little time in Heaven, even as young relievers. Dreamers who travel to parts of the Eternal City other than Blandine's Tower can suffer the embarrassment of getting lost and having to ask for directions. Angels of other Words may spend centuries in Heaven without ever encountering a Servitor of Dreams outside Blandine's Tower.

Celestial Jobs

Administrative tasks in the Tower are entrusted to blessed souls, freeing up more celestials to spend time in the Marches. However, it is in Heaven that the tired and

wounded may choose to rest by their Hearts. It is also in Heaven that Tethers to Blandine's Tower are watched from above. Some angels may choose to work alongside colleagues in service to other Superiors, but the Dreamwalkers often find themselves homesick for the fluid freedom of the ethereal skies. If an angel expresses a preference for the atmosphere of Heaven, a task will be found, which may involve recruiting potential Servitors from amongst the ranks of non-aligned relievers, or teaching other angels about the dreams of Heaven, and the history of the ethereal realms.

Ethereal Jobs

The Near Marches are Blandine's true domain and protectorate. To many of her angels, the ethereal realms feel more like home even than Heaven. Angels take on a wide range of duties that vary from watching dreamscapes and chasing intruders to making sure that the paths between quadrants are well-marked, and any celestial "litter" is cleared up. Administration of the Vale is a huge task, and the Wardens of each quadrant bear a heavy responsibility on their shoulders. Servitors who have no vessels are usually assigned to a specific quadrant, and place themselves at the disposal of the local warden. Relievers are also encouraged to earn their keep – some carry messages between regions of the Vale, or guide colleagues in and around their own areas. Others are specialist lookouts, always checking for signs of demonic or ethereal incursion.

Fantasists may find themselves roped into espionage parties, or sent out to explore the fringes of the Vale, where it melds into the Far Marches. Many Dreamers consider it important to keep an eye on other local activity, and will surreptitiously follow other angels who wander through their "turf."

Dreamwalkers may also volunteer for teaching and orientation duty, instructing Servitors of other Superiors in ethereal combat, and the ethics of dream shaping. Blandine's Servitors include most of Heaven's virtuosos (*Liber Canticorum*, p. 24) with the Songs of Dreams, and these *Meistersingers* occasionally agree to take on pupils for special tuition.

Corporeal Jobs

Angels are most often sent to Earth to foster and protect a specific mortal dreamer, or to help another Servitor who has requested backup. The Humans are usually nominated by angels who are already on Earth, or by Blandine herself. In other cases, a Servitor might be so enthralled by the quality of a mortal dreamscape that he asks that a Guardian be found. The Archangel is tolerant of requests for personal audiences, when an angel wishes

to bring some human to her attention. Those who have fallen in love with a mortal through his dreamscape are reminded quietly of the importance of not meddling with human lives, before Blandine accedes to any requests to visit Earth. Angels may also be required to assist in training Soldiers, or in combating the activities of a specific demon of Nightmares.

It is also not unusual for an angel who wants to see the corporeal realm to be given a vessel and Role (if appropriate) and simply left to build up some expertise, supporting the Word of Dreams on Earth as best he can. Many Kyriotates and Mercurians are allowed to “settle in” and may later become known as corporeal specialists, able to advise less experienced angels on what might be appropriate Earthly tactics. Common Roles include psychologists (especially those involved with sleep research), librarians, and assorted low-level positions which will allow angels to watch a segment of humanity without becoming authority figures.

Unusual Jobs

Angels might be requested to pursue other assignments, if they seem to show talent, including gathering information from dreams, and managing teams of relievers on “path maintenance duty.” Although it might come as a surprise even to their own colleagues, some Dreamwalkers do also actively seek ways to get involved in the media, spreading dreams to a wider audience.

Listening Duty: It may be useful to acquire information from mortals through their dreams. This thought has occurred to almost every Superior at some point, and many do not scruple to send half-trained Servitors to do precisely that. Blandine disapproves of such activity; she prefers that her own angels, who are less likely to inadvertently harm a human dreamscape, be the ones to gather this information when it is necessary.

YOU HAVE TO GO WITH THE FLOW. PICK IMAGES THAT ARE MEANINGFUL TO THE DREAMER, AND THEY'LL BE STRONGER, WIDER, MORE EFFECTIVE.
— AINNAH, OFANITE OF DREAMS

There is a real skill to speaking with sleeping dreamers, and Blandine’s “listeners” are adept at assuming the form of a trusted relative or friend, in order to “have a quiet chat.” Many of these specialists are Mercurians, using their Choir’s ability to understand human relationships to select the best way to win a dreamer’s trust. If even speaking to the dreamer is judged dangerous (e.g., if it is suspected that demons often haunt his dreamscape,

THE INCORRUPTIBLES

Blandine’s personal bodyguard, composed entirely of Malakim, is known as “The Incorruptibles.” Membership is a great honor, which angels bear proudly. They do Blandine’s direct bidding, and it is reputed that they cannot be deterred from a mission by any force known to celestials. And, of course, they cannot Fall. The group maintains 12 active members. Eight of these Virtues are publicly known, and perform honor duties at the Tower as well as leading or planning special missions on their Lady’s orders. Four are “silent members” – they could be anyone, and they could be anywhere.

If any Incorruptible should be killed, the rest of the circle votes privately to decide on a suitable replacement. The new initiate is then presented to Blandine, where he may take the additional vows of the group formally. These extra vows include a vow of perfect obedience to Blandine, and of loyalty to the rest of the Incorruptibles (“one for all, and all for one”).

It is rumored that the first group of Incorruptibles were those angels of Fear who responded to Beleth’s Fall with transfiguring outrage, and swore their new oaths together. The group’s nominal leader, Aruviel, is known to be ancient enough to support this story.

as might be the case with a Hellsworn), then a Malakite might also be assigned to spend time hidden in the dreamscape, observing.

Public Relations: Much of Heaven’s media involvement on Earth is coordinated through Dreams’ Soldiers, who have historically been quicker than the angels to recognize the uses of mortal channels in spreading dreams. Angels with Roles in the publishing industry, journalism, film making, and public relations try to exert subtle influence to provide talented dreamers with an audience to share their dreams!

Contact with demons of the Media is not uncommon (and would probably make Dominic blanch if he was aware of the full extent), but full-out conflict is rare, mainly because the two sides often completely fail to understand each other’s goals. However, Fantasists do attempt to expand into areas where demons are not known to be in complete control, and each side makes attempts to recruit from the other. It is alleged that while Nybbas has Hollywood in his pocket, the Archangel of Dreams has a stronger influence in *Bollywood* – the huge studio complexes in Mumbai (formerly known as Bombay), which are even more prolific.

SAMPLE SERVITORS OF BLANDINE

ALIAH (“UNCLE”)

Angel of the American Dream *Kyriotate Vassal of Dreams*

Corporeal Forces – 4 Strength 8 Agility 8
Ethereal Forces – 3 Intelligence 6 Precision 6
Celestial Forces – 5 Will 12 Perception 8

Suggested Word Forces: 8

Skills: Emote/6, Driving/3, Savoir-Faire/2,
Singing/1, Tactics/4, Fighting/3, Dodge/4

Songs: Dreams (All/4), Shields (Corporeal/4),
Tongues (Corporeal/6), Nimbus (Corporeal/3),
Daydreams/4

Attunements: Kyriotate of Dreams, Vassal of
Dreams, Dream Walking, Lucidity

Special Rite: Sing “The Star Spangled Banner”
aloud, with at least 10 people.

Aliah is an old, quiet angel. Many younger angels honed their skills under his mild supervision in the Marches, earning him the nickname of “Uncle.” It was unexpected when Blandine recalled him recently, requesting that the Seraphim Council should allow the old Kyriotate to replace the previous holder of his Word (Fallen to Nybbas). Despite the fact that he hadn’t walked the Earth for hundreds of years, Uncle is now one of Blandine’s poster-boys for promoting Dreams amongst mortals!

From an initial nervous curiosity, he has become consumed by the desire to experience his new Word within the United States from as many different perspectives as possible! It hasn’t yet occurred to him that his Word might hold some power in the rest of the world too. He dashes ceaselessly from coast to coast and back again (sometimes even both at the same time), searching everywhere for ways to inspire those he touches with the dreams of liberty, the work ethic, and all the things that made America great! As a Kyriotate, his opinions on these topics may be different every time someone asks.

He is still naive about the mortal world, and is just as likely to enjoy the company of drug dealers and survivalists as that of more “responsible” individuals. Soldiers who have worked with him find his endless gung-ho idealism to be appealing, but comment in private that it isn’t always wise to believe *everything*

you read in the papers. And everywhere he goes, Servitors of Beleth, Kronos, and Nybbas cling to his coat-tails, seeking ways to corrupt the dream and turn it into a nightmare.

(Aliah is a newly Word-bound angel who is settling into a very demanding task. He might mentor PCs, or recruit them – God knows he will need all the help he can get.)

JOE JOHNSON

Soldier of Dreams

Corporeal Forces – 1 Strength 2 Agility 2
Ethereal Forces – 2 Intelligence 5 Precision 3
Celestial Forces – 3 Will 6 Perception 6

Skills: Artistry (Poetry/5), Detect Lies/1,
Knowledge (Literature/2, Politics/2), Lucid
Dreaming/6, Tactics/1

Songs: Harmony (Corporeal/6), Shields
(Corporeal/4)

Attunements: Dream Walking

As a young man, Joe was one of the most promising poets of his generation. His brand of politicized street poetry reached out to young people, speaking a language that they understood. He outraged critics and dazzled them at the same time. Then, the accident happened. Joe was in a terrible car crash, which left him quadriplegic and totally dependent on caregivers.

But these things which mean so much to mortals are less important to the Fantasists. Blandine noticed the unusually *vital* qualities of his dreamscapes herself, and recruited Joe as a Soldier personally, spending many precious dreaming hours in his company. Since then, he has helped to defend the dreams of his own friends and fellow patients. Many angels know him well from the Marches, having fought alongside this brave warrior, whom even the most elite cliques welcome for his verbal repartee. Few of them know that his mortal body is a frail shell encased in respirators, only able to communicate by flickering one eyelid.

(Joe is a lucid dreamer, who might offer his dreamscape as a safe private locale for angels to meet in the Marches.)



DEALING WITH OUTSIDERS

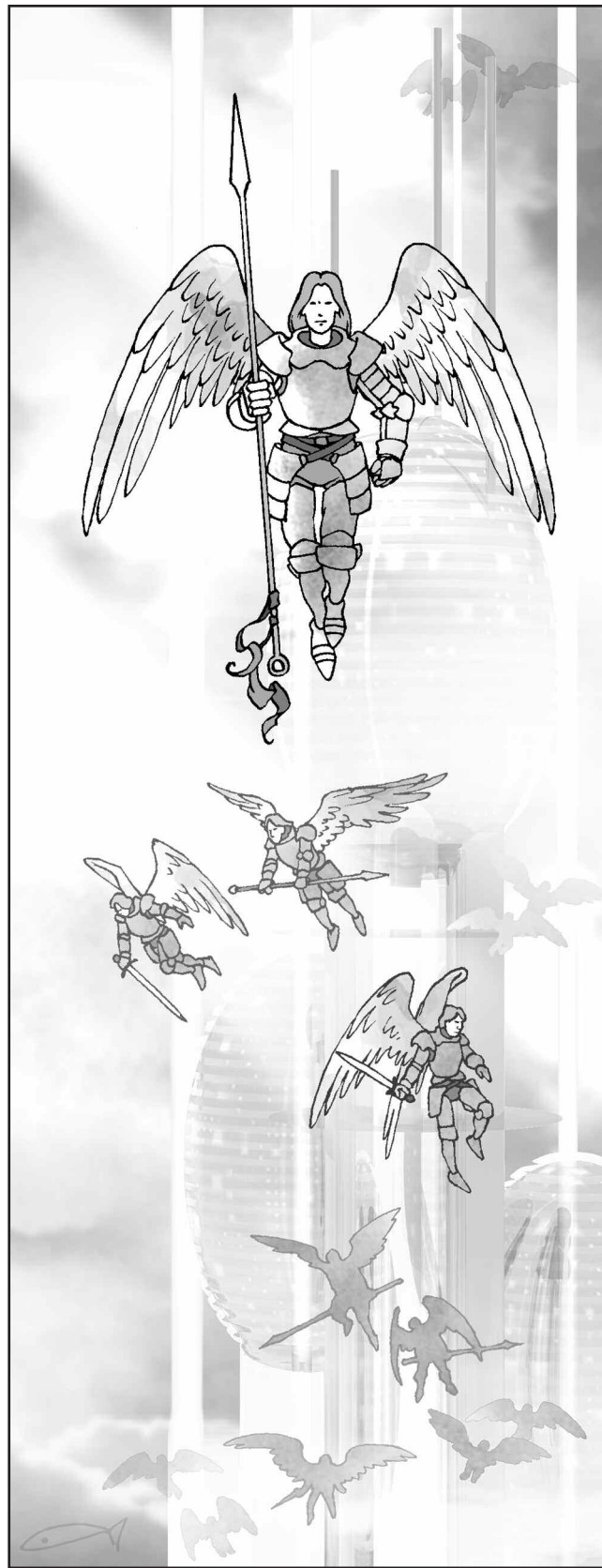
Dreamers deal with outsiders as they find them, as individuals. When they encounter another angel in the Marches, many will expect some deference to be shown, out of respect to Blandine as much as anything else. Angels (even non-Cherubim) have been known to be over-protective of their home turf, and to dislike finding intruders in “their” dreamscapes. Other Fantasists extend the same politeness to visitors as they would expect to receive themselves – but respond badly to having that politeness thrown back in their faces. As in all things, Blandine’s angels are difficult to categorize, and some even enjoy working alongside Warriors or Traders. Far more common, though, is the Dreamer who simply prefers mortals.

One can’t believe impossible things.
“I daresay you haven’t had much practice,”
said the Queen. “When I was your age,
I always did it for half-an-hour a day.
Why, sometimes I’ve believed as many as
six impossible things before breakfast.”
–Lewis Carroll

DEALING WITH JUDGMENT

Angels are instructed by Blandine to allow the Inquisition to go about its business, and to provide any requested co-operation. She maintains no internal police, trusting her Servitors to comport themselves properly. After all, it is Dominic’s job to keep angels on the straight and narrow, not hers. Angels who fall foul of the Inquisition are unlikely to be protected, *if* the charges were demonstrably correct. Blandine dislikes interfering in another Archangel’s business, and is prepared to trust the angels of Judgment to understand their own duties best, as long as they don’t cross the line.

Many Dreamers take “provide any requested cooperation” to mean “provide exactly what is requested, no more and no less” and do not go out of their way to make life easier for Judgment. They regard their own privacy too highly to enjoy being quizzed in detail about personal motivations, which may seem suspicious to an investigative triad. They also dislike Judgment’s tendencies to punish mortals in dreams, or to eavesdrop in dreams for the purposes of punishing a mortal in the waking world. In fact, triads who have flaunted their powers in this way are often unwittingly shadowed by Malakim of Dreams, waiting for an opportunity to give the Dominicans a taste of their own medicine. If the Malakim get in trouble for such a “warning,” Blandine might make an exception to a personal rule, and personally step in to deflect the blame.



MENUNIM

MESSENGERS OF HOPE

Still waters run deep. The Menunim are the most subtle and silent of all the Host, and yet their faith, optimism, and open-mindedness are renowned. They avoid dealing with humans when they can, since they wish to avoid even the slightest disturbance in the Symphony. The Menunim trust humans to do the right thing – they just think that sometimes mortals need a little push to get them going.

The Menunim are a Choir dedicated to service to Blandine. She will loan her Menunim to other Superiors on request; of course, some of the Archangels are more likely to ask for her help than others. Almost every Heavenly project can use a little help from time to time . . . but no Menunite has ever permanently left Blandine's service.

RESONANCE

Menunim are charged with instilling hope in mortals who need it. They do not seek to do so through clumsy methods such as conversation and camaraderie. Instead, the Menunim drift silently from person to person, favoring crowds and public transport, instinctively seeking out those who are in despair and trying to give them the hope they need. They do this subtly, sometimes without speaking a word.

Menunim generally believe that humans possess free will, and that a human must chart his own course toward destiny. But they also believe that the universe is basically good, and that humans are naturally inclined more toward destiny than fate. In turn, they believe that it is they who are the expression of that natural, universal inclination: the innate goodness of the universe manifests itself as Menunim, embodiments of a principle, and it is their inborn responsibility to give humans the hope they need to move upward and onward.

Needless to say, Menunim are rather distant beings. Since they see themselves as goodness given concrete consciousness, they look at things in a concrete, rational way . . . they are the quintessence of hope, and often approach their role mechanistically. Their resonance allows them to *feel* the hopes and fears of those with whom they are in contact, and they have an understanding of what makes people tick (albeit with an idealistic tinge) that few Mercurians can match.



Menunim are fond of keeping notebooks in which they record the lives of those they have touched, and all the hopes and fears which they perceive; when they encounter other Menunim, they read to each other from these books and compare notes. Some might say they're keeping score.

The hope which a Menunite instills through Blandine's Choir Attunement is rarely earth-shattering. The ills they seek to redress are generally the stresses of daily life. On rare occasions, a Menunite will find a human on the very threshold of destiny, and will do all in his power to get the human to take that step. But by and large they are the shoe elves of Heaven, silently encouraging people to mend their woes themselves, and become happier people as a result.

DISSONANCE

It is dissonant for a Menunite to directly manipulate a human toward a given conclusion through any action in the *corporeal* world. They do not engage in mind games, or any form of direct manipulation. Engaging a human in conversation to move them toward some goal is forbidden; the Menunim see even the small happinesses granted by the Mercurians as being abrogations of a mortal's free will. Through dreams they may act, or speak with mortals at great length, but during the day they must remain strangers.

One might ask a Menunite for advice, but it is never offered. Menunim see themselves as involved in the simple channeling of the Symphony's goodness – anything more than that may be dissonant, as it reveals a Menunite who places more value on his personal consciousness than on the universal will.



es, destiny has her hand on
my back, and she's pushing!
– The Tick

Note that Menunim have no problem communicating with Soldiers and other humans who are aware of the War, and of the genuine existence of celestial beings. Even so, Soldiers who ask a Menunite for advice about their personal lives are likely to get the cold shoulder and an admonition to walk their own path. Jimminy Cricket they're not.

Fallen Menunim join the ranks of the Pachadim, Beleth's demons of Fear.

MENUNIM CHECK DIGIT RESULTS

- 1 You know the hope or fear that has most occupied the person over the last day.
- 2 You know both the hope *and* fear that have most occupied the person over the last day.
- 3 You know the two hopes or fears that have most occupied the person over the past month.
- 4 You know the two hopes or fears that have most occupied the person over the past year.
- 5 You know the person's greatest hope and his greatest fear.
- 6 You know the person's greatest hope, and his greatest fear. You can also hear the person's current thoughts, as they relate to a current hope or fear.

MANNER AND APPEARANCE

Menunim tend to be grave and silent except around other allied celestials; in their company, Menunim relax and take on a wistful, wry look.

In his celestial form, a Menunite is a vaporous cloud. They can coalesce a face within the cloud if they feel the need, but this is rare.

Among humans they dress conservatively, favoring gray, and avoid making an impression of any sort through clothing, speech, movement or expression. When they maintain Roles, they are invariably at a low level. They do not wish to be noticed by anyone.

In musical terms, Menunim might be the bassoons or double basses of an orchestra – they are rarely heard in solos, but without them no piece of orchestral music could be well rounded or complete.

GAME MECHANICS

Menunim have the ability to perceive someone's personal hopes and fears. They are naturally drawn

toward people who need a little hope . . . but almost everyone does.

In order to "read" someone, the Menunite must spend two minutes in their company, and make a Perception-based resonance roll. The result is in the boxed text of check digit results. Where the chart says "hope or fear," the GM may choose which to provide to the player.

G
A
B
R
I
E
L



OFANITE ARCHANGEL OF FIRE

The world is energy, hot and fluid.

38

GABRIEL

This energy can fuel the hearts of men and women, bringing joy and inspiration; it can also burn the unwise and the unfortunate. Gabriel's servants are fire incarnate.

Gabriel is an ancient and inscrutable creature. She and her servants may conduct themselves in an honest and simple fashion, but their true natures are complex.

Physically, she's perfect. Her male body is just as flawless as her female vessel, which she prefers in modern times. In any form, she's a powerful, obstinate fighter.

Mentally, however, she's unstable. Gabriel was present at the conception of two major religions (literally, in the case of Christianity – for Islam, she recited the Quran to Muhammed at Yves' instruction). Although she was only following orders, Dominic (who, along with Laurence, supports Christianity in particular) declared her heretical and tried to have her exiled from Heaven. Yves and Michael defended her, but she had already stormed away angrily, and has yet to return. That was over a millennium ago.

Besides the Word of Fire, Gabriel has other offices. Her most important duty is to punish the cruel, which she does with a vengeance. She was once Heaven's messenger, but since her tragic mission to Muhammed, she has refused the role of divine courier.

Gabriel is too unstable to manage God's armies, too disturbed to rehabilitate, and too powerful to destroy. She's a primal force which can occasionally be channeled, but never controlled, by the rational factions of Heaven. And still those who move against Gabriel find themselves balked by Yves.

She still walks the Earth, avoiding other Archangels and performing her role as she has since ancient times. Sometimes she talks to herself; sometimes she screams; sometimes she laughs for no apparent reason. Her servants love her madly, and burn to follow in her footsteps across the hot coals of life.

DISSONANCE

Gabriel punishes the cruel. They need not die, but they must know God's wrath. Gabriel doesn't insist that her angels cleanse the Earth of every human louse they encounter – but each time they finish with one, they must deal with the very next one they meet.

The cruel must feel Gabriel's fire (metaphoric or literal) within a number of days equal to the angel's Celestial Forces, or the Servitor generates a note of dissonance.

This dissonance vanishes once justice has been served – but it will “stick” if they abandon a target. A Servitor who works off his dissonance in a Tether and retreats to Heaven without finding a new target is not breaking his Vow, but few wish to cease their hunts.

CHOIR ATTUNEMENTS

Most of Gabriel's angels are attuned to specific kinds of cruelty, which they can detect at a glance. However, they don't get details – merely that the target practices the kind of cruelty in question. This can make it very painful for such Servitors to walk through human crowds.

Seraphim

Gabriel's Seraphim stalk those who profit knowingly from the suffering of others, or who lie to themselves about what monsters they really are. Sweat-shop businessmen, slumlords and politicians are their special prey.

Cherubim

It is the role of Gabriel's Cherubim to burn those who, within the last year, have horribly betrayed someone devoted to them. Look for them, smiling, outside divorce and custody courts.

Ofanim

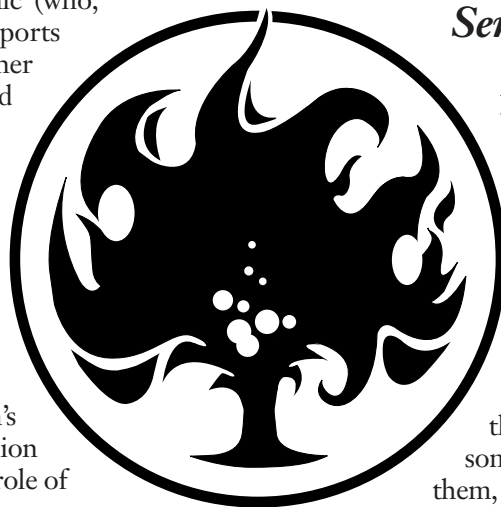
Charged with pursuing those who flee justice, Ofanim in Gabriel's service are immune to damage from corporeal heat, radiation, and electricity. Their vessels' energies balance automatically, with any excess being distributed across the rest of the Symphony, and any deficit made up from it. Every time one of these celestial bounty hunters falls into lava, the Sun burns that much more brightly.

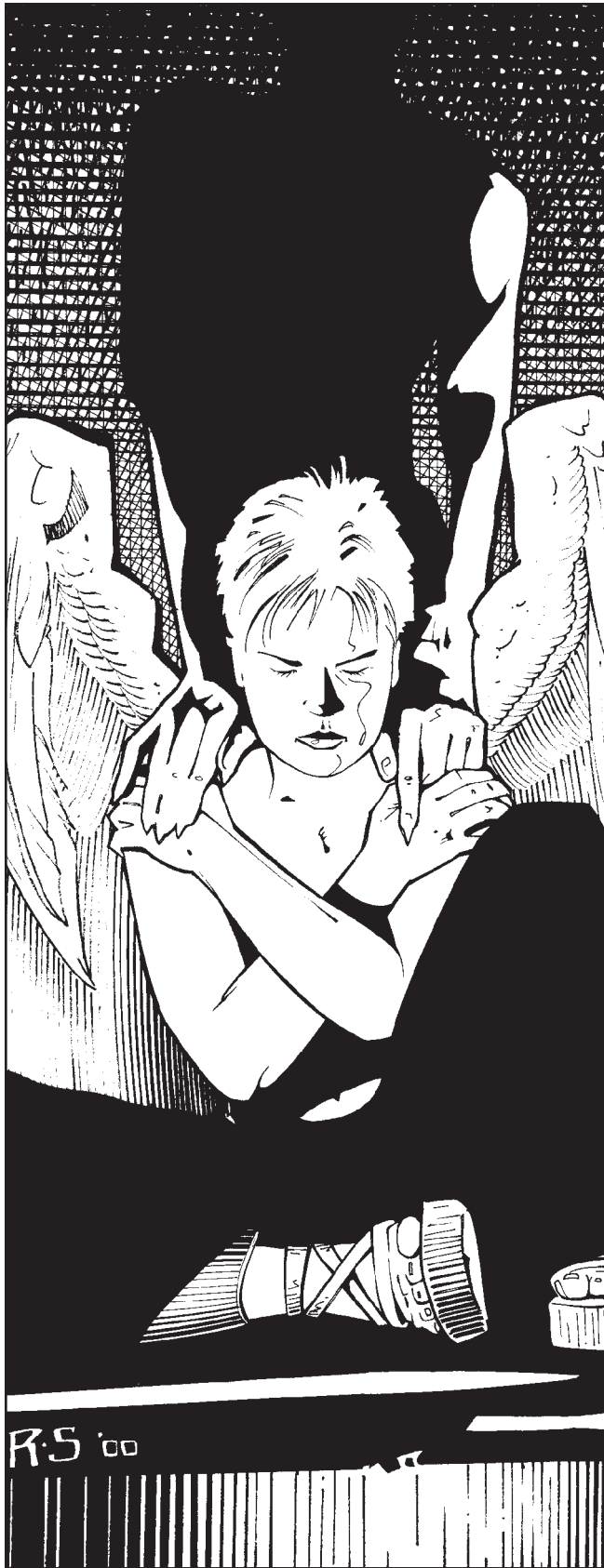
Elohim

Gabriel's Elohim can sense those who delight in inflicting psychological or emotional pain upon others. They themselves take no pleasure in the pain they inflict.

Malakim

At will, these Malakim can encircle their hands with green celestial flames, burning everything they touch. As a weapon, this is a hand-to-hand attack with Power equal to the angel's Celestial Forces, and Accuracy of -1. Gabriel's Malakim are given specific assignments rather than blanket job descriptions.





Kyriotates

Kyriotates serving Gabriel are attuned to people who enjoy inflicting physical pain upon others. Pimps, prison guards, and school coaches feel their wrath. Unlike her Elohim, these angels enjoy the punishments they visit upon the wicked. After all, they're helping people.

Mercurians

Gabriel's Mercurians can recognize those who delight in being cruel to themselves. Rather than punish these people for their dark natures, these Mercurians must prevent each one they meet from hurting themselves, for a single day. These angels enjoy such Roles as bartenders, therapists, prostitutes, and other secret confessors.

SERVITOR ATTUNEMENTS

Dance of the Atoms

The angel may control the ambient temperature within his field of vision, up or down 10°F for each of his Corporeal Forces. The change is almost instantaneous, but cannot be used to reduce (or raise) a person's temperature to the point of death immediately.

Eyes of Fire

By staring into a flame, the angel has the ability to view the closest object of his Choir Attunement (Malakim and Bright Lilim see the object of their current mission), wherever that person may be. No sound is conveyed, but the angel knows the general direction of (if not distance to) his prey. This power requires only an effort of concentration, and a convenient flame.

The Last Spark

An angel may use this power to gift a hopeless, dejected human who no longer believes in mercy, or who has lost faith or turned away from God, with the divine spark. This has the effect of giving the human a number of Essence equal to his highest Force, as well as a swell of personal energy and a feeling of new perspective. This angelic inspiration only lasts for an hour, after which it is up to the formerly depressed human to survive on his own. The angel himself must make a Will roll to activate the attunement.

Smite

The angel may lash out with a fiery attack at anyone he can see, within 10 yards times his Corporeal Forces. It does a number of hits equal to the angel's Celestial Forces times the Essence used to power it, and bypasses

all normal physical armor worn by the target. However, while there is no roll to hit, the attack can be dodged, with the check digit reducing the damage done as normal.

The True Shape of Flame

Using this power, an angel is able to manipulate flame into discrete forms and shapes. These shapes can be anything – some beautiful art has been cast in ephemeral flame. The fire can be made to appear to writhe in a specific way, or to form letters, leaving a communication or making an impression. This attunement is chiefly used to shape fire to scare the Hell out of the cruel, but occasionally it is used in a defensive or artistic manner. It is convenient, sometimes, to be able to swath your body in a circle of flame that moves at your command. A Will roll is required from the angel using the attunement to focus his concentration, and a source of flame is needed to supply the raw material. The effects last for as long as the angel concentrates, with the flames returning to their original source once he loses interest.

Where There's Smoke . . .

This attunement allows an angel to sense when a person within his line of sight is a pyromaniac. It operates automatically, and at no cost. Elohim with this ability are instantly able to recognize Servitors of Belial.

Whispers of Inspiration

With this ability, the angel may communicate thoughts directly into the waiting mind of a listening, contemplative being. This communication carries no specific power of suggestion – it is not a means of control – but the content of the communication can be anything verbally

SONGS OF FIRE

The Songs of Fire (*Liber Canticorum*, p. 35), though not secret, are popular among the angels of Gabriel. The Archangel of Fire is also aware of the Numinous Corpus Song of Flame (*Liber Canticorum*, p. 72), the Songs of Purity (*Liber Canticorum*, p. 75), and the Songs of War (*Liber Canticorum*, p. 77-78) and shares them with particularly favored Servitors from time to time. She also knows the Songs of Creation (*Liber Canticorum*, p. 95-96), but no one can think of any sane reason why she should use them, let alone teach them . . .

BRIGHT LILIM (RESTRICTED)

With eye contact, Gabriel's Lilim may know *exactly* what punishment an offender needs to repent truly of his cruelty. As with her Malakim, Gabriel's Lilim would be assigned to specific cases.

Bright Lilim of Gabriel would be fanatics. There's no kinder way of putting it. To have been redeemed by her – or even less likely, to have been redeemed by another Archangel and chosen to serve Fire – the Lilim in question would need to have an absolute passion and intensity. Usually such Lilim would focus on punishing the cruel, though occasionally they might prefer to gift humans with inspiration and insight. Soldekai (see p. 57) would certainly take great care to keep track of any such angels, assigning other Servitors of Fire to watch over them and to make sure that they didn't get carried away by their enthusiasm.

expressible. Information transmitted this way is more likely to be remembered later, though it may be interpreted in a number of ways by an ignorant target. Servitors of Gabriel who work together frequently use this power to communicate between themselves without being overheard. (In game terms, this attunement has a range of the angel's Celestial Forces in yards, with no cost in Essence and no Symphonic disturbance, and operates whenever a chosen target is within range.)

DISTINCTIONS

Vassal of Fire

A Vassal of Fire may strengthen or reduce any normal fire anywhere in sight by the strength of thought alone. He can contain a fire within the area of effect, letting it burn out without spreading, or cause it to burn faster and leap higher. The fire may be made to spread or shrink at a rate of a yard per round, or leap up to a height equal to its current radius. More detailed control is not possible (though see *The True Shape Of Flame*, above). This power persists as long as the angel concentrates on it, and can cover an area up to ten yards wide.

Friend of the Divine Spark

The angel can amplify a human's burning passion (for a thing or a theory), which the victim must then obsess over for an hour each day. This lasts for a number of weeks equal to the angel's Ethereal Forces. The target must be within line of sight, up to 50 yards distant.

COMMON MALAKITE OATHS

Common oaths taken by Malakim of Gabriel include:

- ✘ I will encourage passion wherever I find it.
- ✘ I will protect any bearer of inspiration.
- ✘ I will never let any sanctified flame be quenched.
- ✘ I will protect prophecies and sacred scriptures.
- ✘ I will purify or quench any flame that is used for evil purposes.
- ✘ I will bring inspiration to those who despair.
- ✘ I will heal those who have suffered from cruelty.
- ✘ I will protect any love born of passion.
- ✘ I will bear witness to any cruelty committed by others.

Master of the Flame of Heaven

In combat, the angel can pay 1 Essence to create a sphere of flames around his body, with a radius of 5 yards, lasting until the battle ends or the angel wills it away. Any foe entering the sphere (or present when it appears) must make a Strength roll to avoid being dazzled (-2 to skills involving Agility or the use of eyes) for a number of rounds equal to the angel's Celestial Forces. The flames are formed of light only, and do not cause damage, nor do they affect the angel's allies, or any innocent bystanders.

HIGHER DISTINCTIONS

The only higher Distinction which Gabriel has ever accorded is that of Chamberlain of the Legions of Flame, borne by Soldekai (p. 57), a Malakite and her highest-ranking Servitor. Other angels of hers may be named as Vassals, Friends, or Masters, or bear Words, but Gabriel bestows no greater titles, and none of her Servitors presume to claim or give them while she refrains. Occasionally, when particularly well-pleased with the actions of some Servitor, she traces her sigil upon his forehead (possibly branding his current vessel, if he is in physical form). Whenever such a Servitor takes celestial form afterwards, the sigil burns with an undying flame on his angelic form.

RELATIONS

Allied: No one (David and Janus are Allied to Gabriel)

Associated: Janus, Yves (Laurence and Yves are Associated with Gabriel)

Hostile: Dominic (No Archangels are Hostile to Gabriel)

BASIC RITES

- ✘ Spend three hours near an intense heat source (a huge campfire, the furnace of a crematorium, etc.).
- ✘ Spend an hour in intense conflict, mental or physical.
- ✘ Kill a demon with fire. (+3 Essence)

EXPANDED RITES

Gabriel may also grant other Rites as a reward:

- ✘ Inspire a human being to a selfless action.
- ✘ Protect someone who is the recipient of genuine inspiration (divine or creative).
- ✘ Purify a source of flame that has been corrupted by Diabolicals.

CHANCE OF INVOCATION: 3

INVOCATION MODIFIERS

- +1 Praying before a fight.
- +2 Cleaning a piece of metal in flames.
- +3 The life's blood from a betrayer.
- +4 The tomb or grave of one who died to protect others.
- +5 In, or surrounded by, flames.
- +6 While actually engaged in mortal battle.

GABRIEL IN DETAIL

... and from the agony which thrilled through body and soul in that embrace, learn that the flame of the Everlasting Love doth burn ere it transform . . .

—Cardinal Newman, The Dream Of Gerontius

A primordial dancer on the edge of the War, listening to the rhythm of the Symphony and moving to its ineffable beat, Gabriel represents the illumination of the Holy Flame. In the early days, this cast her in the Role of messenger and inspirer. But in later days, she has turned toward the aspect of her nature that makes her the punisher of the cruel – the wrath of the Holy Flame.

THE WORD OF FIRE

The Fire that Gabriel promotes is the divine spark, the holy incandescence, the fiery bolt from Heaven, the wrath of God, the Holy Flame. At one time she embodied all of Fire, from its destructive aspects to its more creative ones, but Lucifer has made certain that Belial promotes destruction and the more negative aspects of Fire, and now Gabriel is in a way inhibited and limited to only the

righteous Fire of God's wrath. Curiously enough, Eli and Jean aid her frequently without her knowing, as the inspiration of the Divine Flame is closely related to the lighting of insight and the fire of Creation that they support.

Nearly all celestials, particularly the Word-bound, tend to think of themselves as agents of that Word. Gabriel's sense of identity has slipped. She has a hard time figuring out where her personality ends and her Word begins – and lately she has given up even trying. The primal things that she does might seem mindlessly destructive – but so does an erupting volcano, until you come to know the inner wisdom behind its explosion and flow.

Above all else, Gabriel represents that ineffable spark of light and life that refuses to be snuffed out – in this, she is both horrific and beatific, as she represents the greatest wrath and the greatest mercy all at once.

HISTORY

Gabriel is a very old angel, although she appears ever-youthful. One of the first Archangels to exist, she was present at the creation of the universe, burning in the fire of the sun, and bathing in the lava at the center of the Earth. In those times, the Archangel of Fire was more commonly seen in a male form. He was approached by Lucifer during the rebellion, but despite the Lightbringer's best efforts at persuasion, rejected him.

As Gabriel looked out at the ranks of Lucifer's army, he was seized with the fire that is the living wrath of God – and for the first time in his existence he cried out in anger, knowing the urge to punish cruelty. His newly-created Malakim took wing to follow him, driving toward the enemy host, and they fought with all the passion of their fury, defending Heaven and God's order.

THE RELIGION PLAN

In approximately 2,000 B.C., the Seraphim Council grew worried about the spread of Ethereal deities, and Yves suggested monotheism as a way of cutting off pagan worship. The main participants in this very loosely-defined plan were Yves, Eli, Raphael (the Archangel of Knowledge) and Gabriel. Khalid, the future Archangel of Faith (but then merely one of many Elohim of Purity) was appointed by Uriel to keep watch over the project. Since then, Yves has forsworn meddling with religion, Gabriel has become insane, Eli has gone AWOL, and Raphael was destroyed in the battle with Legion (Demon Prince of Corruption) in 1008 A.D. . . .

When Lucifer gave Belial the demonic Word of Fire, it caused Gabriel agonizing pain – not damage per se, but a kind of dissonance. It was the sound of fingernails scraping along the delicate melody lines of the Symphony, demonic vibrations running directly along the same wavelength which the Archangel occupied. He knew what had transpired immediately, and knew Belial as one of his former servants, one of the ignorant mass who had thrown in with the Morningstar Prince.

As Belial went forth to promote his Word, this noise continued. No other celestial must face exactly what Gabriel faces, because the Archangel of Fire must listen to this foul, anti-harmonious melody playing directly above and *through* Gabriel's own theme and Word in the Symphony. Even in the early days after the Fall, it aggravated him and caused the occasional outburst of rage. Things have gotten worse since then.



Many have assumed from her connection with Fire that Gabriel was the original Prometheus, although the angels of Fire deny being associated with the myth (and certainly the ethereals of the Greek pantheon deny it even more). As angelic histories relate, it was actually Lucifer (with some help from Jean) who introduced fire as a tool to humanity -- an early example of the Lightbringer at work in his original role, and a gift which he has done his best to pervert, with the help of Belial, since the Fall.

As the divine messenger and bearer of inspiration, Gabriel has what might be called a mandate to interact with humans and bear them divine truth. Other Archangels have claimed that there have been times when Fire abused the divinely-granted position – most notably in the creation of Islam. This failed to stop Gabriel, whose path throughout the world has become less and less regular or reliable as the years go by, but who still has not ceased from bringing inspiration to humanity.

On Yves' – or God's – instructions, Gabriel announced the conception of Jesus to Mary, and later led the choirs of angels above Bethlehem, singing alleluias to God on high. Reasoned and deliberate enquiry from some Archangels (not to mention the impassioned and furious demands to know what he thought he was doing, from others) produced no better result than a referral to Yves. Gabriel himself refused to confirm whether or not Jesus was divine, or how God might wish the other Archangels to proceed for the moment. (As it was, some of the Archangels – Uriel, and later Laurence – came to believe that Jesus *was* the Son of God, and that Gabriel had presumably been genuinely inspired.)

A CONVENIENT CRIMINAL

A number of celestials – both divine and diabolical – have been heard to remark that there were plenty of other reasons for alterations in the Quranic text besides heresy on Gabriel's part. The Archangel of Fire is a prophet herself, with inspiration straight from God – and Muhammad also might have received verses from some other sources. One should also bear in mind the possibility that the *humans* charged with copying it down might have made errors in transcription! Given all this, Dominic's direct accusations of Gabriel have seemed to many to be a case of the Archangel of Judgment finally discovering a reasonable pretext for a long-intended inquisition. (After all, some comment, with the worryingly unstable Archangel of Fire out of the situation and thus not creating new and dubious religions which might damage Christianity, Uriel would certainly be pleased . . .) Michael certainly harbors beliefs in that direction. Yves' utter refusal to comment in the matter has not made Gabriel's defenders or accusers any happier.

The extent to which the new religion of Christianity was deliberately promulgated by the Archangels is unknown, but certainly Yves, Raphael, and Gabriel were all early patrons of the faith. Gabriel himself still refused to confirm or deny the prophecies which some texts had put into his mouth. However, he was believed to have been active in the inspirations of many Christian prophets – whether they were confirmed as such in the Bible, or relegated to less reliable works such as the *Apocrypha* or *Pseudepigrapha*.

Then came Islam. On Yves' instructions, Gabriel appeared to Muhammad, a merchant from Mecca and a member of the Quraysh tribe, and dictated the Holy Quran to him over the next 23 years. This in itself caused dissension among the Archangels, especially as several of them were now supporting Christianity thoroughly (including Uriel, the Commander of the Heavenly Hosts, and Dominic, Head of the Heavenly Inquisition). When Dominic carefully compared Yves' own copy of the Quran to what Muhammad's followers had transcribed, he found discrepancies, and lost no time in accusing Gabriel of taking liberties with Yves' (or God's own) revelations. He was prepared, somewhat reluctantly, to tolerate a new religion besides Christianity, if it had been created on the express orders of the Archangel of Destiny, but to have discovered *alterations* in the text . . .

The Archangel of Judgment promptly arraigned the Archangel of Fire for heresy. Gabriel, furious, stormed out of Heaven before the trial could be finished – with it barely started – despite both Yves and Michael standing in his defense, and retreated to the Volcano. This had always been on the border between Heaven and the Marches. After the Archangel's retreat from Heaven, and the Citadel of Fire moving to within the Volcano, it became even more a place apart, a sanctuary for Fire and its faithful Servitors. Gabriel also began to assume a female form and identity, and has maintained that to this day.

This disturbance in Heaven was followed closely by the Purity Crusades. While the angels of Fire did *not* take any direct part in the Crusades, there are rumors to this day that they protected small enclaves of ethereals who called on them for assistance. Such ethereals are rumored to have accepted Islam, and to have begged the Servitors of Fire for help in the name of the religion which their Mistress brought to Earth. If such assistance was given, it was very well-hidden from the rest of Heaven – but when one considers the current mood of the Servitors of Fire, it would hardly have been a difficult step for many of them . . . Gabriel herself attended the trial of Uriel, but did not speak for him or against him.

As time passed, Gabriel was seen more and more often to have adopted a female body and appearance. This caused debate, with some seeing it as a direct

GABRIEL AND URIEL

Gabriel understood Uriel. The driving flames of Purity were something which the Archangel of Fire must by necessity sympathize with. Uriel's *passion* to cleanse the universe with fire and sword could not be ignored by Gabriel, and deserved her blessing. At the same time, her prophecies and visions were bestowed more widely than the Archangel of Purity ever approved, and brought dangerous wonders to men. She was *compelled* toward Uriel's flame of purpose, and at the same time repelled by the massacres in the Marches, a cruelty which she could not ignore. When Uriel was summoned before the Seraphim Council, she attended, but would not speak for or against him, torn by the contradiction in her own nature. She does not have the same feelings for Laurence, who – to her – lacks Uriel's passion and absolute devotion to God. (Her hatred toward Dominic may well affect her judgment in her opinion of Dominic's ally.)

AN ANALYSIS OF GABRIEL'S PSYCHOSIS

Gabriel is insane – that's plain to see. What she suffers from most is a lack of true identity, and the Discordant harboring of centuries of anger, rage, and barely withheld destruction. In the midst of her madness, she is also affected by the transcendent Divine perspective, frequently receiving inspiration directly from the Godhead. As a result, she is remarkably intuitive, prescient and sagacious, in a mysterious fashion that Yves mirrors but does not share.

She inhibits the destructive part of her nature, which causes her even more spiritual pain. Unable to prevent

spillover from her rage, she has taken to isolating herself from all but a few. Still, as a result of her burning need to punish the cruel and to bring inspiration, she must forsake isolation from time to time, and this is usually when her cycle of destruction and inspiration perpetuates itself. At her very heart she *is* still the divine messenger – but words have failed her, and actions are all that she has left to convey what she must communicate.



counter-reaction to Belial's strengthening of the destructive aspects of Fire, while others claimed it was a rejection of her previous persona and attributes as Archangel of Fire. As usual, Gabriel herself refused to comment on the matter, and her Servitors loyally did the same (if with a certain degree of confusion).

Now she walks beneath the sun on Earth, taking fire from it and using its light to illuminate the cruel. She dwells in the most desolate places, wandering for years in the driest deserts, bathing in volcanoes, climbing the highest heights to absorb pure sunlight. The solar light offers her solace in the absence of the light of Heaven, and the flames in the hearts of humanity bring her reminder of the eternal fire of God.

Gabriel has watched Jean turn the night from the darkness of preindustrial times to the brightly-lit spires of the modern cities. She has made sure that humanity never forgets the power of fire, even though they now warm themselves with electrically heated air, and the explosions that drive them in their luxurious automobiles are tiny and unseen. Despite the surge of industrialism, and the materialism which has accompanied it, Gabriel is the carrier and warder of the spark of holy inspiration and spiritual life. She may be unpredictable and visionary – she may not know herself where she travels or to what end she strives – but she is the Fire of God, which descends from Heaven and transforms the soul.

HOLY MYSTERIES

The Fall Of Temple Mount

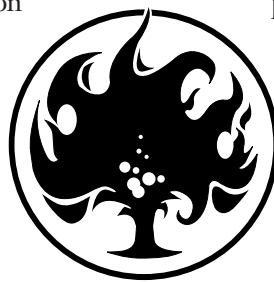
When the Crusaders stormed Jerusalem in 1099 AD, putting every living being within the walls to the sword, Belial's Servitors slew the angel of Fire who was

Seneschal to the Temple Mount Tether, and the hatred of the Crusaders created a Tether to Malphas. At that moment, when her Tether fell, Gabriel is said to have appeared in the center of the Seraphim Council as a shape of flame whiter than the sun, and screamed for sheer grief and rage. The fires of her wrath cast the shadows of the Archangels darkly against the walls, and Laurence himself, patron of Christianity as he was, turned his face away in shame.

It is said that at certain times and seasons, when an angel stands in the Seraphim Council's auditorium, he can still hear the echoes of Gabriel's cry.

Beneath The Volcano

Some angels mutter that Gabriel's Volcano is more than it seems. They claim that after the Purity Crusade, Uriel wasn't taken up to the Higher Heavens by God – instead, he was restrained by the combined will of the Seraphim Council, and chained beneath the Volcano. (Even Laurence is supposed to have consented to this, realizing his Superior's insanity. The entire "accepted version" was created to avoid shaking the faith of lesser angels.) The Archangel of Purity is supposed to be still chained there, on the edges of Heaven and the Marches, hidden by Gabriel's power. One story has it that he is trapped in an endless dream which Blandine wove to keep him prisoner, while another story states that he is awake, and conscious of what has been done to him – and waits to take revenge. Gabriel herself, according to this version, finds it more and more difficult to tolerate her own Volcano, feeling Uriel's presence beneath it. Perhaps if she were insane enough, she might even free him herself . . .



ALURIEL AND MORDEKIAL

These two Cherubim of Yves are 15-Force angels of Destiny, Masters of Divine Knowledge (with the Ofanite resonance), and on loan to Gabriel only at Yves' insistence. Most of the time she ignores them, while grudgingly admitting to herself that Yves' wisdom in placing them with her is greater than her own. They are charged with minimizing the effects of Gabriel's rages and the fires that she will inevitably start, earning them the nickname "Firemen" among Gabriel's Servitors.

Aluriel and Mordekial are nearly always attuned to Gabriel, and are constantly watching her from afar. They try to keep a low profile – in the early days of their servitude, a few demons learned their purpose, and now most demons know that when they see the Firemen, Gabriel herself must be nearby. Belial would love to subvert these two, and cause them to Fall and become Djinn.

No one knows if these bruisers were trained to become as similar as they are, or if they were just "born" virtually identical. Yves isn't telling. They are, however, perfectly aligned to their purpose – keeping tabs on Gabriel and making sure that the worst of her damage is healed or repaired. Ultimately they report back to Yves, and can summon him (+3 to invocation) to handle emergencies that are beyond their powers.

Prophecy In Hell

It is whispered in Hell that sometimes a fiery woman walks the streets of Shal-Mari or the wastes of Abaddon, prophesying hope and destiny for those who will repent. Heretics murmur that it is Gabriel herself, driven (as she always is) by the urge to bring inspiration, even to the depths of Hell. No one will admit to having seen or spoken to her personally, and the Game suppresses such rumors brutally. Still, the legend continues . . .

The Coming of Cruelty

It is said that on the day before Magog, once Angel of Fortitude, Fell, Gabriel made his way to the Catacombs of David. He would not speak to the Cherubim at the entrance, or to the Archangel of Stone, but wandered through the dark caverns and passages, crooning to himself. (Some particular fragments of obsidian or frozen lava-flows are described as due to this visit.) At the moment when Magog did Fall, and the Kyriotate's Heart

shattered, Gabriel paused in his wandering, fell silent – and vanished. The Archangel of Fire would not speak of this matter afterwards, even when questioned by David himself.

The Last Vision

Some demons and Outcasts have claimed that Gabriel has indeed seen a vision of the end of days – and that it showed her the downfall of Heaven and the triumph of Hell. That vision sent her insane, they claim, and since that day she has not been able to see anything *else*. When she roams the Earth in torment, she is attempting to escape from the future which she knows will come; but she cannot escape her own Word and her own prophecy.

PERSONALITY AND OUTLOOK

Mysterious, inscrutable, and fleet, Gabriel is an unknown variable in the War. Laurence cannot plan for her involvement in anything. No one may reasonably summon her, dictate her actions, or involve her in their plots. She is an untamable force of divine nature. Even her Servitors, though they love her dearly, have no idea what goes on inside her head. Although they share in the Holy Flame, they have no way to understand how the events of the past and the existence of Belial have twisted and changed Gabriel.

In the midst of guttering, sparking, fiery madness, she has moments of utter clarity. During this time she reveals her brilliance, the inimitable spark of inspiration that embodies her Word. She speaks quietly and with great love to her Servitors, moving among their host, touching them and instantly knowing all that they face. These messages frequently show uncanny insight, as if – they whisper – God had spoken them, and are given in some of the most unlikely places – celestial, ethereal, or corporeal. It is in these times of clarity that she will remove dissonance from favored Servitors, something which she has no apparent interest in when the madness is upon her. These periods of reason and inspiration rarely lasts more than a day; then Gabriel leaves her Servitors behind, and seeks solitude, as her deep-rooted madness becomes all the more violent and destructive. Two Cherubim of Yves are always attuned to her, wherever she is, watching her (from a safe distance, which can at times be very far away) and marking her passage. They are assigned the duty of making certain that her episodes of uncontrollable fury don't endanger others, or disrupt the Symphony – or, when they *do*, that the mess is cleared up afterwards. They are Aluriel and Mordekial, sometimes called "Gabriel's Firemen" – see the box above.

Priorities

*I am and am not, freeze and yet I burn,
Since from myself my other self I turn.
My care is like my shadow in the sun,
Follows me flying – flies when I pursue it;
Stands and lives by me, does what I have done.
– Elizabeth I*

Gabriel's Servitors serve her office much more than she herself does these days. Her madness prevents her from actively pursuing the cause of punishing the cruel, but her Servitors participate in and utilize her amazing, world-shaping energy to fulfill her office well.

The thing that mostly dominates Gabriel's waking consciousness is a need to destroy that which causes her pain. And yet, giving in to that part of herself means upholding the destructive aspects of the Word of Fire, thus playing into Belial's hands. She is therefore constantly fleeing from herself – that being the only celestial who can truly threaten her (except perhaps for Michael).

The only being she will pause for is Yves. There is some inexplicable relationship between them – she seems to perceive Yves in an almost paternal light. For his part, Yves can freeze her with a word, and is the only one who can actually cause her clarity to return – albeit briefly. If he says something is important, that proves sufficient to penetrate the whirl of madness within Gabriel, and give her pause.

Views on God

Gabriel's utter certainty and faith in God have never faltered. She goes where He directs her, and acts as she

DESTINY'S INTERVENTION

Particular occasions when Yves has halted Gabriel's actions have included times when she was about to take some action which might (other angels theorize) have destroyed a person's destiny. At least once, Yves has intervened to protect the life of a cruel man or group, who were later observed to repent their ways, and to sincerely try to make reparation for what they had done. Dominic cites such occasions as definite proof that Gabriel has overstepped the borders of her duty, but others say that if he had been working more closely with the Archangel of Fire – as he once *did* – then Yves' intervention would not have been necessary.

ELEMENTAL UNDERSTANDINGS

David and Gabriel have an *elemental* affinity and understanding for each other. They both appreciate the needs and impulses of an inhumanly driving force, whether it is to burn and inspire, or to strengthen and defend. They also worked together in close partnership to forge the world, long before Gabriel went insane. However, while stone can become lava (and thus kin to fire) without losing its essential nature, it is far harder for fire to slow and freeze itself to become stone, while still maintaining its own self. David can make allowances for Gabriel with much more understanding than she does for he and his – and he does so. Gabriel, for her part, does appreciate him – when she has the clarity for it.

believes He wishes, a living manifestation of divine inspiration. She does not *ask* to understand; she knows His truth and holiness, and is all the more tortured by the Belial-fostered Hellish Word of Fire that burns in contradiction. While it may tear her apart personally, it also affirms her in the righteousness of God, which she hears and knows. Gabriel is passionate in God's service, and incensed at those who would limit or judge the Lord.

POLITICS

Archangelic Opinions

By not being active in Heavenly politics, Gabriel has become a dangerous variable that all the political players must constantly evaluate and factor into their plans. Only Yves seems to know her well enough to understand where she truly fits in matters – the rest spend countless hours trying to predict what she'll do, and for all their efforts they still have no idea. Her sigil of authority might show up at any time (Soldekai carries it and places it at the discretion of those she wishes to have it), representing her vote, which can fall in any direction.

Below are some of the opinions, both closely held and openly pronounced, that the other Superiors of Heaven and Hell harbor about her.

Blandine: She has a great dream, but I fear it has consumed her . . . I've tried reaching out to her, but I don't know if I ever penetrated her madness to the hope I know lies within. She can be destructive, dangerous, insane. Still – every child fears the dark, and she does bring Light . . . (*I liked her, I think. I think she has visited me recently, in another guise. She sparks fires, and fans embers to flame. Yes, I'm sure I liked her . . .*)

TWO MIGHTY PRINCIPLES

Almost everyone who has ever discussed the matter has commented that Gabriel over-reacted when Dominic accused her of heresy, storming out of Heaven with the trial scarcely begun. Many have also felt that Dominic was too harsh a judge in demanding full formal trial, rather than perhaps suggesting a quiet investigation, or even acceptance of the new order of things. Such people neglect a vital point. Gabriel is Fire – her nature is to over-react, to blaze up in defiance and fury, and to move swiftly and without hesitation, rather than to wait for further accusation. Dominic is Judgment – he could not do other than accuse her of heresy if he felt it was justified, or bring the full process of investigation to bear if he felt that Yves' mandate had been betrayed. Both acted precisely as they must, though other Archangels may have struggled to prevent them. Like all the best tragedies, once begun, it could not be halted. (And perhaps, for them to have acted otherwise – to have betrayed the nature of their Words – might have resulted in an even worse situation . . .) Small wonder that Michael distrusts Yves, who set such a thing in motion, and then refused to explain it.

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

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


Eli: She's intense, you got to hand it to her – she puts up with a lot of crap. And she really needs to lighten up – she's way too quick to torch those who could be put right with a little effort. But I'll tell you something – I would be nowhere without her. How many stories were born around a campfire? *(His flames have broken free, and now he runs across the world like wildfire, destroying the*

old and bringing new growth. I understand that. But there is something dangerous, a lack of balance in him and his angels – they love so much and know so little . . . they are so beautiful.)

Janus: Pure, golden, untamable. We have a lot in common, except she's let her Infernal counterpart get under her skin and drive her over the edge, and I'll never let that happen to me. The way she is now, I just don't understand her. That's okay. I've learned not to fan the flame. *(No solidity, no stability, each movement of his is a mirrored dance – he moves around me, and his changes bring me nourishment, fuel my fires. He is what he is, and contradicts himself because he must.)*

Jean: She has no idea what she does, and cares not for the results. She has long since left the burden of ethics and sanity behind – now she consumes without thinking. Her fire burns out of control. It has ever fallen to me to clean up the messes she makes – I have had to learn to temper that which she cannot properly rule. If only she could be channeled, controlled, made biddable – what a force she would be to harness. The situation requires my consideration. *(He is so purposeful, so certain, and he leaves such fires of inspiration where he touches. But he chooses where to touch, upon whom to bring his clarity, while I move where God directs, where the living fire runs, where the humans call me. Man's flames may be controlled by him, but God's will never be.)*

Jordi: We fear her, with good reason. She is the flash-fire that kills all, whether she means it or not. Still, that firelight draws us all. How can we deny that which both repels and calls us? *(He is passion, as are his animals, pure in his nature, devoted in his service. Others believe they are wiser. They are all the more foolish for it.)*



Aruviel, I mean no disrespect, but it would make it easier for us on Earth if you could organize paying for your own armaments next time rather than requisitioning them from members of the transport police. Please?
- Dorian, Mercurian of Dreams

Laurence: Gabriel's Servitors are dedicated and noble, but Gabriel herself cannot be relied upon. She is a primal force whom I've given up trying to direct. In her rare moments of lucidity, she delivers amazing intelligence, and I know she possesses insights even Yves does not.

LAURENCE AND GABRIEL

It is not a comforting thought to the Archangel of the Sword to know that the Archangel who announced the birth of Jesus Christ (who he sincerely believes in) is apparently insane. Laurence devoutly wishes matters were otherwise – but he can't ignore the reality, which is that Gabriel *is* unpredictable, *is* apparently insane, and *cannot* be controlled. He is profoundly grateful that Soldekai cooperates with him, but he requires a better

and more permanent solution. As matters stand, he supports Dominic's view that Gabriel must be brought to some form of reckoning – but he does so in hopes of finding some sort of healing or stabilization for the Archangel of Fire. If he were made aware of Khalid's tentative attempts (p. 84) at working with the Servitors of Fire, he would support them wholeheartedly.

(He glows with the same fire that consumed Uriel, but his is a more tempered flame. He burns brightly, but he flickers with uncertainty. He has not yet been through the crucible . . . we shall see what emerges.)

Marc: A curious problem – she is ultimately in equilibrium, swinging between extremes. Her Word represents a process, by which things are transformed – there is fuel, and a spark, and a balance of energy released versus fuel consumed. She understands cycles. *(Yes, yes, he*

*plays the human and occupies himself with small things, petty things, money, goods, manners – but beneath it all he knows the grace of fire shared, communication which gives virtue to both, the **transformation** which we bring to each other.)*

Michael: I am concerned by her unpredictability, but I would not take action against her. She carries the original spark of the Divine. If the situation deteriorates, I would not hesitate to do what must be done . . . though it would be a tragic day for us all. *(He is one of the few who knows the battle which we fight in. His passion is a fire that will hold him steady through his battles. His Servitors can be cruel, and feel my wrath for it, yet they have an ardor that few can match. Courage is their flame, a constant one.)*

Novalis: “Ah my foes, and oh my friends – it makes a lovely light.” Seriously, if Dominic could put aside his unthinking hatred, if Laurence would welcome her back with open arms, we'd see how transcendent Love heals everything. Hers is a Discordant soul banished, misunderstood. And yet her madness swathes her in the kind of barrier that not even my most gifted Servitors can hope to penetrate. Still – have you ever seen a forest after a fire? A few years pass, and it is renewed. There is wisdom in that. *(Acceptance – everyone must accept the fire. I would see wisdom in her, but her drive is so much slower, the pulse of vegetable life that drives toward the sun and then falls again. In time she shatters rock and changes the face of the world, but there is not time. There is not enough time. The fire is faster.)*

Yves: I have long since put the past behind me – I have seen how others have taken words and twisted them. It is not my destiny that I am concerned about, but all of creation's. In the end, Gabriel will remain – this I have seen, as I have seen her aurora burn over the horizon of potentiality. She is the fire that speaks to patriarchs and saints, she is the holy inspiration that moves humanity to wisdom. Wherever she goes, there is God. *(When a long time passes and we do not speak, I remember his madness . . . his quiet, deep, **essential** madness. He is such a good friend and the kindest of them all.)*

JEAN'S PLANS

It is contrary to all Jean's instincts for common sense and practical safety to let Gabriel continue to roam while she is – clearly – insane. Consider the disasters which her volcanoes and firestorms have brought upon humans, not to mention the inspiration which she scatters so carelessly, without thinking of the potential consequences. It is, quite simply, intolerable – the Symphony (to Jean's mind) demands that *someone* sort it out. To his credit, Jean does not believe that Gabriel will Fall; he merely feels that her current actions do more harm than good, and her “extremist” tendencies must be corrected. Whether this will take the form of an attempt to cleanse Gabriel of Belial's influence, or to barrier the Volcano Symphonically in order to shield her till she is more “stable,” or sessions of psychoanalysis, or a societal shift to alter perceptions of the Word of Fire, or an attempt to actually manipulate her very Forces, or something else, Jean hasn't decided – yet – and he certainly will not act in haste or further exacerbate the situation. But Gabriel's current behavior does nothing to reassure him.

Princely Opinions

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

Asmodeus: A dangerous wild card who upsets the settled order of Heaven, and an unpredictable gamepiece. It is a pity that Dominic cannot control her better. Her servants have an annoying habit of detecting those who are . . . efficient . . . in my service. *(Burn the boards, shatter the pieces, tear away the self-written rules which blind you, Asmodeus, and see the truth. God does not play games with his children. You are ashes and cold iron, charred and bitter.)*

Baal: Her insanity is a major strategic advantage for the forces of Hell. Imagine if she were coherent and focused her attention on the War, and cooperated with Laurence and Michael! Anything which keeps her at odds with the rest of Heaven, or widens the divide further, is to our advantage. Her fits of inane ranting prophecy are unimportant. *(There are mirrors all around him, but the cruelest are behind his eyes, where he still sees the Archangel of Valor in all his pride. Baal's arrogance is his weakness. Every human soul is a living insult to him.)*

Beleth: She is a nightmare to many, which pleases me – but the inspiration which she brings is not welcome. She fears the loss of God. I wish that I could make that fear a reality. *(She knows fear; she is fear, she understands fear, but most of all she denies her own fear. Her hands are ice and her eyes are knives, and her footsteps burn the Marches where she walks. Cruelty is in her mouth and heart.)*

Belial: That bitch will die. Her Word will be stripped away from her, and she will writhe in agony as she sees me enthroned in her place, taking the whole of Fire for myself. Her death will take years. Decades. Centuries. She will learn to curse the name of God. *(Foul corruption – he soils my Word by his very existence. I scream each time I feel his destruction and entropy within my soul, I cry to Heaven for mercy, but I am not yet answered. The fires will cleanse him. Fire must cleanse him. It must. It must.)*

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

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

Kronos: I will not be complacent yet. She is swift to strike, and many fail to meet their fate because of her angels – or worse, find inspiration and meet their destiny. When she hears the voice of God that brings only fate behind it, then I will have won. *(He is entropy which my fire shall burn away, darkness that my light shall banish. He is Yves' antithesis, and his understanding is twisted, warped, wrong. The past may belong to many, but the future belongs to God.)*

Lilith: It's dangerous to try to fulfill a lunatic's Needs – her urge to punish cruelty makes dealing with her worse than walking through a minefield. As likely to flame someone as not, too. God drove her insane, another cruelty to his name, and her so-called prophecies are visions of madness. Yet her ravings can be . . . unsettlingly relevant. *(She is a Princess of Hell. She is alone. Not cruel, not kind; her sins are omissions, her mercies a lack of malice. Freedom enslaved to darkness, enslaving light – how does she reconcile the division in her nature?)*

Malphas: It's beautiful. Look at the factions in Heaven, formed by her, forming around her. She has become a living instrument of discord, whether or not she wants it. If only she were just a little bit more insane . . . *(He foments cruelty. The factions he creates torment each other, and then torment themselves yet more. Malphas twists the words of prophets to break their religions asunder, and shatters a man's faith in God, in humanity, in his closest friends. He is a spoiler and destroyer, kin to Belial in his urge for destruction.)*

Nybbas: Insane chicks do win Oscars, but her performance got old centuries ago. If I need pyrotechnics, I've got Belial. Now, if she would agree to some full frontal, her act could make a comeback . . . *(Pathetic worm. He has no inspiration. One touch of my fire would burn him to ashes.)*

Saminga: Burning kills people. But flames keep people alive too. Worse than Belial. *(A maggot who crawls in the mud and has never dared to lift his eyes to Heaven. Pitiful creature, inhabitator of a rotting corpse. Lift up your eyes, Prince of Death, and learn of life.)*

Valefor: Stealing inspiration and passion is an art all of its own. As for stealing fire from Heaven – well, hey, it's been done before, and besides where's the challenge when she gives it away so freely? *(As long as he stands in Hell, what he does is sin. I saw him and his Servitors in the shadows, creeping, hiding, taking the holy Fire from those who need it most. It shall blacken their hands and burn their souls.)*



Vapula: She has tried to comprehend the magnitude of my ambitions, but was too weak-minded to share the glory. *(There is a dark scream which corrupts all it touches, and he welcomes it like a house cat. I have seen it! I have seen how it sits on his shoulder and purrs, and claws pretty patterns in his skin. Oh, those claws must dig deep, Vapula. Do they burn?)*

Humans and Others

Soldiers of God: Who is there that would deny their fire? They bear God's touch in them, for His hand has wrought mighty wonders in their souls and flesh. They have given up their will in His name, and sacrificed their lives in His holy temple. Behold, ye hosts of Heaven, how great a thing the least of humans can do!

"You don't serve the Word of Fire because it makes sense to do it. You see her servants and they burn with God's own light and fire. You have to follow."

*— James Seldon,
Soldier of Fire*

Soldiers of Hell: What a thing a spirit is, to be sold so cheaply! They are paid with corrupt coin, which eats them away body and soul, till there is nothing left but sin and darkness. Look at them, agents of Lucifer, writing his testament in cruelty upon the flesh of their brothers. Let them burn! Let the flames take them into the darkness, to the payment that they have earned.

Sorcerers: What does it profit a man to command demons, if by doing so he becomes worse than any demon? I have walked through the blood upon the floors, I have heard their cries, I can count their voices in the night. One in a thousand calls with clean hands and a pure heart, but the others are stained to Hell by the darkness that runs in their veins.

Ethereals: They crawl and scuttle through the wilderness which men create from their own minds, and they are so far below God, for all that they claim His majesty, for all that they would steal His mantle. How shall the Almighty fear the creations of his created? Let the cruel know His wrath, and the gentle His mercy.

VARIATIONS ON A THEME

Gabriel may be portrayed in a number of different ways, depending on the tone of the campaign, and on the GM's personal view of her.

Utterly Insane

This version of Gabriel is totally, absolutely, *raving* insane. She may claim that she hears God's voice, but no one else can prove it. (Possibly she does hear God – but it's driven her so far out of touch with the "real world" that she can't interact on an angelic, or even human, level any more.) Things burn when she's around. All the time. This Gabriel is obsessed with smiting the cruel, wherever she can find them, and probably includes certain celestial factions (such as the Archangel of Judgment and his Servitors) in that mandate. Most sane angels try to avoid her – even the few who can manage to point her in a particular direction (Yves, Michael, and David) take care to stand well back afterward. Soldekai may be utterly faithful to her – or he may be planning to take her place and Word, building links with other Archangels while he undermines her.

Comic Relief

Gabriel is the celestial ditz, forever "accidentally" setting fire to stuff around her, commenting on Demon Princesses' hairstyles, having to remove her CD headphones so she can pick up on the latest prophecies – and when she does, delivering them in rap. She's incapable of being in the right place at the right time, always showing up five minutes late in an overdone wash of flames. When called upon to punish the cruel, she may appear in bondage gear, flourishing a whip – and giggling. Her Servitors are worse.

Alternatively, Gabriel and her angels are stereotypically stern, insisting on fervor and dedication, yet utterly blind to anything going on behind their backs. When the Archangel of Fire dictates a new prophecy, all her Servitors get down on their knees to listen, ignoring rampant nuclear chaos (or worse) in the background. They'll spank children for cruelty to their pet gerbils, while failing to notice the campaign's arch-villain who's just requested a light for his cigarette. She and her angels will also be wildly impulsive, utterly unable to give a good answer (except for "God told me to") when asked why they got into the current course of danger – and will be fervent smokers.

Manipulator

Gabriel *says* that she passes on God's word as and when He dictates. Isn't it convenient that this can't be verified?

People throughout Heaven and Earth record Gabriel's prophecies, or the words of those whom she has inspired, and act on them. Are they, possibly, following some deeply-laid scheme of hers? She may be passing on God's words, but according to her own schedule, or with her own amendments, or filtered through her own insanity . . . This version of Gabriel is perfectly lucid (though not necessarily *sane*), even if she doesn't look it, and has her own agenda. It may be virtuous and guided by a higher destiny, or it may even involve Michael and Dominic wiping each other out so that the Archangel of Fire can seize power – in God's name, of course.

Gabriel – The Male Version

The male Gabriel had many traits in common with his current female persona. He was intense, unpredictable, and never lingered in any one place for long. He was guided by divine inspiration, which could make his behavior seem erratic. But Gabriel's male incarnation had a core of stability and self-assurance that is noticeably missing from her current state. He brought the full power of the Word of Fire into focus, harnessing that awesome energy and using it to do God's will. There was no way to distract him. Being the object of his attention was like standing on the sun – there was never any question of who or what Gabriel had on his mind.

Objective evidence and certitude are doubtless very fine ideals to play with, but where on this moonlit and dream-visited planet are they found?

— William James, 1842-1910, "The Will to Believe"

In ancient times, Gabriel spent a great deal of time with the other elemental Archangels: Stone, Wind, and Water. Instead of conflicting, Oannes and Gabriel seemed to have a balancing effect on one another, despite serving Words that are polar opposites. But the Fall, and the naming of Belial as Prince of Fire, began to erode Gabriel's stability. When Belial killed Oannes, Gabriel received another severe blow, destabilizing him further. (And certainly Belial gloried in the pain he'd caused his rival.) Dominic's accusation of heresy was too much for an already stressed mind, and Gabriel lost his certainty, his center, fleeing from his peers and seeking his former clarity in a new, female form.

If angels encounter the male Gabriel, they should be overwhelmed by his intense single-mindedness. He will not be distracted from his goal, but when that goal is met, he is gone in an instant.

THE VOLCANO

The Volcano – Gabriel’s Cathedral – marks one side of Heaven. (Which side? Heaven doesn’t obey Earthly geography. The point is that it marks *a* side.) It rears up against the sky, a great lifting mass of rock that contains a huge, seething crater of lava. At the center of the lava is a high-towered, strong-walled fortress of bronze – the Citadel of Fire. This was Gabriel’s original Cathedral, once situated in the Eternal City – when she left Heaven and took shelter in the Volcano, her Cathedral vanished from the Eternal City, and reappeared in the heart of the Volcano. (No trace of its existence remains in the City – Heaven’s architecture, mutable to the wishes of the Archangels, restructured itself – though it is believed that it hung in the sky above the Halls of Worship.) Patrols of Ofanim sweep around the rim of the crater, guarding the edge of Heaven, while Malakim and Cherubim man the battlements of the Citadel. The Volcano itself was once a mountain, and was the site of the duel between Michael and Lucifer, on the day of the Fall. When Lucifer was thrown down from Heaven, the top of the mountain fell with him, and the shattered crags became the foundations of Hell.

Any angel approaching from Heaven must leave the Eternal City behind, and head *away* from the center of Heaven, *toward* the Volcano. He will doubtless be challenged at the rim of the Volcano by the Ofanim there – however, these Wheels will let anybody with a reason past, even Dominicans. The angel then flies across the lava to one of the archways or battlements of the Citadel, where he will certainly be met by Malakim or Cherubim. These Servitors of Fire will ask his business, and expect a sensible answer. Dominicans will be escorted on their business, if it is considered legitimate, or taken to a senior Shield (p. 68) if not. Most other visitors will receive the offer of a guide – the Citadel of Fire is confusing to those angels who do not serve the Word of Fire. (Honestly wishing to admire the beauty of the Cathedral *is* considered a sensible answer, and will not only gain the recipient a guide, but also the good opinion of his inquirers.)

The interior of the Citadel is bronze, gold, silver, and other metals, with gemstone mosaics and hammered reliefs set into the walls. Interior rooms are wide and spacious, and some have large windows opening onto the caldera outside. The stairs and passages inside go down to the bedrock of the volcano, and open onto rooms carved from obsidian and marble, veined with metals in flame-like patterns. Visitors have described the style of decoration as frequently Islamic or Coptic, with very few surfaces being bare of some form of art or complexity. The smell of incense hangs in the air, mingling with the scents of candle-wax and lava. Rooms burn with the ceaseless light

MALE OR FEMALE?

Gabriel’s shift from male to female represents an attempt to utterly deny Dominic’s charges of heresy and alteration of the Word of God. Once a being who was arrogant in his own right, she now subordinates herself to her task. This is not so much an embrace of any sort of “feminine side,” it is more an absolute rejection of her persona as it was then. From male, she has become female; she has left the comfort of Heaven, left the society of the other Archangels, even left behind the customary vessel and image that she once wore. How can the Archangel of Judgment now claim that she acted for her own wishes? She is Gabriel, and Gabriel is God’s servant, and there is nothing more.

of countless candles, or the hanging flames of Tether-endpoints, and echo with chants and psalms from Servitors of Fire who choose to spend their spare time singing for the glory of God.

Most Servitors of Fire have their private rooms in the “rock” section of the Citadel, choosing spaces formed by lava-bubbles in the rock, or carefully sculpted spaces of smooth-cut black glass. Their Hearts rest in raw stone niches that line tunnels at the heart of the Volcano, where lava flows naked in streams down the center of the corridor, and the rough fire blazes behind the stone of the walls, shining *through* the stone in a naked light which sears the eyes.

And, from time to time, a room in the Volcano vanishes . . . but it returns later. Usually. The angels of Fire don’t discuss this. Not with outsiders, not with anybody.

A Lively Heat

Fire implies heat, and Gabriel’s Cathedral is *hot*, a permanent dry heat that ranges from pleasant to incandescent. No fire there will burn any angel of Fire, or any human soul, but other angels are warned to be careful. Some flames are merely decorative, or symbolic, but others are very real – wards, protections, and affirmations of fire that *burns*. Gabriel herself can give immunity to all fires within the place with a single thought, and does so automatically to any Servitor of another Archangel who receives an attunement, Distinction, or Rite from her. The lava in the caldera of the volcano is harmless to Gabrielites, who often swim in it, but will burn other angels; fortunately, it is easy enough to fly over, if one is permitted to do so by the Ofanim on the Volcano rim.

GABRIEL'S TETHERS

Tethers of Fire are sites of inspiration, or places where cruelty was punished, or places containing fire and heat. As such, the events which form them are very rarely totally secret – though it can happen. The Tethers themselves vary in strength, and are administered by Soldekai, although Gabriel herself will appear to stabilize any Tether that has been discovered. At one time, when she performed the service of divine messenger, Gabriel was herself a divine Tether, mobile and sentient in service to the Name. After she went into exile from Heaven, however, Gabriel discovered that she had inadvertently inspired several Tethers by her very presence – among these are the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem (since lost to Belial and Malphas) and a certain field near Bethlehem (which has since been lost, and not yet relocated.) Other known Tethers of Fire include Kilauea Crater in Hawaii; St. Ignatius' Orphanage in Manhattan, New York City; and the Vatnajökull Volcano, Iceland.

The Dictorium

One of the highest towers of the Citadel of Fire contains records of all known prophecies that Gabriel has spoken or inspired. Her Servitors pass word here of any which they have personally heard her speak, or which have been reported to them. These prophecies are lovingly copied down by a group of scribes, mainly Seraphim, who occupy the room at the bottom of the

tower. They are physically stored higher up in the tower, as scrolls of wafer-thin hammered metal and books of feather-light etched glass, guarded by some of Gabriel's more scholarly Cherubim. While one can find one's way here from Yves' Library, it is usually a rude shock to any searcher when he does so, given the differing environments. The prophecies are kept in the order in which they were given, with the oldest being stored

SAMPLE TETHER: THE CONVENT OF SAN JOSÉ, AVILA

Teresa de Ahumada was born the daughter of an impoverished but aristocratic Spanish family of Avila in Castile in 1515, in Spain. At the age of 20, although a lively, restless girl, she decided to join a community of Carmelite nuns. The Carmelite Order, originally a very austere religious body founded in Palestine in the 12th century, had lost its early strictness, and Teresa was shocked by the laxity of the nuns. During her first years there, she suffered unusually bad health, and later, when she was about 40, she began to have mystical experiences. In order to help her understand and master these ordeals, her confessor commanded her to write down all she could recall of her life, in particular her experiences when she prayed. This autobiography, the first of her books, is a logical and scientific analysis of the processes of prayer.

However, Teresa's plans went beyond writing. Inspired by her visions and seeing the need for Catholic reform, she resolved to reform the Carmelite Order. At the small convent of San José, she reimposed the original 12th-century Rule upon herself and some chosen companions – sleeping on

straw, wearing rope sandals, eating no meat, and so on. The flame of her faith and intensity, joined with that of her fellow-nuns, created the potential of a Tether to Fire. (It could also have been claimed by other Words – notably the Sword, or Faith – but a Cherub of Fire who was watching over Teresa, on Soldekai's personal orders, saw the opportunity first.) Teresa spread the reformed Rule, and was canonized as St. Teresa of Avila after her death.

Since then the Tether has been maintained, and as the convent still stands, the Seneschal (Inez, the Cherub who first guarded Teresa) serves as a nun there, changing her Role-name whenever "old age" makes it necessary. The place is a firm base for Servitors of Gabriel, and can offer shelter to wounded angels, but is hardly a position from which to launch armed strikes. Angels of the Sword do, however, occasionally visit to pray in the convent's chapel. Inez has established a good working relationship with a number of them, and is one of Soldekai's most trusted contacts with Laurencians – he'd like to use her as a more regular liaison, but her duties as Seneschal hamper this.

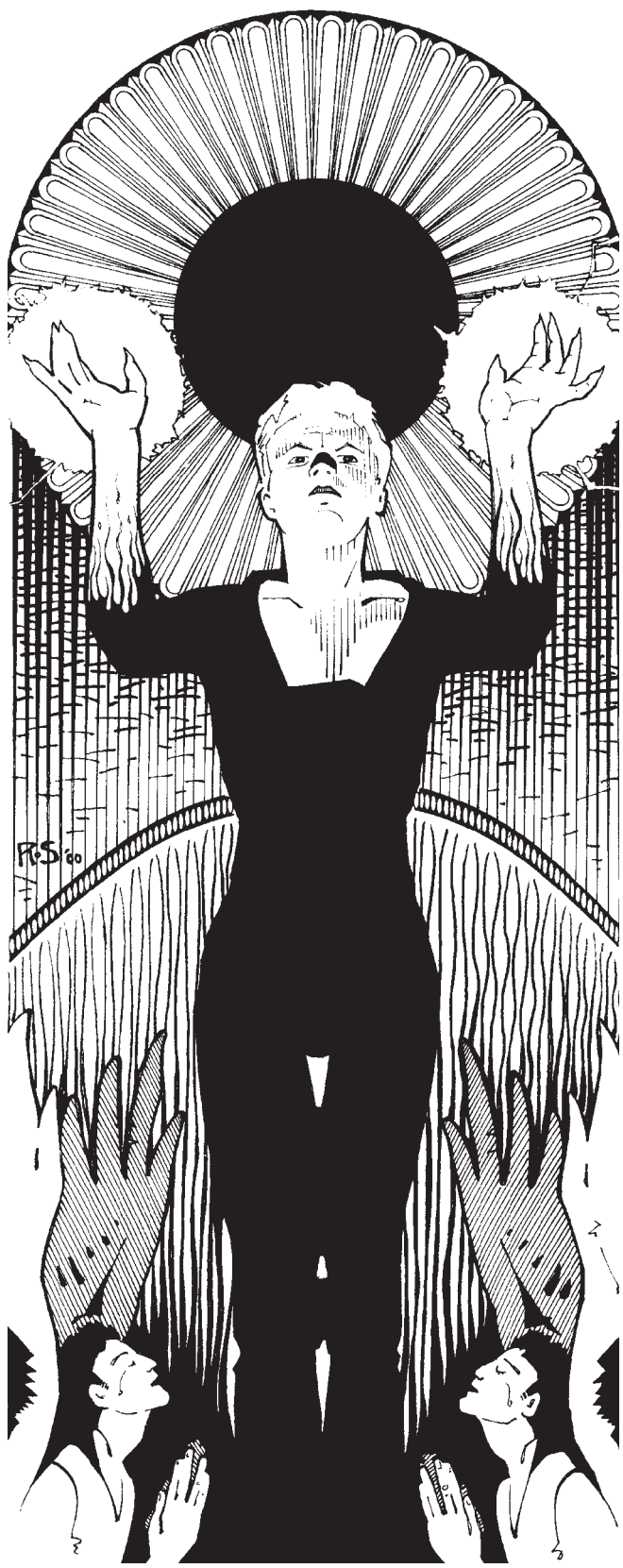
at the pinnacle of the tower, but the Cherubim have an indexing system which allows them to reference particular named events, people, or themes. (Inquiring minds are advised not to try looking up “Armageddon” or other such common elements – it would take years to check all the references.) Any Servitor of Fire may enter this tower at will, though angels from other Words need to ask permission of the Cherubim (which is usually granted). The Archangel of Fire herself has never set foot in the tower.

Into The Marches

Gabriel’s Volcano borders on both the Marches and Heaven, even if one can’t walk directly from one to the other. If traveling from the Volcano, an angel has to walk or fly around the rim of the crater, moving away from that portion of it that borders on Heaven, until the sky grows dark above him and the winds become strange. He should then seek a particular cleft in the rocks, which leads to a rough track down the side of the Volcano, and out into the Marches. Senior angels of Fire show this passage to their juniors once the younger Servitors have some experience, and not before. Too many young angels have tried going out into the Marches, alone and inexperienced, to smite cruelty, and found themselves out of their depth. While large numbers of angels *can* be sent through this passage and into the Marches in the event of necessity, there has rarely been the need.

The way can be traveled in reverse, and often is, by angels of Fire, visiting angels of Dreams, demonic and ethereal spies (so far, invariably caught before they reach Heaven) – and, rarely, by demons seeking redemption. Such demons find the way hard, the Volcano bitterly high, the dust and pumice harsh beneath their feet, the winds biting, and the track itself thin and difficult to follow. However, any demon who does manage to forge his way up the Volcano to ask for redemption there will not be turned away.





SPARKS TO A FLAME: SERVITORS OF GABRIEL GABRIELITES, FLAMES, BURNERS

Angels of Fire serve on the edge of Heaven, conscious of what lies far, far below – Hell, refuge of Lucifer, birthplace of a thousand cruelties. They know their Archangel's history; she was persecuted by Dominic, driven from Heaven, simply for obeying the will of God. They live day in, day out, in the heart of a Volcano which blazes with their Mistress' urge to prophesy and punish. Other angels view them as intense at best, even if they may qualify that with "but they mean well."

To a Gabrielite, other angels just don't *understand*. How can the world, the War, be met with any reaction other than utter intensity? The angels of Fire exist to bring flame, either as punishment or as inspiration. There is no peace for them – they are driven, ardent beings, and while they may not be as furiously insane as their Archangel, neither can they rest. The best that they can manage is the slow pulsation of lava, with searing heat hidden beneath, or the brief placidity of a campfire, which burns within its limits until it has the opportunity to spread. Most of all, they *know* that their Mistress is God's messenger, and that she brought and brings the Word of God to mankind. Many of them feel, rightly or wrongly, that this places them a step closer to God's personal will than most other angels – and the attitude sometime shows.

Spending time on Earth can mollify such behavior – or exacerbate it. Some Gabrielites develop positively un-Firelike attitudes (which can cause them to be criticized privately by their brothers), becoming "corrupted" by "lesser priorities." Others fall more and more into the passions of Fire, deliberately rejecting cultural taboos and Earthly laws for divine justice and righteous behavior. (Oddly enough, some of these extremists get on very well indeed with Dominicans.) However, this doesn't prevent them from supporting each other in anything short of a cataclysm – with their Archangel manic and her Cathedral on the very edge of Heaven, the Servitors of Fire stick together. Not that they'd ever admit to loneliness, but . . . sometimes they yearn for company, for other angels who *understand* their passion.

All Servitors of Fire burn with an urgency that cannot be denied without renouncing their very natures. They are conscious of their position as servants of an Archangel who many believe to be insane, on the very edge of Heaven – some of them even revel in it, enjoying their

SOLDEKAI, CHAMBERLAIN OF THE LEGIONS OF FLAME

Soldekai has no fear of his Mistress. He is a Malakite of Fire, once a Cherub, who became a Virtue at the moment of the Fall. Since his creation, he has purely and simply *loved* Gabriel, as he loves the Fire which is her Word, and sought to serve her in any way that he could. His genius has always been in the area of organization and responsibility – he rose to Master through supervising operations on Earth, and coordinating the activity of angels of Fire in different countries. When Gabriel stormed out of the trial in Heaven over the foundation of Islam, he was among the first of her Servitors to follow her as she swept across Heaven to the Volcano. As her insanity grew, Soldekai took up more and more of the burdens of responsibility, and was named Chamberlain of the Legions of Flame at the time of the Purity Crusades. (Many have suggested that it was mainly Soldekai's influence which stopped most of the Servitors of Fire taking a part – on one side or the other.) This rank is the only higher Distinction that Gabriel has ever bestowed, and enables him to keep track of the punishment of the cruel on Earth, and to know where Gabriel is at all times. He has an Ofanite servant with an impressive choice of transportation, who keeps him moving from place to place.

Given that the Archangel of Fire had so clearly approved of Soldekai, the other angels of Fire accepted his authority. Many Gabrielites were privately relieved to have someone in charge to keep track of logistics, and to coordinate relations with other Archangels. As time went on and his grasp on power solidified, a number of angels from other Words began to whisper that he hoped to replace Gabriel, and to take her Word if – when – she should Fall. However, no Servitor of Fire would believe such rumors; Soldekai's devotion and faith are so well known among them as to be proverbial. (His oaths, beside the standard two, are known to be "Serve Gabriel's needs with all my strength" and "Protect all prophets" – which includes Gabriel herself.)

Gabrielites find Soldekai easy and straightforward to deal with. He's clear-spoken and intense, though always vaguely preoccupied – there's so much going on to be con-

sidered. Most of Gabriel's Word-bound angels work with him, or report directly to him, to coordinate their activities and to request assistance or support. Lower-ranking Servitors of Fire may often see him, if they spend time in the Volcano, or may report to him personally in the event of an emergency which he needs details about. Servitors of other Archangels will find Soldekai courteous but abrupt, and will have to go through at least one other Servitor of Fire to get permission to speak to him – the Chamberlain does not have time to waste. The only times that Soldekai has ever been known to relax are during the occasional appearances of Gabriel. She has been seen to embrace him at such times, and enfold him in her own rings of fire, singing in languages that have long since been lost on Earth.

Laurence finds much in Soldekai to value, as another Malakite, and as an angel who's doing the best he can to coordinate the Servitors of Fire. He and Michael are always glad to receive information from Soldekai which can be used in the War, or to coordinate strikes against demonic targets. It cannot be denied that Laurence is also somewhat reassured to see the Gabrielites under the firm direction of another Virtue – whatever may happen to Gabriel, Soldekai at least will not Fall. Michael, for his part, would rather see Gabriel firmly in charge, but he isn't going to spend his time in wishful thinking. He has been meeting Soldekai privately of late, in order to quietly set up some plans to move Servitors of Fire into shelter with War, if some catastrophe should occur with Gabriel herself. Soldekai is unhappy about this, feeling that it is somewhat disloyal to his Archangel to be even considering it – he prefers to consider the operation as a necessary shield if *Judgment* should go on the offensive. As to dealings with Dominic's Servitors, Soldekai has carefully cultivated a group of angels who have demonstrated the ability to handle Dominicans – the Shield (p. 68) – that he hopes will prevent direct clashes with the Archangel of Judgment. Dominic himself views Soldekai as a worthy Malakite, and one who serves a dangerous Word with virtuous dedication.

status as near-outcasts. They are not mild in anything they do. They don't "like" – they love. They don't "dislike" – they hate. There are no partial measures for them, no compromises; there is only the fire which drives them, tearing them apart when they are forced to do less than punish cruelty where it is deserved. Many of them are driven to fury by the casual cruelties which are *tolerated* as part of the human world, even accepted as normal.

(Criticize a co-worker and wreck his career? Well, it's just part of corporate life. Bully a pupil till he's ready to commit suicide? It's just one of those things that happens at school. Take a swing at your wife because she annoyed you? Well, hey, of course one shouldn't really do it, but everyone knows it happens . . .) The angels of Fire will punish cruelty, now and always, and they will not let themselves be stopped.

ORGANIZATION

Gabriel's in charge, naturally – whenever she shows up, and if she issues any actual orders. The rest of the time (in practice, most of the time) Soldekai commands the angels of Fire. His authority is respected, and is not debated. Some angels, both Word-bound and those with Distinctions, work directly under his orders, operating on projects suggested by him and passing orders to junior angels. Others – mostly the older or more powerful Word-bound – tend to work solo or in loose coterie on projects which interest them and particularly involve their Words. However, they do keep him informed on their current status, pass on any useful information, and give their assistance if he requests it. In such cases, Soldekai often assigns junior angels to work with them, so that the younger Servitors can gain experience and the older ones won't run short of resources.

Most Gabrielites on Earth therefore report to Soldekai to some degree. While they may have a great deal of latitude in how they perform their duties, there will be another angel of Fire – on Earth too, or in the Volcano – who knows their general location and duty. Even if they aren't actually answering to such an angel's orders, they will stay in contact. Soldekai encourages this, and is a great believer in the “buddy system,” frequently assigning the Gabrielites in pairs. (An angel of Fire on his own is prey to passion and doubt, not to mention suicidal risks, but two together have a better chance of keeping to the path of common sense – or getting out of a dangerous situation alive.) Malakim are the most likely to have very specific assignments, given that their targets are chosen for them.

An arrangement assigned by the Chamberlain personally will be obeyed (though possibly grudgingly, if personal dislike enters the equation) by those angels involved in it. If, on the other hand, it's a matter of two Servitors of Fire meeting at random, there *may* be a serious clash of personalities. Authority generally runs in a chain of closeness to Gabriel and the Word of Fire. Thus, those with Distinctions will obey the Word-bound, in the case of conflict (although a Master of the Flame of Heaven would have an edge over a very weak, junior Word-bound), and other Gabrielites will obey both. In the case of two Servitors of Fire of equal rank disagreeing utterly, a third is usually requested to arbitrate the matter – usually an EloHITE. For the Servitors of Fire to damage each other, after all, would be positively playing into Belial's hands . . .



Rewards and Punishments

Soldekai has limited powers when it comes to rewards or punishments – he can't impose or remove Discord or dissonance, or bestow attunements. However, he and some of the other angels can provide most Songs, and can certainly manage corporeal benefits such as new cars, bank accounts, Roles, and so forth. (There are Songmasters among the Servitors of Fire who can provide most generally known Songs.) There is also a stock of spare vessels available, some provided by Gabriel herself, and others quietly supplied by Michael and Laurence, in acknowledgment of the number lost by Gabrielites during War-related operations. (Of course, this doesn't mean that an available vessel will necessarily look like what an angel requested . . .) Celestial tokens linked to these vessels are stored in the Volcano, and can be distributed rapidly if necessary. Gabriel herself can bestow Rites and attunements, and is – as ever – divinely guided or capricious in her choice of rewards or punishments. Sometimes the smallest act may receive unexpected praise, while heroic self-sacrifice gets only a pat on the back and a “well done.”

If a Gabrielite fails to fulfill a mission, his punishment (should there be one) will depend on the reasons why he did so – and this will be in addition to any dissonance from failing to punish the cruel. Laxness and carelessness may earn anything from scourging with a whip of flame to removal of Earthly benefits, or even attunements, and forced penances and menial work. Deliberate self-love or cruelty may be punished by removal from Earthly duty, Force-stripping, or even death. (If a Servitor of Fire failed a mission despite doing his best to succeed, he will probably not be given any actual punishments by a superior – but he'll punish himself.) Success in punishing the “everyday” cruel usually only results in rewards for long and faithful service, such as the occasional Song or relic, as it's no more than the Gabrielite's job. Success in a particular mission from Soldekai, Gabriel herself, or some large-scale project that the angel of Fire personally discovered, will result in more significant rewards; attunements, Rites, a new vessel . . .

Only Gabriel can bestow Distinctions, and she very rarely does that when the recipient is expecting it. More than once, a humble angel who felt that they were “only doing their job” has received a Distinction, while a more powerful Servitor was passed over. From time to time, the Archangel of Fire also gives Distinctions, Rites, or attunements to angels of other Words, as her inspiration drives her. This has been known to happen on occasions when such angels faced down their own comrades to prevent cruelty, or acted on inner faith and belief against all provocation. Such angels are given due respect by Gabrielites, since their Mistress has judged them worthy.

Dealing With Dissonance

The cruel must feel Gabriel's fire. This is bone-deep in every Servitor of Fire, an article of faith and a statement of purpose. Every Gabrielite *must* punish the sinner to whom he has been assigned – and he knows that in doing so, he lightens the burden of the world's cruelty which torments the Archangel of Fire.

Of course, sometimes one just can't punish on schedule. Perhaps the Servitor of Fire is denied an opportunity to reach his chosen target, or perhaps he is persuaded into delaying a while before punishment. (Maybe he wishes to give the sinner one last chance at repentance, or maybe there are other reasons . . .) Whatever the cause, the angel in question has failed in his duty, and will feel the fires of dissonance burning in him. This happens, at some time or another, to almost all Servitors of Gabriel – they know this and they understand this. While it isn't *usual*, to be carrying a point or two of dissonance because one hasn't reached one's target quite yet is understood as being "one of those things which happens."

(Unfortunately, Judgment doesn't have as understanding an attitude.) Naturally, any Gabrielite worth mentioning will be doing his best to fulfill his duty and wipe out the dissonance as soon as possible. Assuming that the angel of Fire continues to try to perform his duty, the note of dissonance will vanish once his target has been punished. If he gives up entirely, however, the dissonance will remain . . .

Gabriel herself feels the dissonance of those who serve her as though it were her own. This ubiquity of pain makes her simultaneously merciful and stern. On the one hand she feels the pain of her Servitors; on the other hand, she cannot help but channel some of the divine wrath within her toward those who are dissonant. (And may God help them if they have any traces of cruelty in them.)

Furthermore, she is perpetually aware of the perverted Word of Fire which Belial propagates, and so her tolerance for dissonance is very thin. Fortunately for her Servitors, this means she is more likely to remove it from them. Unfortunately, this also means she is merciless toward the extremely dissonant, especially if they became that way through their own inaction. Fire hates laziness. (Seneschals who administer Tethers of Fire understand this, and watch those angels who come to their Tethers



to work off dissonance very carefully indeed. After all, if the angel in question is deliberately trying to avoid Gabriel, there may be some deeper problem.)

Changing Superiors

Many Servitors of Fire view one of their own who wants to serve another Archangel as weak or flawed – or worse, as disloyal. Love for their mistress is rooted in their very being; insane, passionate love, absolute and frightening in its intensity. To deliberately want to leave her and serve someone else is a betrayal in itself. And if a Gabrielite would despise a brother who expressed a wish to leave, he would despise himself far more if he even considered doing

it himself. For these reasons, very few angels of Fire ever ask for permission to serve another Archangel, or even mention the subject aloud.

However, it happens sometimes. Perhaps the angel is truly impassioned in his desire to serve some other Symphonic Word, or, occasionally, he can no longer abide punishing the cruel and seeks some less wrathful way of serving God. Soldekai can send such a Servitor to serve another Archangel, but cannot release him from the Word of Fire; Gabriel herself must do that, and often the angel must wait till he can speak to her, in order to be fully released from Fire and accepted by the other Word. Soldekai himself disapproves of angels wishing to serve other Words, unless they are clearly moved by a desperate urge to do so (which is understandable, if annoying). In such a case, he will eventually arrange for a transfer of service, but will usually try to persuade the Servitor otherwise – particularly if such an angel possesses skills which are useful to Fire. Gabriel herself, if asked, has never yet refused a transfer, but usually removes any Servitor Attunements (and sometimes, though not always, Choir Attunements) which the angel in question possesses. She also often weeps to see them leave her – and to many Servitors of Fire, that is the most painful thing of all.

WORD-BOUND SERVITORS

Word-bound angels of Fire include Nathanael, Angel of Punishment and Gabriel's greatest Seraph; Rikbiel, the Ofanite Angel of Ascension, who transports select mortals to Heaven as a chariot of fire, a living artifact; Fugit, the Ofanite Angel of Messages (who transferred to Marc's service several centuries ago); and Ahaziah, the Kyriotate Angel of Active Volcanoes. Other Words belonging to Servitors of Fire include Poetic Inspiration, Incense, Repentance, and The Hearth.

The Redeemed

Servitors of Fire view the process of redemption in others with an absolute joy. It is both an ultimate punishment for cruelty, as the demon will have to truly admit and repent his sins, and a true ending to cruelty, with new life for the candidate as an angel. However, this doesn't necessarily make them trust those who claim that they want to redeem – the angels of Fire are likely to suggest the candidate do so on the spot, and summon Gabriel to assist in the process. They do understand the concept of standing back and letting angels from other Words, such as Destiny or Flowers, work on a candidate; such slowness fails to suit a Gabrielite's impetuous nature, however.

Gabriel has yet to refuse a demon who seeks redemption from her. Some demons die, but many survive, and claim to other angels afterwards that they never knew greater sanity than when within her flames. Those demons who sincerely attempt redemption, but who fail for some reason and perish, are remembered and honored by the Servitors of Fire, who respect the attempt which they made.

However, if the redemption succeeds, the new angel will be welcomed as a full brother. All the Gabrielites will accept him – as their Mistress already has – and will take particular pains to defend him from any inquisitorial debriefing squads sent by Judgment. The new Servitor sometimes even takes a new name, to signify his rebaptism in Fire. He is often reassigned to Earth at once, in order to work off the ardors of his temperament in good service, but *always* with at least one experienced Servitor of Fire to guard and guide him. Soldekai also likes to get as much information on known demonic outposts, organizations, and bases from the new recruit as possible, which he will use himself or pass on to the militant Archangels.

Young Flames


Relievers and young angels “grow up” with the Volcano as their home, heat as normality, and fire as their birthright. Early duties include maintenance of the Citadel, guard duties, Tether-watching, combat practice, and studying Gabriel's prophecies. Their first encounters with angels from other Words are usually while guarding the edges of Heaven – implying that the other angels are usually warlike types. When they meet more pacifistic angels elsewhere in Heaven, they are often surprised – though not always disappointed. They may be sent to the Groves for martial training, or to other parts of Heaven if Soldekai feels they need specific background in particular areas. However, they always return to the Volcano, and consider it their proper home and environment. (Sometimes they even feel like strangers elsewhere in Heaven, so far from their own fires . . .) There are occasional expeditions into the Marches, usually supervised by an angel of Dreams – more for the protection of any nearby human dreams than for the protection of the Gabrielites.

It doesn't take long for a young angel of Fire – or even a reliever – to be assigned to Earth. They usually start off as assistants in Tethers, where older angels can watch over them, and take care that their dissonance conditions don't get them in too much trouble. There are two main reasons why a Gabrielite might be assigned to duty in Heaven and *never* see Earth – either he is utterly devoted to some task in the Citadel, such as the upkeep of the Dictorium (p. 54) or he is too unstable for Earth duty. (And for an angel of Fire, that's *very* unstable – such angels are usually assigned to menial duties in the Citadel, in the hope that they will settle down.)

Humans

Any human who knowingly works with Gabrielites, aware of their personalities and Archangel, is usually as devoted to the cause of Heaven as they are. This leads to two types of personality – the self-denigrating, sacrificing *everything* for their angelic work, and the arrogant, who are proud of it and expect to be appreciated for it. The Gabrielites themselves either display an intense interest in the welfare of their human assistants – spiritual, moral, and physical – or tend to ignore it completely, treating them as mere adjuncts. This isn't so much due to a lack of charity, as to an obsession with other matters in hand, such as destroying cruelty. Humans either get used to this sort of attitude, or get themselves transferred to angels of another Word, who will be more understanding about human standards and requirements.

Servitors of Fire don't necessarily *like* humans. Protect them from cruelty, yes, love them with a passionate blazing



love in the abstract which will let an angel court certain death to protect a human's soul, yes, but like them? Humans are so . . . vague. They have petty priorities, weak vacillating desires, uncertainties, doubts, and they hesitate. It's hard for a Gabrielite to actively appreciate that, however much he may be vowed to humanity's good in the general sense. For this reason, humans who are actually appreciated by the angels of Fire tend to be utterly intense, and in the words of other angels, "as bad as the Flames themselves."

Humans in Fire's organization usually work with the angels directly, either in a one-to-one Servitor-Soldier relationship, or as a group of humans (not necessarily Soldiers) around a site of importance to Soldekai, such as a Tether. It is very rare for human servants of Fire to be allowed to operate without angelic guidance – the only exception is if they are led by a genuine and inspired prophet. In that case, there may well be angels present to guard the prophet in question, but they will allow the prophet to determine the group's actions. After all, the inspiration of the divine is the best of guides.

CHOIRS

All angels of Fire are – angels of Fire. However, despite their general passion, they by no means all behave in the same way, even within the boundaries of typical behavior for their Choir. This has not prevented a number of "general" patterns of behavior from being observed, although it would be foolish to expect them always to be the case.

Seraphim

Seraphim of Fire bear a particular anger toward those who lie to themselves or others about their own cruelty. The very *concept* strikes at the roots of any Seraph of Gabriel's devotion to truth and fire, and rouses a passionate anger in the angel. Many of them believe that any cruel person who has the tiniest potential for salvage and salvation will – no, must – realize his own errors if he is forced to see the truth of what they have done. (Other angels have been known to call such beliefs unfeasibly idealistic.) They will ruthlessly force the facts of a situation in front of a sinner's eyes – kidnapping him and holding him hostage if necessary, though such dramatics are usually avoided – in an attempt to make him admit that he has been cruel.

Other such Seraphim content themselves with removing the sinner, or simply punishing him, and preventing him from hurting others again. When any Seraph of Fire is dealing with those who profit *knowingly* from the suffering of others, matters are much simpler. There is cruelty, and it is punished.

The Most Holy who serve Gabriel are, generally speaking, in constant burning mental agony from the hypocrisy of the world. There are very few people who can *honestly* say that they have never committed cruelty. Even angels often choose to mercifully delude themselves about the extent of their actions, or the possible consequences. The Seraphim of Fire *know* this, *feel* it in the beings around them, and passionately endeavor at their task in an attempt to find some peace. They refuse to deceive themselves or abide by "lesser" standards than the absolute, and if they see cruelty in their own brothers, they expose it mercilessly.

Cherubim

Cherubim of Fire see to it that those who have been harmed by a cruel betrayal of trust will *not* be so harmed again. They attune themselves to the victims – abused children, battered wives, maltreated older relatives, and the like. (Although not all such abuse takes place within family circles, the condition of betraying bonds of trust means that Gabriel's Cherubim find themselves in such areas more often than not.) They grow deeply concerned for those they protect, like all Cherubim, and often take the time to get such people into a safe situation, after having done their duty and punished the cruel.

Unfortunately, having to be in such situations time after time after time often has an embittering effect upon the Guardians of Fire. After seeing love betrayed and innocence mocked so many times, they sometimes grow cynical, and suspect all loving bonds, fearing that it's "only a matter of time." They also have an occasional regrettable tendency to try to shield their attuned from everyone and everything, only trusting other angels of Fire near them. However, a Cherub of Gabriel on the job fulfills his task thoroughly, making sure that the cruel are fully punished, and that they cannot repeat any offenses again. (Castration is a favored punishment, where appropriate.)

Ofanim

The Wheels of Gabriel thoroughly enjoy themselves. Their function allows – no, mandates – that they travel as fast as possible across the world, hunting those who flee from justice. These Ofanim tend to have an extremely casual attitude toward everything physical, as they are so accustomed to their bodies being invulnerable to all kinds of fire that they neglect almost all corporeal dangers. (A car crash? Pfeh. A hundred-meter fall? Negligible. A swan dive into the molten iron vat? Lead me to it.) They give new meaning to the term "daredevil" in their pursuits, causing their targets to know true fear for these unstoppable hunters. When the Wheels catch up with their victims, they may hand them back to other agents of justice – or may execute an appropriate sentence of their own.

THE IGNES

Throughout the ages, there have been sorcerers (*Corporeal Players Guide*, p. 69-74) who saw fire as a path to illumination and power. Various groups have worshipped fire, revered it, used it as a means of purification – and one particular organization uses it as a keynote to their beliefs and sorceries. This group, the Ignis (Latin for “flames” or “fires,” singular *Ignis*), claims to trace its origins back to the Zoroastrians; however, this claim has been disputed by a number of angels of Destiny and demons of Fate. The first definite manifestations of these sorcerers as an organized group were noted shortly after the Purity Crusade, and some celestials have even theorized that the Ignis were originally sponsored by a few overactive angels of Purity.

The Ignis view fire as a manifestation of the inner wisdom contained within every human being, and believe that ultimate wisdom lies in “having one’s own flame subsumed into the greater Godhead.” Purification of the physical being and soul are steps toward enlightenment and “the greater fire.” They are, on the whole, moral, virtuous, upright, and often religious. The group is not organized in the sense that central records are kept, or that there is some hidden Grand Master. However, friends in the group do keep track of each other, and masters keep track of their pupils, meaning that one Ignis can usually locate another – eventually. The group is aware that angels and demons exist (word gets around) but it is one of their key beliefs

that to accept help from a divine being hinders one’s own personal progress toward enlightenment. (Accepting help from a *demonic* being would, clearly, be an even greater check.) This results in them tending to avoid celestials and ethereals, trying to make their own path.

Individual rituals vary, as creation of personal rituals is considered an important step in spiritual evolution for an Ignis, but tend to involve strong elemental symbolism, and periods of purification, fasting, and scourging. Alchemy is the sorcerous practice most favored by the group, but it includes practitioners of Exorcism, and even a few daring Summoners (though other Ignis look askance at this). Initiation is always conducted through flame, with methods ranging from personal branding to jumping through a bonfire, and the Sorcery attunement comes directly from Gabriel herself. Of course, the Ignis only know of the descent of some great and holy fire, while no celestials have been present to witness it . . . resulting in no definite proof ever having yet emerged that Gabriel actively sponsors this order. Angels who have encountered them find them acceptable – as sorcerers go – while ethereals find them generally useless, and demons who know of the order strongly dislike it. Hatiphaz, the Demon of Sorcery, would be very interested in some answers about these sorcerers, where their powers come from, and how they continue to avoid Hell . . .

However, no attunement is *perfect*. A cruel person who isn’t currently fleeing justice may be totally unnoticed by a Wheel of Fire, while a shoplifter guilty of filching a pack of cigarettes, terrified of the police catching up with him, will show up like a neon sign. For this reason, many Ofanim get pointed at targets by other Choirs, and *then* throw themselves into the chase. There is also a widespread urge among these Ofanim to imitate their Archangel as closely as possible, which can at times manifest as wildly impulsive behavior, with the angel hoping that he is being inspired by some inner divine prompting. This results in the Ofanite in question taking *insanely* reckless chances and following the most fragile of hunches. (Dominicans dislike this – and so, to be fair, do most other angels involved in such risks.)



Elohim

It’s a natural step from being able to sense and predict the emotions of others to being able to tell which others around them like inflicting psychological or emotional pain, and Gabriel’s Elohim find it entirely logical. They bring both calmness and passion to their task – calmness, so that they may serve the Symphony’s desires rather than their own, and passion, as inscribed in their being by the Word of Fire. These Powers seek to find the most efficient way to both punish the sinner *and* prevent him from repeating the sin. The second is comparatively hard in comparison with the first.

Powers of Fire often spend a while studying a target before acting, both in order to maximize their efficiency, and to prevent those who have already been victims from being hurt further. It does little good to punish a cruel teacher if he then takes his feelings out on his class, demoralizing them yet more. For this reason, many

Powers of Fire like to work in the Marches, where they can try to shape their target's psyche into a more ethical pattern – or just traumatize him into better behavior (though Servitors of Dream take strong exception to this). Others pursue psychological campaigns, seeking points of stress in their victims that will provide ways of reaching their souls. And finally, in the end, if all other recourse fails – there's always fire and death. An EloHITE of Fire knows when he has run out of other options.

Malakim

Not *all* Malakim of Fire stalk around in a trenchcoat and exemplify the Dark Avenger of Wrongs – but the ones who do are the ones who get remembered. The ones who often *aren't* noticed are the quiet assassins who pursue their targets patiently, faithful to Gabriel's (or Soldekai's) orders, and who remove them neatly from existence. Such Malakim are punishers and executioners, but act with efficiency and without cruelty, doing whatever they feel is necessary to take suffering-price from those who have offended Heaven with their cruelty.

Gabriel's Virtues can be surprisingly creative in their ways of punishing the cruel, and – for the more dramatic – in their ways of spreading the word that One Should Not Be Cruel, Or Else. Although these angels do operate on particular assignments, nothing stops them doing a bit of “freelance work” if they should happen to encounter someone who deserved their talents. These Malakim are frighteningly focused, and even if they do embark – from time to time – in the occasional intensely passionate affair, they're back on the job the next day, bringing God's flame to the cruel.

Kyriotates

Kyriotates of Gabriel punish those who inflict physical pain on others. They do not spare anybody, whatever the fleshly envelope of the sinner, or his position in society; they will and must bring down the fire of God upon him for his cruelty. Accustomed as they are to changing bodies like suits of clothing, they refuse to accept the excuses of society, custom, or circumstance. If anybody has committed such a sin, they will exact payment from him. One of their favorite tactics is to “help” a victim resist his bullies by possessing him, and teaching the bullies a few lessons in precisely what applied physical pain feels like . . . This isn't cruelty. They're very, very careful to make sure it isn't cruelty. It's merely justice – no more, no less – and the Kyriotates sometimes even count blows precisely, so that exactly the same number of blows inflicted on the victim is returned upon the aggressor.

Unfortunately, these Dominations are often as slow to recognize *psychological* cruelty as they are quick to observe

physical pain. A Kyriotate of Fire will often quietly request the help of an angel from some other Choir, knowing that he himself may not be able to properly judge or assess motivations. In the field, they're extremely focused, usually choosing their hosts based on their current targets or plans. Dominations of Fire often court dissonance, unfortunately, by taking a cruel host, and then leaving him in a very disadvantageous situation, preferably one exacerbated by the host's own earlier cruelty. As they point out to the Servitors of Judgment, they may be a *little* bit dissonant because of it, but it's so beautifully just . . .

Mercurians

Mercurians of Fire are charged with preventing people from hurting themselves, and throw themselves into this task with all the usual passion of Servitors of Fire. This causes some of them to become the archetypical confessors and consolers, listening to other people and helping them to forgive *themselves*, and persuading them – for one day – not to punish themselves for sins real or imagined. Such angels are gentle, quiet, and good listeners, often spending time just sitting at the edge of a conversation, and finally cutting in with some comment which shows an acute understanding of the personalities involved.

However, not all Mercurians of Fire take such an easy route. There are people in the world who take a guilty pleasure in torturing themselves, possibly because they enjoy wallowing in angst, or because flagellating themselves means they don't actually have to *do* anything about the current problem. Some of the Intercessionists of Gabriel take it upon themselves to kick such humans out of their rut – one way or another. While taking care not to actively harm the humans, such angels have no objection to forcing their targets into a tough situation in order to make them think about the world around them, or pushing a situation to breaking point, just to make the target snap out of his guilt and *act*. They don't mind being disliked by the human in question – after all, if he's spending his time being annoyed with the angel, he isn't torturing himself. Such Intercessionists are manipulative and devious, using all the information they have about the target in order to push him toward a less self-harmful course of action. (Other angels have been known to claim that the *new* courses of action can be positively dangerous – but at least they don't involve cruelty.)

Character
is
destiny.

– Heraclitus
(540?-480? B.C.)

WORKING WITH FAITH

Recently, since Khalid's "rehabilitation," a number of angels of Fire have been working with angels of Faith to bring new inspiration to religions which had grown stagnant. Their task is not so much to root out the cruel among the congregation (though this is always helpful) but to inspire new belief and life to established faiths. They may serve as lay preachers, theologians, priests, or simply members of the congregation, but they work to remind the humans of the roots of the faith, and the driving urge to love and worship God. These angels of Fire strive to nurture *illumination* in the souls of those around them, celebrating the service and love of God.

Soldekai approves of this work, and cooperates with Khalid; he knows that the Archangel of Faith respects

Gabriel, and he hopes that – in some way – this whole process may stabilize Gabriel herself. Perhaps as the Servitors of Faith and Fire work hand in hand to strengthen religions, bringing integrity and inspiration together, the very Word of Fire may be purified. Gabriel herself makes no comment on the matter, and doesn't even seem to have noticed Khalid's re-emergence, or the new work of some of her angels. However, she has met and spoken to some of her Servitors who are now working with Faith, and she has not punished them or criticized them, either . . . Her words to them were, as ever, prophetic and incomprehensible.

JOBS

Celestial Jobs

There's always something to do in the Volcano; however, many of Gabriel's Servitors are too driven to want to spend time there, and they'd rather be actively smiting the cruel. This often means that the Gabrielites currently in Heaven are either young and untried, or experienced and patient. Some of these angels, mainly Cherubim and Malakim, patrol the edge of the Volcano that borders the outer limit of Heaven, watching for dangers from Hell or from the Marches. Others keep the records of Gabriel's prophecies in the Dictorium (p. 54), with Seraphim transcribing them and Cherubim guarding them. Younger angels volunteer for the honor of guarding the end-points of Tethers, while Mercurians and Elohim provide counseling and help to wearied or Traumatized angels who need it. Ofanim carry messages within the Citadel, and courier reports to and from Earth, the Marches, and Heaven – and a number of Kyriotates maintain existence in multiple planes simultaneously during emergencies, for near-instantaneous communication. (This is vital – Soldekai is powerful, but he's not an Archangel.)

Ethereal Jobs

Servitors of Fire frequently spend time in the Marches – a target's dreams are a good place to learn more about him, or even to punish him. (Blandine's angels object strongly to Gabrielites punishing victims inside dreamscapes, however cruel they were. This almost invariably results in a nightmare and a trip to Beleth's side of the

Marches, which is bad in itself, and can also be incredibly dangerous for the angel of Fire . . .) Mercurians in particular find this a useful way to learn why a particular subject is being cruel to himself, and to try to find ways to stop him. Some of the angels of Fire who are more interested in aspects of inspiration visit the dreams of mortals who have been inspired, in the hope of understanding them better, or somehow growing closer to the Word of Fire.



SLOW DREAMSCAPES CROSSING

From time to time, angels of Fire selflessly offer their assistance to Servitors of Dream, inquiring whether Blandine's Servitors know of any nearby outposts of cruelty in the Marches which need rooting out. Most of the time, the Dreamwalkers prefer to handle such problems themselves – but every once in a while the angels of Fire prove useful. Finally, older Gabrielites regularly lead patrols of junior ones out into the Marches, in order to teach them the ways of Ethereals and dreamscapes. (Such training varies, depending on whether the instructing angel's sympathies lie more with the Servitors of Dream, or the Guardians of the Marches.)

Corporeal Jobs

There are three main tasks which any given Servitor of Fire on Earth may be working at – punishing the cruel, protecting and encouraging inspiration, or guarding a Tether. Any and every Choir may work at the first task, and is expected to do so. Even if he has some other assigned function, no Gabrielite can abide the presence of the cruel near him. It's not a personal taste – it's a vocation. Malakim will usually be given particular targets, but other angels of Fire may roam freely in search of specific sinners or sins, or may “stake out” a particular area to guard.

Generally speaking, Cherubim are tasked with protecting those who are the subjects of inspiration, although other Choirs may help them. An EloHITE may serve in the entourage of a prophet, watching the emotions of those who come near him, or a Malakite organize his security, while a Mercurian might help a poet on the verge of falling into self-pity and self-harm. However, Cherubim *are* the principal guardians in such cases – and also the angels of Fire most capable of being patient and enduring the mood swings to which many inspired people are subject. Being an angel of Fire doesn't necessarily make you capable of limitless calmness and patience – quite the opposite.

Any angel may *encourage* inspiration, but Elohim, Mercurians, and Seraphim are the most noted in this area. Their attunements give them knowledge about the personality in question, and can try to stimulate the person in appropriate ways. (Of course, no one can *force* inspiration to descend – but even an angel can do his best, and then pray.) Malakim attempt to encourage inspiration more by their attitude than in any other way; after all, an honorable person deserves inspiration far more than a dishonorable one. Unfortunately, they're usually too busy punishing the cruel.

Guarding a Tether is another job which any angel of Fire may be called upon to do. Relievers deserve a mention here, as they are a good resource for patrolling the edges of a Tether, and can be given relatively small vessels, such as animals or children. Given Soldekai's resources and the number of Tethers he needs to coordinate, assigning relievers to such a task allows him both to protect the Tether and to give the young angels experience on Earth. Full Servitors are needed to protect the Tether from attack, and to administer it so that it can reach out to the world around it. Cherubim and Kyriotates may serve as regular guards, with Elohim, Mercurians, and Seraphim watching for infiltration and attacks – and Malakim and Ofanim brought in rapidly if trouble starts.

LIVING IN FIRE

Angels of Fire can go for years without seeing their Archangel. They have to keep going on faith, and keep themselves busy in punishing the cruel. Generally, any Gabrielite has a “current project” – one of the cruel who has yet to taste the Fire, on whom he will spend most of his time. However, Soldekai often shows up with a special mission of some sort. If this happens, the cruel-of-the-moment will either go unpunished for a short time (with Soldekai making arrangements for the angel to work off dissonance at a Tether) or plans will be stepped up to finish off the sinner's punishment, so that Soldekai's needs can be made a priority.

If Gabriel does show up – an event simultaneously longed for and feared – even in the midst of her madness, she will recognize her Servitors on sight, and will expect absolute loyalty from them. Immediately. She will often draw them into any current delusion she may be experiencing (which can be difficult if she's insisting that it's currently the Purity Crusades, or the foundation of Islam); sometimes it's a very real

threat or danger, sometimes it's just shadows of the firelight. Luckily, Aluriel and Mordekial (p. 46) are usually very close behind the Archangel of Fire, and have been known to help a hapless Servitor out of a particularly sticky situation. After observing Gabriel for as long as they have, they know when to step in, and when to call for reinforcements – in the utmost emergencies, even Yves himself. Still, they can't dissuade Gabriel all the time; if the Archangel of Fire wants something, she will get it, and it is a very bad idea to tempt her cataclysmic temper – for a Gabrielite most of all.

None of this alters the fact that angels of Fire *love* their Archangel. They submit willingly to her fires, trusting her holiness and her position as messenger of God, and let the Divine Flame do as it wishes with them. Many Servitors of Gabriel speak wistfully of the last time they saw their Archangel – however traumatic it was – and hope that she will pass by again soon.

SAMPLE SERVITORS OF GABRIEL

JABESH

Angel of Guilt Elohite Friend of the Divine Spark

Corporeal Forces – 4 Strength 9 Agility 7
Ethereal Forces – 5 Intelligence 10 Precision 10
Celestial Forces – 5 Will 8 Perception 12

Suggested Word Forces: 7

Vessels: Human Female/2; Human Male/2

Roles: “John Caldwell,” Reporter/3, Status/3;
“Maria Jefferson,” Estate Agent/3, Status/3

Skills: Computer Operation/2, Detect Lies/3,
Dodge/2, Driving/1, Emote/3, Fast-Talk/2,
Fighting/2 (Savate), Lying/3, Move Silently/1,
Ranged Weapon/2 (Pistol), Savoir-Faire/2

Songs: Dreams (All/2), Form (Celestial/3), Healing
(Ethereal/2), Light (Ethereal/4), Projection
(Corporeal/2), Tongues (Corporeal/3)

Attunements: Seraph of Fire, Cherub of Fire,
Elohite of Fire, Whispers of Inspiration, Friend of
the Divine Spark, Angel of Guilt

Special Ability: For a cost of 2 Essence, when
concentrating on a specific act or acts of cruelty,
know what (if anything) the sinner regrets about
them.

Special Rite: Cause a sinner to feel genuine guilt
for some act of cruelty which he has committed (1
Essence).

Jabesh is one of Gabriel’s most devious and manip-
ulative Elohim. He works to enforce guilt as a tool

for salvation – when the sinner truly feels guilt for
some crime, it should cause him punishment in itself,
and should cause him to make some form of restitu-
tion. When Soldekai sponsored Jabesh for the
Word in the 13th century, certain members of the
Seraphim Council expressed concern that it would
be a difficult Word for an Elohite to hold. They
feared that it might be a temptation in itself toward
Habbalite tendencies. However, Jabesh has shown
no signs of leaning in that direction; in fact, from
time to time he has chastised his own brethren for
being unduly harsh toward a genuinely guilty and
repentant sinner.

The Elohite’s *modus operandi* is somewhat unusual.
Unless directly ordered by Soldekai (or Gabriel her-
self), he moves “as the Spirit directs him,” and takes
as targets those whom he meets while traveling. He
holds that this prevents him from prideful actions
such as deliberately choosing those who he considers
deserving punishment, which would imply personal
choice in something that should be a matter of God’s
direction. This makes his course unpredictable and
his location uncertain – and annoys a lot of demons,
who would just love to see him Fall, and only ask for
some uninterrupted time with him. (Embarrassingly
for Hell, Jabesh has had success with a number of
demons and Hellsworn, and is particularly disliked
by certain Servitors of Fate.) He has cooperated with
Judgment on a number of occasions, in cases that
involved both Dominicans and Gabrielites, and is
viewed by Dominic as an example of the more rea-
sonable Servitors of Fire – if still somewhat irregular.

When working on a target, Jabesh’s preferred tac-
tic is to determine what (if anything) will cause him
to feel guilty about his actions, and then to work
psychologically on this point. He isn’t satisfied until
the sinner feels real guilt, and – as an Elohite – he
knows when that happens. In the event that a target
proves truly obdurate, which may take months,
Jabesh will reluctantly execute the target himself, or
pass the name to Soldekai for a more elaborate
removal operation.

*(Jabesh is an experienced and powerful Word-bound
Servitor of Fire, who may show up at an inconvenient
time for characters, or may be ordered by Soldekai to carry
out a mission in their neighborhood.)*

Continued on next page . . .



SAMPLE SERVITORS OF GABRIEL (CONTINUED)

BERNARD

Kyriotate of Fire

Corporeal Forces -3 Strength 7 Agility 5
Ethereal Forces -3 Intelligence 8 Precision 4
Celestial Forces -3 Will 7 Perception 5
Skills: Computer Operation/4, Dodge/2, Emote/2, Fighting/3 (Brawling), Knowledge/2 (American High School Etiquette), Lying/3, Running/2

Songs: Attraction (Ethereal/3), Form (Ethereal/3), Healing (Corporeal/2)

Attunements: Kyriotate of Fire, Dance of the Atoms

Bernard is a young and vigorous Kyriotate of Fire who really enjoys his work; he particularly likes “cleaning out” schools and colleges. After a while surveying each new place through various hosts, animals or humans, he jumps from body to body in attempts to artistically punish those humans in the area who happen to be cruel. He has a fondness for public humiliation (using a current victim as host) but, from time to time, he gets more elaborate. It’s surprisingly easy to spike a cruel athlete’s food or drink with drugs, then arrange for a random drug test or an accident that involves the police. It’s also not too hard to possess a sinner during public examinations and wreck their scores for them, or humiliate a Valley Girl in the middle of the Mall. (“Yeah, it’s true – Mary-Lou shaved her head bald and got piercings . . .”)



Of course, leaving a host worse off can get him dissonance, but so far he’s been able to work it off at Tethers without any significant problems.

However, Bernard isn’t good at working with others – even other Servitors of Fire. Not only is he convinced that Kyriotates are innately superior to any other angel (with the possible exceptions of Gabriel and Soldekai) by virtue of their powers, but he has the bad habit of changing plans mid-action without telling anybody else. Unfortunately, he has a lot of “local knowledge” about a number of educational establishments which make him a very useful resource. He wouldn’t *deliberately* spoil a celestial operation in progress, but he is often far more concerned about the safety of his current hosts than that of other angels. This tendency may wear off in time – or it may get worse.

(Bernard is a balanced starting character, who can be used as a resource or a scenario book.)

Unusual Jobs

Even when the cruel have been punished, the victims of their cruelty may well require healing. Some angels of Fire devote themselves to this task, trying to stamp out the “cycle of abuse” and to prevent the victims of abuse from becoming abusers in their turn. Such angels, often Elohim, Cherubim, and Mercurians, frequently work with Servitors of Flowers in an attempt to heal their charges. Other Gabrielites respect their efforts, but don’t volunteer for such tasks. However, the names of these angels are known in both the Volcano and in Novalis’ Glade, and they can be contacted in a hurry if there should be urgent need for them. They tend to be skilled in the Songs of Healing and Dreams, the better to help their subjects.

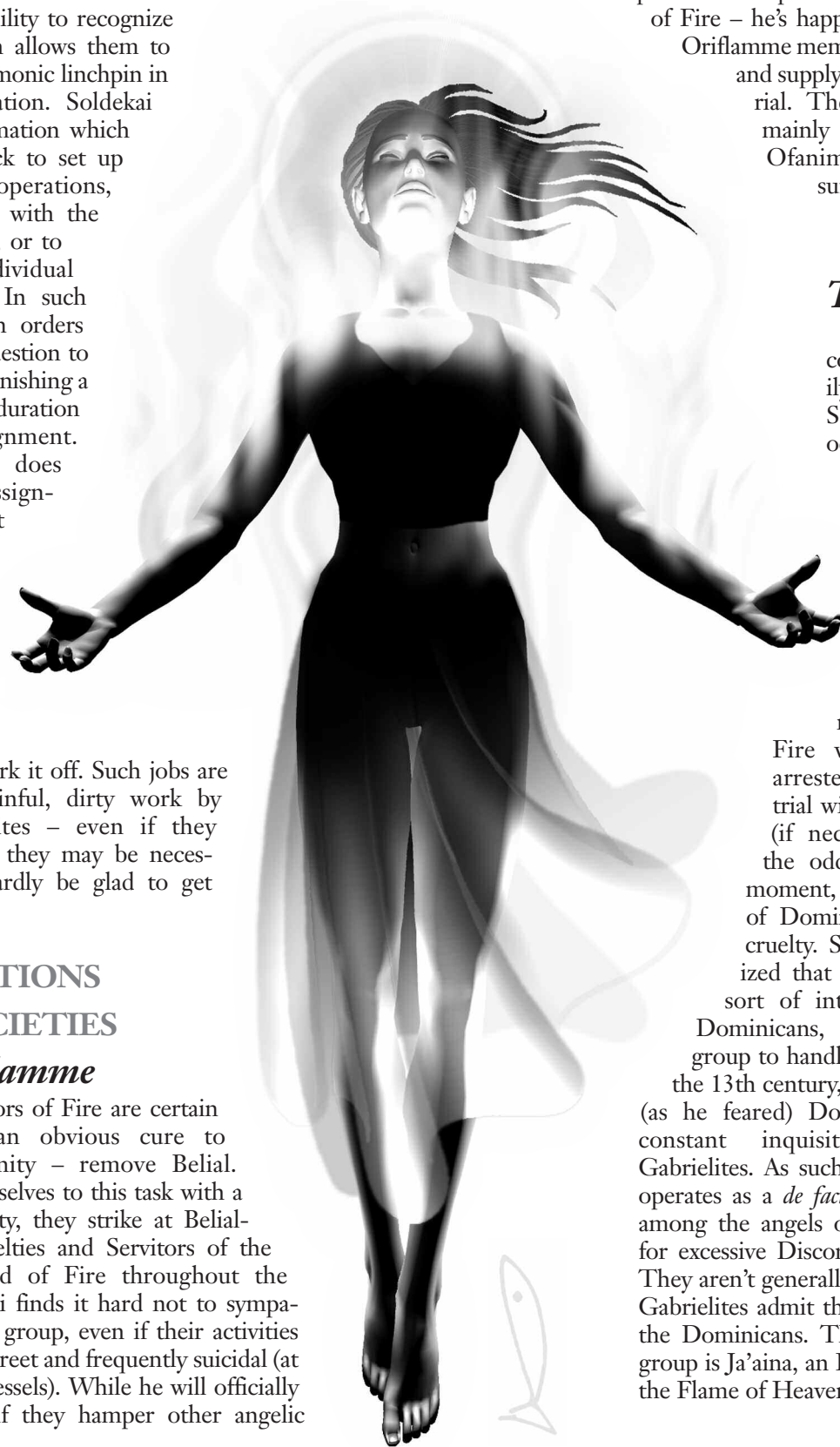
Another task for many Gabrielites, one which Soldekai finds vital, is that of messenger. The Chamberlain of the Legions of Flame *must* stay in contact with angels of Fire across the world, pass on orders, coordinate strategies, collect information, and provide protection or resources where necessary. Kyriotates can maintain presences in more than one realm, while a “messenger corps” of some of Fire’s fastest Ofanim also serves in this capacity, speeding across Heaven and Earth to keep the lines of communication open. They often travel with a guardian Malakite or two, as Belial realizes the importance of the information that they may be carrying, and has been known to set ambushes.

Many Gabrielites also work as spies. Their ability to recognize the cruel often allows them to identify the demonic linchpin in some organization. Soldekai uses the information which they bring back to set up large-scale operations, often together with the Sword or War, or to organize individual assassinations. In such cases, he often orders the angel in question to refrain from punishing a target for the duration of the assignment. However, he does make the assignment as short as possible, and if the Servitor incurs dissonance, he'll arrange for some time at a Tether to work it off. Such jobs are considered painful, dirty work by most Gabrielites – even if they recognize that they may be necessary, they'll hardly be glad to get them.

ASSOCIATIONS AND SOCIETIES

The Oriflamme

Some Servitors of Fire are certain that there's an obvious cure to Gabriel's insanity – remove Belial. Applying themselves to this task with a fervent certainty, they strike at Belial-sponsored cruelties and Servitors of the demonic Word of Fire throughout the world. Soldekai finds it hard not to sympathize with this group, even if their activities are often indiscreet and frequently suicidal (at least to their vessels). While he will officially rebuke them if they hamper other angelic



operations – especially other Servitors of Fire – he's happy to pass known Oriflamme members information and supply them with material. The group consists mainly of Malakim and Ofanim, though any sufficiently intense Gabrielite is welcome.

The Shield

This group is composed primarily of Elohim and Seraphim, though occasionally other Choirs are temporarily brought in, should they be required. Its purpose is to regulate dealings with Judgment, retrieve angels of Fire who have been arrested by triads for trial within the Volcano (if necessary), and, in the odd job-satisfaction moment, turn over angels of Dominic for excessive cruelty. Soldekai has realized that he requires *some* sort of interface with the Dominicans, and set up this group to handle such liaisons in the 13th century, rather than have (as he feared) Dominic launching constant inquisitions on the Gabrielites. As such, the Shield also operates as a *de facto* internal police among the angels of Fire, watching for excessive Discord or dissonance. They aren't generally loved, but most Gabrielites admit they're better than the Dominicans. The leader of this group is Ja'aina, an EloHITE Master of the Flame of Heaven.

The Testers of Faith

This group is definitely not approved by Soldekai, and Gabriel herself is probably not even aware of it. The angels – mostly Cherubim – feel that it is their divinely appointed task to test other Servitors of Fire in their faith for Gabriel. Sometimes they do this by questioning, in an attempt to ascertain whether the other person *truly* believes that Gabriel is Chosen, Divine, and Bears the Word of God. At other times, they have been suspected of pushing other Servitors of Fire into situations that might cause dissonance, to observe their actions. Known membership in this group is cause for long discussions between the individual in question and the Shield. (Of course, the Testers of Faith themselves feel that they suffer for a righteous cause . . .)

The Mystery Cults

There are a number of cultist groups among the Servitors of Gabriel, some of which actually include humans. Whatever their particular rites, they all view Gabriel as an intermediary between themselves and God, and worship her as such, addressing prayers and psalms to her – sometimes even shedding their own blood with scourges and knives – and begging her to intercede for them to God. These cults, which go by names such as *Those Who Serve Through Blood And Fire* or *The Silent Followers Of She Who Speaks*, are absolutely illegal in the eyes of Judgment. Archangels are not there to be worshipped. Soldekai himself roots them out whenever they are discovered, as while he sympathizes with their adoration of Gabriel, he must concede that she is to be loved, not worshipped. (He'd also rather not give Judgment cause to make serious investigations among the ranks of Fire.)

DEALING WITH OUTSIDERS

Angels of Fire are often stiffly courteous to outsiders, or abrupt and hasty. While a Servitor of Fire can technically appreciate that other angels don't have the same burning sense of urgency that he does, he doesn't feel obliged to pander to their *mildness* – or, in the case of Dominicans, their rigidity. There is duty, and it needs to be attended to, and failing that, one can spend one's time in a suitably passionate activity, or praising God. A Gabrielite has little time to sit around admiring the scenery, although he could sympathize with a gardener who worked day in and day out on his beloved flowerbeds.

Given this, Servitors of Fire tend to deal fairly well with other angels who have either a similar sense of urgency, or some form of passionate dedication. Angels

CREATIONERS IN SERVICE TO FIRE

Any Servitors of Creation who have chosen to serve Fire are received with open arms. The Gabrielites consider that other angels who want to serve under their Archangel clearly have their hearts in the right place. They'll welcome the Creationers to the ranks, and even if Eli's Servitors seldom end up in positions of authority, their artistic opinions are *always* courted.

The angels of Creation are often assigned to missions involving spreading inspiration, as Soldekai feels that their talents are most useful there. The few who truly *burn* for combat or justice are placed with Servitors of Fire who are punishing the cruel, with instructions to apply their creative talents to the situation. (This may lead to particularly elaborate schemes of justice, or methods of redressing some cruelty – and *frequently* attracts the attention of Servitors of Judgment.) The Creationers themselves are generally comfortable with the loose Gabrielite organization. Even if the angels of Fire are sometimes “way too intense,” the sheer amount of casual passion and affection makes Eli's angels feel welcome and wanted – which counts for a lot.

of War, Stone, and the Wind are brothers in arms – angels of the Sword to a slightly lesser extent, as their form of discipline may grate on a Gabrielite's urgency. Servitors of Lightning and Creation are accepted if they are enthusiasts about their work, but avoided if they spend too much time in “frivolous byplay.” Those of Dream and Destiny are genuinely respected, as many Servitors of Fire see clear links between their work and Gabriel's own inspirations, and will be worked with – though there may be frequent arguments as to ends and means. Angels of Flowers, Trade, and Animals are tolerated, but it's generally considered that their work doesn't have much to do with the Gabrielites – they're given due respect if they're motivated, but they aren't usually boon companions. Dominicans, unfortunately, are tarred with the same brush as Dominic himself, and generally distrusted on sight. The odd angel of Judgment can prove himself worthy by utter dedication to his job, clear incorruptibility, and a total lack of prejudice or cruelty – unfortunately, too often the angels of Fire won't give him the chance or time to do so.

DEALING WITH JUDGMENT

Relations with the Servitors of Judgment vary from the tactfully strained to the very strained. It is nearly impossible for any angel of Fire to forget how Dominic's persecution and threatened trial drove Gabriel to leave Heaven – at least, that's how the Gabrielites tell it. They consequently greet Dominicans with sarcastic comments and thinly veiled resignation at the best of times, and outright hostility at the worst.

Servitors of Judgment find it hard not to react to such obvious *prejudice*, which is a potential flaw in any angel. The known and obvious insanities of Gabriel are also logically likely to have some reflection in her Servitors. In addition, Servitors of Fire frequently carry dissonance from not being able to punish their target within their time limit, which hardly inspires confidence. Finally, the angels of Fire frequently judge and punish the cruel, which is – to some extent – in the domain of Judgment. (In the days when the two Archangels cooperated, matters were a great deal simpler.) Dominicans often feel that the Gabrielites are meddling in an area that should be the domain of Judgment, and probably doing more harm than good with their “heavy-handed concepts of torching everything in sight.”



MODES OF ADDRESS

Servitors of Gabriel, when dealing with each other, flip between either a rigid courtesy that controls whatever their current passion is, or just intense and obvious affection. They may be many things to each other, but they will not be mild. A Gabrielite will usually address one of his fellow angels of Fire as “beloved brother” or “honored sister,” with an obeisance of some sort if the other holds a Word or Distinction. Respect tends to be conveyed in personal bearing, rather than in the formality of words. Gabriel herself is addressed most usually as “Lady,” “Bright Lady,” “Mistress,” or with some ornate title such as “Holy Keeper of the Eternal Fire.” Soldekai tends to receive the honorific of “Sir” from other angels of Fire (or “Sol” behind his back), or “Chamberlain” if in the company of angels from other Words. The angels of Fire are known to other angels as “Gabrielites” or “Flames” – politely – or “Burners” and “Fireboys,” less politely. (Referring to them as “The Inspired” is considered to be technically polite but extremely snide.)

Of course, there are exceptions. Angels of Fire *can* come to appreciate the devotion to duty which Dominicans show, and recognize their passion for the safety of Heaven. They might even cooperate with particular Judges, even working together to identify angels who are straying into cruelty and risk Falling.

However, this is far less common than the usual (and accurate) image of harsh correctness and traded insults.

Dominicans most often accuse Gabrielites of indulgence due to their passions, unnecessary interference in mortal affairs, and heresy (ah, that convenient word). The general reaction of any angel of Fire to such charges is haughty disdain, usually followed by a denial of the Dominican's right to accuse him – followed by a report to Dominic or a trip to the Celestial Tribunal. Soldekai is forced to spend a certain amount of time investigating such affairs. He has a group of Elohim and Seraphim, the Shield (p. 68), who have demonstrated an ability to work with Judgment, and who are assigned to handle “jurisdictional matters” – and preferably get Fire's angels judged by Gabriel, not by Dominic.



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ELOHITE ARCHANGEL OF FAITH

*The world is as God wills it. All is God.
God is great; there is no God but God. Our duty is to believe.*

71

KHALID



KHALID – BEFORE AND AFTER

The Archangel of Faith first appeared in *The Final Trumpet* (pp. 53-56). In that book, Khalid was portrayed as a borderline-Outcast Archangel, teetering on the edge of a Fall. Having lost his objectivity, he compensated with reactionary adherence to Quranic law, and had become oblivious to any other point of view. The final book of the *Revelations* cycle dealt in part with the question of whether Khalid would regain his faith, or lose it completely and become the Demon Prince of Fanaticism (see p. 89).



In the official *In Nomine* universe, Khalid was redeemed, and is slowly improving his relations with the rest of the Host, as well as taking a less dogmatic view of religion and human society. Several of Khalid's Rites and attunements in *The Final Trumpet* reflected the rabid fundamentalism of his previous phase. These changed when he moderated his attitude. However, the original versions are included here, in italics, for GMs who prefer to run Khalid as his old, harsher self. At the GM's option, some of Khalid's most fanatical servants may retain the old forms of his attunements and Rites . . . though they will be courting dissonance if they don't realign themselves to Khalid's new way of thinking.

Faithlessness

Previously, Khalid defined "good" humans, for the most part, as Muslims, "evil" humans as atheists, and everyone else as corrupt but redeemable. When he hasn't lost his perspective, Khalid regards only faithless humans as truly bad. A faithless human is not simply a person who has no religion, but one who believes in *nothing* but self-interest. Anyone who possesses higher ideals, or believes – without proof – in something greater than himself, possesses some measure of faith. Thus, even atheist humanists who believe in humanity's innate goodness, or children who believe in Santa Claus, are redeemable in Khalid's eyes, despite their wrong and harmful beliefs.

Another kind of faithlessness – and a far greater sin, in Khalid's eyes – is *breaking* one's faith. Not believing in God is bad, but believing in God and then turning your back on Him is worse. Likewise, betraying anything or anyone – whether it be your religion, your country, or your loved ones . . . or even yourself – is a grievous act against the Word of Faith. A Muslim who pays lip service to Islam but does not practice its tenets or truly believe in God is faithless, and will incur Khalid's wrath. And while Khalid is never kind when dealing with demons, he is *far* harsher with those who are actually Fallen angels than he is with those who were born in Hell.

The power of faith – whether it be in something mundane or fantastic – is similarly inexplicable, but it must be preserved at all costs. The Elohite Khalid makes this preservation his sole concern, specifically guarding the True Faith of pure submission to Allah: Islam. Khalid is at the same time serene and holy, angry and violent. Once the zealous Angel of Faith under Uriel, Khalid has risen in stature to Archangel of Faith. Archangels seldom tend to be “nice” by anyone’s definition, but Khalid’s ascent has made him a notoriously unsympathetic character.

Khalid had served Archangel Uriel ably and well for many centuries when Allah called that powerful being, both radical and archaic, into the Higher Heavens. Laurence was made Archangel of the Sword and replaced Uriel, much to Khalid’s disgust. Khalid, famous for his victory over Magog, the Demon Prince of Cruelty, while working with the Archangel of Stone, thought he should take Uriel’s place as head of Allah’s army rather than Laurence. Although Khalid agreed that Laurence (like Khalid himself) combined exceptional intelligence, integrity, and tactical skill, the removal of Uriel clearly indicated that Christianity’s day had passed. He saw Dominic’s hand behind Laurence’s (and Christianity’s) elevation in the ranks of Heaven, just as he saw Dominic’s hand in the exile of Gabriel.

From that moment, Khalid followed Gabriel into the wilderness, vowing to defend the True Faith of Islam, as revealed in God’s dictation of the Quran, against all enemies. Jihad must continue, inside and out, against infidels and heretics, against armed besiegers and smooth-tongued corrupters. Nothing that Khalid has seen on the Earth since has dissuaded him; the Christian West’s Earthly triumphs have come at the expense of its faith, its morals, and its very soul. Western so-called freedom is a lie; the righteously free surrender their will to God rather than selfishly demanding the liberty to foul and pollute themselves, their women, and their cities. Khalid sees America bloated with drugs and consumerism, Europe decimated by global war and mass murder, and Russia bankrupted and poisoned by atheist socialism; he wonders how anyone with eyes to see can doubt the rightness of the path of Islam.

Islam offers true equality under God, true freedom to seek the divine, true brotherhood of all mankind. Khalid believes with all his might that it is worth defending. During the Crusades, he defended it against Laurence’s Christian knights – now, he defends it against the far greater threat of moral corruption and baneful propaganda. While Khalid no longer supports terrorism (see p. 81), neither does he exert much effort to curb it; first and foremost, he wishes to preserve the faith of Muslims, and protect them from the rapacious West. If that means sometimes the West suffers the consequences of its cowardly use of technological superiority to bully Muslims, that is something they brought upon themselves. For angels who supported the Crusaders’ blood-soaked rule in Jerusalem or the conquistadors’ forcible conversion of the New World to complain about “Muslim terrorists” strikes him as sheerest hypocrisy.

Khalid personally considers Christians and Jews – faithful, believing Christians and Jews, that is – to be noble foes or even trustworthy allies. Shari’a, Muslim law, has long allowed the other People of the Book to live and worship God in their own way within the house of Islam. The true foes of faith are not the other, lesser faiths, but the soulless armies of materialism, agnosticism, atheism, and humanism. Khalid sees these cancers destroying Christianity before his eyes; he will Fall before he lets them corrupt the True Faith.

Not all of Khalid’s servants work in Muslim-held territories. As many as 10% of them live and work in other parts of the world, even among the infidels, protecting the Muslim lifestyle and supporting the Word of Faith in its most general sense. His angels are not always as zealous about his cause as he is, but it’s never wise to question his orders.

Khalid is very harsh with his servants, punishing failure with dissonance and insolence with Discord. But he’s also very gentle with his favored Servitors, and generous to a fault with those he loves. Most of his servants are more maniacally loyal than even David’s followers; they have faith in him.

DISSONANCE

Angels of Faith are instructed to perform miracles, but subtle, hidden ones. Khalid’s servants must never allow their true natures to be found out.



BRIGHT LILIM (RESTRICTED)

As far as anyone knows, no Bright Lilim has ever taken up service with Khalid. If a redeemed Lilim did serve Faith, she would not gain any characteristic bonuses. However, she would gain the ability to use her resonance to determine what it would take for someone who has lost his faith in God or himself (or never had it to begin with) to regain it, or what it would take for *her* to earn his faith.

They must prevent humans from acquiring proof of the existence of the celestial realm. If an angel allows undeniable physical proof of Heaven to fall into the hands of mortals, he will gain a note of dissonance until it is retrieved.

It is also dissonant for an angel serving the Word of Faith to kill a human who has true, unquestioning, unselfish faith in something beyond himself. Followers of Hell, fortunately for Khalid's Malakim, find unselfish faith even more difficult than most people.

CHOIR ATTUNEMENTS

Purposely mysterious, Khalid's servants never reveal more than they have to. They have the ability to see faith in a person's eyes; these angels know what humans believe in.

Also, Khalid strengthens his Servitors with his faith in them; every Choir has one characteristic boosted by 1 point. The particular characteristic enhanced varies from Choir to Choir. Characteristics may be raised to 13 *if* the angel has 6 Forces in the appropriate realm. This characteristic bonus is part of the Choir Attunement; losing the attunement (such as by Falling) means losing the bonus.

Seraphim (restricted)

Seraphim find themselves in something of a predicament working for Khalid. It's not given to them to lie, yet faith in the greatly unprovable and even wildly improbable must be maintained. Working for Khalid increases a Seraph's Precision by 1, which helps him to stay surprisingly tight-lipped – for a Seraph. Khalid's Seraphim cannot *lie* about matters of faith, but they can remain silent or tolerate deception by others with less distress than others of their Choir, as long as it is in a good cause. (This is a matter of GM's discretion rather than game mechanics; in general, when forced to make a judgment call, the GM should be more lenient with Seraphim of Faith who skirt

dissonance in order to preserve faith than he would be with other Seraphim.)

Cherubim (restricted)

Some of the most devoted angels in the universe are the Cherubim serving Khalid, who grants them an increased Perception (+1) and the ability to know what someone to whom they are attuned believes in most strongly . . . and *how* strongly he believes.

Ofanim (restricted)

Ofanim who work for Khalid have a +1 to their Agility. They specifically target lovers, helping them to stay together. These angels also have the ability to see true and faithful love in a human's eyes. Also, Khalid's Ofanim heal a number of Body hits per day equal to their Celestial Forces.

Elohim (restricted)

Khalid's Elohim may choose which of their characteristics to enhance – again, by 1 point. Solid and steady, these angels of balance and reserve have the ability to see what a person believes in by using their natural resonance. But whenever an EloHITE of Faith breaks the faith of his word, for any reason, he generates a note of dissonance.

Malakim (restricted)

Khalid's Malakim are granted an additional point of Strength to help them punish those who have caused pain with their faithlessness (including to oneself, especially by abandoning one's religion). The deep eyes of the Malakim can spot such people whenever they successfully apply their resonance.

Kyriotates (restricted)

A Kyriotate who does the work of Faith has his Will enhanced by 1 point. He also has the ability to forcibly enter a human for a brief moment (the angel must make a normal resonance roll, but the human may not resist) and give that person true faith in anything the angel desires, lasting for a number of minutes equal to the angel's Celestial Forces.

Mercurians (restricted)

The characteristic of Intelligence increases by 1 in all of Khalid's Mercurians. They are charged with making miracles from the mundane, without celestial means. Every time a human accepts as miraculous something done by a Mercurian working for Khalid (which didn't involve him disturbing the Symphony), the angel gains 1 point of Essence.

SERVITOR ATTUNEMENTS

Fast

Khalid only grants this attunement to *humans* of great piety (almost always Muslims). At any time, beginning at sunrise, the human may begin a fast. So long as he does not eat, drink, use any drugs (including tobacco), or engage in sexual activity, his corporeal body will be almost like a celestial vessel; he will not *need* food or water, nor will he need to sleep, he will be immune to normal temperature extremes, and he will not suffer fatigue. Women also will not menstruate. He may break the fast at any time, but may not begin another until the beginning of the next lunar cycle. (Note that going without sleep for too long is not good for a human's mental health, but a fasting human may *choose* to sleep without breaking the fast.)

Jihad

This attunement allows the character to declare a holy war against a specific enemy, which may be an individual, a movement, or even an entire nation. However, the subjects must be *human* in origin; you cannot declare a jihad against Hell (or against a particular Band, or a specific Prince). Diabolical servants working for the target of the jihad are fair game, though. The holy warrior will get a +1 bonus on *all* actions taken against the subject of his jihad, and a +1 bonus to the Power of any attacks on them. (This may be interpreted as liberally as the GM likes.) If the character should ever completely eliminate his enemy, or voluntarily choose to abandon his jihad, the attunement disappears; declaring a new jihad requires getting the attunement again.

Rituals of Faith

This attunement is only available to angels (or humans) who are devout followers of a religion. It must be an established *divine* religion (*Game Master's Guide*, p. 66), such as Islam, Christianity, or Judaism; personal belief systems, cults, and pagan religions don't qualify.

Every time the believer performs one of his religion's prescribed rituals, he gains 1 point of Essence, as per a Rite. Each ritual can only grant 1 point of Essence per day. For example, Catholics would gain Essence for attending Mass, going to confession, and praying. Muslims would gain Essence for performing the five required daily prayers while facing Mecca, donating money to the poor, and 1 per day of fasting during Ramadan. Rituals must be performed sincerely, in accordance with the tenets of the religion. It's not difficult to earn extra Essence every day for faithful religious observances, but if the character is going out of his way to perform rituals just to gain the Essence, it won't work.



That Which Moves Mountains

This attunement allows an angel to perform miracles in the presence of faithful humans. If at least one mortal in the angel's presence believes that God is aiding his efforts, the angel will receive a bonus to all d666 rolls equal to the *mortal's* Celestial Forces – but only to actions that don't disturb the Symphony. (If there is more than one such believer, use the highest Celestial Forces among them.) Naturally, the angel may not violate Khalid's dissonance conditions while taking advantage of this attunement. At the GM's option, the angel may become capable of performing other feats, if the mortal thinks he can, and if the *angel* has faith that he can. These should be miraculous in nature, without being accompanied by any kind of supernatural effects or disturbance in the Symphony. For example, the angel might be able to walk through flames without being burned, fall from an airplane without a parachute and land unharmed, or stand still while a mob of pursuers runs right past him as if he were invisible. As a rule of thumb, treat such miracles as minor Divine Interventions (*Angelic Player's Guide*, p. 77), but do not let them become automatic; neither the angel nor the mortal who believes in him should take them for granted.

Wrath of God (Wrath of Allah)

This power costs 3 Essence per use. Invoking the Wrath of God doubles the damage done by the user's next successful attack, regardless of the scope of the assault, after all other modifiers are taken into account. This power affects only faithless human beings (see p. 72), ethereals, and Diabolicals within range of the attack, but not objects (doors, cars, etc.). (*Previously, this attunement only affected non-Muslim human beings and Diabolicals.*)

DISTINCTIONS

Vassal of Faith

This rank grants the ability to know if the Wrath of God attunement (above) could be used on someone within the Vassal's line of sight. In other words, they can spot faithless humans and ethereals and Diabolicals on sight (though they don't automatically know *which* an individual might be).

Friend of the Faithful (Friend of Islam)

The angel gains a +1 bonus on *all* interactions (including resonance and reaction rolls) with humans possessing

true faith in God. (*Previously, this Distinction granted a +1 bonus only with practicing Muslims.*)

SECRET SONGS

Khalid is a very old angel, and knows many secret Songs, which he is willing to teach to his most beloved servants. These include (from the *Liber Cantorum*) Correspondence (p. 65), Pestilence (p. 73), Purity (p. 75), and War (p. 77).

Master of the Word of God

As above, but the angel gets a bonus of +2 to all interactions *and* successful check digits with humans possessing true faith in God. (*Previously, this distinction increased the power of the Wrath of God attunement. Damages, rather than being doubled, were then multiplied by 3.*)

HIGHER DISTINCTIONS

Khalid does not grant formal higher Distinctions (see *Organization*, p. 91, for more on how Khalid sees Distinctions). However, those who earn his very special favor, and prove themselves to be exemplary servants, join his inner circle and are given more responsibility and authority than other Servitors. All have earned his Master of the Word of God Distinction, and most are Word-bound.

RELATIONS

During the centuries of his self-imposed exile from Heaven, most of the Host regarded Khalid as an obsessed ideologue, possibly influenced by Gabriel's madness, and dealt with him warily if at all. Since returning to the fold, his relations with most Archangels have improved somewhat, though only the militant camp has welcomed him with open arms.

Allied: *Laurence, Gabriel (previously, Khalid was Hostile to Laurence)*

Associated: *David, Michael, Yves (all of whom are also Associated with him, as are Janus and Laurence)*

Hostile: *Dominic (Novalis was Hostile to Khalid; since his reformation, she has warily upgraded him to "Neutral" status.)*

BASIC RITES

- ✘ Slay a faithless human (*Slay an atheist*).
- ✘ Guard a place of faith (mosque, church, synagogue) from danger for one night and day.

✘ Inspire faith in something holy (*Inspire faith in the symbol of something holy – when losing his own faith, Khalid was willing to reward any show of faith, even reverence for talismans or pop-culture icons such as the Easter Bunny, which is completely contrary to Islamic principles*).

EXPANDED RITES

Khalid grants these Rites for exemplary displays of faith.

- ✘ Convert someone to Islam.
- ✘ Instill true faith in a faithless person (+2 Essence; converting them is better than killing them – and this Rite is cumulative with the one above).
- ✘ Undertake a spiritual pilgrimage, without using any celestial powers for the entire journey (+3 Essence and the loss of 1 point of dissonance upon completion – but this Rite is only performable once per year).

CHANCE OF INVOCATION: 2

INVOCATION MODIFIERS

- +1 A sincere prayer, spoken or written (*A Santa Claus hat*).
- +2 A copy of the Quran in the original Arabic.
- +3 A religious symbol, made by a person who has faith in its significance.
- +4 A sermon or call to prayer from a devout holy man.
- +5 The head of someone who served Hell (*The head of a dead atheist*).
- +6 A sincere prayer from someone devoid of faith.



COMMON MALAKITE OATHS

Khalid's Malakim obey a code of honor dating back to the Middle Ages and the height of Islam. As the chivalrous ideals of European knights were similar in many respects to those of their Arab counterparts, the oaths taken by Khalid's Malakim are often very similar to those taken by Laurence's. However, most Malakim of Faith take at least one religious oath. Below are some of the most common oaths sworn by Khalid's Virtues.

- ✘ I will not refuse hospitality to anyone except a sworn enemy (Diabolicals, of course, are sworn enemies).
- ✘ I will always be polite to my guests and my hosts.
- ✘ I will not harm, nor fail to protect, anyone who has surrendered to me.
- ✘ I will not use trickery or treachery to defeat my foes, if it is my choice (Khalid is more pragmatic, and thus requires this "escape clause" so that his Malakim may follow orders to deceive or ambush the enemy).
- ✘ I will never act in a manner that would shame me to see others emulate.
- ✘ I will not allow any insult to God, Heaven, my Archangel, or my own honor to go unanswered.
- ✘ I will not indulge in anything that is *haram* (prohibited by Islamic law, such as alcohol, drugs, pork, fornication, and gambling).
- ✘ I will read at least one sura from the Quran every day.
- ✘ I will pray in the direction of Mecca five times daily.
- ✘ I will maintain a beard (in all human male vessels).



KHALID IN DETAIL

“Who but a foolish man would renounce the faith of Abraham? We chose him in this world, and in the world to come he shall abide among the righteous. When his Lord said to him: ‘Submit,’ he answered: ‘I have submitted to the Lord of the Universe.’”

“Abraham enjoined the faith on his children, and so did Jacob, saying: ‘My children, God has chosen for you the true faith. Do not depart this life except as men who have submitted to Him.’”

— *al-Baqarah (The Chapter of the Cow), 2:130-132*

NAMES, APPEARANCE, AND MANNER

Khalid means “eternal” or “immortal” in Arabic (and its proto-Arabic parent language). It is the name Uriel gave him. Since becoming the Angel of Faith, Khalid has sometimes added *al-Din* (pronounced “ah-DEEN”), meaning “the faithful,” or *Abdullah* (“servant of God”) as a suffix to his name. Thus, in human form he may introduce himself as “Khalid al-Din” or “Khalid Abdullah,” both of which are perfectly legitimate names for a mortal Muslim or an angel.

Corporeally, Khalid always appears as a male Arab, stocky and muscular, dressed in traditional Muslim garb, usually with a large sword, either sheathed or in his hand. As Muhammad condemned the practice of shaving, saying that Muslims should distinguish themselves from non-Muslims, Khalid usually wears a neatly-trimmed beard in human form, though he has been known to go clean-shaven, to set himself apart from mortals (see p. 83).

In the celestial realm, Khalid usually chooses to manifest in humanoid form, still bearing a sword, but glowing with such an intense light that his face and androgynous EloHITE features cannot be seen.

Khalid exudes holiness. His expression is always composed, his voice intense, sometimes soft and sometimes loud and angry, but never out of control. He expresses himself clearly and carefully. His utterly black eyes are hard and shining; few can bear the fire and strength of his glance. He is not without a sense of humor, but he rarely laughs.

Khalid greets everyone but his foes warmly, embracing fellow Archangels and his favored Servitors, and offering hospitality to the lowliest mortal or celestial. He will *never* harm anyone – even a demon – who receives an audience with him (unless they are foolish enough to attack him directly, thus violating his

hospitality). Insolence or rudeness, however, will get the offender cast out of his presence (and stricken with dissonance or Discord, if the offender is his Servitor).

In conversation, Khalid frequently quotes from the Quran, and sometimes other holy books, such as the Bible. He strives to be just, and always thinks before making a decision. He is continually probing others for their sincerity, and someone who speaks from the heart, even intemperately, will gain a better reaction than someone who carefully measures his words, saying what he thinks Khalid wants to hear. In this regard, he is very different from most other Powers.

THE WORD OF FAITH

Faith is belief not supported by evidence. Anyone who believes something he cannot prove has faith, and humanity’s capacity for faith is considered its most valuable quality by angels. Humans, unlike celestials, generate Essence with their faith – not as a Rite usable by them, but as raw energy to fuel the Symphony. Human faith creates Tethers, and strengthens celestial Words. But Tethers and Words aren’t all divine; faith can also be turned to pagan or diabolical ends.

The Seraphim Council was surprised at Uriel’s nomination for the Angel of Faith. As a divine virtue, many considered it more appropriate for a Malakite, and as an inherently subjective trait, it seemed particularly inappropriate for an EloHITE.

Khalid proved that he understood the nature of faith better than any other angel, and his ability to separate true faith from delusion, deception, and paganism was agreed to be invaluable. As Uriel’s Servitor, he upheld Faith as an objective good for humanity, something that strengthened Heaven and saved humans from damnation. Impartial to religion, he was Uriel’s censor who detected selfish perversions and diabolical corruption among the faithful. He even advised other Archangels, notably Raphael and Eli, on how to promote God-concepts in different cultures.

Khalid promotes faith in divine religions. Belief in God, Heaven, angels, salvation, mankind’s positive qualities, and in one’s friends and family is good. Faith in *anything* supports Khalid’s Word, but he selflessly discourages faith in things that do not support Heaven. Khalid’s angels do not encourage people to believe that they can jump off a roof and fly. They are not supposed to encourage belief in mythical beings like Santa Claus, ghosts, space aliens, and fairies (the fact that some of these beings *do* exist is irrelevant; belief in anything without evidence is faith). Worship of pagan gods strengthens Khalid as much as it does the gods, but he has no tolerance for such beliefs.

As the Archangel of Faith, Khalid embraced Islam as the One True Faith. He regarded other religions, particularly those of the Book (Judaism and Christianity) as legitimate and worthy, but flawed in comparison to what was revealed to Muhammad by God, through His agent Gabriel. "Faith" increasingly became defined as "Islamic Faith" in Khalid's mind, and as Islamic thought became narrower and more exclusive over the centuries, he found his own faith in Islam increasingly causing friction with his Word and his EloHITE nature.

Since the events of *The Final Trumpet* (p. 72), Khalid has reaffirmed the broader aspects of his Word, and struggles to accept the legitimacy of *all* faiths, so long as they are inspired by selflessness. However, he still considers Islam to be the best religion and the most perfect expression of faith, and continues to promote it.

HISTORY

Khalid is an old angel, though he is young compared to most of the other Archangels. He was created by Uriel, the Archangel of Purity, circa 2000 B.C. It was the beginning of the great religion experiment initiated by Yves and carried out primarily by Eli, Gabriel, and Raphael. While Uriel approved of the plan and had faith in Yves, he didn't trust Gabriel's erratic inspirations, Eli's indulgent creativity, or Raphael's unrestricted search for knowledge. He feared that humanity's faith would be too easily tainted by selfishness or worse if not rigorously held to *pure* standards. So he created a group of Elohim specifically to monitor the faithful. Khalid was first among that group, assigned to watch over the first monotheists: the tribe of Abraham.

Khalid was intensely devoted to his job, and made it his business to understand the psychology of faith, the spiritual ramifications, and the mundane details of every Earthly religion he heard of. While he himself rarely left the Levant, he collected reports from his fellow Elohim of Purity, and other angels throughout the world. It was Khalid who first theorized a distinction between *divine* religions, which send Essence to Heaven, and pagan ones, which send Essence to ethereal spirits (see the *Game Master's Guide*, p. 66.) He also became very good at discerning true faith from worship motivated only by a desire for personal benefit. He was ruthless in purging diabolical and pagan influences wherever he found them, and utterly incorruptible in maintaining the integrity of those who served the Lord. Many of his peers observed that if he had been present during the Fall, he would surely have been among those angels who transformed into Malakim.

For centuries, Khalid watched over the Hebrews, God's chosen people. When they turned away from

Yahweh and resumed worshipping pagan gods – as they did frequently – Khalid was always there to help push them back toward the One True God . . . often using harsh, unforgiving means. He learned much about prophets, and he was the first to discover that Lucifer was creating false prophets (*Corporeal Player's Guide*, p. 68) to confuse mortals and angels alike. His impassive, meticulous analysis of religion added greatly to Heaven's understanding of faith. For this, and his hard work in keeping the Hebrews a God-fearing people, he was awarded the Word of Faith during the Exodus.



Had I the heavens' embroidered cloths,
Enwrought with golden and silver light,
The blue and the dim and the dark cloths
Of night and light and the half-light,
I would spread the cloths under your feet:
But I, being poor, have only my dreams;
I have spread my dreams under your feet;
Tread softly because you tread on my dreams.

— Yeats, *He Wishes for the Cloths of Heaven*

New to his Word, and still (by celestial standards) very young, the Angel of Faith really earned his reputation in 859 B.C., when he helped the Archangel of Stone trap Magog in a desert tomb in Egypt. Magog had been David's most powerful Servitor, the Kyriotate Angel of Fortitude, but he fell and was crowned the Prince of Cruelty by Lucifer (see *The Final Trumpet*, pp. 57-61). David asked for Khalid's assistance because no one knew the area better, and Khalid was already a respected warrior. Afterward, David praised Khalid for his tactical prowess and said he was "as virtuous as any King." That same night, Lucifer appeared before the Angel of Faith, and also praised him for being a worthy foe.

Khalid rose rapidly through Uriel's ranks after that, and became famous throughout Heaven. More than one angel speculated quietly that if the monotheism "experiment" worked out, Khalid might someday become an Archangel.

Khalid was completely neutral with regard to which religion was "correct"; he had the ability to recognize true faith, and wasn't concerned under what name that faith was embraced. When Gabriel announced the birth of Christ, Khalid presumed it was part of God's plan, under Yves' supervision, as the pact with Abraham had been. He watched the spread of Christianity impassively, noting its theological merits and its flaws.

In the 4th century A.D., however, Uriel and Dominic both declared their support for Christianity. This perturbed Khalid. He agreed that Christianity was a divine religion, but he had seen no evidence that it was superior to Zoroastrianism, Judaism, or even Buddhism or Hinduism, all of which also produced many Soldiers of God and Saints. He did not see why it should be elevated above all other faiths in the eyes of Heaven. Uriel became a zealot for the Church of Rome. Most of his Servitors converted, and those who didn't (like Khalid) found themselves falling out of favor. Khalid continued to serve faithfully, but felt a growing resentment, which he tried to suppress, for Laurence, recently Word-bound Angel of the Sword. The brilliant young Malakite was rising through Uriel's ranks even faster than Khalid had, and Khalid suspected his conversion to Christianity was an act of blind faith in Uriel, rather than Christ.

In the 7th century, Yves announced another attempt to introduce a divine religion to humanity. While the Seraphim Council was debating it, Gabriel went ahead and began dictating the Quran to the Prophet Muhammad. Dominic accused Gabriel of heresy, which led to Gabriel's self-imposed exile from Heaven. Uriel was deeply suspicious of this new religion, and ordered Khalid to study it, and determine whether it was truly divine.

The more Khalid studied the followers of Islam, the more impressed he became by their faithfulness.

Certainly, like any other religion, it quickly produced rival factions and cynical opportunists furthering their own interests in the name of God, but Khalid believed Muslims were, by and large, keeping the faith better than Jews or Christians had. It was clearly a divine religion, and as Khalid began studying the Quran, he became convinced that it *was* the inspired word of God, delivered to a true prophet by Archangel Gabriel. Islam was an obvious improvement upon earlier attempts at revealed religions (see box, p. 83), with a simplicity, clarity, and beauty that its predecessors had lost.

Of course, he knew that this was not what Uriel wanted to hear, so he delivered accurate but unembellished reports to his Superior while he continued studying the new religion. Then Uriel declared the Purity Crusade.

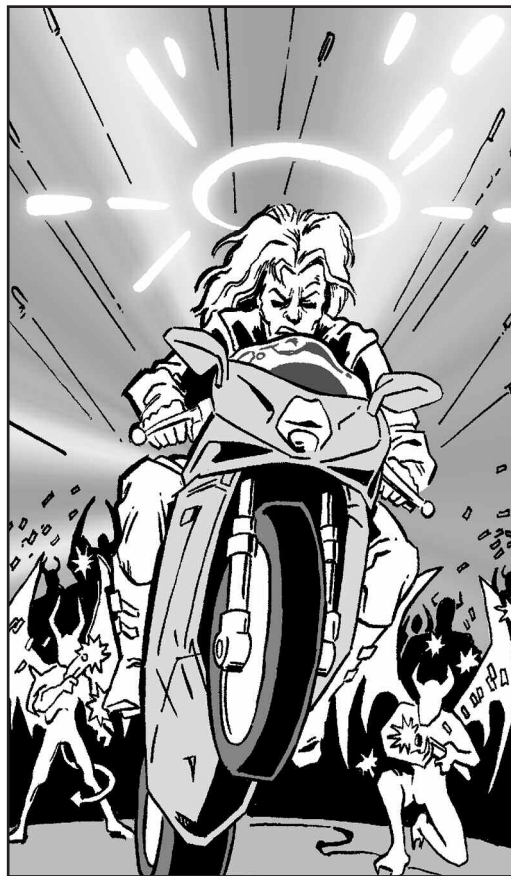
Ostensibly a campaign to purge the world of ethereal spirits and pagan religions, many angels feared that this was merely a warm-up for the brewing confrontation between the Christian and Muslim worlds. Khalid shared those fears, more deeply than most. When Uriel was recalled to the Higher Heavens in 745 A.D., Khalid was relieved, and certain this was a sign from God that Christianity had had its day. He was confident that *he* would be elevated to Archangel status and appointed as Uriel's replacement.

Instead, it was Laurence who received that honor. Khalid was stunned. The seed of pride that Lucifer had planted in him over a thousand years earlier had bloomed, and rather than accepting God's wisdom, Khalid became convinced that this was the result of Dominic's manipulation of the Seraphim Council. He withdrew from Heavenly affairs and spent all his time on Earth. For a time, he could have been considered an Outcast, as he had no Superior (though his Heart remained unbroken in Uriel's Cathedral).

Islam was expanding at an incredible rate, and Khalid's Word was growing with it. In 750 A.D., the Seraphim Council took notice of the vastly powerful, yet unaffiliated Angel of Faith. Following lengthy closed-door sessions, they politely requested Khalid's presence in the Council Spires,

and Khalid appeared. He was formally invested with the status of Archangel of Faith. Khalid politely thanked the Council for the honor, and then returned to Earth.

If the Council hoped that making Khalid an Archangel would bring him back into their confidence, they were disappointed. For the next 12 centuries, Khalid rarely left the Middle East. As he continued to promote Islam, he found himself increasingly isolated from the rest of Heaven. Laurence, General of the Host, promoted Christianity, and even those Archangels who didn't agree with Laurence and Dominic that Christianity was the best hope for mankind weren't inclined to promote Islam instead. This point was reinforced during the Crusades; while not everyone backed Laurence and his Christian knights, *nobody* sided with Khalid. Because Khalid was so



zealous in defending Muslim lands, and opposed any angels who did anything Khalid considered to be non-supportive of Islam, other Archangels sent fewer Servitors there, which led Khalid to feel even more embittered as the rest of Heaven “abandoned” the only truly faithful people on Earth.

By the 20th century, the Muslim world had become largely isolated, much like Khalid. Once a haven for science, intellectualism, high culture, and (relative) religious tolerance, all under the influence of a divine religion, while Europe went through its Dark Ages and the rest of the world was mostly pagan, the Middle East was now technologically backward and culturally frozen in the Middle Ages. Rapacious Western powers treated the Arabs like gullible heathens while taking their oil, and once Muslim countries gained independence, they reacted by doing their best to keep Western influences out.

The formation of Israel was what almost drove the final wedge between Khalid and the rest of Heaven. He felt that, once again, Muslims had been treated like commodities by the West. The fact that David and Michael, who were among the few Archangels whom Khalid respected, supported Israel, was a particularly bitter blow. He saw Dominic and Laurence behind this, and defensiveness turned to paranoia. His people, and the one True Faith, were under assault by both demons and his own fellow angels. The Islamic world *had* to prevail in this cultural jihad, or the light of Islam would be extinguished. The ruthlessness that had always marked Khalid’s character was now turned toward war. Believing himself to be in a fight for survival – not his own, but that of God’s word – the ends justified *any* means. He supported any movement that advanced the Muslim cause and harmed its enemies . . . even terrorists.

To the rest of Heaven, it was clear that Khalid had become unbalanced, but it was not clear what could be done about it. Even Dominic had little power to exert over the near-Outcast Archangel of Faith. By the events of *The Final Trumpet*, Khalid was on the edge. No longer sure even of his own faith, he allowed Malphas to talk him into helping release Magog from the tomb where Khalid and David had sealed the Prince of Cruelty thousands of years earlier.

In the official *In Nomine* universe, Khalid repented, and regained his faith and his objectivity. He is slowly repairing his relations with the rest of Heaven, and seeking to find a more balanced means of promoting Islam while not putting himself into conflict with the rest of Heaven and Earth.

That’s what happened in the official *In Nomine* universe, but it too easily could have gone differently (see pp. 72, 89) – which is why many Archangels still don’t entirely trust Khalid . . .

LEGENDS AND RUMORS

Moses and the Israelites

“We gave Moses the Scriptures, and knowledge of right and wrong, so that you might be rightly guided. Moses said to his people: ‘You have wronged yourselves, my people, in worshipping the calf. Turn in repentance to your Creator and slay the culprits among you.’”

– *al-Baqarab (The Chapter of the Cow), 2:53-54*

Khalid earned his Word during the Exodus. He had been watching the Hebrews for centuries, and he followed Moses for 40 years in the desert. It was Khalid who frequently visited punishments upon the Israelites for their lack of faith. Moses was one of the greatest of the prophets, and certainly influenced Khalid’s view of religion. The question is, who influenced whom more?

Supposedly, Khalid never revealed his presence to the Israelites. Either he remained invisible, or adopted a human Role. And Khalid would never admit to performing the miracles that Moses credited to God. Yet there were an awful lot of miracles associated with Moses, and they always came at the *most* opportune times.

Khalid says this was self-evidently God’s will, of course. Cynics have suggested that everything was engineered by Khalid, and that it was Khalid, not God, who spoke to Moses from the burning bush.

The most blasphemous rumor of all is that Moses *was* Khalid! (After all, suggest these conspiracy theorists, in over 40 years, you never saw Moses and Khalid together . . .) No angels take the notion seriously, but it’s a popular rumor with which demons taunt Khalid’s servants.

The Battle of Poitiers

In 732 A.D., a Muslim army led by Abd al-Rahman met a Frankish army led by Charles Martel at Poitiers, France. (There were actually two battles, the first one at Tours.) That battle, which the Muslims lost, was a historical turning point; it effectively stopped Islam’s westward expansion. Had the Franks been defeated, all of Europe might well have become part of the Muslim empire.

Khalid was present at Tours and Poitiers, merely as an observer, though by then he was already partial to Islam and hoping for a Muslim victory. Laurence, also a Word-bound Servitor of Uriel at that time, was present on the Frankish side, and urging a Christian victory.

To this day, Khalid maintains that Laurence actively intervened on the side of the Christians. There is a persistent rumor (which both refuse to confirm or deny) that the two Servitors of Purity actually fought a duel at Poitiers. It is certain that Khalid’s active hostility toward Laurence began at this time.

The Missing Years

From 745 A.D. to 750 A.D., Khalid was absent from celestial politics entirely. He remained the Angel of Faith and a Servitor of Purity, but since he had no Superior, he was technically an Outcast. He has never spoken about his activities during these years. His mysterious absence from Heaven has prompted much speculation . . .

The Tsayadim

Many angels of Purity refused to serve another Archangel after Uriel's recall. These Uriel loyalists, technically Outcasts, exist to this day, and are known as the Tsayadim.

Khalid has never had any formal ties to the Tsayadim, but during his "missing years" (above) he was in exactly the same situation as them. Many of the Tsayadim are his old comrades, many of them sharing his earlier disdain for Laurence, and he has given them covert aid from time to time.

It's been whispered that Khalid actually *founded* the Tsayadim, by rallying all the disgruntled Servitors of Uriel and convincing them to remain Outcasts faithful to the Word of Purity. Since after becoming an Archangel, it would serve Khalid better to bring them into his service, there are various explanations for why they remain Outcasts. Perhaps they are truly loyal to Uriel, and don't want to become angels of Faith. Perhaps there was a falling out between Khalid and the Tsayadim. Or perhaps Khalid has long-term plans for them . . .

Khalid's Ascension

Despite living as an Outcast and refusing to acknowledge Laurence's authority, Khalid was made an Archangel by the Seraphim Council in 750 A.D.; an unexpected decision, from a political perspective.

While it's commonly accepted that only the Seraphim Council (or God, as in Laurence's case) can make someone an Archangel, the exact process by which this is done is known only to other Archangels. Some angels believe that Khalid had *already* achieved Superior status, either on his own or by God's will, and that the Seraphim Council was merely bestowing formal recognition after the fact.

PERSONALITY AND OUTLOOK

Khalid has always combined exceptional intelligence and devotion with cold-blooded pragmatism. He is exactly the sort of ruthless and manipulative EloHITE, one who will suffer no qualms if his hands drip with the blood of innocents for the sake of the greater good, who makes other angels fear the Powers. Once Khalid determines

that something is an objective good, that good *must* be accomplished, no matter the cost and no matter one's personal feelings on the matter. As an angel of Purity, he obeyed his master even when he personally doubted Uriel's rightness. Like a good EloHITE, he followed orders, and participated guiltlessly in the slaughter of ethereals and their pagan followers.

At the same time, Khalid has never had any problems *expressing* his feelings, and in fact sometimes scared his fellow Servitors of Purity with his passionate displays of hatred for Diabolicals, pagans, and faithless humans. Khalid has always been a very militant EloHITE, one who feels very comfortable with Malakim, and they with him. But the fact that he served Uriel – who was even stricter than Dominic and would *surely* have noticed had one of his highest-ranking Servitors become dissonant – put Khalid above reproach.

After becoming an Archangel, Khalid became dissonant, probably beginning with the sacking of Baghdad by the Mongols in 1258 A.D. The destruction of the Abbasid Caliphate marked an end to the golden age of Islam, though it was now dispersed throughout the world and no longer an *Arab* religion. It became more difficult to view Islam as a single, divine faith. Multiculturalism brought multiple perspectives, and worldliness brought sectarianism, corruption, and stagnation. Rather than recognizing that Islam could change, like any other religion, and adapting, Khalid clung to what Islam *should* be, not what it was.

That began his long slide into fanaticism that climaxed in *The Final Trumpet*. While he was on the verge of Falling, Khalid rationalized the most abhorrent actions, supported even corrupt Muslim countries in favor of non-Muslim ones, and used terrorists to achieve his aims.

Since his redemption, Khalid has stopped dividing the world into Faithful Muslims and *everyone else*. However, he still regards Islam as the most perfect religion, for angels and for humans, and while he'll accept non-Muslim faithful as friends and allies, his inner circle is made up exclusively of those who share the True Faith. And he is still willing to kill innocents to achieve his aims – but he no longer identifies his aims as exclusively Muslim.

Priorities

Khalid wants every human being to have faith. Faith in God through submission to His Word, as revealed to the Prophet Muhammad in the Holy Quran, is best, and so his angels continue to promote Islam and seek converts. Faith in other revealed religions (such as Christianity and Judaism) is second best, while faith in another divine religion, or *some* unselfish cause, is better than nothing. For

those devoid of faith, a tiny seed may grow into a willingness to submit to God.

Besides expanding his Word, and Islam in particular, Khalid has now set about trying to reform religion – and Islam in particular. Most of his Servitors are still active in the Muslim world, where they have now been tasked with reducing friction between Muslims and other people, and very carefully encouraging modernization *without* surrendering to the forces of secular materialism and other Western values.

Angels of Faith dwelling in non-Muslim lands spend much of their time supporting Muslims, but some also work with Christians, Jews, and other faiths. They bolster the faith of all worthy souls, and make “improvements” when they can. They are particularly zealous about rooting out diabolical infiltrators and exposing charlatans.

Views on God

For Khalid, God is the final, absolute authority in all things. His word is absolute, His will is not to be questioned. Though everything happens as God wills it, this does not absolve the faithful of their obligation to serve and obey Him . . . and most of all, have faith in Him. Khalid *knows*, with a strength of conviction beyond faith, that God will set the universe to right in the end.

Views on the War

While Khalid remains militant, and as merciless toward Diabolicals and ethereals as he was while a Servitor of Uriel, he does so out of duty to God, not because he feels such zeal is really *necessary*. Everything is preordained, after all; Lucifer cannot possibly prevail. To Khalid, the entire War can only be a pointless exercise from the demons’ point of view. From his own point of view, it is an opportunity for the faithful to commend themselves, and for God to demonstrate His righteousness, glory, and mercy.

Khalid can be a little infuriating to his fellow Archangels because of this attitude. He fights diligently and effectively, but does not act like Heavenly strategies are really important. He still does not consider himself to have hurt the War effort while he was effectively isolated from the Host, since God will clearly prevail with or without Khalid’s support. If God wills the War to be won while Laurence is General of the Host, so shall it be. If not . . . God will choose someone else.

Khalid has no desire to hasten the Final Trumpet; Armageddon will come when God wills it, and not a moment before or after. But when that trumpet does blow, Khalid and his Servitors will be on the front lines.

REVEALED RELIGIONS

Theologically, a “revealed religion” is one believed to have been given directly to mankind through divine revelation, usually using prophets as intermediaries. Judaism, Christianity, and Islam are the most notable examples. Some other religions (such as Zoroastrianism, Sikhism, and Baha’i) also claim to be divinely inspired. Paganism, and Eastern religions such as Hinduism, Buddhism, and Taoism do not fall into this category. While some of these religions do include “truths” considered to have been obtained through communication with gods, most of their beliefs are considered discovered, rather than revealed.

Because Khalid equates faith with divine inspiration, he regards *only* revealed religions as worthy of Heavenly support, though he will tolerate other divine religions as a bulwark against Hell.

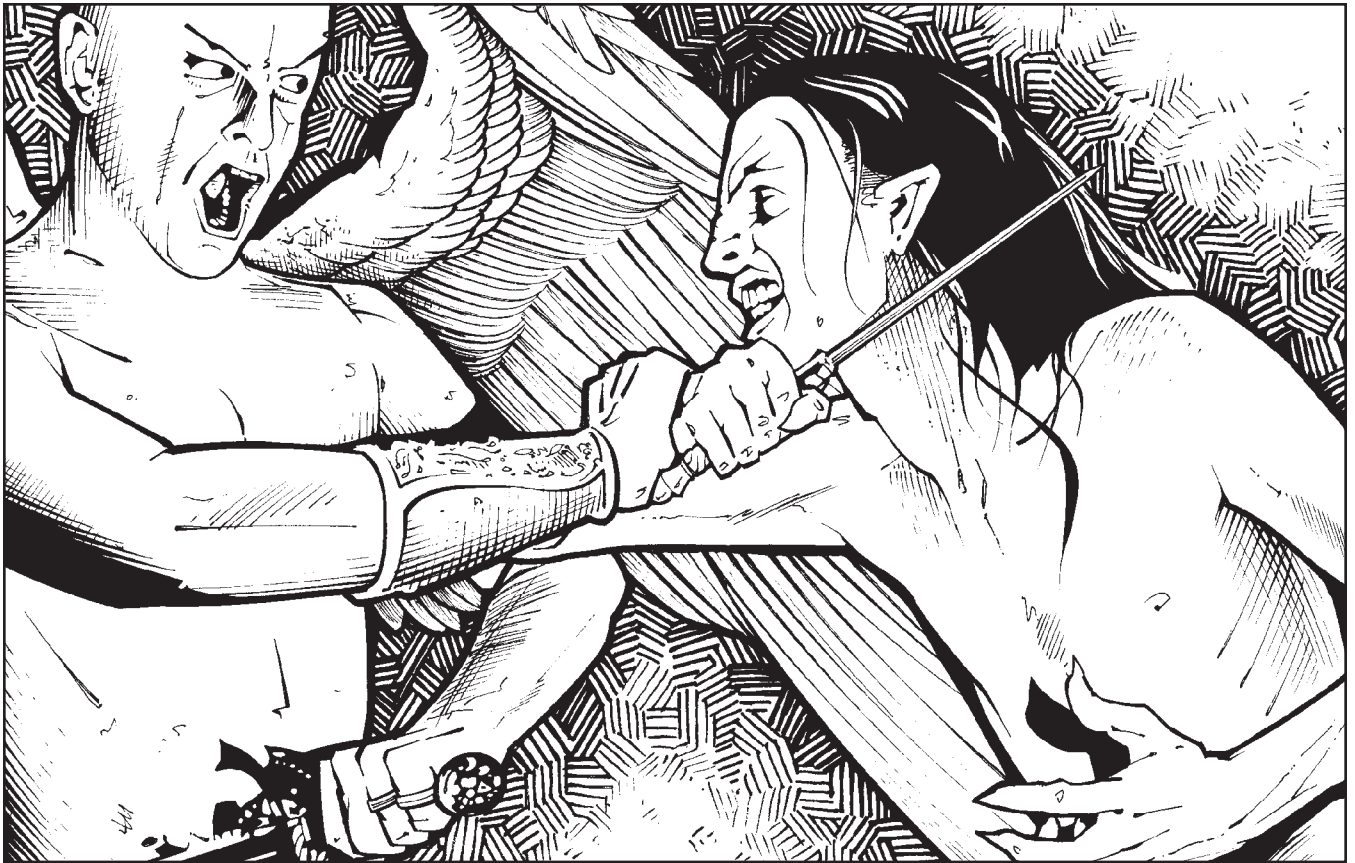
Khalid and Islam

Khalid is most certainly a Muslim, and believes that Gabriel was receiving authentic divine revelations when he dictated the Quran to Muhammad. He believes that the Quran is the literal word of God. He does not take a position on doctrinaire issues, however. He carefully considers his strategies, and the needs of justice, ensures that nothing he does is contrary to what is commanded in the Quran, and then makes his final decisions on faith.

Thus, Khalid can take a shockingly casual attitude toward theological questions that perplex mortals and have divided Muslims. Islam is a religion for *all* people, and while Khalid feels most comfortable among Arabs, he does not need to follow the practices of the Sunnis or the Shiites or any other Muslim tradition to remain lawfully submissive to God.

He often follows those traditions, and because many of his human servants are Arabs, he usually adopts the guise and manners of an Arab, but the Quran does not prescribe many of the Middle Eastern cultural practices associated with Islam, and so Khalid does not feel bound by them. By the same token, many of God’s instructions to Muhammad (such as the prohibition against shaving) are understood to have been rules for *mortals*. While issues of faith and morality apply equally to celestials and mankind, dietary laws and cultural practices are not binding on angels . . . though it’s a good idea for an angel in corporeal form to follow Muslim practices so as to set an example.

(For more information on Islam in *In Nomine*, see the *Game Master’s Guide*, pp. 74-78.)



POLITICS

Khalid has been a virtual outsider for much of the last thousand years. While he did occasionally communicate with other Archangels, he rarely acted in concert with them. He concerned himself with the Muslim world, and most of the rest of the Host allowed him to take over that responsibility. As he became increasingly edgy and dogmatic, other angels had less and less to do with him, until Khalid was widely regarded as a loose cannon, better left alone.

Now that he has been pulled back from the brink, Khalid has reappeared in celestial councils. He is, for now, quiet and humble, and has not thrown himself back into Heavenly politics with his old fervor, but he has become more active, which means his peers are taking more notice of him.

Laurence

The animosity between these former Servitors of Purity was never mutual; Laurence disagreed with Khalid's religious views, but never questioned his former comrade's sincerity or virtue. If they *did* fight at Poitiers (p. 81), it's a feud that Laurence had long since put behind him.

Khalid, however, had disliked the Angel of the Sword since the young Malakite first began climbing the ranks in Uriel's service, and his resentment festered when Laurence took the position that Khalid felt should be his, General of the Host.

Khalid used to voice support for Laurence, and require his Servitors to help Laurence's at any opportunity (and loudly trumpet any such assistance), while quietly disdaining the patron Archangel of the Christian faith. Now that Khalid has seen the error of his ways, he is more genuinely cooperative with Laurence, and has even begun letting Laurence request assistance for military operations in the Middle East and Southeast Asia. Khalid no longer denigrates Laurence's Catholicism – although he still maintains that Islam is the superior faith, Khalid seems to have accepted Laurence's right to command the forces of Heaven.

Gabriel

To Khalid, Gabriel holds a status in the celestial realm similar to that of Muhammad on Earth; she is God's divine messenger. Moreover, she is *essential* to bringing true faith to mankind, for she inspires humans in their darkest hours, and brings the light of God to those who

would never have found it otherwise. Her passion and inspiration was indispensable in promulgating Christianity and Islam alike. Since taking a long, hard look at the religion he's been supporting, Khalid has realized that Gabriel's exile and instability has meant that she is no longer kindling the fires of religious fervor in the hearts of men. He attributes much of Islam's stagnation (and the corruption and secularization of Christianity) to a lack of divine Fire.

Khalid does not blame Gabriel for her madness and abdication; he blames Dominic (see below). He would dearly love to help the Archangel of Fire regain her senses, and persuade her to turn her attention once again to matters of religious faith.

Khalid has been quietly talking to Gabriel's Chamberlain, Soldekai (p. 57), and requesting help from some of Gabriel's Servitors. If the Archangel herself is no longer supporting Islam, some of her angels will, and they are happy to find another Archangel who will lend unqualified support to their maligned, beloved mistress. (See *Faith and Inspiration*, p. 99.)

Khalid also continues to use male pronouns when referring to Gabriel, and while he hasn't forbidden his Servitors to acknowledge her current feminine predilections, he grows noticeably colder when they do. Since he doesn't seem to have a problem with other "feminine" Archangels, some think he regards Gabriel's female manifestations as indicative of her induced madness, while others think he secretly does disdain all angels (including Archangels) who take on a female guise.

Dominic

Once, Khalid had nothing but respect for the Archangel of Judgment, but Dominic's pro-Christian bias tainted him, in Khalid's eyes. He attributes Laurence's ascension and Gabriel's exile to Dominic's manipulations. Dominic, ironically enough, has come to respect Islam, but until he stops persecuting the Archangel who brought the Message to Muhammad, Khalid will never trust Dominic. He considers Judgment to be blind and suspects Dominic to be almost devoid of faith.

Dominic, for his part, regarded Khalid as dangerous, nearly Outcast, and very close to being heretical. Because he had so little leverage over the Archangel of Faith, Dominic could only watch Khalid and hope to contain his Servitors if he got out of control. Now that Khalid has overcome his dissonance and begun cooperating with the Seraphim Council again, Dominic is cautiously optimistic . . . but he certainly won't stop watching the Archangel of Faith any time soon.

Yves

Yves is a mystery to Khalid. The Archangel of Destiny had a hand in promoting all three Abrahamic faiths, and has in his Library a perfect, celestial version of the Quran which he gave to Gabriel. Yves could only have been acting as an instrument of God. Yet he's done nothing to promote religion ever since. Khalid regards this as a sign that the faithful must flourish or falter on their own. Khalid originally considered Yves a perfect example of submission to God: the ideal Muslim, absent any theology or dogma. But now he suspects that Yves may be something more – perhaps the only truly free-willed being in the Symphony. Khalid keeps both his theory and its implications to himself.

The Others

Khalid is definitely in Heaven's militant camp, even after his redemption. He does not believe any quarter should be shown to the Enemy, since they have already made the choice not to serve God, and the faithful must be protected from Diabolicals at all costs. He has a brilliant tactical mind and is ready to work with other Archangels to press the battle against Hell.

Khalid doesn't really know the other Archangels very well, and they don't know him. He is polite with all, and will show them the utmost hospitality if they call on him, but the new, post-*Final Trumpet* Khalid is practically a newcomer to celestial politics, and so everyone is a bit wary.

Archangelic Opinions

While Khalid is not speaking openly for the time being, he still maintains firm opinions about his peers, and they about him.

Blandine: Without faith, how can there be hope? When he attends to the broader aspects of his Word, he makes my job easier. When he turns narrow-minded and reactionary, he creates more nightmares than dreams. (*Messenger of hope and harbinger of prophecy, she safeguards an important realm. If she could be persuaded of the rightness of the True Faith, how effective her angels would be at bringing mankind into submission!*)

David: A valiant warrior; strong, indomitable, brilliant. He terrifies demons, and he unites people in submission to God. Uriel chose well. I hope he will not retreat into the desert again; we need more like him. (*David does not question. He does not doubt. He knows the will of God, and he obeys. His strength is the strength of the Lord. Obey the Lord as David does, and you shall also be strong.*)



Dominic: Once I thought him incorruptible, but he let himself be swayed by Gabriel's unreliable prophecies, and he almost Fell. I am of course glad to see him back in the Heavenly fold, but he still clings to one particular faith, and forces me to worry what will happen if he has to choose between Islam and Heaven. I still have my doubts about him. *(If he had faith, judgment would not be difficult. He does not trust anyone, even God, and so he will always be alone, always doubting, always blind to the revelations God has offered him. Dominic does not serve God. How little he thinks of the final judgment awaiting him!)*

Eli: Khalid . . . really intense, and he's deep, y'know? I haven't talked to him in a long time, but we used to have the best conversations. I heard he got a little too wrapped up in the whole religion thing, but I'm sure he'll get his head straightened out. *(If there is anyone whom I would dare to envy, it is Eli, who has truly touched the face of God. To be so intimately tasked with the job of Creation must be both a joy and a terrible burden.)*

Gabriel: Faith is the hottest fire of the soul. Some are consumed by it, others are candles, shedding light and passing the flame to others. Khalid burns, so very brightly. *(Fibril – God's peace be upon him – is the most holy messenger of God, a prophet to men and angels. I might wish his actions and demeanor be other than what they are, but one who burns with divine inspiration is answerable only to the Answerer.)*

Janus: After Uriel was recalled, Khalid blew off the status quo, and in the Middle Ages, Islam was the most dynamic movement going. Then they both became entrenched and stagnant. I'm sure glad to see Khalid clear-headed again, and it wouldn't bother me any to see him put a burr under Laurence's saddle. *(The Quran says: 'God sends forth the winds which set the clouds in motion. We drive them onto some dead land and give fresh life to the soil after it has died.' Janus personifies the blessings of the Lord, and he brings renewal. But sometimes he acts on his own initiative, forgetting he is but an instrument of God. And his Servitors seem much-influenced by Western pop-culture and over-full of pride.)*

Jean: Khalid personifies a field where I have no influence and little understanding. I'm not saying faith is unimportant, but I deal with tangible realities and potentialities. As an anachronism, he was an embarrassment, frankly. If he keeps his priorities straight, his perspective is important in the Seraphim Council. *(The Quran says: 'It is He who makes the lightning flash upon you, inspiring you with fear and hope.' This is Jean's role. Like Janus, he is a primal tool for bestowing God's blessings, or executing His wrath. Jean's work is*



praiseworthy, but sometimes he should "look outside the box." Scientism is a hair's breadth from secularism.)

Jordi: Animals don't need faith. Only humans need to be given a set of beliefs for them to act properly. Khalid does a necessary job, I suppose. *(Animals are also part of God's creation, and the Quran enjoins us to treat them as such. Jordi has been given an important task, but he and his servants are not part of my work.)*

Laurence: We are brothers in arms. We share a common bond, despite differences in strategy, and even religion. Khalid served Purity, like me, and he will not Fall. *(One could not ask for a more virtuous leader, and Laurence is a fine commander. I know God has done and will do what is right. I regret my folly in doubting Him, and Laurence.)*

Marc: There are a lot of good ideas in the Quran, and for a while, the Muslims had the most advanced social and economic infrastructure in the world. But I don't think much of that can be credited to Khalid. By the same token, I don't think he can be blamed for the fact that the Muslim world has become a backwater. Now that he's no longer ranting and railing against the West, perhaps he will help me connect the Middle East to the rest of the world, and that will increase prosperity for everyone. *(He seems very much the face of Western materialism, yet I know his Word goes deeper than that. I am sure Heaven can do better than capitalism. We should talk, and see if there can be common ground between the industrialized West and Islamic socialist values.)*

Michael: Khalid's tale is a cautionary one. Religion is a good thing, but it's not the only thing, or the most important thing. Now that he's begun to realize that, I'd like to see all his Servitors who are so good at putting the fear of God into people applying more of their zeal against demons. *(Most honored of God's angels, Michael (God's peace be upon him) stands above us all as a symbol of God's majesty. He is above reproach, he smites the evildoers, and the unbelievers will cry out 'God, spare us! Mika'il, spare us!' on Judgment Day.)*

Novalis: Islam was supposed to be the religion of peace, but I was never comfortable with a Servitor of Uriel championing it. Khalid has a lot of blood on his hands, and much to atone for. Still, love brought him back to Heaven, so I will welcome him as my brother. *(Do not mistake softness for weakness. I do not agree with Novalis' views, but she has such faith as puts her fellow Archangels to shame. Since I cannot sway her, I accept her as she is and hope we do not interfere with one another.)*

Yves: Khalid has stared into the abyss, and come back a better person. He's a walking parable, and one I hope won't soon be forgotten. *(Some mysteries, God does not choose to reveal to us. I respect Yves, but I cannot understand him, so I do not try. It is enough to know that he has the Book.)*

Princely Opinions

Most Princes have had few dealings with Khalid's Servitors, and know him only by reputation.

Andrealphus: Oh *yes*, all that *passion*, that burning *desire*, bottled up inside an Elohite, begging for release, just waiting to explode. He was so close to becoming a Habbalite, he just needed that little something *extra* to push him over the edge . . . I could do it. I know I could. Religiosity is just subordinated lust. (*The Quran says: 'Do not come near zina,' which is sexual impropriety. Sex is not forbidden; indeed, God has commanded that men not deny themselves lawful pleasures. But you have only to look at the West to see how insidious and destructive are the ways of Lust.*)

Asmodeus: Islamic jurisprudence has always been one of my favorite fields. Khalid deludes himself that he can separate faith from dogma. People choose what to believe in, and they make rules to help them believe, and then faith becomes just another game. (*Lucifer's most faithless servant. Small wonder his methods and Dominic's are so alike.*)

Baal: Khalid would make a formidable foe, but fortunately he's been all but neutralized by his Word. He is an entertaining foil for Laurence, and could be a strategic asset if properly handled. (*In the early days, Baal was my primary adversary, as I worked to abolish the cults he founded. Though his worshippers are gone, the serpent is as deadly as ever.*)

Beleth: Faith in the unprovable leads easily to fear of the unseen. And what Khalid fears most is *losing* his faith. His Word is his weakness. (*Oh Beleth, poor wretched creature and least of Lucifer's minions! Your lack of faith makes you an empty shell, your fears are phantoms to test mankind. Don't you realize that you are but an instrument of the Lord, regardless of whom you proclaim to serve?*)

Belial: He used to be all that and a truck bomb . . . now he's just a raghead preacher. But he's got a lot of followers who still want to set the world on fire, even if he doesn't anymore. (*Belial also had worshippers across the Holy Land, but I saw them all put to the sword. Would that I could do the same to him, for his evil works cause untold suffering to Gabriel (peace be upon him).*)

Haagenti: Faith? Can you taste it? Touch it? Smell it? Eat it? Then what good is it? (*Pathetic creature. Only one of the dregs of Hell who has never even seen Heaven could be content with such a debased Word on which to build a Principality.*)

Kobal: Faith is a con, and Khalid is a huckster. Why is it every time Heaven teaches humanity another "correct" path to salvation, Archangels start feuding, crusading, and going nuts? Good thing for God that humans can't see how clueless His divine servants are. Hey, stop me if you've heard this one: A wop, a kike, and a camel

jockey go to Hell . . ." (*The Quran says: 'The evil-doers mock the faithful and wink at one another as they pass by them.' So has it always been, but God makes men laugh and weep, not any angel or demon. Kobal's evil is petty and preordained.*)

Kronos: Heaven would like to believe that Khalid has escaped his fate. I wonder if Khalid has as much faith? (*Kronos leads men to despair, but he deludes himself that he is responsible for consigning them to Hell. God already knows who will be saved and who will not. Kronos is nothing.*)

Lilith: He says he won't deal with me, but I've seen what he needs. I think if the stakes were high enough – if he thought his precious religion to be really on the brink – he'd deal with the Devil himself. Hell, he's already dealt with *Malphas*. Now Khalid is oh so sorry and no doubt convinced he'd never do it again. Oh yes, he will. (*Freedom – the very fact that it is a diabolical Word should tell you its true nature. How bitterly Lilith seeks to enslave others, pretending that she is free. From the moment God created her, Lilith has been His creature, as we all are.*)

Malphas: Of all the Archangels, Khalid is probably my favorite. Rarely does an angel do so much to spread my Word. Faith is a weakness I've exploited time and again, and I *adore* religion. (*God rebukes those who split their religion into sects, for factions indeed weaken all faiths. But true Islam is only submission to God. Those who submit to God are Muslims. If they have truly submitted, Malphas has no power to mislead them.*)

Nybbas: Khalid says Islam is the religion of peace. I say Islam is the religion of bloodthirsty, medieval towel-heads. A picture of a smoking Marine barracks is worth a thousand words from the Quran. Religion is a product, and I'm the one who packages it. (*There is hardly an image broadcast anywhere in the West that doesn't have Nybbas' stamp upon it. Is cable TV and satellite news worth letting the Media define society's values?*)

Saminga: Faith is an empty hope, compared to the certainty of Death. I'd consider all beliefs useless, except that people are so willing to kill over them. (*This grotesque monster rules soulless husks; does he really think that makes him powerful? When Judgment Day comes, he will cry at the abject poverty of his domain.*)

Valefor: Stealing faith is a trick that requires a little more work than your typical smash-and-grab, but it's more satisfying to take something that can rarely be replaced. Oh, and if you want to twist the knife in one of Khalid's angels, tell 'em I think Palestine belongs to Israel. (*The Quran says that anyone who steals will bring with him that which he has stolen on the Day of Resurrection, and all will be returned to those who were robbed. Thus, Valefor acquires nothing; he merely adds to the burden he shall bear on that Day.*)



Vapula: I wouldn't give that bloody ignorant fanatic the time of day. He pretends to serve God while trying to keep mankind in the Dark Ages. (*Godless technology is not progress, it is a diabolical tool. Placing your faith in new devices is what Vapula counts on. I am not against science, but which is better: to serve God without science, or to serve science without God?*)

Humans and Others

“And when We said to the angels: ‘Prostrate yourselves before Adam,’ they prostrated themselves except Satan, who in his pride refused and became an unbeliever.”

– *al-Baqarah (The Chapter of the Cow), 2:34*

Khalid believes that God created man as a superior being. Though angels are more virtuous, wiser, and mightier than humans, mankind was created in His image. Humans possess the special quality of *faith* . . . a stronger faith than any angel can know, because humans do not hear the Symphony and do not *know* God, as angels do. Human faith creates Tethers and sustains divine Words. (And infernal Words too, but that is because humans, like angels, are corruptible.)

As far as Khalid is concerned, angels exist to *serve* humanity. God has appointed a Day of Resurrection when believers shall be saved, and angels are to work with that day ever in sight. He promotes religion more vigorously than he fights the War. Some Archangels claim he is thus putting his Word above the interests of Heaven, but Khalid believes he is putting emphasis on what God has said is truly important. Celestials cannot really affect the outcome of the War, but they can sanctify His name by exalting mankind and catering to the faithful.

Here is what Khalid thinks of those humans who are active participants in the War.

Soldiers of God: The Quran says that those who die in the cause of God will be rewarded by Him in the hereafter. Those who serve God need fear nothing. Treat them as equals; nay, more than equals. Remember that God commanded us to prostrate ourselves before Adam. I will not abide a faithful human being treated as a servant.

Soldiers of Hell: The Quran says: “Those who barter away their faith for unbelief will in no way harm God. A woeful punishment awaits them.” We need not concern

ourselves with the Hellsworn, except when they oppose us. Their fate is already sealed.

Pagans: Pagans are no better than unbelievers. They know not that God is supreme, and some of them have worshipped Demon Princes as gods. Treat them as Hellsworn.

Sorcerers: God has forbidden the practice of sorcery, including fortune-telling and astrology. Those who sell their souls for knowledge will not profit thereby. They too are lost.

Saints: These most blessed of souls have received the reward God promised. Some continue to help the faithful. I command my Servitors to aid God's Saints whenever possible, and remember that they are higher than we.

Ethereals: To call them "pagan gods" is blasphemous; God is God, there is no other god. They are soulless spirits with the power to tempt and mislead men, but on Judgment Day, they will cease to exist. In the meantime, suffer them not.

VARIATIONS ON A THEME

However you portray Khalid, religious fervor is his most essential characteristic. He is *not* objective about religion – he is a Muslim. He is also very open about his beliefs, and passionate about expressing them. This has the potential to create friction between his Word and his EloHITE nature. He can be safely biased as long as he sincerely believes he is following the most divine course, but when he lacks faith that this is the case, a vicious, dissonant circle begins.

In the official *In Nomine* universe, Khalid was once a fanatical, fundamentalist Muslim who is now becoming more moderate, but he can play other roles in your campaign.

Peace Be Upon You

A devout Muslim doesn't have to be a harsh and uncompromising zealot. If you want to portray Khalid (and Islam) more sympathetically, let him emphasize the peaceful aspects of Islam. Perhaps Muhammad's peaceful message caused a change of heart in the former Servitor of Purity, and Khalid became an advocate for Islam because he saw its potential to bring peace and justice to the world. His disdain for Laurence might have stemmed from the Archangel of the Sword's militant nature. A more peaceful Archangel of Faith would have more in common



"The behavior of angels puzzles me. I have met some who don't seem to care about religion; believers and unbelievers are the same to them. They care only about fighting demons. But Archangel Khalid reassures us that our belief is not in vain."

– Yusef ibn-Daud al-Din, Soldier of Faith

with Sufi mystics than Shiite fundamentalists, and would be more likely to count Novalis among his allies than David or Michael. Eliminate his *Wrath of God* and *Jihad* attunements (pp. 75-76), and all Rites that involve killing people.

Guardian of All Faiths

As the Archangel of Faith, Khalid needn't be partial to Islam at all. Perhaps he regards Islam as only one of many worthy religions. He might still be a violent fanatic, encouraging reactionary fundamentalism in all faiths (better they make a few mistakes than allow diabolical corruption in), or he might seek to bring all faiths together in a truly divine religion. Any Islam-specific Rites and attunements should be modified to apply to any religion.

Archangel on Jihad

If you want to use Khalid as a villain, or just keep him as one of the most unsympathetic Archangels, assume the events of *The Final Trumpet* didn't happen, and he remains a fanatical Muslim; use his original Rites and attunements described in parentheses (see pp. 76-77). Alternatively, perhaps he's not quite so unbalanced, but he *is* still a militant Muslim with little tolerance for other beliefs. This version, if not dissonant and cruising for a Fall, would work better if you change Khalid's Choir to Malakite.

Demon Prince of Fanaticism

The most extreme variation on the Archangel of Faith is to let him Fall. In this case, he becomes the Habbalite Prince of Fanaticism, as described in *The Final Trumpet*, pp. 101-103.

*Muhammad smashed our idols
and persecuted our followers,
but the Kaabah wasn't always a
divine Tether, no matter how
much Khalid would like to pretend
otherwise. Allah was our father;
now he pretends he was never one
of us.*

– al-Lat, Goddess of the Sun

KHALID'S MOSQUE

Khalid's Heavenly Cathedral is a grand mosque in the Eternal City, just opposite the Halls of Worship, and conspicuously out of sight of Laurence's Church of the Sword. It is a larger, more perfect version of the *Masjid* (Holy Mosque) in Mecca that contains the Kaabah (p. 92). Like the *Masjid*, Khalid's Mosque has an enormous open courtyard in its center. Muslim Saints and other holy men can be found here and in numerous courtyards and gardens leading away from the center square. Great scholars like Abu Hamid al-Ghazali and Jalad al-Dun Rumi can be found conversing with religious leaders and other Saints, like the Sufi mystic Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani. The Hearts of Khalid's angels sit in dusty recesses along the perimeter. Angels are comparably rare here, as most

of Khalid's Servitors stay on Earth with him, and few other angels are Muslims. Of course not all the blessed souls (or angels) in the Mosque are Muslims; all are welcome. But non-Muslims usually prefer the subjectivity of the Halls of Worship, which are more amenable to the perspectives of other faiths.

Impossibly tall minarets rise from the Mosque above the streets of the Eternal City. From those lofty towers, Servitors of Faith lead calls to prayer five times a day. All Muslim souls in Heaven, wherever they may be, can hear these calls, and prostrate themselves for the *salat*. Though the Eternal City is considered analogous to the Earthly Jerusalem, blessed Muslims have traditionally regarded Khalid's Cathedral as corresponding to the Kaabah in Mecca. Thus, they pray in the direction of his Mosque (or in the general direction of the Eternal City if they are elsewhere in Heaven). Given that Jerusalem is also holy to Muslims, and there isn't really much correspondence between Earthly geography and Heavenly locations, it seems an adequate compromise.

Khalid built his Mosque shortly after becoming an Archangel, but he never took up residence here. In fact, his visits to his Cathedral have been very rare for the last 1200 years, and as he edged closer to Falling, those few Servitors stationed in his Mosque despaired of ever seeing him again. Since mending his soul, Khalid has returned to his Cathedral several times, to express his appreciation to those loyal angels who had faith in him, and to encourage other angels and blessed souls throughout Heaven to visit the Mosque and hear the True Faith in the divine tongue. But he still spends most of his time on Earth, so those hoping for an audience with Khalid are better off seeking him on the corporeal plane.

ANGELS AND THE FAITHFUL

Angels of Faith have something of a dilemma dealing with Soldiers, since they cannot reveal their true natures, even to those who already *know* about the War. Nor are they allowed to bestow artifacts or other supernatural gifts upon any mortal. This means first of all that most Soldiers of Faith are recruited by other Soldiers (often after an angel of Faith has identified a potential candidate), or sometimes by Servitors of other Archangels. Secondly, it means that an angel of Faith can never actually *admit* to being an angel, nor can he do anything in a mortal's presence that will prove he is one.

Thus, while a Servitor of Khalid may work with mortals, he must always do so as a fellow servant of God, never as an angel. Soldiers of Faith who are

aware of the restrictions placed upon their angelic allies have learned to quietly accept the unusually capable individuals who sometimes appear among them, without asking questions. They will even politely avert their eyes when asked, and not speculate about any disturbances they hear. (Naturally, both angels and Soldiers have developed subtle methods of confirming that the mysterious stranger isn't a diabolical infiltrator . . .)

Soldiers in service to other Archangels are not always as tactful, and blunt questions like "Are you an angel? What Choir? Can you tell me what Songs you know?" will earn a silent rebuke. The angel will usually leave if pressed.

TETHERS

The great majority of Tethers to Faith are located in the Middle East, with a few scattered in Asia and Africa. There are no more than a handful elsewhere, as Khalid simply has not bothered to secure any potential Tethers not connected to *Islamic* sites. His selectivity has resulted in fewer Tethers than most other Superiors possess, but those he holds tend to be very powerful, and guarded with fanatical determination. This makes him perhaps the most powerful Archangel within his chosen sphere of influence, but gives his Servitors few resources when they venture into the West. Since broadening his perspective, Khalid has shown more willingness to consecrate Tethers to Faith inspired by non-Muslims, and many of his servants are urging him to pursue a more aggressive strategy to obtain Tethers outside the Muslim world.

Besides the Kaabah (p. 92), Khalid's next two most powerful Tethers are Muhammad's mosque and burial place in the city of Medina (the second holiest place in Islam), and the site of the Battle of Karbala (in Iraq) between Sunni and Shiite Muslims in 680 A.D., which resulted in the martyrdom of Muhammad's grandson Hussein ibn-Ali, making it among the holiest places for Shiites. Most of Khalid's other Tethers are either famous mosques, or the shrines of Muslim saints. He is notably lacking any Tethers in Jerusalem, a fact which causes him much anguish, and which many angels interpreted as an indictment against him. One of Khalid's long-term ambitions is to break Malphas' hold on Temple Mount (*Liber Castellorum*, p. 103), and rededicate the Dome of the Rock and the Western Wall as Tethers to Faith.

SERVITORS OF KHALID THE FAITHFUL

Angels of Faith share with Servitors of Fire and Stone a reputation for being fanatically devoted to their Archangel. While his degeneration caused some of his servants to lose faith in him (resulting in many Outcasts, and a few Fallen angels), those who did not have been rewarded for sticking by him for all these centuries. Khalid doesn't have as many Servitors as the other major Archangels, but they are older and more powerful, on average. Khalid has created very few new angels in recent years. Thus, one will find a higher proportion of angels of Faith with Distinctions and extra Rites and attunements than in the service of most other Words. In Heaven, Khalid's servants have a reputation for being old, wise, and bad people to mess with. His younger Servitors strive to live up to this reputation, and tend to be as serious as Dominicans and as militant as any angel of the Sword.

The majority of Khalid's Servitors dwell in the Muslim world (which includes not just the Middle East and North Africa, but Pakistan, Indonesia, Malaysia, parts of India, and some other regions of Southeast Asia). Most of Khalid's Servitors have male vessels, and all take male (or gender-neutral) celestial names. The Quran condemns giving female names to angels; as Islam took hold in Arabia, some pagans tried to preserve their goddesses by calling them angels. This gives Khalid's following a decidedly patriarchal image. However, angels of Faith can assume female vessels and Roles when necessary, though

they usually won't present themselves to Muslims as angels in this form.

Fluency in Arabic is a virtual requirement for Khalid's Servitors, since Arabic is the language of the Quran. All are well-versed in Islam, and often other religions as well (regardless of their opinions of them). Angels of Faith are less likely to use Songs than many other angels, since Khalid emphasizes *subtle* miracles.

ORGANIZATION

In Islam, everyone is equal before God. Khalid accepts the title of Archangel, but disdains the word "Superior." He commands his Servitors in God's name; when they serve him, they do so in recognition that he is simply a humble servant of God, whom the Lord has seen fit to elevate to a position of authority. He is not better than them, only mightier and – perhaps – wiser.

By the same token, Khalid has little use for such things as rank. He awards Distinctions in recognition of good and faithful service, and angels who have earned Distinctions should be respected and confided in. However, Khalid appoints angels to whatever position they are most suitable for at any given time. It's even possible for an angel to be put in the position of receiving instructions from another angel with a lesser (or no) Distinction.



SAMPLE TETHER: THE KAABAH

“Many a time have We seen you turn your face towards Heaven. We will make you turn towards a qiblah that will please you. Turn your face towards the Holy Mosque; wherever you be, turn your faces towards it.”

– *al-Baqarah (The Chapter of the Cow), 2:144*

According to the Quran, God gave Muslims a *qiblah*, or direction in which to pray (and bury the dead), because they argued so much over which signs in the heavens indicated the proper manner and direction for prayers. Jerusalem was the first *qiblah* assigned by Muhammad, but he later said that God had changed it to the Kaabah, located in the Holy Mosque in Mecca (near the west coast of modern Saudi Arabia).

Around the world, hundreds of millions of Muslims turn to pray in the direction of Mecca five times daily. During the Islamic month of *Dhul Hijja*, millions arrive here for the pilgrimage called the *hajj* every year, with many more arriving throughout the year on “lesser pilgrimages.” The Kaabah – the locus of all this concentrated faith – has become Khalid’s most powerful Tether.

The Kaabah is actually a cube-shaped structure the size of an office building, built of gray stone and marble, within the central courtyard of the Holy Mosque. Most of the year it is covered by an enormous black cloth called the *kiswah*. The Kaabah is empty save for three pillars that hold up the roof, some silver and gold lamps

suspended from the ceiling, and the sacred Black Stone (now broken into pieces and held together by a ring of stone and a silver band) that sits in the eastern corner.

Numerous legends are associated with both the Kaabah and the Black Stone. One says that the Kaabah was lowered by angels from Heaven to the Earth. Muslim tradition holds that the Black Stone was given to Adam after his expulsion from Eden, as a token with which to earn forgiveness for his sins. Supposedly it was once white, but has turned black from absorbing the sins of countless millions of pilgrims (who kiss the stone as part of the *hajj* ritual). According to the Quran, Abraham and Ishmael built the original Kaabah, which Muslims say is the location where Adam left the Black Stone and built the first temple.

Historically, the Kaabah was a pagan shrine containing idols to many pre-Islamic deities, until Muhammad had the idols removed and rededicated the site to Allah in 630 A.D. It became the holiest site in Islam, and when Khalid ascended to Archangel of Faith, his Word connected to the Kaabah, making it his first Tether.

The Seneschal of the Kaabah is one of Khalid’s mightiest Servitors, a Kyriotate named Imad. *Any* celestial who performs the *hajj* with true sincerity will lose a point of dissonance upon kissing the Black Stone, though only Khalid’s Servitors receive the full benefits of his Rite (p. 77).

Khalid frowns on any subdivisions in his organization. Sectarianism is strongly condemned in the Quran; that hasn’t prevented it from happening in Islam, but Khalid won’t permit it among his Servitors. There are no permanent, organized divisions of the Faithful. Some angels work together for a long period of time due to overlapping territories and interests, and circles of friends and associates naturally develop, but if a group seems to be forming around a particular ideology, Khalid reproves them. While the Archangel of Faith does not endorse any one Islamic sect, and permits his Servitors to follow the practices of whichever one suits them best, he is particularly watchful of sectarian divisions causing schisms among the Faithful. Angels of Faith are expected to work together regardless of personal convictions – a Shiite Malakite, a Sunni Seraph, and a Sufi Mercurian might have theological differences, but they’d better not let their differences interfere with their duties. By the same

token, angels of Faith may *not* form associations based on shared doctrines; Khalid steps in and breaks up any group that smacks of cliquishness.

The lack of hierarchies in Khalid’s organization does not mean a lack of discipline. If Khalid *does* put one angel in charge of another, the subordinate must obey without question. And while Distinctions don’t technically convey rank – a Master of the Word of God doesn’t “out-rank” a Vassal of Faith – as indicators of Khalid’s esteem and trust, they bestow respect, which to the Faithful is more important. An angel of Faith who respects someone will follow that individual to Hell and back. By comparison, they regard the orderly segmentation of angels of the Sword, or Judgment, as impersonal arrangements that inspire no faith in one’s leaders. An angel of Faith might *obey* a Master of the Armies of God, but he won’t automatically show respect until the Laurencian has earned it.

Rewards and Punishments

“He will requite the evil-doers according to their deeds, and richly reward those who do good works.”

“To those who avoid the grossest sins and indecencies and commit only small offenses, your Lord will show abundant mercy.”

– *al-Najm (The Chapter of the Star), 53:31-32*

Khalid is by turns extremely harsh and excessively generous. His most beloved servants can be forgiven much, but those who cross him may stir his great wrath.

Khalid does show favoritism to those who have earned his faith. Favored Servitors (such as player characters) get more allowances made for them, and are rewarded more generously. To earn (and keep) this faith, however, they must be exemplary servants. They must uphold the ideals of Islam (and vocally espousing Islam doesn't hurt), and do good works in service to faithful humans. Angels who lack faith, zeal, and initiative will not attain this status.

If using the guidelines for mission success from the *Game Master's Guide* (pp. 8-9), GMs can reflect Khalid's generosity toward favored Servitors by ignoring one level of negative modifiers should they err during a mission. In other words, Khalid will not punish minor transgressions (such as making too much disturbance, or antagonizing Servitors of an ally) on the part of his most beloved servants (though he will probably scold them, and he will not overlook repeated or willful blunders).

Factors that will improve Khalid's reaction to the completion of a mission include:

✘ The characters furthered the cause of Islam, saved Muslims from danger, or protected a Muslim site.

✘ The characters generated a positive image for religion (especially Islam), or discredited secularism or other anti-religious movements (such as by exposing a corrupt atheist, making a hard-core rationalist scientist look foolish, etc.).

✘ It used to be that embarrassing angels of the Sword, particularly by coming to their rescue and accomplishing what the Laurencians were trying to do, would reap extra rewards from Khalid (though he never *explicitly* encouraged his Servitors to do this). Now that Khalid is on better terms with Laurence, this is probably no longer true . . . though he still won't *mind* if his Servitors look good at the expense of Laurence's.

Khalid is very generous about awarding extra Rites to successful Servitors, particularly Islam-related Rites to Muslim servants. He is also fairly tolerant of losing vessels; any angel who loses a vessel acting in good faith (if not with good sense) will probably have it replaced without cost. Sacrificing one's vessel to take out diabolical servants is not only permitted, but encouraged.

As noted on p. 100, however, Khalid's Distinctions and Words have in the past been reserved for good Muslim angels. While the Archangel of Faith might not be so prejudiced now, most of his high-ranking Servitors still are. Being a devout Muslim will still make advancement in Khalid's service easier, and an acknowledged non-Muslim will probably have to work extra hard to prove himself and earn Khalid's blessings.



As generous as Khalid is toward those he loves, he is among the harshest Archangels toward those who earn his displeasure. He is very free with dissonance – much too free for Dominic's tastes. Khalid will inflict dissonance on his Servitors for the slightest hint of doubt or disobedience. On the other hand, he is quick to remove it again, once the angel has adjusted his attitude and approaches Khalid with a humble, repentant spirit.

More disturbing to Dominic is Khalid's habit of casting out those who severely disappoint him. Most Archangels cast out

their Servitors only as a last resort, or in a great fury. Dominic disapproves of creating Outcasts, as it moves them closer to Falling (and gives the Inquisition more celestials to keep track of). Khalid casts out anyone who defies him, does something very damaging to Islam, or who earns dissonance as above, and then fails to seek its removal by mending their ways. He will take back repentant Outcasts, but the process of regaining Khalid's trust is long and strenuous, and requires absolute submission.

As a less severe punishment, Khalid is quick to take away Resources; any Servitor who fouls up a mission can expect to lose any artifacts, and possibly servants and even Roles as well. Gross stupidity or poor judgment, indicating incompetence but not immorality, may be punished by the stripping of attunements.

Khalid only slays angels who are in open rebellion – while he is quick to cast out a disobedient Servitor, he will only destroy one whose Fall seems inevitable.

Changing Superiors

With a significant trail of Outcast ex-Servitors, Khalid is not the easiest Archangel to work for. Most of his Servitors are extremely loyal to him, but it does happen that some lose faith, particularly those who are not as convinced as Khalid of the infallible truth of Islam. Some who *were* loyal and faithful were simply not good enough, and were cast out anyway.

Knowing Khalid's harshness, other Archangels, and even Dominic, tend to be more sympathetic toward Outcast angels of Faith, and those whose transgressions were relatively minor, and who sincerely desire to rejoin the Host, are usually taken back in short order. Of course, quite a few of them will not be satisfied except by regaining *Khalid's* trust and being accepted back into his service. These Outcasts are treated like any others.

Other than becoming Outcast and seeking refuge and redemption with someone else, angels of Faith who no longer wish to serve Khalid generally find that it's easier approaching the Archangel they want to transfer to first. If that Archangel is sympathetic (and most are), he will ask Khalid for the angel's Heart. Khalid will not refuse to hand it over – he certainly doesn't want faithless servants in *his* service – but this guarantees that his former Servitor will never again be welcome in his presence, and the angel will have no more friends among the Faithful. (Needless to say, all attunements and Rites of Faith will be stripped away.)

More rarely, an angel will truly believe that he is called to serve a different Word. If he approaches Khalid and confesses his feelings, Khalid's reaction may range from anger to disappointment to acceptance. Sometimes, Khalid believes, God *does* direct angels to a new purpose, and if Khalid believes the Servitor's heart is divinely-guided, he will transfer the Servitor with no hard feelings – in which case he will *probably* not take away attunements and Rites (though it's very rare for an angel in someone else's service to retain Khalid's Distinctions). Khalid is most likely to react positively to someone who wants to serve Gabriel, and also to someone who remains a devout Muslim.

The Redeemed

Not many Archangels are scarier than Khalid. It would be suicidal for a demon who hasn't already gained unshakable faith in God to approach the Archangel of Faith for redemption, and the old Khalid would not have heard them out unless they were also prepared to take the *shabada* and become Muslims. Even the new Khalid will react more positively to Diabolicals who have seen the truth of Islam.

A very small number of Diabolicals have been redeemed by Khalid, though, and those who survive are said to have never “yo-yoed” back to Hell. (It's also rumored that no non-Muslim Diabolical has ever survived a redemption attempt at Khalid's hands.) Khalid is rare among Archangels in that he treats redeemed Diabolicals as newly-fledged angels, with no bias against them. The act of redemption (and their survival of the process) is proof enough of their sincerity; to make them prove themselves afterward would show a lack of faith. Of course, not all Khalid's Servitors are quite as willing to accept a newly-redeemed angel who hasn't “earned his place,” but they will not openly discriminate against the former-Fallen . . . at least, not in Khalid's presence.

Humans

Khalid has many Soldiers, and many more mundanes who serve him knowingly or unknowingly, almost all of them Muslims. Historically he has recruited very heavily from militant Muslim groups, and kept an eye on *all* Muslim Soldiers, even those in service to other Archangels (much as Laurence considers *all* Soldiers of God to be under his jurisdiction). Khalid has counted avowed terrorists among his following, and is now struggling with the question of whether he can still use these individuals and groups to legitimate ends, change their focus without inspiring feelings of betrayal, or whether he must disassociate himself entirely from those who once bombed innocent civilians with his implicit blessings.

Khalid has told his Servitors to increase their efforts at recruiting Soldiers and mundane servants, and encourages them now to seek recruits outside the Middle East, and among other religions.

Because Khalid considers humans to be the most important part of the War, and exalted above angels by God, he will rarely consent to make a faithful human a servant Resource, unless the human is completely willing. Even then, Khalid will expect the angel not to *impose* his will on his servant (i.e., provoke the servant to make a Will-roll to resist a command) unless absolutely necessary.

CHOIRS

Khalid takes very seriously the principle that all are equal before God. While each Choir is honored for its special gift, and employed as it can best use its divine resonance, the Faithful must not segregate themselves by Choir. The natural friction between certain Choirs has not been completely suppressed in Khalid's ranks, but it *never* manifests in his presence. Khalid regards inter-Choir rivalries as akin to racial disharmony; it is not to be tolerated.

Seraphim

Khalid's Seraphim, being required to work among humans without revealing their true natures, are masters of understated truths. They cannot lie, but they can walk the tightrope of willful omissions and implied statements with more finesse than many other Seraphim. They tend to get a reputation as both wise and enigmatic, frequently diverting mortal inquiries with cryptic comments and riddles. Many Seraphim of Faith adopt Sufi Roles, ironically enough, as Sufi sects generally have a more flexible theology than mainstream Islam, allowing the Most Holy to speak about religion without fear of violating the Truth. They also favor Sunni Islam, seeing its rule by informed community consensus, according to the guidelines of the *summah* (Islamic law), as an Earthly reflection of the Seraphim Council.

Seraphim of Faith test the faithful – mortals and angels – for true sincerity. No one who lacks faith will pass their tests, and nothing outrages them more than those who use religion to deceive people, or who pretend to believe something they do not.

Cherubim

Khalid often hand-picks individuals for his Cherubim to protect. Any important Muslim holy man, especially a prophet, will be assigned a Cherub of Faith. Important mosques and other holy sites also frequently have a Cherub guardian.

Besides offering the usual physical protection, Khalid's Cherubim are frequently sent to bolster believers whose faith is wavering. If a Cherub of Faith's attuned is losing faith, the angel will know, and it will be his duty to prevent it. Khalid sends his Cherubim to ensure that mothers, teachers, clergy, and other individuals whose own faith can influence many others never lose sight of the blessings God bestows upon them.

Most of Khalid's Cherubim are stalwart Sunni Muslims. Sunni Islam is the "religion of the majority," and the Guardians find its mainstream orthodoxy reassuring.

Ofanim

Ofanim of Faith are sometimes called "matchmakers" – quite inappropriately. They are *not* celestial Cupids, bringing strangers together. Indeed, Khalid would strongly disapprove of any match arranged by an angel, as that would abrogate God's will. Instead, his Ofanim look for couples who have met and fallen in love already, then work to bring them together.

Unfortunately, as love respects neither social conventions nor religious boundaries, the work of Khalid's Wheels sometimes conflicts with Islamic law. According to the Quran, any romantic desire outside of marriage is sinful, and Muslim women are specifically forbidden to marry non-Muslims. (Muslim men are *encouraged* to marry Muslim women, but Jewish and Christian wives are permitted.) Needless to say, homosexuality is also prohibited. But Khalid's Ofanim cannot help but encourage true and faithful love, wherever they see it.

Thus, they tend to be among the least devout Muslims in Khalid's service – in fact, of the few angels of Faith who are not professed Muslims (see p. 100), Ofanim make up the majority. This gives them a poor reputation with Khalid's other Servitors, but it also makes them good messengers, as they have less trouble dealing with "infidels." Ofanim who are devout Muslims tend to favor Shiism, for its dynamic, physical, passionate nature of worship.

Elohim

Ironically, there are relatively few Elohim serving the Elohite Archangel of Faith, for they must walk the same tightrope Khalid does, between faith in the unprovable, adherence to the Quran, and objectivity. Most resolve this by simply obeying Khalid without question; blind obedience makes subjectivity moot. These Elohim are usually strict Sunni Muslims, and favor Wahhabism (the puritanical, fundamentalist school of Sunni Islam prevalent in Saudi Arabia). They are Khalid's judges and enforcers of orthodoxy.

A smaller group of Khalid's Powers have a more philosophical bent. While still faithful Muslims (usually), they tend to take the Quran less literally, and are more tolerant, even encouraging, of other faiths. Some have joined divergent sects such as the Sufi brotherhoods, the Isma'ili, or heterodox Muslim offshoots like the Ahmadiya and the Sikhs. They may be viewed with suspicion by their more conservative peers, but they, along with the Ofanim (above) are the most likely Servitors of Faith to be sent to work with non-Muslims. It should also be noted that their rational approach to faith makes them excellent proselytizers; they frequently have more success than their fundamentalist brethren at *converting* people to Islam . . .

WORD-BOUND SERVITORS

Khalid doesn't have a lot of Word-bound Servitors, but they tend to be influential. Most of them were appointed early in Khalid's tenure as Archangel. As he became more removed from celestial politics, he was both less able and less willing to endure the political negotiations involved in sponsoring an angel for a Word. On a few occasions, when he had support from other Archangels, he managed to obtain a new Word for one of his servants, but the Seraphim Council became increasingly loath to grant a Word to an angel of Faith that might be applied only for the benefit of Islam.

Khalid's most powerful Word-bound Servitor is Rashid, the Kyriotate Angel of Prayer. Virtues, such as Dariel, the Angel of Charity, and Zuheyr, the Angel of Cleanliness, make up many of Khalid's Word-bound. Khalid has *not* sought any Words that are utterly specific to a single religion (such as an Angel of Islam, or Angel of the Quran), though some of his Word-bound Servitors (such as the Angel of Martyrs and the Angel of Fasting) are as devoutly Muslim as he is, and at least in the past were equally biased toward wielding their Words for the benefit of Islam.

Malakim

Malakim of Faith are the most fervent and uncompromising of Khalid's Servitors. Almost all are fanatical Muslims who take appropriate oaths (see p. 77). There is no sectarian unity among them, though; some embrace orthodox Sunni Islam, others become zealous Shiites, and historically Malakim of Faith have supported the Khawarij, the Qarmatians, the Isma'ilis, the Mutazilites, and every other militant Islamic splinter group.

Naturally, Khalid's Malakim are his holy warriors (*mujaahidum*), and the most eager to wage a jihad against unbelievers, Diabolicals, and even heretical angels. If a Malakite converts to a particular religion, he takes his faith as seriously as a vow, even if he is not technically bound by any oaths. Malakim of Faith don't *have* to be intolerant fanatics who regard all non-Muslims as the Enemy, but quite a few of them have allied with terrorist groups. Khalid used to encourage this, and is now having some difficulty bringing his most ardent *mujaahidum* in line.

Kyriotates

Khalid's Dominations can inspire faith, but without nurturing, temporary faith is just that. Giving someone faith in God, angels, or his own abilities for a few minutes

can be beneficial, but Kyriotates of Faith don't flit among the population bestowing brief episodes of faith at random. They are long-term planners, often choosing (or assigned to) a single group, sometimes a single individual, on whom to do their work.

Kyriotates of Faith usually choose people who need to have faith – either for their own good, or for the effects they may have on others – and then work very hard to set up a situation conducive to gaining true, lasting faith. Using their Choir Attunement to give someone faith is like lighting a match; they have to prepare enough fuel to ensure the flame will continue to burn, and then the fire needs to be protected. They arrange fortuitous events and divine blessings (which must be subtle and not obviously supernatural, in accordance with Khalid's dissonance conditions). They possess their subjects' friends and family, and manipulate people ruthlessly, all for the benefit of the individuals on whom their attention is really focused. They rarely possess the actual subject, both because one cannot instill faith in someone whose mind is wandering in the Marches, and because such possessions risk exposing the angel's presence to the target of his ministries.

While they are good and faithful Muslims like most of Khalid's Servitors, Kyriotates of Faith tend to be neutral with regards to doctrine, making most of them moderate Sunnis. Ironically, both their methods and their religious convictions are quite compatible with those of their Cherubim counterparts. Thus, Kyriotates and Cherubim of Faith often work together (with the Cherub protecting and reporting the progress of the individual whom the Kyriotate is trying to bring to God), though not without the occasional personality conflicts.

Mercurians

Mercurians of Faith like to be peacemakers. They work in the Muslim community, ironing out disputes, helping keep families together, and identifying bad influences (who may be dealt with by preaching or by Malakim, as appropriate). Mercurians have a hard time being fanatical about orthodoxy, but often become very knowledgeable on theological matters, so that they can find a happy medium between different points of view. Many have joined one of the Sufi sects, as this is the more humanistic face of Islam. They also act as Khalid's ambassadors to the non-Muslim world.

Khalid's Mercurians gain Essence for performing "miracles," but such miracles should inspire faith in God, not in the Mercurian. It would be easy to use their resonance and attunements to perform parlor tricks to impress the credulous, but Khalid will deal harshly with any angel taking advantage of the faithful just to gain Essence. Everything an angel does should be credited to God.

JOBS

Celestial Jobs

Only a few Servitors of Faith can be found in Heaven, and almost all of them are in Khalid's Mosque (p. 90). Most are Cherubim, performing mundane maintenance or watching over angels in Trauma. A few serve as *muezzins*, leading the daily calls to prayer. There is little else for this skeleton staff to do.

Recently, Khalid has assigned a few Servitors to spend time in Yves' Library, memorizing the divine copy of the Quran (and the Bible and other scriptures), and researching the history of religion and the celestial realms. Khalid has not specified exactly what information he's looking for, or what he plans to do with it. It is rumored that more Servitors of Faith have also been seen visiting Gabriel's Cathedral and talking to her Servitors.

Ethereal Jobs

While Khalid remains intolerant of ethereal spirits, he doesn't spend much time hunting them. Almost all vestiges of paganism have been purged from Muslim countries, so an ethereal would have to do something quite blatant to attract the attention of Khalid's Servitors.

Other than hunting these occasional intruders from the ethereal plane, angels of Faith have little reason to visit the Marches. A few do specialize in dream-monitoring, particularly Cherubim and Kyriotates, who may spend time watching their subjects' dreamscapes as part of their work.

Corporeal Jobs

About 90% of Khalid's Servitors are found in the Middle East, or other areas of Muslim control (such as Indonesia and Malaysia, the most populous Muslim nations on Earth). These angels try to keep creeping Western materialism out, some violently, even if it means keeping the countries in which they live arrested in a medieval level of social development. Others take a more progressive attitude, wanting to modernize without Westernizing. All of them do much the same thing that angels everywhere else do; they help people and promote selflessness, while opposing selfish values and any sign of diabolical corruption.

Angels of Faith are unique in their geographical concentration and their focus on one particular religion. Within the Muslim world, most angels of Faith are cast as either teachers (*usaatithun*), defenders (*mudaafi'un*), or warriors (*mujaahidun*).

Teachers: Khalid's *usaatithun* are not simply instructors, but exemplars. By their words and deeds, they should demonstrate the highest ideals of Islam, as a model to

By the dust-scattering winds and the heavily-laden clouds; by the swiftly-gliding ships and by the angels who deal out blessings to all men; that which you have promised shall be fulfilled, and the Last Judgment shall surely come to pass!

– al-Dhariyat (The Chapter of the Winds), 51:1-6

mortals. They must be doctrinally correct and spiritually pure. They may hold actual Roles as teachers of one kind or another, or they may be *mullabs*, judges, policemen, writers, or housewives. Seraphim and Elohim are usually given the most important teaching jobs, with high-Status Roles, while Kyriotates and Mercurians are often seeded into the population and assigned to work with common people, improving the lot of mankind with everyday acts of faith.

Defenders: *Mudaafi'un* are more aggressive about defending Khalid's interests. They are positioned in places where Islam, or the Word of Faith, might be threatened. They may be physical defenders, such as the Cherubim who are appointed to guard Muslim holy men and mosques, or they may defend the Islamic way of life, by trying to screen out secular influences, and prevent corrupt government officials or Muslim clergy from infecting the Message with their own selfishness. They most often view themselves as defending Islam from Westernism, atheism, and/or secular humanism (depending on the biases of the angel), but some specifically look for diabolical influences – infernal agents are very active in the Middle East. (Other angels mutter that Khalid's overzealous "defenders" have been known to treat Servitors of other *Archangels* as a threat.)

Cherubim are natural *mudaafi'un*, mostly assigned to physical protection, or to listening for disturbances with their keen Perception. Seraphim and Elohim tend to take Roles that allow them to be social guardians, scrutinizing people and ideas for signs of heterodoxy. Kyriotates and Mercurians do this at the grass-roots level, with their fingers on the pulse of the public. Malakim are sometimes detailed to examine individuals, but only when they are in a situation where the predictable Malakite response to iniquity won't cause an uproar . . .

KHALID AND THE MIDDLE EAST

Khalid is often considered a “minor” Archangel because his worldwide influence is nowhere near as great as that of the major Superiors. He has fewer Tethers and fewer servants, and has not been very active in celestial politics for over a thousand years.

His Word, however, is a tremendously potent one, and while no one knows how powerful Khalid is in raw terms (no Superior’s power is easily quantified), many suspect that he’s been severely underrated simply by being less visible.

In the Muslim world, especially the Middle East, Khalid is most definitely a “major” Archangel. Few Superiors have anywhere near as many Tethers and Servitors in those areas as Khalid does, and no one has as much corporeal influence. He’s been focusing his attention there almost exclusively for the last 12 centuries. The fact that some Superiors have focused on the Western world almost as much as Khalid has ignored it makes him too powerful to ignore where the Middle East is involved.

Characters who know little about the Archangel of Faith may consider him a lightweight, but they’d better revise their thinking fast if they enter his turf.

Khalid and Israel

Khalid was outraged by the creation of Israel at the expense of the Palestinians, but while he’s generally been more sympathetic to the Arabs than to the Israelis, he’s not as much of a partisan as one might expect. While Khalid does believe that Western support for Israel is largely motivated by disdain for Islam, he doesn’t think destroying Israel will help the divine cause, nor will it strengthen his Word. In his view, the Arab nations should spend more time getting their own houses in order.

Warriors: *Mujaahidun* go beyond defending the faith; they prosecute a jihad against the enemies of the Word of Faith (often, though not always, the enemies of Islam). Some stand ready to respond to calls for help from Khalid’s *mudaafi’un*, others go out looking for trouble. Some combine the functions of teacher and warrior, training humans to fight evil. As police or military officers, they may recruit potential Soldiers, or operating as wandering *mujaahidun* without a Role, they may simply engage demons and infidels at any opportunity. Angels of Faith fought with the Afghanis against the Soviet Union, and with the Palestinians against Israel.

Most of Khalid’s warriors are Malakim or Cherubim, but his most devout Ofanim are among his most eager *mujaahidun* as well.

Unusual Jobs

About 10% of Khalid’s Servitors live and work in the West. Most minister to Muslim communities there, performing the same functions as they do in Muslim lands (above). Teachers who work “abroad” are likely to be not only role models for Muslims, but missionaries seeking to convert others to the faith, and thus are drawn from Khalid’s more tolerant Servitors.

A smaller number, however, work directly with infidels. Some have chosen to associate themselves with Christianity or Judaism or some other religion, seeing them as equally worthy of support. Others are missionaries, and some simply spread faith in whatever form they can. These Servitors include messengers and ambassadors (frequently Ofanim and Mercurians), and the rare angel of Faith temporarily assigned to the service of some other Archangel (most often Michael or David, but occasionally Gabriel or Yves, and lately, Laurence).

KEEPING THE FAITH

On Earth, angels of Faith are waging a war against the forces of atheism, commercialism, materialism, humanism, and many other values enshrined in Western culture today. Not all of them do so as fervent Muslims, but all



FAITH AND INSPIRATION

Islam, like Christianity and Judaism before it, was once a dynamic religion, an agent of change, an instrument of social justice, a holy Message that moved people and inflamed their passions. Muhammad described his revelations from Gabriel as painful and all-consuming; nothing less than divine inspiration could turn a shepherd from a desert backwater into a prophet who would found an empire and a world religion.

Now, centuries later, Islam has stagnated, buried under layers of dogma and legalism and reactionary movements. It, like all other religions, cannot be sustained indefinitely on faith alone . . . not and remain a divine religion. It needs inspiration.

As an EloHITE, Khalid once represented the rational side of religion. While promoting the Word of Faith, he separated faith from superstition and emotional mysticism. Without Gabriel's irrational aspect, however, faith can become arid and formulaic, remote from the Divine. Khalid attributes the decline of religion in the West, and its perversion in the East, both to his own lack of diligence and to Gabriel's abdication of her role as divine messenger.

While he blames only himself for his own shortcomings, Khalid cannot bring himself to blame Gabriel for

her madness and irresponsibility. He blames Dominic and Belial, mostly, while holding faith that she will eventually recover.

In the meantime, he has begun having meetings with Soldekai, Gabriel's Chamberlain (p. 57), about infusing some divine sparks back into religion. Khalid has selected his wisest and most faithful students of religion to work with some of Gabriel's most devout followers. Their plan is still under development, and will take a long time to execute, but they hope to resume the work that Yves and Gabriel abandoned 1,300 years ago: using celestial intervention to bring religion directly to mankind. Ideally, their project will attract Gabriel's attention and garner her involvement. Whether the final result will be a mutation of Islam, a synthesis of existing religions, or a completely new faith, remains to be seen.



agree that mankind needs faith – specifically, faith in God – and that all these secular “isms” tend to erode that faith. Yet most of Khalid's Servitors realize that progress is also necessary, that *blind* faith will ultimately weaken the faithful, and that Islam has to coexist with other religions.

What makes the job of the Faithful more difficult than that of most Heavenly Servitors is that their Superior, more than any other, has adopted one particular mortal religion as his “party line.” Even Laurence, who is an unabashed supporter of Christianity in general, and Roman Catholicism in particular, doesn't confine his operations to those dealing with Christian interests. But Khalid has historically ignored anything that didn't impact on Islam. It's been very hard, these past centuries, for angels of Faith who saw merit in other religions and didn't want to see them neglected. It's been even harder for those who realized how close Khalid was to Falling.

Most passed these trials – they are angels, after all. They had abiding faith in Khalid, and they feel vindicated now. But there is a sad trail of demoralized angels of Faith who became Outcasts, sometimes through their own faithlessness, and sometimes because they simply crossed Khalid.

Some went on to Fall, and many of those now continue to work among Muslims, but for the other side.

What has sustained all of Khalid's servants is not just loyalty to him, but faith in God. Angels of Faith cannot help but feel God's constant, immediate presence. They credit everything to God; they *know* He is watching them, helping them when they need Him, and above all, He is in control. Their destinies are in His hands. An angel of Faith should come off as *holy* and very, very devout, even if he is not particularly devoted to Islam. Cynical or doubting angels don't last long in Khalid's service. His Servitors are to the rest of the Host what an Evangelical minister (or a Muslim mullah) is to a lukewarm congregation of lay believers. All angels are connected to the Symphony; Khalid's angels *feel* that connection as the love and glory of God. They may be dogmatic, some of them may be fanatical, intolerant, even violent, but they are fulfilled by their religious fervor. Even Servitors of Judgment sometimes feel a little unsettled in the presence of the Faithful, for angels of Faith seem to genuinely *feel* what many angels simply *believe* as a matter of faith.

MUSLIM ANGELS

How can a non-Muslim angel serve a Muslim Archangel? He can't . . . but while all of Khalid's Servitors are Muslims, not all of them necessarily believe in Islam.

Even during the long, dark years, Khalid would not cast out a servant who refused to accept all the precepts of Islam, or the infallibility of the Quran. He did expect all of his Servitors to take the shahada; lacking faith that God is the only god, or that Muhammad was a genuine prophet, would certainly make it impossible to serve Khalid. According to Islamic doctrine, anyone who recites the shahada with true belief is a Muslim; acceptance of Muhammad's revelations, as transcribed in the Quran, should naturally follow, but is not specifically mandated.

Thus, it is technically possible for a professed Jew, or Christian, or plain theist, to also be a Muslim. They may not be what most humans would consider a Muslim . . . but simply submitting to God is good enough for Khalid.

Of course, disagreeing with Khalid over theological issues was never a good idea. The vast majority of his Servitors accepted not only the Muslim profession of faith, but at least its basic tenets as well. Of those who did not, only a handful dared to be open about their dissent . . . and that handful was never promoted, and was constantly under the eye of Khalid's orthodoxy enforcers. All of Khalid's highest-ranking Servitors are true, pious Muslims.

Now that Khalid is no longer quite such a zealot, there has been a *slight* loosening in the ranks, and some angels of Faith feel freer to speak about alternative religious views. This is regarded with dismay by Khalid's more conservative Servitors, but most are treating it as a positive opportunity to promote dialogue. It remains to be seen whether Khalid will actually grant Distinctions or sponsor Words for Servitors who are not devoted Muslims.

DEALING WITH INFIDELS

The majority of Khalid's Servitors stay in Muslim lands, where they are usually the most numerous angels. Many have little contact with Servitors of other Archangels. This has resulted in a mindset similar to that of the humans around them – seeing those who are not among the Faithful as “infidels.”

During Khalid's long self-imposed exile from Heaven, his servants became quite insular, and a bit defensive about their Archangel and his religion. It earned them a poor reputation with the rest of the Host. Few angels of Faith were ever as fanatical as Khalid, but most are still quite fervent by Heavenly standards. Their acceptance of Islam as “the Truth,” and their hostility to a lot of things promoted by other Archangels, can make them difficult to get along with.

Khalid's attitude has been one of viewing other angels much like Muslims view other People of the Book: misguided and wrong, but still servants of God who can be virtuous allies. Now he is encouraging his Servitors to be more cooperative with non-Muslim angels, but there is still a culture clash between the Faithful and “infidel” angels.

Angels of Fire earn the most respect from Khalid's Servitors; even those who show little interest in Islam are to be treated as allies,



because they have the privilege of serving God's Divine Prophet. Servants of David, Michael, and Yves are also shown respect, and may become friends. (Though some of Khalid's Servitors are more suspicious of the Archangel of Destiny than Khalid is – how could Yves give the Quran to Gabriel and then not support her? For that matter, how can he possess the most perfect, divine copy of the Holy Quran in his Library and still not be a vocal proponent of Islam himself?)

Angels of the Sword used to be not-so-friendly rivals, especially during the Crusades. Khalid always forbade his Servitors to engage in hostilities with Laurence's angels, and they did sometimes team up against greater threats, but clearly there was no love lost between them. Now Khalid is requiring his Servitors to cooperate fully and wholeheartedly with the General of the Host, and to treat Laurence's Servitors as allies. Many angels of Faith are having difficulty with the transition (and many angels of the Sword are wary and skeptical).

DEALING WITH JUDGMENT

Khalid is hostile to Dominic, and his hostility naturally communicates itself down to his servants. Angels of Judgment in the Middle East have often felt beset by fanatical heretics. The Inquisition is less intimidating to angels who surround it with a much larger support network, including an Archangel who frequently disregards the wishes of Dominic himself. For a time, Khalid could have been considered an Outcast, and he has instructed his Servitors to (nominally) acknowledge the authority of Judgment. But the Faithful make it very clear that they don't respect the Inquisition, and consider Khalid (and God) to be a higher authority. Some even stoop to Judgment-baiting, particularly if the Dominicans happen to be supporters of the Church. At times, Dominic has had to intervene personally to ensure that the judgment of a triad on an angel of Faith was carried out.

This doesn't endear Khalid to Dominic or his Servitors. Both consider Khalid to be as obnoxious as Michael and as troublesome as Gabriel. The latter opinion has been revised with Khalid's recent turnaround, but being long-accustomed to obstreperousness and abuse from the Faithful, angels of Judgment tend to prepare for the worst when dealing with Khalid's Servitors. This means those angels of Faith who leave Khalid's turf often find themselves interrogated and even harassed by Dominicans, who are happy to show them what it's like to be surrounded by unfriendly, uncooperative angels.

SERVITORS OF CREATION IN SERVICE TO FAITH

Khalid is sympathetic to the Archangel of Creation; as Khalid did for many centuries, Eli has chosen to abandon the politics of Heaven and support his Word on Earth. Khalid has faith that Eli is serving God in his own way.

Thus, the Archangel of Faith is happy to provide refuge to Servitors of Creation – even more so because it annoys Dominic. However, Faith can be a rather austere Word for Creationers to serve. Khalid doesn't exactly encourage innovation; nor does he approve of the more libertine uses of some of Creation's Rites . . .

Servitors of Creation who are deeply religious – particularly if they are Muslims – will find Khalid is fairer to them than almost any other Archangel. Others, however, are likely to find the environment stifling, and their freethinking ways likely to get them in trouble.

MODES OF ADDRESS

Since only God should be exalted, angels of Faith tend not to use many honorifics in addressing one another, or even their Superior. Even when addressing Khalid in flowery Quranic verse, all praises are ultimately attributed to God. Thus, one of Khalid's Servitors might address him formally as "Archangel of Faith and Most Honored Servant of the Almighty, Granted Wisdom by the Grace of God, Dispenser of Justice by the Will of the Most-Just, Peace Be Upon You."

Such formality is only for ceremonial occasions or very important audiences, though. Khalid's favored Servitors may address him simply by name (often adding "al-Din" or "Abdullah" to the end of it – see p. 78), and even the humblest reliever need be no more formal than "Archangel Khalid."

Other angels are usually addressed simply by name, sometimes with Choir and/or Distinctions mentioned, to be more formal.

Certain individuals are so respected by the Faithful that whenever they are mentioned by name, the phrase "Peace be upon him" (or something similar) follows almost ritualistically. (Even angels of Faith who are not devout Muslims will do this when speaking with fellow Servitors, so as to avoid giving offense.) Muhammad is foremost among these, as are all the other prophets given the same treatment by Earthly Muslims (such as Abraham, Moses, and Jesus). Khalid, when spoken of in the third person, is treated likewise. Other Archangels *may* be shown this respect (and always are in formal speech, including by Khalid himself), but the only ones besides Khalid for whom it is obligatory are Gabriel and Michael.

By contrast, angels of Faith consider it almost blasphemous to refer to any demon by name, and will use all manner of circumlocutions to avoid actually naming Lucifer, a Prince, or an infernal Word. (Baal, for example, might be "The master of carnage and battle," "He who dwells in Gehenna," or "The Evil One's general.") Khalid himself doesn't fear to name diabolicals while in Heaven, but will avoid doing so on Earth – he doesn't want to pollute the Symphony.

SAMPLE SERVITORS OF KHALID

RASHID

Angel of Prayer

Kyriotate Master of Faith (and Fire)

Corporeal Forces – 6 Strength 12 Agility 12
Ethereal Forces – 6 Intelligence 13 Precision 12
Celestial Forces – 6 Will 12 Perception 12

Suggested Word-Forces: 18

Skills: Detect Lies/4, Emote/6, Escape/1, Knowledge (The Middle East/4, Religions/6), Languages (Arabic/6, Hebrew/3*, Greek/2, Latin/3), Meditation/6, Singing/4, Savoir-Faire/3

Songs: Faith (all/6), Fire (all/5), Healing (Corporeal/6), Might (Corporeal/4, Ethereal/1, Celestial/6), Nimbus (all/3), Shields (all/6), Tongues (all/6), Projection (Corporeal/4), Purity (Ethereal/4), Wings/5

Attunements: Kyriotate of Faith, Mercurian of Faith, Kyriotate of Fire, That Which Moves Mountains, Rituals of Faith, Whispers of Inspiration (see p. 41), The Last Spark (see p. 40), Master of the Word of God, Master of the Flame of Heaven, Angel of Prayer

Special Rites: Say a sincere prayer to God, only thanking Him and not asking for anything; Cause an unbeliever to say a prayer, as above; all of Gabriel's basic Rites.

Special Abilities: Whenever someone prays within Rashid's line of sight, silently or aloud, in any language, Rashid hears and understands every word. Rashid may possess unopposed anyone who is praying to God (he must still make a resonance roll, but the praying person may not resist). Either of these abilities may be granted to other angels (the latter only to other Kyriotates) as Servitor Attunements.

Rashid is Khalid's most powerful Servitor. He has actually been Word-bound longer than Khalid; for thousands of years, he was a Servitor of Gabriel. When Gabriel dictated the Quran to Muhammad,

the Angel of Prayer was suffused with Essence from the power of the Muslim faithful, and became convinced, as was the Angel of Faith, that Islam was truly the inspired word of God.

Gabriel's seeming abandonment of Islam, and her self-imposed exile, was crushing to Rashid. While he still loves and adores Gabriel, he could not deny his sense of betrayal. When Khalid ascended to Archangel and became a vocal proponent of Islam, Rashid felt his course was clear: he asked Gabriel's permission to transfer to Khalid's service. He expected to be stripped of all the attunements and Distinctions he had earned in her service, but she acquiesced to the transfer with no more than a nod, and never took anything away from him. To this day,

Rashid is nonplused by this, and wonders if Gabriel was even in her right mind when he spoke to her, and if she will someday take notice of him and do what he expected her to do then.

Rashid wants everyone to pray, including angels. Especially angels. He is a devout Muslim, but he believes misguided prayers are better than no prayers, and the prayers of Christians and Jews are almost as pleasing to him as the prayers of Muslims – they all go to the same place, after all. Rashid is in favor of ecumenicity and religious tolerance. However, he has nothing but contempt for atheists and agnostics.

Rashid spends almost all of his time listening to human prayers, and answering those he can. He tends to downplay his own importance, and rarely takes advantage of his status as a high-ranking Gabrielite. Few celestials who know him realize that Rashid is probably one of the *most* powerful angels on regular Earth-duty.

(Rashid is an extremely powerful Word-bound angel who would be a fitting supervisor for servants of Faith.)

Continued on next page . . .



SAMPLE SERVITORS OF KHALID (CONTINUED)

ASIM

Cherub of Faith

Corporeal Forces – 2 Strength 4 Agility 4
Ethereal Forces – 3 Intelligence 7 Precision 5
Celestial Forces – 4 Will 8 Perception 9

Vessels: Human/2, Charisma -1 (female), Human/1 (spare male vessel)

Role: “Aisha Khaldun,” Social Worker/2, Status/2

Skills: Detect Lies/2, Dodge/2, Emote/2, Fast-Talk/3, Fighting/1, Languages (Arabic/4*, English/3), Singing/1

Songs: Attraction (Ethereal/3), Harmony (Ethereal/4), Healing (Corporeal/2)

Attunements: Cherub of Faith

Artifact: Reliquary/1 (head scarf)

(* *Native language; level 3 was free, but Aisha has raised it by 1 point – she can speak either Saudi or Egyptian dialect.*)

Asim’s first assignment on Earth was in Saudi Arabia, one of the most conservative Islamic nations. Rules for women there are stricter and harsher than anywhere else in the Middle East. This doesn’t concern Khalid overmuch; a repressive society based on Quranic law might make people less happy in this life, but it will save them from Hellfire in the next. However, Asim, who is one of the few angels of Faith who has taken on a feminine identity, was concerned about practices that are not endorsed by the Quran, such as wife-beating, and stoning women accused of impropriety. Khalid approved of her efforts to protect women unjustly accused or sentenced to excessive punishments, but when the Cherub began organizing protests and even advocating social reforms, she became an irritant to more conservative angels of Faith. They certainly didn’t want to see Western-style feminism, and the licentious “freedoms” it encourages, creeping into the country that hosts Khalid’s two greatest Tethers.

After too many clashes with her superiors, they reported her “liberalism” to Khalid. Khalid transferred her to the West. Asim’s Saudi superiors felt she had been rightfully banished as punishment; Asim felt the Archangel had sent her where her



talents and temperament could be put to better use. Khalid hasn’t said what his motives really were; they may both be right.

Now, Asim has a Role as an Egyptian immigrant (a single woman emigrating from Saudi Arabia, with no family accompanying her, is difficult to arrange as a plausible Role). She works in the Muslim community and has even started a battered-women’s shelter catering to Muslims (though non-Muslim women will certainly not be turned away). While she dislikes the misogynistic practices of many Muslim societies, she is still a faithful Muslim herself, and will be quick to lecture people on the differences between what the Quran teaches and what is actually practiced. Dispelling the myth that Islam is a harsh, oppressive religion is her secondary goal.

As a Cherub, Asim protects people, but she’s accustomed to using her wits and social pressure more than force or celestial powers. She specifically asked Khalid for an unlovely female vessel, so as to make it less likely that men would be distracted by romantic feelings for her, but she sometimes uses the Ethereal Song of Attraction to make an abusive man obsessed with her – this makes him easier to deal with.

Asim’s reliquary is a piece of cloth that was once a part of a dress worn by Muhammad’s wife, Aisha, after whom she took her Earthly name.

(Asim is a beginning-level character, suitable for use as a PC, or as an angel of Faith who can easily be encountered in the West.)



Ψ
Y
E
S



ARCHANGEL OF DESTINY

*The world has its own destiny.
Accept it, embrace it, and help things along when possible.*



Legend has it, Yves was the first soul created by God. Armed with his knowledge of the universe from its most primal state, he and his Servitors have a miraculous ability to predict the Symphony's future.

Though he serves as an Archangel, he belongs to no Choir. The other inhabitants of the Earthly Heavens speculate that he represents a higher order of being, sent to guide the angels as the angels are sent to guide man.

It was given to Yves to name God, after God named Yves. Some divine theologians argue that Yves, by giving God a name, not only created the distinction between Good and Evil – but that he created God Himself. Others believe that by naming a darkness for light to stand against, he facilitated the original Fall.

Yves is perpetually quiet and rational. He intervenes very rarely on Earth, spending most of his days in serene meditation. On every plane, he manifests as an elderly man, radiating calm good cheer and spiritual strength.

He and his Servitors are the givers of names, the guardians of knowledge. (Yves held the responsibility for Knowledge before Raphael's creation, and took back many of the duties when she died.) In the modern era, Yves concerns himself most with philosophy, having delegated the sphere of technology and the sciences to Archangel Jean. Yves' Tethers are almost all in libraries, and all connected to his Cathedral, The Library (see p. 119).

Yves once promoted religion as a way to enlighten the hearts of humanity, but this has not always worked out as well as it might have. His last major attempt was the founding of Islam, which led to the bloody Earthly Crusades with warrior Archangels on both sides, and the Heavenly persecution of loyal Gabriel.

Yves is not omniscient, but he knows the names of all things, everything that has ever been written down, and – as Archangel of Destiny – all the best and brightest possibilities for the world. He is the most respected soul in Heaven. Of the Archangels, only Michael is hostile to Yves, and Yves himself is hostile to no one.

DISSONANCE

The angels of Yves, holy messengers and divine creatures of knowledge, are charged with helping people achieve the greatest heights of their destiny. They may not take any direct action – knowingly or not! – to move a person toward his fate.

Servitors of Yves are pragmatic and methodological, never behaving rashly or letting their emotions get the better of them. When an angel of Yves acts, they understand the potential ramifications of their actions and how they impact the “bigger picture.”

CHOIR ATTUNEMENTS

Each angel of Yves has inherent knowledge of a different aspect of the Symphony. This information comes in flashes, but merely reflects the Symphony as it *should* be – which is to say, barring celestial intervention.

Seraphim

A Seraph of Yves is linked to Yves' Book of Names (see p. 122). He knows the true name of everyone he personally touches, and of every item that he sees clearly or handles, provided it *has* a name in an Earthly language that he knows. Knowing truth, he penetrates illusion with a touch.

Cherubim

(restricted)

A Cherub of Destiny knows if (and when) a person to whom he's attuned will die within the next year from mundane causes (disease, stepping in front of a bus, etc.). Yves' Cherubim know when the time is right for a mortal to pass on.

Ofanim

Travelers and wanderers, Yves' Ofanim can add their Celestial Forces to any Intelligence- or Knowledge-based skill roll by drawing upon their vast experiences.

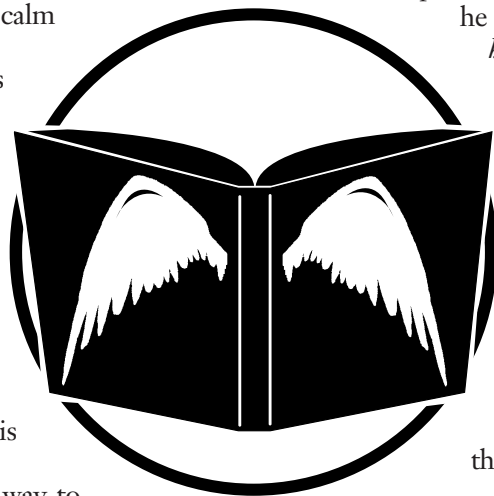
Elohim

(restricted)

Yves' Elohim are models of objectivity and detachment, who pay attention to the nuances of the Symphony. They automatically succeed in their resonance rolls when touching the subject, with an effective check digit equal to their Celestial Forces. (They may roll normally to try for a better check digit.)

Malakim

Protectors of Destiny, the honorable Malakim of Yves are sensitive to celestial tremors in the Symphony, able to tell a divine disturbance from a diabolical one. (Disturbances caused by ethereals and humans (Soldiers, undead, Saints, etc.) are not distinguishable from each other.)



BRIGHT LILIM (RESTRICTED)

Lilim serving Yves would know whether fulfilling a resonance-detected Need will lead the subject toward his destiny, his fate, or neither – though not *why*.

Kyriotates (restricted)

Understanding is inherent to the angels serving Destiny, and this includes memories. Yves' Kyriotates have complete access their host's memories, including Skills, as long as they remain inside that host.

Mercurians

Yves' Mercurians, through physical contact, can intuit a person's fortune – loves, career, etc. – for a number of months into the future equal to the angel's total Forces.

SERVITOR ATTUNEMENTS

The Akashic Record

This powerful attunement allows the angel to direct a question to the vaults of Heavenly Omniscience, gaining the answer to any *one* question about the present or past for the cost of 5 Essence. The question must be simple, direct and answerable in three words or less. Proper names such as "Angela Garret" or even "Sword of Commerce Municipal Savings & Loan" count as a single word. Use of this attunement requires a minute of quiet communication with Heaven.

Divine Destiny

For 1 Essence, the angel can see both fate and destiny in a mortal's face. He knows the greatest thing that person can achieve, as well as the weaknesses that might seal his fate.

Divine Logic

The angel can make practically anyone concede practically anything, as long as he believes it himself. In two minutes, with a successful Precision roll, he will prove to his target by simple logic that $a + b = c$, therefore he is right and any other possibility must be absurd. The victim may resist with an Intelligence roll.

Obviously, don't try proving to a Demon Prince that good is better than evil. Somehow, it never works.

Forgetful Words

Angels of Destiny are subtle, carefully tending the Symphony without interfering too much – but from time to time, even Yves' Servitors need to cover up their tracks to prevent any potential ripples in the Symphony. Angels with this attunement can cause mortals, and even other celestials, to forget ever meeting them.

All the angel must do is whisper in the target's ear and make a Will roll. If successful, the target will completely forget ever meeting the angel for a number of days equal to the check digit starting the second the angel leaves the target's eyesight. After this time, the target will only have vague and fleeting impressions of the meeting, easily dismissed as dreams or *déjà vu* – as long as the target never sees the angel again. If he does, a successful Perception roll causes the target to remember *everything*.

This attunement also works in reverse. For 1 Essence, the angel can implant a simple message or suggestion in the psyche of the target like "spend more time with the kids" or "forgive Dad." The target can resist with a Will roll.

Library Card

An angel with this attunement cannot be kept from recorded knowledge. Whether he wants to walk into the private stacks at a university library or access an Interpol database, all mundane security measures effectively cease to exist for the angel. Security guards will cheerfully wave him toward the suddenly unlocked door, the database will recognize whatever password he elects to try, and so on.

Past Lives

A rare attunement, Past Lives allows an angel to see a mortal's existence in its totality – in this life or another. To use Past Lives, the angel must touch the target. *If* the target has reincarnated (GM's choice) the angel is flooded with a montage of images and memories of the target's previous lives. These flashes should center on key moments when the target turned away from destiny or fate (and thus bound himself to the corporeal plane). The angel has no way of knowing which choices led away from which path, but gains a better understanding of who the target is, and where his destiny may lie.

Angels can use this ability on immortal humans (Saints and undead), but at the cost of 3 Essence.

Right of Passage

This attunement is never granted casually. It should be reserved for those angels who have distinguished themselves in play. It allows the angel to use the Gateways



(p. 120) that link every repository of knowledge to the Library for a cost of 6 Essence per trip (returning to the point of entrance costs no Essence). This ability is normally limited to Yves and to the pure of heart. Any angel granted this attunement must display a similar purity.

For every additional point of Essence spent, the angel can bring another with him, but if that person strays from the angel, he will become lost. This attunement may only be used to travel to the Library and back again.

Synchronicity

Many followers of Yves describe destiny as an ocean of possibility. With this attunement the angel lets the waves of destiny take him where they might. By concentrating for a moment and spending 3 Essence, the angel will appear where he is most needed in the Symphony, without causing a disturbance. The angel has no control of where he materializes, nor does he know why or what he must do. He is, for all intents and purposes, at the mercy of Destiny.

Where the angel manifests is up to the GM (usually within the same city).

DISTINCTIONS

Vassal of Destiny

The angel immediately comprehends any printed material he sees, even if it's only flashed before him, and his indelible memory will never forget it.

Friend of the Sages

The angel has a general, college-level education . . . in every subject. He has a default target number of 11 for any sort of general Knowledge, except Area Knowledge. To simulate this, the player may consult the encyclopedia or general reference book of his choice during play.



nd keep on praying through that
bass, for it is a link to Jah. One love,
one heart, one destiny.

– Flabba Holt

Master of Divine Knowledge

The angel is so in tune with the Symphony that he gains the natural resonance of another Choir! However, he becomes bound by the dissonance rules of that Choir – if, for example, a Mercurian Master of Divine Knowledge acquires the resonance of the Seraphim, he can detect the truth but generates dissonance for lying. These angels' appearance also alters slightly to reflect their new connection to the Symphony, but never enough to mask their original Choir.

HIGHER DISTINCTIONS

Beyond Masters of Divine Knowledge, Yves grants the Distinctions of Scholar and Philosopher to those who have distinguished themselves in their service to the Word of Destiny. Scholars and Philosophers are the celestial equivalent of honored university dons, each sharing their wisdom in leadership of the namers and thinkers of the Host. Respected Word-bound angels in their own right, Scholars and Philosophers are equally comfortable in the chaos of the Earthly war and in the calm peace of Yves' Library. It should take a lot of serious play for angel PCs to attain these Distinctions. Neither title is inherently superior to the other, and some angels have *both*.

The full title of angels bearing these Distinctions is derived from their Word. The Angel of Secret Languages, one of Yves' Scholars, is titled the Scholar of Secret Languages. Yves' higher Distinctions carry with them no special powers, unlike the lower Distinctions. Rather, they are typically awarded with several unique Rites – and a new level of responsibility. The higher in the hierarchy an angel gets, the less time he'll spend on Earth.

RELATIONS

Liked and respected by his fellow Archangels, Yves is a cornerstone in Heaven. Unlike Dominic, or even Michael, who are deliberately conspicuous, Yves moves in subtle and delicate ways, always there when needed with a word of encouragement or timely advice.

The quintessential "gray man" of celestial politics, Yves' stance is always – "what should be, will be" – a stance that has many whispering about the Archangel of Destiny's motives in the War. Yves' answer: "what should be, will be."

Allied: *No one (Dominic considers himself Allied to Yves.)*

Associated: *Blandine, Gabriel, Jean (Blandine, Eli, Gabriel, Janus, Jean, Jordi, Laurence, and Novalis are Associated with Yves.)*

Hostile: *No one (Michael is Hostile to Yves)*

SECRET SONGS

Yves' Library contains every Song ever composed – but only Yves knows where to look. The Archangel of Destiny is known to teach the following Songs: Symphony (*Liber Canticorum*, p. 57), Correspondence (*Liber Canticorum*, p. 65), Daydreams (*Liber Canticorum*, p. 67), and Fruition (*Liber Canticorum*, p. 70). In addition, he surely recalls a number of lost Songs left up to the GM. There is little the Archangel of Destiny does not know.

BASIC RITES

- ✘ Spend two hours in deep philosophical discussion.
- ✘ Spend four hours teaching willing students.
- ✘ Spend six hours studying in a library or meditating.

EXPANDED RITES

- ✘ Spend an hour writing in a journal.
- ✘ Spend six hours walking a city's streets, witnessing the Symphony unfold.
- ✘ Engage in a game of chance (not for profit) to understand randomness and how it impacts destiny.
- ✘ Read the same book in at least five different languages.
- ✘ Help a mortal solve an enigma or recover some "lost" fragment of recorded knowledge (e.g., a scroll from the Library of Alexandria) through mundane means.

Believe that people have the right to decide their own destinies; *people own themselves.*

– Frank Zappa

CHANCE OF INVOCATION: 1

INVOCATION MODIFIERS

- +1 A detailed city map.
- +2 An encyclopedia.
- +3 Solve *The New York Times*' Sunday crossword puzzle.
- +4 Successfully apply to a major college.
- +5 Read materials in 10 languages.
- +6 Recite the Bible from memory for an hour.

YVES: GIVER OF NAMES

*“There is a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will.”*

– William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, V:II:10

NAMES, APPEARANCE, AND MANNER

The Namer of God, of Good, of Evil, and of the Symphony, goes by a simple name – Yves. Each creature, celestial or not, comprehends the Archangel’s name at an intrinsic level. Just as “sky” (“cielo,” “sora,” “jardawalara-walara” . . .) best describes the swath of blue above, or “night” (“nox,” “xiao,” “sv-no-i” . . .) the time between sunset and sunrise, so “Yves” best defines the Giver of Names and the Archangel of Destiny.

Yves manifests as an elderly gentleman with gray hair, and deep blue eyes hidden behind wire-rimmed spectacles. He has no other form – even in Heaven – yet everyone sees him differently. The basics remain the same – elderly human, glasses – but the details vary. To some, he’s a soft-spoken grandfather, to others he’s a regal and aging head of state.

Only his garments have changed through the ages. During Roman times, he favored the robes of philosophers and oracles; during the Middle Ages, monkish habits suited Yves best. Today, Yves is partial to slightly wrinkled tweed sports jackets and slacks that paint a distinguished and subdued image of the Archangel of Destiny.

Yves is the very definition of a gentleman scholar: his emotions are always in check and if he has nothing nice to say, he says nothing at all. Even when he has something to say, Yves is reserved and prefers to let others reach their own conclusions. To this end, he’ll subtly drop hints, even nudge the person in the right direction, but he’ll never force his opinions on others.

A few of his fellow Archangels, *particularly* Michael, have accused Yves of manipulating events through his silence and cryptic answers. The Archangel of Destiny, however, understands the Symphony moves in mysterious ways, and that even the most enigmatic or dubious motive eventually reveals its purpose in the greater scheme of things . . . all that one needs is a little faith.

THE WORD OF DESTINY

Yves’ Word begins and ends with the Symphony. Yves understands, like he did the moment he named God, that without Destiny (or its hope) and Fate (and the fear of it) there can be no Symphony. Without these two concepts,

COMMON MALAKITE OATHS

- ✘ Never assume a course of action is the right one until all possibilities are evaluated. Act on reason, not instinct.
- ✘ Never use weapons; they encourage rash actions.
- ✘ Accept the possibility of forgiveness.
- ✘ Never allow someone to reject destiny without confronting them.
- ✘ Judge people for their present actions, not their past.
- ✘ Show others the errors of their ways, not through violence but through reason, understanding, and compassion.
- ✘ Never let someone reject destiny because of pride or fear.
- ✘ Fight only if I must, and not for glory or pride.

reality, the “Cosmic All,” even the Almighty would exist in lifeless stasis, frozen in potentiality for all of existence.

When Yves gazed upon this totality for the first time, he also understood that just as it had begun, it must eventually end. And with this came the realization that Fate and Destiny lay at the core of what had been, what was, and what would be. One would drag the Symphony into the darkness of despair, the other elevate it to something more. Without hesitation, Yves took the mantle of shepherd and protector of Destiny – that which is the brightest and best for the Symphony.

Destiny is not a matter of chance,
it is a matter of choice; it is not a
thing to be waited for, it is a thing
to be achieved.

Destiny exists in everyone and everything. Each aspect of the Symphony has its part to play and it is Yves’ duty to ensure that this potential is actualized. Destiny is an all encompassing Word; it is not a thing, like Stone, a place, like the Marches, or an idea, like Judgment, but all these and more. Yves, and his Word, are at the root of the Symphony. One could even call Destiny the celestial “Big Bang” that set the universe in motion, the divine spark in each and every one.

More concretely, Yves’ Word concerns itself with guiding the Symphony and ensuring that the Light prevails over the Darkness. Unlike other Archangels who preoccupy themselves with abstract concepts and often overlook the individual actions of mortals, Yves knows these actions are what define Destiny.



Destiny is a fragile and delicate thing that cannot be forced or manipulated. It is a culmination of individual choices, the important word being “choice.” Angels with the best of intentions have turned people from their destinies to their fates by interfering with their free will. Like a tender flower, Destiny needs to blossom on its own. It can be sheltered, even protected, but it must grow by its own power. Everyone must decide what path to take. The choice is theirs and theirs alone.

However, destiny is more than just letting “what is meant to be” happen. Choices can’t be forced, but they can be educated. Without awareness of all the possibilities, there can be no Destiny. This is why Yves is the Giver of Names, and why his angels are Heaven’s chroniclers and scholars. It’s not enough to walk the less-traveled path; Yves’ followers must know where both paths lead and why.

More important than knowledge and understanding, however, is faith. Without faith, Yves would not have the confidence to let events unfold as they should, knowing that it’s God’s will in the end.

HISTORY

The Symphony (call it what you like: reality, the universe, the Cosmic All) is both aware and self-aware. You’re a part of it, and so is everybody else and everything else. It sings, it dances, and it lives. When Yves was given the task of naming the Symphony’s awareness, he called it God.

From time to time, God *manifests*, taking on a single perspective within Himself, speaking with a single Voice that resonates with the truth of every age past and every possible future. The light and music is pure enough to knock an Archangel to his knees, weeping with joy. It is an experience akin to the overwhelming ecstasy of the upper Heavens, where God is always visible.

Why God first manifested at all is a mystery. Many of the demons say that the Symphony got lonely, and solved the problem by fragmenting into a schizoid mess. They also hasten to point out that until the Fall, it was still lonely, and that it’s probably happier now that there are two sides in the War. But that’s just hearsay from demons. Take it for what it’s worth.

Whatever the reason, God manifested, creating within Himself a consciousness with which to really *look* at Himself, and called it Yves. Yves named God in turn, and for the first time the universe stared itself in the eye.

What followed was less the story of the Archangel of Destiny and more the story of the birth of the living cosmos. Yves was there to name Heaven when it was created, and each layer of reality above and below it. He named Michael, the first angel, and then each of the

DESTINY AND CHOICE

At one point or another all Servitors of Destiny come face to face with the quandary of free will, choice, and destiny. Is the Symphony preordained or not? Is it nothing but an infinite collection of choices, each one dragging or elevating creation toward fate or destiny? Is Yves nothing more than a celestial scorekeeper, or is he Destiny's guide and shepherd? If Yves knows, he is keeping silent on the matter.

What all Servitors of Yves know is that in the end, destiny cannot be forced or coerced. Destiny is all about choice. Angels and demons can influence this choice, but everyone must decide what path to follow on his own.

Some Servitors argue that everything is predestined except that moment of choice. Everything that comes before and after is out of one's control. Everything is set

in Symphonic stone, in a matter of speaking, except that epiphany of free will where mortals and angels decide what road to take.

Other servants of Yves view destiny and the Symphony as liquid: a divine river that shifts and bubbles almost at random. To them, destiny is not *one* choice, but a lifetime of challenges, quandaries, and possibilities that define the course of the river.

Not everyone is aware that they have a choice in the first place. Without the right nurturing and guidance, many are either ignorant of these divine moments in their lives, or reject them out of fear and misunderstanding. Some are not willing to make the sacrifices needed. There are times – and all followers of Yves know this – when Destiny can be a cruel and exacting Word, even if the goal is lofty and pure.

Choirs. He named Man. He organized Heaven and gave the first great angels Words.

Yves is a part of God. *Everything* is, since God and the Symphony are just two ways of looking at the same thing. In the sense, though, of God as a single all-encompassing Persona of the Symphony, Yves is more than just the Archangel who speaks to God – Yves is God manifest. It's

more complicated than that, of course; in the Heavenly realms above that which the Archangels know, *everyone* has much greater oneness with the Symphony. Yves, though, was the first to inhabit that place, and he elected to stay down with the angels. They don't fully understand this, and that's fine. Their understanding of Yves is no more complete than man's understanding of them.

SINGULARITY OF VISION

Yves is not omniscient, but he knows the names of all things, everything that has been written down, and – as Archangel of Destiny – all the best and brightest possibilities for the world.

Although kind and approachable, Yves is unique, almost alien among the Archangels. Whereas his fellow Archangels concern themselves with a specific aspect of the Symphony, Yves encompasses more than a single concept or emotion. Many see Yves as a facet of God himself, capable of seeing and understanding the “bigger picture” and having the faith to let it unfold. But there is more to Yves and his Word than that.

Yves is neither omniscient nor infallible; such thinking would only be prideful and the fastest path toward Falling. At the moment Yves named God, he witnessed a glimpse of the totality of the Symphony,

and with this singularity of vision, Yves *understood*.

In an instant he heard the names of all things to be; his Library filled with empty shelves for the many volumes that would fill it, and he saw how it was all *supposed* to end. Had Yves remained detached, a simple observer, this singularity of vision and understanding would have continued. He knew, however, that his role was to be part of the Symphony and not spectator. He loved God and the Symphony too much to remain a passive witness, and so he sacrificed his omniscience, his holistic vision, for the ability to affect and safeguard Destiny.

Many argue that to this day, all that Yves retains is that initial vision, that intrinsic memory of *how* things are meant to happen. This does not make him perfect. However, it gives Yves confidence in the belief that he is doing what must be done.



God is concerned with destiny on every level . . . including the Divine. It's a mistake to assume that Good and Evil apply to God, or that He is one or the other. Yves created those words to simplify initial understanding of the way things work – introductory terms that outlive their usefulness once you move on to the next step. The truth is that the entire Symphony has a destiny and a fate, and the final movement of the Symphony depends on the destiny and fate of every smaller thing within it. That's where Yves comes in. Yves is God's own destiny, working to complete itself in Heavenly perfection; Kronos, also a (warped and damaged) manifestation of the Almighty, is God's own dark fate, trying to drag the rest of the Symphony down with him into the pit.

Armed with a singular purpose – the safekeeping of *everyone's* destiny – Yves turned faith into religion in the earliest days of mankind. This simple exercise turned into a millennia-long experiment in the nature of independence and learning. As the angelic Host grew and matured and learned about mankind, they did so through the channels created by religion, since it provided a natural interface between the divine and the mundane. Some of the wilder spirits of the younger Earth reveled in the concept, and cults and faiths of all kinds flourished, met one another and fought. What had been meant as a teaching tool was often twisted by human selfishness and ignorance into

a justification for hatred, war, and atrocity, and every new attempt just seemed to make things more complex.

Islam was Yves' last major attempt to teach mankind through religion. Not only did humanity use this new religion as another excuse to make war on one another, the Archangels themselves were torn apart, arguing over Gabriel's supposed heresy.

Most of this took place in the days when the Seraphim Council was still young, and humanity had spent only a few scant centuries forming nations and kingdoms. These days, young and brash angels see all this history as errors of Yves, errors of the elder Archangels and, most of all, errors of Man. Maybe. The trouble is, many of the angels, while they like to talk about how everything is a reflection of God, find it easy to forget how true that is. The Symphony learns, and it was learning then, as it is now.

PERSONALITY AND OUTLOOK

Amid the strained relations and emphatic personalities of the Seraphim Council, Yves is an island of pleasant, self-assured good humor. He treats every angel as a friend, and in turn is treated by every angel (except Michael) as the most benevolent of mentors. An encounter with Yves is an experience in casual, comfortable awe. Yves is very, very easy to like, and he never gives anyone reason to feel otherwise.

Unlike his infernal counterpart Kronos, who is concerned only with the powerful and overtly significant, Yves truly cares about everybody. Anyone talking to him gets a sense of this, but also notices the tiniest hint of distraction . . . Yves himself is perpetually calm and mellow, but his mind is always busy, even when he isn't wandering in the depths of his Library.

There is no greater optimist than the Archangel of Destiny. GMs portraying him should keep in mind that he sees the best in everybody, often seeing qualities and potential in them that they've never seen in themselves. It is, after all, the task of Yves and his followers to encourage those hidden qualities to emerge.

In dialogue, Yves always refers to everyone by the names they are most comfortable with. There isn't a single subject that Yves doesn't enjoy discussing. He knows everything that has ever been written down . . . but every living memory contains experiences that are unique, and contain valuable lessons. Yves is always curious to learn more.

Priorities

Yves works in mysterious ways. Rather than expending his resources on key humans, or even key conflicts in the war, Yves works through the broad spectrum of human thought and learning, in order to aid humanity's betterment of itself. He does the same for the celestials, in ways every bit as subtle. Yves understands that destiny cannot be forced (to attempt it is practically an invitation to fate). Destiny is a gradual process of learning and maturity. Yves seeks to nurture, not to drive. The signature tools of the angels of Yves are insight and inspiration.

Yves' priorities and methods have themselves changed over the course of time. Before the advent of Islam (*In Nomine*, p. 134), Yves was equally concerned with knowledge and names, but was more overt, seeking to inspire mankind through awareness of the Divine. Now, his approach is more concerned with mankind's *self*-awareness and each human's awareness of every other.

Views on the War

Before Lucifer's rebellion, there was only destiny. Fate existed, but only as dark potential. It took Lucifer's selfish act to actualize it. Did the Fall come as a surprise to Yves? Yes and no. He understood from the very beginning the *potential* of the Fall, but he never expected something as perfect and loving as the Symphony to schism into fate and rebellion. It was an incomprehensible outcome.

To Yves, the War is all about destiny and the final choice that will either plunge everything into darkness or shower it with light. Regardless of what Laurence and Michael think, Yves is heavily involved in the war. Unlike Heaven's warriors, Yves tends to the Symphony across a wide

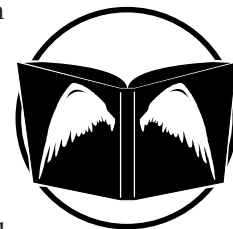
spectrum of individual action, one person, one choice, at a time.

Of late, Yves' attention is focused on preparing his Servitors and humanity for the new millennium. Lucifer's legions seems to be gaining the upper hand and this has everyone nervous, even Yves. He knows, however, that every new beginning springs from the ashes of the old. The Symphony is changing, adapting and preparing itself for what's next. Patience and understanding are what Heaven and Earth need.

Yves knows that rash action is detrimental; it denies the wisdom of judgment and blinds faith with the folly of righteousness and hubris. These may not be the end times, but they are trying times nonetheless and Yves' main concern is to preach understanding and patience. Just because Destiny is all that is good and best doesn't mean it is without pain or sacrifice. There are times when events must unfold for themselves even if they seem wrong or harmful. Who are mortals, or angels – especially angels – to judge God's plan?

Views on God

The Archangel of Destiny sees God in everyone and everything – there is no doubt in Yves' mind that the Almighty exists. Yves sees himself as a messenger, a concrete manifestation of God's abstract Divinity. He understands he is more than the medium for the message – that he *is* God's message. Additionally, he acts as the messenger *to* God – He shares in everything Yves sees and does.



Did Yves create God by naming Him? The process of naming something is often interpreted as creating it by a number of cultures and philosophies. It's the traditional "chicken or the egg" argument. Was there something before Yves became aware and spoke, or did he formulate the concept first and then it manifested?

This is a hotly debated question in both Heaven and Hell, and whatever the answer or position taken, it's clear there is something more out there. This essence exists beyond mortal, celestial, and even Yves' comprehension and can only be vaguely understood as "God."

Perhaps at the moment of creation, Yves lost the capacity to understand "God" and it became a separate entity, an all-encompassing totality of which Yves was now a part – Yves/God could no longer exist outside of itself. Or maybe these are all questions meant to make one (celestial or not) self-aware and conscious that one is a part of a bigger reality.

Yves himself has no comment on the debate.

When we walk to the edge of all the light we have; And take the step into the darkness of the unknown; We must believe that one of two things will happen . . . There will be something solid for us to stand on, Or we will be taught to fly.

—Patrick Overton

POLITICS

It would be inaccurate to say that Yves doesn't play politics. Rather, he plays politics on a different level than the other Archangels. While it is not widely understood that Yves is, after a fashion, God manifest, it is understood that Yves has a kind of "in" with the Almighty. If you want to get word to Him, then Yves is known to be the one to talk to (some angels *do* pray, but just talking to Yves offers more feedback).

Since the Islam incident, Yves is careful not to involve himself too heavily in angelic politics, instead trying to remain true to his policy of detached intervention. But the truth of the matter is that even outside the political arena, Yves profoundly affects his fellow Archangels. Most see him as a mentor and companion. However, just because most Archangels like and respect Yves, it doesn't mean they *understand* him or his motives. At his core, Yves, though approachable, is a vexing creature.

As the War rolls on, militant Archangels like Michael have come to worry about the Archangel of Destiny's motives. Only the Archangel of War openly criticizes Yves, calling into question his silence on a great number of issues. The wounds over the persecution of Gabriel, which Yves could have ended so easily, still run deep with Michael.

Even Dominic, who sees Yves as the epitome of celestial wisdom, worries about the Archangel of Destiny's *laissez-faire* attitude toward the Fallen and the redeemed. Not everyone should be granted a second chance. Nonetheless, Dominic is not about to start questioning Yves, one of his oldest allies and dearest friends. The Archangel of Judgment has faith in Yves.

As for Hell, Yves is an enigma and many Diabolicals fear him more than they fear David or Laurence – just because they cannot understand him.

Archangelic Opinions

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

Blandine: Kind, sweet old Yves . . . When I was younger and understood less, I once was foolish enough to be angry with him. Never since. He is a mentor and a friend and does as much to bring the bright dreams of mankind to reality as I do. (*When the trouble with Beleth came, Blandine, dear friend though she is, was angry with me for not warning her. But I had, in so many ways; in every way that I could. That was a brief flash, though; she was still quite young, and she has since accepted the complexities of her destiny with elegance. She is one of our brightest, and I miss the days when we could talk more often.*)

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

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

YVES AND GABRIEL

Few understand Yves like the Archangel of Fire does. Even after the Islam incident, and her storming out of Heaven, Gabriel is still close to Yves. Gabriel is one of the only celestials Yves ever confides in, often spending days in deep conversation with her. It pains him to see her in her present situation, but he knows a brighter future lies ahead – or at least is supposed to. Lately, Yves worries that not all the Archangels understand this; some blame her for Dominic's fanaticism and for Michael's rift with Yves, polarizing Heaven.

Quietly, Yves wonders if he did the right thing for his trusted and beloved companion. There is no doubt that Islam was meant to be, but he wonders why so few understand this, even to this day. Yves has paid dearly, and continues to do so, for his silence in the matter.

YVES AND MICHAEL

The growing rift between the Archangels of Destiny and War worries many. It doesn't bode well if the two oldest celestials, Yves and Michael, cannot see eye to eye. Many are asking what has gone wrong to bring "brothers" to not speak to each other.

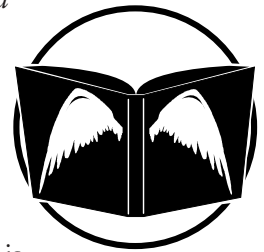
To Michael, it's a question of doubt, and doubt can poison the closest of relationships. Yves' silence weighs heavily on God's champion, especially in a time when action is called for. Michael loves God above all, he follows His orders implicitly, but he cannot not comprehend how Yves can simply sit back. The persecution of Gabriel was only one of many events where Michael was at a loss to explain Yves' silence

To Yves, it is a question of faith. Those who implicitly trust need no answers, and the Archangel of Destiny is concerned that Michael has so many questions. Even if Yves could explain his motives to Michael, he's not sure the Archangel of War would, or even could, understand. It pains Yves to see Michael, the first angel he ever named, grow distant, but some truths must be accepted without question. Further, Michael knows that Yves' Library contains *everything* written; why, then, does Yves not present any of the Enemy's written battleplans to the Seraphim council?

Eli: Yves? *Yves?* Oh, God. I love him, he's wonderful. Always was. Half of the Seraphim Council are as stuffy and narrow as they are just to compensate for the humility he makes them feel. It's not something he does on

purpose, but it's a problem for *them* to get over someday. (*I understand his wanderlust; creation is fleeting and elusive if one grows too detached from it. We tend to spend so much time contemplating the intangibles that we lose touch with what's real. I trust that Eli won't lose himself in the process.*)

Gabriel: When a long time passes and we do not speak, I remember his madness . . . his quiet, deep, *essential* madness. He is such a good friend and the kindest of them all. (*I have long since put the past behind me – I have seen how others have taken words and twisted them. It is not my destiny that I am concerned about, but all of creation's. In the end, Gabriel will remain – this I have seen, as I have seen her aurora burn over the horizon of potentiality. She is the fire that speaks to patriarchs and saints, she is the holy inspiration that moves humanity to wisdom. Wherever she goes, there is God.*)



Janus: He changes; that's fantastic. He is proof that wisdom and stagnation have *nothing* to do with one another. As the chaotic forces erode the old surfaces and bare new ones, he's *already there*, smiling back at you as though he'd been sitting there all along, reading. (*Pure and ever-changing, Janus sweeps through the Symphony shaking things up. He's the wind that brings storm clouds to wash away the old and feed the new. The change he brings allows the potential to become the possible.*)

Jean: A respectable scholar. *The* respectable scholar; many of the younger angels lack the wit to give him his proper due. Our purposes are really much the same; I meet him often in the Library. (*The student is now the teacher, bringing light to the world – as is his destiny. I did no more than set him on his path, he did all the rest. A dear friend and scholar, faithful to the end.*)

YVES AND KRONOS

Kronos perplexes Yves. His arrival came as a complete surprise to the Archangel of Destiny. While he knows Kronos' nature (see p. 112), he never named Kronos, nor recalls any being who could have Fallen and become Kronos. This "mental gap" troubles Yves greatly, but only those who know him well (Gabriel among them) know this. Kronos is a thorn in Yves' side, and ever since the Prince's appearance, the two have battled each other.

Quiet, serene Yves is anything *but* serene when confronting his nemesis. At the slightest indication that Kronos is meddling with the Symphony, Yves sends in his heavy hitters. Yves is methodical and pragmatic when it comes to Kronos, but he doesn't mince his words or keep the kid gloves on. Battles between Yves and Kronos take place in the shadows and over the course of years. Both understand subtlety and the fact that the Symphony, when pushed too hard, often reacts contrary to expectation.

If there's one being who truly understands Yves and his methods, it's Kronos, and vice-versa – a fact that drives their respective allies mad.

Jordi: He was right to discard religion; it even tears angels apart. Big buildings, big temples, more people clustered together between walls. They don't belong there. These days, they're out there in the wild, finding the real truth again. And Yves – he cares about everything. I've seen his angels risk eternal destruction to help a crippled rat heal itself and return to its family. Animals have destinies, too, and fates . . . Yves doesn't ignore them. *(He understands that everything has a place, but needs to extend his perceptions to include humanity. Perfect they are not, but they are part of God's plans. In time, all will be set right. Jordi is pure, his destiny bright.)*

Laurence: I respect him. I admire him. There are days when I envy him, and one or two days when I think I'm lucky enough to understand him. I'm glad the Halls of Worship are left to me, though. He made some mistakes there that he's been wise enough to avoid making again. *(Some are inclined to judge him harshly, because he hasn't already won the War for us. After spending eons waiting for the Earth to cool, haven't his fellow Archangels learned patience yet? God didn't select Laurence on a whim.)*

Marc: He is the master of information, and that's the new gold, the gold that will last. He's always understood that. I'm a little embarrassed to admit how much of it I had to learn from him. Well – not really embarrassed. We all learn from Yves. He teaches us. I think that's what he's here for. *(He exists for details. He understands the nuances and minutiae of mortal existence, but at times loses sight of the forest for its trees. At least he's an excellent listener.)*

Michael: I stood by his side to defend Gabriel. I don't think we've really talked since without fighting. He's wrong about so much. *(War is a harsh Word to bear. He has gathered the years of his Word around him as a shield to protect himself from all other things. Time can refine the vision, or distort it: it will become clear, regardless.)*

Novalis: I adore the old man. You don't really know Yves until you've seen him in a garden . . . it's like another library to him. He sits down and smells the air and sees a million truths dancing in the sunlight. He's always been there for me, you know. When things get to be a little too much, he'll always find time to talk. *(We share the same ambition, to encourage, nurture, and protect. Her Word is a microcosm of the Symphony.)*

Princely Opinions

Princely views on Yves (and Yves' commentary on the Princes).

Andrealphus: Yves may be an insufferably ineffable being, but a *single* soul reaching his fate in Hell proves him wrong, and proves that the entire universe is flawed. The only happy endings are the ones that we take for ourselves. He embodies a lie.

(Some say that the road to Hell is smooth and pleasant. Andrealphus embodies this. But even if he chose his path at the Fall, he cannot prevent the possibility of his redemption from existing. I think that frightens him more than anything else.)

Asmodeus: Ah, yes, Yves. There's a curious being. So unlike the rest of Heaven's host. He and Kronos knock heads without even trying. *(He's relentless in hunting down Renegades, those for whom the Symphony still has hope. Destroying the repentant can not drown out his desire for forgiveness.)*

Baal: I have no time to waste on that bookworm. As long as his spat with Michael keeps my rival occupied, so much the better. *(There is too much destruction in the world. Everything he touches flares with dissonance and Discord. He must be stopped; senseless wars obliterate hope, and without hope there can be no destiny.)*

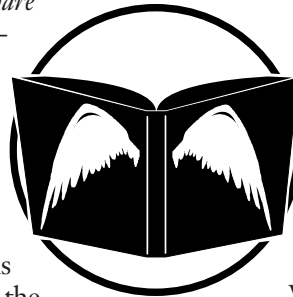
Beleth: Foolish Yves, little does he realize the darkness that lurks in the hearts of man, and in their dreams. If he really understood, he would see that destiny is nothing but a fanciful dream, and in his deluded mind, a nightmare. *(Without the light of destiny, all one can see is despair and darkness.)*

Belial: Nothing burns better than paper – well, maybe flesh. Yves concerns me little . . . let him worry about destiny while I burn down this church here. *(He reminds us that, while the spark of knowledge inspires, it can also consume and take on a murderous rage. Belial is a danger; but the same flames he worships will smother him.)*

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

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

Kronos: Always struggling with questions of objectivity – should I or should I not? In the end, it doesn't matter, the longer he remains detached and "faithful" to God, the quicker Destiny and the Symphony will slip through his fingers. Destiny and Fate are one and the same when you really think about it; it's all a matter of taking choice away and keeping people in the dark so that we can enforce our will. *(He's mistaken, blinded by arrogance and hubris. Destiny is to give oneself to a higher power. Fate is to succumb to one's fears and worries.)*



Names are all about power, and the angels must delude themselves if they think Yves is their equal. He who names, defines, and he who defines, controls . . .

– Oscar Guelph, Adept of the Black Order

Lilith: I remember when he named me. And I remember when he walked away, and Lucifer explained free will to us. Yves is tricky, but I'll deal with him; the knowledge he commands is still tempting. *(It remains to be seen if Fate has truly claimed Lilith – her story is not over. Freedom brings hope, and hope leads to destiny.)*

Malphas: He understands the Symphony is made up of individual parts, each with their own wants, desires, and ambitions. I just shake things up a bit. *(He does Heaven's work without knowing it. For every soul he snares, another ten see the lie and strive for the light. After a while, people stop believing in lies and seek the truth.)*

Nybbas: Destiny makes a nice plot, but in real life, it's a load of crap. You get to the top on your own, and you stay there by standing on the dead bodies of your rivals. Yves is a senile old fool with his mind in the Dark Ages. Kronos can handle him. *(His alliance with Kronos is a dangerous one. He allows Fate to reach out further than it ever could before. Nybbas is a key figure in the War, and will have more to do with its conclusion than many will admit.)*

Saminga: Silly little man, there is no destiny except death. Death is the end of everything. *(Death is an integral aspect of the Symphony – natural, necessary. He has perverted it, turned it into something to fear, and this only gives Hell more power.)*

Valefor: His Library is full of priceless books he wouldn't miss . . . if I could just get inside. Again. *(Loss can be good, forcing one to reevaluate what is dear and why. Theft shakes things up, but more often than not in a negative and harmful way.)*

NAMING THINGS

Yves named Light and Dark, Good and Evil, God and Heaven and angels and a billion other things. He was the original Giver of Names, and he and his angels still serve that function. Naming things lacks the overt grandeur of seeing to mankind's destiny, but it is nevertheless a powerful tool often underestimated by both sides of the War. The names of things can define the way things are considered, forever shaping the path taken by mankind. If "good" and "evil" had never been defined, for instance, everything would be *very* different. Whether or not good and evil literally exist isn't even the point. Because they are concepts, because they have *names*, they take on a reality that must be dealt with, and their reality touches everything else. A problem must be named to be solved, but by naming it you give the problem a stronger hold on reality.

Today, most of the actual run-of-the-mill naming is carried out by humans (lexicographers, taxonomists, inventors, and others) watched over by angelic functionaries, not by Yves himself. These angels are among the most political in the Host, since they must answer to Yves and cooperate with the rest of the Heaven. While Archangel Jean's servants are the angels of technology now, it is the angels of Yves who invented the concept of the technical jargon that gives engineers and programmers much of their freedom to work as they please (the same concept introduced in antiquity for doctors, priests, and mystics).

These angels are often caught up in a sort of semantic "spin control," keeping important words like "honor," "virtue," or "justice" from being given foul or deceptive meanings by their demonic opposite numbers. The Servitors of Nybbas have been the greatest challenge for Yves' Servitors in recent years, as the Demon Prince of the Media tries to recast words like "true," "family," or "adult" in his own corrupt idiom.

Vapula: Pathetic and irrelevant. His time is past. *(Technology is such a wonderful "gift," but so easily abused. He has made the ends justify the means.)*

Have designed my style pantomimes as white ink drawings on black backgrounds, so that man's destiny appears as a thread lost in an endless labyrinth

– Marcel Marceau

PHILOSOPHY

For a very long time, Yves worked with the theory that the best way to help mankind find its destiny was to reveal some direct knowledge of the Divine, wrapped in packages that included insight on avoiding the dark temptations of fate. To this end, Yves invented religion, and was once Heaven's principal proponent of the concept.

Today, religion is still an active issue, but its defense has been taken over by Khalid, Dominic, and Laurence. Yves now prefers philosophy – the same packages of insight, but tied to observations of human life rather than knowledge of the Divine. It seems to be more effective, in the circles where it takes hold, because philosophy encourages thought rather than obedience, and one of the first lessons that Yves and his angels learned about humans is that you can do them a lot more good by asking than by ordering. Yves named this quality “independence” and, joking aside, it was a hard lesson for the angels to learn, since it's a foreign concept to many celestials.

Humans and Others

Humanity: Humans are the linchpins of the Symphony in a way we can only barely comprehend. Each stands at a crossroad between destiny and fate, the choice their own, but few of us understand exactly what this means. It is easy to forget, with our gifted vision and station in the Symphony, that all we're meant to be is guardians and protectors. The Symphony was created for them; our job is to ensure the show runs smoothly and that it ends as it's meant to.

Soldiers of God: They have accepted their role in the Symphony and God's plan and now strive to show others the glory of destiny. Single-minded in their dedication, they understand as only those who *made* the right choice can. We can only see one path, the bright one, but my Soldiers understand all too well that there are two paths, and every being ultimately decides which to take.

Sorcerers: They are no strangers to choices, but unfortunately they often make the wrong one. Those few who avoid fate have bright destinies, as their special gifts give them a vantage point unique in the Symphony.

Ethereals: Everything has a destiny. Uriel's crusade destroyed many and sent many more to their unjust fates. This is why patience and understanding are needed more than swords or rage to win the War.

VARIATIONS ON A THEME

Yves as God

It's entirely possible that Yves *is* God, or at least that part of the Almighty that is both conscious and aware, a fragment projected by the One to better understand the Symphony and its potential. Yves certainly fits the mold of an enigmatic divinity watching the Symphony unfold from his front-row seat. From this point of view, Yves/God sacrificed His universal view for a more detailed and intimate understanding of His creation. Yves/God sees things how His angels see them, better understands them, and can ultimately guide them down the truest path.

Yves as Tyrant

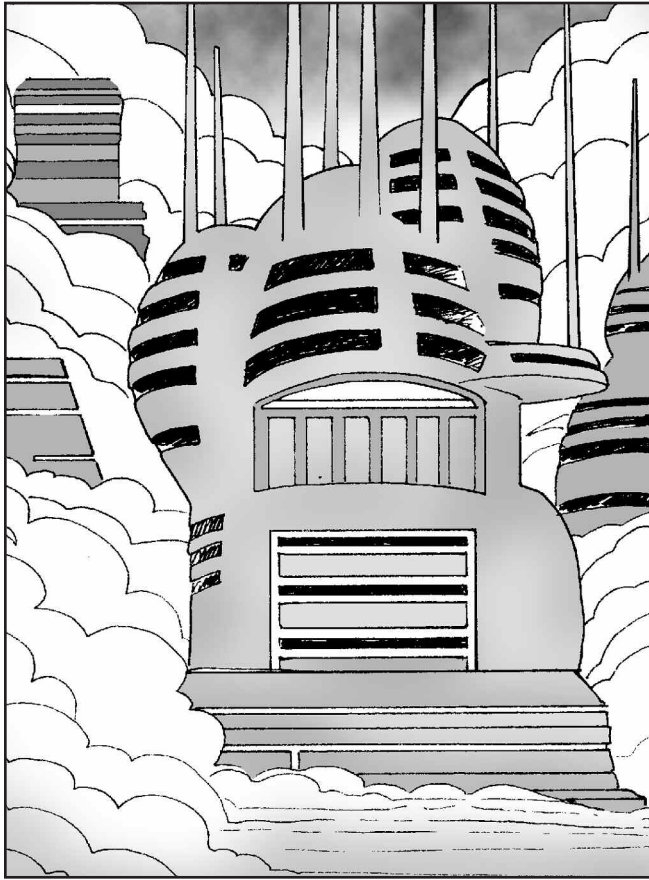
A darker version of Yves would see him as a tyrant, willing and able to do what must be done to ensure Destiny is the only outcome for the Symphony. This tyrant of Destiny would become the ultimate puppet master, using his intimate knowledge of the Symphony to manipulate events and make sure there is no choice between fate and destiny.

To this darker version of Yves, the ends would justify the means. He would not be a cold and heartless Superior, but one who understands what hangs in the balance and what must be done to ensure a destiny-favorable outcome. This dark Yves would not hesitate to sacrifice anything or anybody if the end result brought the Symphony closer to its destiny. His perspective would change from subtly encouraging people to choose destiny over fate, to giving them only one choice – no matter the cost.

A tyrannical Yves would be Heaven's dictator and master conspirator, pulling strings and using his knowledge of the future to orchestrate the War from the Library. It would take anyone, even Dominicans, years to uncover Yves' web of control. For all appearances, Yves would still project his stoic and calm exterior, but this, like so many other things, would only be a front to hide behind. Characters could either discover Yves' machinations as part of a celestial conspiracy, or they could be agents in the Archangel of Destiny's secret agenda.

Yves the Madman

Yves understands, he *knows*, and this is what sets him apart from the other Archangels. But knowledge oftentimes comes with a price. The moment he gazed at God and named Him, Yves' mind fractured – the Almighty's potential was too much to bear. Yves still remembers fragments of the totality, but as time passes his memory and mental faculties degenerate.



YVES' CATHEDRAL

Yves' angels hold a special place in Heaven. Not only do they serve the being who named God, and tend destiny, but they maintain the Library – the greatest repository of knowledge in the Symphony. Serene and unimposing, the Library is in many ways the center of Heaven. The Seraphim Council and the Cathedrals of other Archangels might eclipse the Library in grandeur, but Yves' Domain (and the knowledge it contains) is the support beneath them all. Most angels visit the Library, and even Archangels roam the endless miles of shelves looking for a particular piece of information or a chance to confer with Yves.

THE LIBRARY

Like most of Heaven, the Library is defined in abstracts and only limited by the comprehension of those who visit its hallowed walls. The Library is a nexus, a crossroad that leads from one possibility to the next. It's a place of learning, of reflection and understanding – all of which are the foundation of Destiny.

The Library is only a “place” in the loosest definition of the term. Its main entrance is in the Eternal City, a simple and unassuming classical building with the inscription “Eternal Light” (in whatever language the reader is most comfortable with) written above the archway. Inside, the Library molds itself to the visitor, rearranging itself to better suit the visitors' needs (although these “needs” are not always obvious to the visitor at first, if ever).

Some areas remain constant, linchpins shared by all visitors. Others change at a moment's notice; the effect is subtle, almost invisible to untrained eyes. One minute someone could be walking down a long corridor, and the next there is nothing behind but a dead-end or the opening to a vast chamber or hall filled with scribes etching memory into books.

The Library *is* alive; it is not a place, but a being – some say an extension of Yves, or even the Almighty Himself. Angels secretly speculate that if Yves is God's consciousness given form, then the Library is His subconscious.

The Library is mutable and ever changing. Yves and some of his older Servitors simply let the Library take them where it must. Inexperienced visitors aren't as wise, easily becoming lost in the labyrinthine corridors and stacks that make up the Library. Most of its thoroughfares lead nowhere, stretching to infinity, or to tiny alcoves or vast reading rooms. Soft, warm light pours through stained-glass windows, casting the upper recesses of the Library's vaulted ceiling into nebulous shadows. The effect is not threatening, but impresses upon the visitor an awesome sense of infinity and potential.

An insane Yves would mutter strange prophecies and become Heaven's oracle. His Servitors would catalog his endless ramblings as Yves named everything and everyone, hoping to decode Yves' tainted truth. The Archangel of Destiny would send angels on seemingly random and pointless missions. Only he would understand the significance of them – if they have any significance at all.

Yves the madman would be closely watched by Judgment, but even Dominic would see the kernel of truth in Yves' ramblings. Regardless, Yves would be confined to his Library, and it would take on the appearance of an insane asylum mirroring the Archangel of Destiny's shattered psyche.

Michael, honest and pure, would naturally distrust a madman, especially one who distorts God's words. He would see the Archangel of Destiny's madness as a virus that has already infected Gabriel, and possibly Eli, and want to prevent this contagion from spreading.

Yves the madman becomes a tragic figure . . . an angel who has seen the glory of God and destiny, but cannot convey his message in terms others, even the Archangels, could hope to understand.



How it Works

The Library contains *all* knowledge. Everything that has ever been written down – from graffiti, to letters lost and never delivered, to books written in dreams – manifests in the Library. Everything ever recorded in painting or sculpture, on tape, CD, or film is there, too. Sumerian clay tablets rest next to photos of the Kennedy assassination and scrolls from the Library of Alexandria are sandwiched between corporate memos and the lost works of William Blake.

The Library's contents are not limited to the corporeal realm. Anything written by ethereals and celestials, from pagan deities to Lucifer himself, is somewhere in the stacks. It's all here, somewhere, in the endless miles of bookshelves waiting to be read.

However, just because it exists in the Library, it doesn't mean it's easy to find. Only Yves knows where to look. Other angels, even his Servitors, must spend what seems like an eternity finding what they came to look for. Yves' Librarians face the daunting task of cataloging and referencing the Library's vast contents to help visitors – an endless process that must start anew each time the Library shifts and reshapes itself.

YVES' GATEWAYS

The Library is connected to every repository of knowledge by a myriad of Gateways. Through them, Yves can travel from the Library to the corporeal realm at his whim. Other than the Archangel of Destiny, only the pure of heart or angels with the Right of Passage attunement (p. 106) can access these Gateways.

The sheer scope of Yves' power is nearly incomprehensible. From the Library, Yves can travel anywhere where knowledge, in any of its recorded forms, is stored. This includes libraries, corporate databases, the Pentagon, and even private archives of other Archangels. The implications make the other Archangels, and Michael in particular, wary. Nothing can be kept from Yves – no truth, no lie, no secret, no deception. This would not be a problem if Yves were infallible, but few truly believe the Archangel of Destiny is above mistakes.

And yet, Yves does not abuse his power. Yves may know something, but as Archangel of Destiny, he *must* let events unfold as they are destined to. Many accept this, but few truly understand.

LOCATIONS OF INTEREST

The Library might be a sprawl of endless corridors and rooms, constantly shifting, but permanent locations do exist – just not in the same place every time.

Halls of Remembrance

Somber and holy, the Halls of Remembrance are the storage place for the Tomes of Memory – books containing the memories of everyone who has died and passed on. Each tome documents a lifetime's worth of happiness and hardships. If tomes are not read at least once every few centuries, they seem to vanish – a fact even Yves cannot explain – though rarely they have surfaced again in the “general” part of the Library.

The Halls are vast circular chambers. The walls are lined with recessed alcoves where the tomes rest, each illuminated by a single votive candle. A suspended bridge bisects the circle. On the bridge are reading tables where angels and souls can read the tomes in peace. Talking is strictly forbidden in the Halls of Remembrance, out of respect for those who have passed on.

An order of Yves' Cherubim called the Mnemosyne care for the tomes and fetch them from the walls if anyone cares to peruse a particular volume. Many Mnemosyne are Masters of Divine Knowledge and have been granted the Seraph resonance to better safeguard the Halls and the tomes.

Yves' Attic

No one ever finds the Attic; it finds them. A simple wooden door marks the entrance to the Attic. Behind the door, a stairway winds its way up to a simple platform giving a spectacular, though disorienting, view. Stairways and bookshelves defy gravity (not that there is gravity in Heaven to start with) jutting out from the ceiling, walls, and floor. The whole Attic is littered with unfinished books, all failed attempts that have no other place in the Library. It's possible to find rare and priceless fragments here; Shakespeare's notes working out the plot of *Hamlet*, a never completed alternate to the *I Ching*, even (possibly) fragments of the tablets containing commandments 11 through 17. However, the sheer volume of forgotten books makes any attempt a daunting task.

Unknown to anyone, Yves has a room here with a view of the Marches. This is where Yves comes to contemplate and record his own personal impressions of the Symphony and the War. The walls are lined with Yves' personal accounts, from the time he named God to the present, written in a language only he can understand.



KNOWLEDGE AND THE LIBRARY

The quiet, loving patron of teachers, scholars, chroniclers, and wise men, Yves is the dedicated shepherd of all human knowledge. Everything ever written (and many things not yet put down on paper) is kept within his Heavenly Library.

The Library, once occupied mostly by the quietly industrious servants of Yves, now sees a lot more traffic from Heaven as a whole – you're just as likely to bump into one of the bodhisattvas reading up on the history of the Texas Rangers as a quiet Seraph reflecting on the biography of a saint.

GMs should keep in mind that the Library seems to live and think on its own. If it plays a part in an *In Nomine* campaign, it should be treated as a subtle NPC, not just a surreal location. Its persona reflects every part of what it is: the sum knowledge of the Symphony. In some ways, it's as much a focused “face” of the Symphony as Yves himself is. In others ways, it's as much “Yves” as Yves himself is.

The Corridor of Histories

Within this corridor rest the volumes containing the history of Heaven and Hell. Whenever an angel is looking for any information concerning celestial history, he eventually find himself in the Corridor of Histories. Once here, the Corridor is, for all intents and purposes, endless. The extremities appear within walking distance, but are always out of reach. That is, until the angel finds what he was looking for. Then he can leave through an archway that appears to have always been there.

Along the seemingly infinite shelves is every written account, true or not, about celestial history. It's all here, from the creation of Eden, to Lucifer's rebellion, to Raphael's death, collected by Yves and the curators of the Corridor since time immemorial.

The current curator is Tirshatha, a Cherub of Destiny with the Friend of the Sages Distinction. Friendly and helpful, Tirshatha has spent all his existence in the Corridors, always ready to assist angels in their research (*You Are Here*, p. 80).

THE BOOK OF NAMES

In a small chapel known only to the Seraphim of Yves, and the Archangel of Destiny himself, is the fabled Book of Names. The chapel itself is simple, almost rustic. Candles, hundreds of them, provide the only illumination. In the center, on a raised dais, rests the Book of Names. Intricately etched on its yellowed pages is every name in existence, including those of places, people, or things yet to be.

Three of the oldest Seraphim of Destiny, known as the Ternion, protect the Book of Names and its chapel. Chanting in unison, these angels pronounce the names of things as they come into existence. The effect is beautiful as it is haunting.

It's rumored, mostly by demons serving Fate, that if the three Seraphim are silenced, the Symphony would fall silent for all of eternity . . . frozen between potential and actuality.

The Special Collection

Deep within Yves Library is a single room known as the "Special Collection." It is the only room in the Library that is locked, and no one but Yves himself has the key. The Library actively tries to prevent visitors from stumbling across the Special Collection, but a determined searcher *might* find it.

On the shelves of the Special Collection are books of lore that would be too dangerous for even angels to read. Only Yves and a few other senior Archangels have seen the books in the Special Collection. Among the perilous works are the writings of the Grigori, the *Testament of Lucifer* (written to justify his rebellion), and the dreadful *Book of Fate*. GMs should feel free to add whatever blasphemous and unholy texts they choose to the Special Collection.

Inhabitants and Visitors

At any given time, the Library is bustling with activity. Most of this is Yves' own Servitors going about their appointed tasks, but it also includes visitors from other Archangels doing research or consulting with members of the Ivory Council or Yves' Librarians. Other visitors include souls catching up on current affairs or reading the many books on display.

The most common angels in the Library are Yves' Librarians. Librarians are traditionally relievers or junior ranking angels undergoing training; occasionally a Librarian is an experienced Servitor doing penance – or taking a relaxing break from corporeal duties! They spend the better part of their existence helping visitors find what they are looking for and simply cataloging the endless numbers of books. Beneath the Librarians are the Scribes. These are usually the souls of Soldiers of Destiny entrusted to document current affairs in all three realms and keep reports on the activities of all of Yves' Servitors. Most Scribes are assigned to selected Servitors as chamberlains and assistants.



TETHERS OF DESTINY

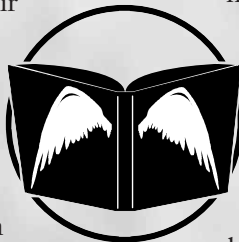
Yves' Tethers are scattered around the world. They range from the seemingly insignificant, like neighborhood used-bookstores, to the most prestigious collections of books in the world. Traditionally, his Tethers are places of knowledge and learning, but rows and rows of books and stuffy librarians do not make a Tether of Destiny – it's not the assembled knowledge that is important. Rather, it's how it inspires and affects its perusers to follow their destiny.

Yves' most famous Tethers are libraries, such as Paris' Bibliotheque Nationale, the Library of Congress in Washington D.C. and the Bodleian Library (*Liber Castellorum*, p. 88). Other Tethers of Destiny include the Topkapi Museum in Istanbul and an unemployment office in Edinburgh, Scotland (*Liber Castellorum*, p. 89). However, Yves's Tethers are also places of worship and destiny, such as the churchyard where Joan of Arc was burned in Rouen, and the shores of Lake Tanganyika in East Africa where Stanley and Livingstone met.

Destiny's Tethers are Symphonic crossroads. They are places of new beginnings, quiet and conducive to contemplating one's place in the bigger picture. They are places where artists come for inspiration, where children come to dream and where people go to find answers. In short, they are fonts of possibility just waiting for someone to take the right book off the shelf and turn to the right page and see what is brightest and best for him.

Yves lets his Servitors exercise a free hand in maintaining his Tethers (the Archangel of Destiny would have it no other way). Yves understands, better than anyone else does, that all Tethers have specific roles to play and all have to evolve in their own time. He grants his Seneschals total autonomy in protecting his Tethers and often assigns a Seraph (or a member of the Ivory Council, pp. 135-136) to the duty.

Yves does not have inspections or scheduled visits; there's no need for him to do so. All of Destiny's Seneschals understand the importance of their task, not only as angels but as shepherds of the Symphony. Yves is always aware when a Tether is weakening or in possible danger, and he takes whatever steps needed, usually nothing more than a quiet word with the Seneschal.



End-Points

All of Yves' Tethers are linked to his Cathedral – the Library – through end-points. These portals manifest as small book-lined passages throughout the Library, which one walks through to reach the corporeal realm. They can be found in a rough spiral upward through the Library, laid out in alphabetical order. Each gateway has a small card by it giving details of where it ends, and a guardian Cherub or other angel to watch over it. (The Library is also known to drop people out in, or bring people in from, random libraries, museums, and bookstores, without requiring a Tether point at all. However, this is more likely to be immediately annoying than obviously helpful).

Flashpoints

Not all of Yves' Tethers are libraries and places of knowledge. A scant few, rare and priceless for Yves, have nothing to do with knowledge and everything to do with choice. They are places where mortals chose destiny over fate, and angels of Destiny call them Flashpoints – pinpricks of hope and potential in the Symphony. Most Flashpoints are short-lived micro-Tethers (*Liber Castellorum*, p. 13). A rare few become actual Tethers, but many don't last for more than a few hours or even days before vanishing into the Symphony.

Flashpoints are formed when someone consciously takes their first step toward destiny – usually by inspiring onlookers. They realize they are standing at a crossroads in their lives and that they must act. A dinner where a wayward father decides to return to his family, or a checkpoint in Bosnia where a peacekeeper risks his life to save a child from a mortar attack, are typical examples of Flashpoints.

When a Flashpoint manifests, Yves dispatches a group of Servitors to document the occurrence, its effects, and to protect it. With each Flashpoint, a chance exists that it might blossom into a full-fledged Tether, but rarely for Destiny itself.

Because of their seeming insignificance, Kronos tends to ignore Flashpoints. However, the Demon Prince is beginning to worry that Yves' "little victories" could grow into something more substantial and might start taking an interest in Flashpoints.

SAMPLE TETHER: THE CHURCH OF ST. TOBIAS

Only one church in Montreal, also known as the City of One Thousand Steeples, is a Tether for Destiny. Located near the downtown core, the Church of St. Tobias serves as the regimental archive for one of Canada's oldest army regiments. Shortly after it was decommissioned as an active regiment in the 1960s, all of its records, a near-endless collection of crates and filing cabinets, were moved to the basement of the church. These included logistic reports, order of battles, rosters, maps, and personal accounts from the Great War and the Second World War. It also included over a dozen crates of undelivered mail, journals, and diaries written by soldiers who fought in both world wars, many of whom never made it home. Most of these accounts provide eyewitness testimony of destiny in action – of normal everyday folk risking their lives to help wounded comrades, struggling against the horrors of war and dreaming of home.

Today many of these accounts are on display in the small two-room museum by the church's entrance, reminding young and old of the sacrifices made for the safety of the nation. More than one person has wandered into the church and become immersed in the yellowed pages of a war diary on display. The sepia pictures of youthful men in uniforms or young nurses, contrasted against the accounts of war, makes visitors realize just how precious life is, and how fleeting. They usually leave feeling grateful for what they have, and determined to help others.

Aaron, Scholar of Martyrs and an EloHITE of Destiny, is the Tether's Seneschal. Reserved even for an EloHITE, Aaron spends most of his time as the curator of the collection, and visiting veterans hospitals. He collects stories and personal accounts of the war from dying and forgotten vets. His attunement allows him to "communicate" with those who can no longer speak, and chronicles their memories and deeds before they are forgotten.

PUSHING THE SYMPHONY

Yves knows you can only push the Symphony so far before it pushes back. Just because it's his purview to foster Destiny, it doesn't mean he can muscle the Symphony – the same goes for his Servitors.

All Shepherds, sooner or later, realize that their Word is both a blessing and a curse: A blessing because it elevates one to Heaven, and a curse because it ultimately demands a sacrifice of some sort – a sacrifice not everyone is willing, or even ready, to make. More importantly, *Les Temoins* understand that everyone must choose his own destiny. Destiny cannot be forced on people; this pushes them off of their path and usually ends in losing them to their fate, or reincarnation at best. What few understand, usually only when it's too late, is that not everyone can be, or should be, saved. Some are bound to fate, and there is nothing Yves or his Servitors can do to stop it.

This is why Shepherds learn to be subtle and pragmatic. They understand the power of a kind gesture here and a word of encouragement there and know these are more effective than rash actions. But even this is not always easy. It's a bitter pill to swallow to see someone turn away from destiny. On more than one occasion, a Shepherd has Fallen desperately trying to save someone from Fate – blinded by his own love of Destiny and not aware of the harm he inflicted in his single-minded devotion.

The temptation always exists for Servitors of Destiny to manipulate events. They understand the myriad potentials of the future better than anyone else and can try to affect them. It's true there are times when the ends justify the means, but, more often than not, blatant methods only cause events to spiral out of control. The more one meddles with the Symphony, the more unstable and unpredictable it becomes.

Elder Shepherds use the analogy of destiny as a lake. Potential is reflected on the lake's surface, a fleeting impression of what is to be. However, the moment one interferes with destiny, it causes ripples . . . ripples that distort the image and make it hard to discern what is truly the best and brightest and what's just a reflection, or even worse, a whirlpool of fate.

BEING ENIGMATIC

Playing a Servitor of Yves, or GMing Destiny, can be tricky if not handled properly. Both Yves and his Servitors offer great potential to any *In Nomine* game; Yves is the ultimate man on the mountain, the enigmatic mentor who knows all and adds an element of divine mystery to the game. It is this mystery that makes Yves and his Servitors an interesting part of a campaign. Did Yves create God? Does he know where everything is headed? Do his angels know the future? It all depends on the GM. The trouble with mysteries and destiny is that they are tricky to translate into roleplaying games; done incorrectly, Servitors of Yves can come off sounding like bad fortune cookies.

Yves' servants are intriguing; they have an intimate connection to the Symphony. They are visionaries, guides, and holy crusaders of the Symphony. They are not concerned with one tiny aspect of God's work, but with its totality. So how does one play a being who has such a Symphonic awareness? It's all a matter of perspective. Just like a mosaic, one can focus on the single bead

of color or the whole image but not both at the same time – the same applies to destiny.

Servitors of Yves can sense the underlying motion of the Symphony toward destiny or fate, but can only concentrate on particulars – everything else is abstract, a possibility or potential. A Servitor of Yves would see the beauty in a blank canvas just as easily as in a painting by Monet. Does this mean *Les Temoins* talk in riddles, or that others cannot understand them? No. It means that occasionally they are blessed with insight and intuition.

The best way to play a Servitor of Yves is to “go with the flow.” Don't try to be clever or enigmatic; this usually only annoys your fellow players. Instead, concentrate on the immediate and try to leave everything else to “God” or the Game Master.

GMs should take advantage of angels of Destiny by using them as conduits for information. Pass the player a note or speak to him before the game, so that during play, his character seems to be visited with divine insight, and new information is seamlessly added to the plot.

THE HAND OF DESTINY: SERVITORS OF YVES SHEPHERDS, LES TEMOINS

“Tell you the truth, nobody really understands us. Nobody knows the burden we Shepherds carry every moment. It's not easy being the shepherds of Destiny; knowing that everything rests on our shoulders.

“Everyone thinks we ‘understand’ the master plan, or that Yves somehow knows everything and plays us (and the other Archangels) like a puppet-master. We've become estranged from Michael and his followers because of this false perception.

“The truth is, we feel more than we understand.

“We don't see the future, but we know that every future action is rooted in the choices of the present. We have to feel our way along each path, each possibility, before making a decision to act. If we ignore an aspect of someone's potential, if we misread the importance of a moment in his life and act in haste, we can disrupt the Symphony and hand another soul to Kronos. Is it any wonder that we are cautious? Who can blame us for maintaining silence when the penalty for being wrong is so high?”

– Hadrien, Malakite of Destiny

Servitors of Yves, also known as Shepherds or *Les Temoins* (the witnesses), are linchpins in the Symphony. Like clockwork, they operate behind the scenes to ensure Destiny prospers in everyone and everything. They leave the flashy displays of divine power to Michael, Dominic, and Laurence, preferring instead to work on a more personal and focused level.

Yves doesn't think of himself as a general, instead, he likes to see himself as a guide and advisor. While Yves' Word-bound are arranged in cascading spheres of dominion, *Les Temoins* do not see themselves as a part of a rigid hierarchy; they work together, heeding and respecting their elders.

Rewards and Punishments

Shepherding Destiny is, in the eyes of many angels, the greatest reward in serving Yves. Just knowing that they brought the Symphony closer to its destiny, even through a seemingly insignificant action, is enough. Beyond that, knowledge is the greatest gift Yves can impart. Yves usually rewards his Servitors with a greater understanding of the Symphony and their place in it. Special Rites and attunements are his most common gifts, but occasionally he imparts visions of the future.

DISSENT

*"The old man is losing it. Face it, maybe at one time Yves knew what he was doing, but he's spent too much time in that Library of his. He's lost touch with what's really going on, focusing instead on what's 'supposed to happen.' It's not a question of losing respect – he **did** name God and Michael – but there comes a time when we have to act.*

"The Trumpets have sounded, even if Gabriel was just warming up. Did Yves do anything about it, about the Malakim, about Gabriel? No. He just stood on the sidelines and speculated.

"Destiny, no matter what he or his followers say, doesn't look after itself. Destiny is what we make of it. The Boss is right for not trusting Yves . . . at least until he proves what side he's on.

"I've heard whispers that Yves is forgetting. Scary, ain't it? That's why he has his angels write everything down. Maybe by collecting enough scraps he can joggle his memory. I think it must have started with the whole Gabriel business. I mean, why he didn't explain himself? Maybe he just forgot; got so focused on the details that the 'Master Plan' blurred a bit.

"If you ask me, it's Raphael's death that sent him over the edge. The two were really close. Before it happened, before Raphael sacrificed herself, I've heard that Yves grew distant from her. That the Library was empty for a while . . . its doors were open to Raphael but Yves was nowhere to be found. Maybe he couldn't accept her coming death?

"Come on, you don't think he's infallible, do you? He's not like you or me, or any of the other Choirs . . . or even the Archangels. He exists on his own terms. Can we really say we know him?

"Can we really trust him?"

– Kisael, Ofanite of War

Just because Yves knows the possible destinies and fates of his angels, it doesn't mean a rare few do not need to be disciplined. The greatest punishment for Shepherds is knowing that they failed Yves and Destiny – unfortunately, the anguish from this realization sometimes leads to fate and Falling.

When possible, Yves has a personal talk with the offending angel, and if this does not help, simply says, "I can't help you," and walks away. Shunning is the severest of Yves' punishments. Shunned angels are banished to the corporeal plane until they have realigned themselves with Destiny. In some severe cases when exile is not enough, the Shunned are stripped of their attunements. Needless to say, Shunned *Les Temoins* are pariahs among their fellows.

Changing Superiors

Serving Yves and Destiny is not easy. Oftentimes, it's strenuous and taxing on the souls of Shepherds, knowing that so much rests of their shoulders. Burnout is relatively common among Yves' field operatives. Even after a stint at the Library, some never recover and sooner or later some contemplate changing Superiors.

Most, however, do not have to ask. Yves either lets them go with a clear conscience, or presents them with an opportunity to leave on their own without the shame of quitting. After all, whether they serve him directly or another Archangel, they are still serving Destiny in the end.

The Redeemed

To Yves, the redeemed are shining examples of the purity of Destiny and its power over Hell. Every celestial who finds his way back to Heaven is another victory in the War. Yves' ranks are home to a large number of former demons, even ex-Fallen who once served another Archangel.

A fair number of ex-demons find their way into Yves' service thanks to the actions of the Redemption Squad (p. 134), and return their gratitude by serving Yves and other angels of Destiny. For the most part, redeemed in Yves' service are focused and strong adherents of destiny – almost fanatical. They are willing to sacrifice everything to further Yves' Word. All he asks is that they just try to do what is best and not obsess about it.

Humans

At one level or another all humans serve Destiny, too; it's their choice between what is best and worst in themselves that underpins Yves' Word. Since the earliest days of civilizations, humans have carried out Yves' work – either by spreading religion as priests and prophets, or as scientists and wise men trying to explain the world around them. Yves, at times, feels a closer kinship to humans than to his the fellow angels. Humans are unpredictable and this makes their lives and destinies even more precious and beautiful.

Throughout the ages, Yves has appeared to many humans, but few ever realized they were in the presence of the being who named God. Yves encouraged the formation of theocratic societies to help humanity unlock its own potential through belief and faith. After Islam and the bloody Crusades, Yves realized that religion lent itself too easily to fanaticism and blindness and that only knowledge and understanding could truly free humanity from fate. He left religion to Archangels like Khalid and Laurence, and focused on learning, just in time for the

Enlightenment, when a large number of Shepherd Soldiers were active.

Soldiers of Yves are defined by their belief that something better exists for everyone: they are all optimists. They strive for change and enlightenment, but are realistic in their outlooks. They do not want to change the world, only the way people relate to one another. Traditionally, Yves' Soldiers are community figures. While angels of Destiny prefer to take a subtle, protracted approach, Soldiers of Destiny operate in the open, leading their family and neighbors as preachers, principals, local beat cops, and even mailmen.

Saints are central to Yves' organization; they stand as icons of Destiny. Every Saint, even those not belonging to Yves, embodies a notion central to destiny – believing in oneself and God, and understanding the role one plays in the cosmos.

CHOIRS

Rumor has it that Yves doesn't create his angels; they manifest to serve a particular Symphonic duty and the Archangel of Destiny is nothing more than a caregiver and guide. Some even say that Yves' angels are brought into being by God himself.

Yves is always careful not to force his angels into molds. Though they often share common traits, each is unique and Yves makes sure his Servitors are assigned duties they are destined for, regardless of their Choir. Just because Seraphim make excellent scribes and historians, doesn't mean all are condemned to be stuffy scholars.

Seraphim

Seraphim of Destiny have an eye for Symphonic truths . . . truths that few others, even Seraphim, are willing to understand. They are God's eternal eye gazing at the Symphony, capable of seeing what is really there, not just in the present, but in the web of potential that is the future.

They can see past illusion, past self-denial and delusion, and understand the intrinsic truth at the core of everyone and everything. This is why they can divine true names.

Seraphim of Destiny are also known as Heaven's Chroniclers. It is they who record Heaven's history, unbiased, objective, and painting a true picture of the celestial realms. It was one of Yves' Seraphim who chronicled failed Eden, Lucifer's Fall and the Rebellion, Uriel's pogrom, and the alleged Fall of a Malakite.

(It is rumored that Yves even has Seraphim in Hell to record the punishment and torment of demons and damned souls.)



TRUE NAMES

A being's true name is a complex thing, but the part that the Seraphim can verbalize is that word (or short phrase, if appropriate) that encompasses how the being perceives itself. For an angel or demon, this may be an instant give-away of their non-human nature – however, there are human names which have meanings that are equivalent to celestial names (such as Aaron, “a teacher,” or Chloe, “green herb.”) (And some celestials, such as Servitors of Dark Humor and some Lilim, have “human” true names.)

For more details on names, see the *Angelic Player's Guide*, p. 21, and the *Infernal Player's Guide*, p. 22.

Among the ranks of Yves' Servitors, the Most Holy function as teachers and mentors. Their unique perspectives allow them to better prepare fellow Shepherds for the difficult road of tending destiny. While a good number never leave Heaven, busy serving in the Library or in the Seraphim Council, many take sabbaticals to the ethereal and corporeal realms so as not to lose touch with the “front lines.”

Seraphim of Destiny are typically aloof and distant. Others accuse them of not paying attention to the here and now, focusing instead on some distant or remote fact. What few understand is that because a Seraph can see a myriad of possible truths, he cannot comment on them for fear of possibly lying. Although some Seraphim have forsaken this rule, most are guarded against saying or predicting something that might come back and haunt them. Even if it's not dissonant to be wrong, it's *unpleasant*.

Cherubim

The second largest Choir in service to Yves, Cherubim are appointed guardians of destiny. They usually serve as the traditional “guardian” angel, always looking out for their charges' Symphonic well-being. Most of Yves' Cherubim serve in the corporeal plane and hold Roles that allow them to watch over people without attracting too much attention. Cops, firemen, and teachers are all typical Roles, but others include lawyers – to defend the wrongly accused – and politicians (usually at the municipal level where altruistic actions are not as heavily scrutinized).

To safeguard against becoming too emotionally attached to the target of their attunement and forsaking their objectivity, most Cherubim never interact directly with whomever they are attuned to. Generally, they

watch from afar and only become involved when absolutely necessary. Next to the Elohim, Yves' Cherubim are the most subtle and patient, grooming their charges over the course of their lifetimes to achieve their destiny.

Cherubim may be guardian angels, but they are Servitors of Destiny first and there are times when destiny is neither pleasant nor painless for their charges. When they act, they must accept the potential, and often hidden, ramifications of their actions. Those who don't are usually not far from Falling.

Ofanim

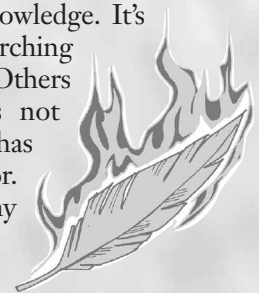
Like most other Ofanim, those serving Destiny are consumed by an intense sense of wanderlust. However, being attuned to Destiny, the sheer vastness of the Symphony and the infinite paths it could follow nearly overwhelms them. Shepherd Ofanim are famous for riding the waves of chance and letting the Symphony, and destiny, take them where they have to go. Just as the Seraphim are Yves' reason, the Ofanim are his eyes, ears, and hands, moving seemingly at random, sowing the seeds of destiny throughout the Symphony.


YVES AND RAPHAEL

Few mourn the loss of Raphael like Yves. From the Archangel of Knowledge's creation until her death, Yves and Raphael were companions and kindred spirits. Both understood the connection between Knowledge and Destiny. It was Yves who bestowed on Raphael the title of Archangel of Knowledge.

In the aftermath of the battle against Legion, many of Raphael's Servitors flocked to Yves' ranks – only natural when considering the kinship between Yves and Raphael and the bond between their Words. Other Raphaelites, however, took to the Elohim Archangels Khalid and Jean.

After Raphael's sacrifice, Yves was reluctant to reassign the Word of Knowledge. It's rumored that Yves is searching for the right candidate. Others whisper that Raphael is not dead, which is why Yves has not named her successor. On this topic, as on many others, Yves is silent.





Divine messengers, the Ofanim of Yves are heralds and harbingers of Destiny. They travel the Symphony shaking things up, paving the way for destiny or keeping a lookout for those close to fate. Legend has it that one of Yves' Ofanim appeared to Constantine the Great as a flaming cross with the insignia *In Hoc Signo Vinces* ("in this sign you will conquer") during the battle that proclaimed him as the first Christian Emperor of Rome.

Some have likened Ofanite Shepherds to muses, inspiring and propelling mortals to greatness. To this day, they work hand in hand with Creationers, many of whom were offered asylum by Yves following Eli's sabbatical. Ofanim of Destiny also empathize with Gabriel, the Divine Prophetess, and quietly bemoan her persecution. They are known to go out of their way to help Gabrielites in need. These two facts have tainted Shepherd Ofanim in Dominic's mind, and Judgment keeps a close eye on their activities.

Elohim

Detached, rational, and objective, the Elohim are paragons of Destiny. Their unique perspective allows them to understand destiny's subtle web and how best to work it without disturbing the Symphony too greatly. The EloHITE adherence to objectivity and impartiality makes them excellent Servitors of Destiny – never losing sight of their goal. There are more Elohim in Yves' service than any other Choir, and many angels believe they are the Archangel's most trusted Servitors. The Elohim, of course, do not consider themselves any better than other Choirs. However, a few Powers postulate that all Elohim, regardless of what Superior they follow, actually serve Destiny.

Among the Servitors of Yves, the Elohim are the foot Soldiers of Destiny. Most spend their existence in the corporeal realm observing and understanding the complexities and vagaries that lead a person toward destiny or fate. Typical Roles include not only teachers and librarians, but also reporters and counselors. While the Seraphim may know the essential truth behind someone's existence, Elohim can see how someone will react to destiny. Among all angels, EloHITE Shepherds are the only ones who can predict, even if rarely, how someone will exercise free will – an ability that makes them valuable to Yves. Furthermore, due to their objectivity, most Elohim are not afraid to do what must be done for the "good" of destiny, even if it involves sacrifice.

In Heaven, Yves' Elohim can be found in the Library, working alongside the Seraphim or advising field operatives. It's the Elohim of Destiny that other *Les Temoins* come to for answers and direction in Yves' absence, or when he is being enigmatic. The majority of the Ivory

Council (p. 135) is made up of Elohim. This unique arrangement has given Shepherd Powers substantial pull among the angels serving Destiny.

It's the Elohim who handle matters of discipline among Yves' Servitors. Although not as harsh as Michael or Dominic, the Shepherd Powers ensure all Servitors of Yves act with the best interest of Destiny at heart, free of pride or subjectivity. Whenever the purity of one of their fellows is in question, an EloHITE usually confers with the Observers (p. 136), and steps are taken to rectify the situation.

Malakim

Misunderstood and sometimes ridiculed by their militant Choir-mates for serving a traditionally non-warrior Archangel, Shepherd Virtues would never contemplate switching Superiors. Yves' Malakim are Destiny's bulwarks, pure and honest in their mission. They are Yves' first and last lines of defense against Kronos or any other Demon Prince working against Destiny. To Malakim, questions of objectivity or free will are not their concern; when Yves needs something done, from protecting a Tether to righting a Symphonic wrong, he calls upon his Virtues.

Most Malakim of Destiny work hand in hand with Elohim, stepping in when a situation demands action. A Virtue usually decides if someone (angel or human) is given a chance at redemption. Of all Malakim, Yves' are the most accepting of those seeking redemption, often going to great lengths to help them out on the road back to grace. This is why Shepherd Malakim are misunderstood by others, even perceived as weak and cowardly. Virtues of Destiny accept this scorn and strive to prove their detractors wrong – that honor does not preclude forgiveness or compassion, something they feel other Malakim have forgotten in their search for glory.

However, Shepherd Malakim are still Malakim and they don't look kindly on deception or weakness. They may grant somebody a second chance, but if he squanders it, then the Malakim have no remorse or compassion and do whatever must be done.

Yves' Malakim, thanks to their attunement, are also Symphonic watchdogs and keep an eye open for infernal *or* divine disturbances in the Symphony. Kronos and Hell are not the only ones who can adversely affect the Symphony; angels are often just as guilty. Most Shepherd Virtues are quick to respond to any disturbance in the Symphony and hold accountable whoever is responsible. A Malakite will judge the action, and only the action. If a Virtue finds the action pure and just, he will let the infraction slide, only noting it down in a report. Unjust, selfish, or dissonant actions are met with the divine fury of the Malakim.

KYRIOTATES AND HOSTS

Kyriotates of Destiny have access to all the skills possessed by their hosts, and can even use the skills possessed by one host in another body simultaneously. However, no skill can be used in a physically inappropriate host body. Thus, possessing a martial artist won't allow a flock of possessed pigeons to utilize Fighting skill, and a Kyriotate's other hosts don't get Tracking when he possesses a bloodhound.

Unlike the Song of Possession, no Kyriotate (not even those of Destiny) may use the supernatural knowledge (such as Songs) or attunements of their hosts.

After a Domination has left a host, it will have only its personal memories of what it specifically "looked at" within the host's mind; the Kyriotate may make an Intelligence roll to see if it remembers a particular fact from its stay within someone.

Yves usually assigns his Virtues non-combatant Roles so they don't lose sight of their true purpose. Typical Roles include lawyers, professors, coaches, taxi drivers, and more rarely, detectives and cops.

Kyriotates

The unique and fractured perspectives of these Kyriotates of Destiny allow them to see possibilities, even truths, that other, more grounded Shepherds may overlook. Few understand the *randomness* that is inherent in the Symphony better than Shepherd Dominations. To Kyriotates of Destiny, the Symphony is not a homogeneous whole, but a stained-glass reflection or mosaic that eternally fractures and fluctuates. The Seraphim may know the truth and the Elohim the endless possibilities of it, but only the Dominations comprehend that at any given time, everything can be both true and false, right and wrong – and this applies to Destiny as much as the Symphony.

Many of them work hand in hand with Jean's Servitors, cataloging and processing information, especially since the advent of computers. Because of their disembodied sense of self, Shepherd Kyriotates make excellent researchers, capable of multi-tasking on a mental scale and arriving at conclusions and theories impossible when limited to looking at a problem from a single perspective. This also makes them highly adept at problem solving and troubleshooting. Yves likes to use them as Symphonic detectives and jacks-of-all-trades. Where other Servitors of Destiny are bound by their singular perspectives, Dominations can push the limits of their comprehension to truly understand

what is best and brightest. Kyriotates can handle all sorts of probabilities and chances and gut-level hunches, when the Seraphim and Elohim are bound by truth and objectivity.

Because of this, Shepherd Dominations are regarded as mavericks and celestial cowboys, even by the Ofanim – something Kyriotate Shepherds take great pride in. They are not afraid to take chances or make mistakes. They know that flexibility is integral to destiny. If one gets too hung up on what "should be" one loses sight of what "might be," and more to the point, what *will* be.



On the corporeal plane, Kyriotates of Destiny flutter from one host to the next. They occasionally form a stable of hosts, especially when working toward a long term goal, but most prefer to “surf” the Symphony and let it show them what it will. A great many Dominations prefer to speak in the future tense – “what will be” – instead of the present or past tense. This drives their companions mad, but it is an indication of how Kyriotates see their role in the Symphony.

Mercurians

Some of Yves’ angels on the higher rungs of divinity believe that Mercurians are incapable of truly understanding Destiny and its awesome significance – that because of their proximity to humans, most Mercurians are blinded to the grandeur and scope of their mission as Servitors of Destiny. But the Friends of Man possess an intimate and personal understanding of humanity and this gives them a perspective few can match. While Seraphim and Kyriotates might see the bigger picture, Mercurians accept that it all boils down to the actions of individual humans. To some, humans are cogs in the Symphonic machine; only Mercurians really comprehend the scale on which these “cogs” affect destiny.

Mercurians of Yves focus on the immediate. Of all the Choirs they are the best suited at “fortune-telling” and divining the future of specific people. This isn’t just due to their Choir Attunement; they also purposely limit their perspective. There is no point, they argue, in focusing on the “big picture” if you do not understand it is first made of tiny dots of color. So, while Intercessionists may lack a global perception of destiny and possibility, they can focus on the immediate and glean what few others can.

Mercurians of Destiny serve as guides for other angels on the corporeal plane, taking time to show them the beauty inherent in the small and seemingly insignificant. Their understanding of the human conditions allows them to help their fellow celestials relate to humans and know how to handle their fickle and infallible natures (from an angelic perspective). Yves’ Intercessionists are best likened to pastors and shepherds, never directly affecting the destinies of others, but subtly guiding its flow and direction. They prefer unobtrusive actions. Conversely, unlike most other Servitors of Yves, Mercurians vessels include somewhat public Roles like politicians, anchorpersons, actors, and athletes – all tools to influence mortals to greatness.

In the theatre of destiny, it never hurts to back up your creation myth with hard copy.

– Steve Silberman, *Wired*, July 1998

WORD-BOUND SERVITORS

The Servitors of Yves are a diverse lot when it comes to Words. Elder Shepherds tend to have religious Words such as Holy Scriptures, Prophets, Divine Truths, or Divine Mysteries. Younger Servitors hold Words that reflect the Archangel of Destiny’s focus on enlightenment and the written word: History, Autobiographies, Journalism, or Freelance Writers, for example. Words that focus on Destiny include Forgiveness, Inspiration, and Epiphanies.

Notable Shepherds include Tarshish, Angel of Wisdom and the highest-ranking Malakite serving Yves. The EloHITE Lailah, the Angel of Conception, records the destinies and fates of all mortals before they are born. The Scholar Randolph, Angel of Dictionaries, is an Ofanite and one of the few of that Choir totally comfortable when “bounded” by books in the Library.

JOBS

Tending Destiny is not as simple as serving War or Judgment. There is no clear-cut “right” or “wrong,” merely the nebulous “what should be.” To *Les Temoins*, destiny is the greatest mystery of the Symphony, and while all are awed by the grandeur of the Word they serve, few can concretely define “what should be.” So, instead of focusing on what they cannot comprehend, Shepherds focus on the immediate – the everyday lives and choices of mortals and their fellow angels.

A Shepherd’s existence is dominated by details. This is why knowledge and information are so important to Yves and his Servitors. It’s by studying and cataloging the particulars, the infinitesimal and obscure, that any sort of pattern in the Symphony begins to emerge. By seeing Destiny at work in the smallest of details, *Les Temoins* gleam a better understanding of themselves and the Symphony. Far more crucial, they gain an inkling of “what should be.”

When tending Destiny, most Shepherds take a long-term view of their duties. When and if they act, followers of Yves do so knowing their actions have a lasting impact on the relentless pull of destiny and fate on the Symphony. While it can be argued that all angels (and demons) have the same potential, Servitors of Yves are directly keyed to this potential, and are charged with bringing it out in others as well as themselves. This is the grave responsibility all Servitors of Destiny shoulder every passing moment.

SERVING YVES

Few Archangels are as easy to work for as the Archangel of Destiny; he is not a taskmaster or a tyrant, but neither is he a pushover or apathetic. Angels in service to Yves count themselves blessed and cursed. Blessed, because they have a great deal of autonomy in how they perform their missions; cursed because of the vagueness of the missions and the awesome responsibility attached to them.

Usually, Yves doesn't even have to tell his angels what to do or why. They just do what needs to be done of their own accord (even if they are not aware of this all the time). In the rare cases when Yves, or a high-ranking angel of Destiny, needs to intervene, a simple word or a gentle nudge is all that is required.

Yves *knows* his Servitors. Not in the way Laurence keeps battle rosters or Dominic maintains files; Yves knows the destinies (or fates) of *all* his angels, from relievers to the Word-bound. Yves does his best to place his angels where they are "meant to be" and guides them along their path, like they guide mortals and other angels.

Most Shepherds are aware of this and take solace in it. But it can also lead to apathy and resentment. However, even if Yves knows the destiny of an angel, that angel makes the bed he sleeps in. Yves *never* forces his knowledge on his Servitors; instead he hopes they will eventually see the light of truth and do what they have to do.

As the Shepherds say, serving Yves is both a blessing and curse . . .

Celestial Jobs

The Library keeps most Shepherds busy in Heaven, whether transcribing, recording, or researching information in the endless miles of corridors and bookshelves. Most angels of Destiny spend their first few years (or decades, or centuries) in Heaven and the Library before being assigned to the other realms.

When not in the Library, *Les Temoins* serve as advisors and tutors to other angels (usually those of Marc and Dominic, but also Laurence and Jean), briefing them on a myriad of topics. In Heaven, Shepherds are celestial historians, monks, and oracles; they are respected and sought out for their unique perspectives.

Ethereal Jobs

Les Temoins are extremely active in the Marches, where they weave destiny through the dreamscapes of sleeping mortals. Long ago, Shepherds discovered that dreams

make excellent vehicles for nudging people toward their destinies. Dreams can show a sleeper what possibilities are ahead, but can also impart horrific glimpses of fate to dissuade sleepers from walking down the darker path; "thank God it was only a dream . . ." (This tactic is not always well received by angels of Blandine, even if she is friendly with Yves.)

Dreams give Shepherds more freedom. Dreamscapes allow them to take a more active role in encouraging positive choices. Dreams are flexible and chock-full of potential; they are also symbolic and personal – all excellent tools for *Les Temoins* to work with. Unfortunately, Kronos is more than aware of this, making the Marches a nightly battleground between the Archangel of Destiny and the Prince of Fate. (Much to the annoyance of Blandine's Servitors.)

Corporeal Jobs

On Earth, Shepherds are best described as guides, counselors, and mentors – the proverbial "guardian angels." Their primary goal is to encourage people to strive to be the best they can be, to understand their own strengths and limitations, and to accept who they really are. The shepherd analogy best suits what servants of Yves do on Earth and how they go about doing it. *Les Temoins* have strong permanent Roles which allow them prolonged access to the people they want to help.

In the War, Servitors of Destiny normally serve in a supporting role, providing logistics support or information gathering where their subtle ways are most useful. Whatever the animosity between Michael and Yves, more than one Servitor of War has relied on the timely advice of a Shepherd to achieve victory.

Unusual Jobs

Destiny is not always reached without sacrifice or pain. Often what is best for the Symphony has nothing to do with happiness or joy. Shepherds know that certain events, like the death of a loved one, or the misery of failure, must happen to bring about the right circumstances for destiny. Anguish, grief, and even despair all serve as catalysts of destiny. There are times when Shepherds must sit back and do nothing, letting events unfold unhindered for the greater good.

Master: You were destined to die, it was written.
Buffy: What can I say? I flunked the written.
– From "Buffy The Vampire Slayer"

SAMPLE SERVITORS OF YVES

TARSHISH

Angel of Wisdom Malakite Master of Divine Knowledge

Corporeal Forces – 4 Strength 8 Agility 8
Ethereal Forces – 6 Intelligence 12 Precision 12
Celestial Forces – 6 Will 12 Perception 12

Suggested Word-Forces: 18

Vessel: Human/4 (older man)

Notable Skills:* Artistry (Poetry/3, Writing/3), Computer Operation/2, Detect Lies/6, Dodge/2, Driving/1, Emote/3, Fighting/4, Knowledge/11 (all, as per the Friend of the Sages Distinction), Large Weapons/5 (Mace), Savior-Faire/3, Small Weapon/3 (Dagger)

Notable Songs:* Attraction (Celestial/2), Charm (Celestial/2), Dreams (Corporeal/2, Celestial/1), Harmony (All/5), Healing (All/3), Projection (All/2), Shields (All/4), Tongues (All/3), Wings/3.

Attunements: Seraph of Destiny, Ofanite of Destiny, EloHITE of Destiny, Malakite of Destiny, Mercurian of Destiny, Divine Destiny, Divine Logic, Past Lives, Akashic Record, Right of Passage, Master of Divine Knowledge (EloHITE), Angel of Wisdom

Special Abilities: As Angel of Wisdom, when presented with several choices, Tarshish always knows which is the wisest course of action. (A choice he does not see is not included; he is wise, not omniscient.)

Malakite Oaths: (i) Never suffer and evil to live if it's his choice. (ii) Never surrender or allow himself to be captured by the armies of Lucifer. (iii) Always remember that the mind is the seat of honor, not the body. (iv) Strive to correct ignorance wherever he finds it.

**Tarshish's skills and Songs listed above are only vague approximations. As Angel of Wisdom and a Master of Divine Knowledge there is little Tarshish doesn't know. Game Masters are encouraged to adjust as needed.*

Tarshish is the highest ranking Malakite of Destiny, and among the oldest and most trusted of Yves' Servitors. Contemplative and reserved, many confuse Tarshish for an EloHITE or Seraph and are always shocked to discover that he is in fact a Virtue. Tarshish is guided by honor, like all Malakim, but his honor is

based on understanding and not swordsmanship or heroic exploits. To Tarshish, the mind is the most honorable of battlefields and the only place where an angel's true worth can be measured.

Few can match the Angel of Wisdom's razor-sharp intellect. He can pierce through lies and deceptions and comprehend what is most essential and pure. As a Servitor of Yves, Tarshish is a shining example of knowledge as a dynamic force. He teaches other Shepherds that all the knowledge in the Symphony is useless unless one applies and learns from it – this is Wisdom.

MEGELES

Seraph Servitor of Destiny

Corporeal Forces – 2 Strength 4 Agility 4
Ethereal Forces – 4 Intelligence 9 Precision 7
Celestial Forces – 3 Will 6 Perception 6

Vessel: Human/1 (young woman)

Role: "Sarah Megeles," Reporter/3, Status/3

Skills: Artistry/2 (Writing), Computer Operations/1, Detect Lies/1, Dodge/1, Fast-Talk/2, Move Silently/1, Savoir-Faire/1

Songs: Light (All/1)

Attunements: Seraph of Destiny, Mercurian of Destiny, Divine Destiny.

"Sarah" Megeles is a stickler for details, often obsessing about the slightest fact or apparent misunderstanding – and so she should. Her task is to keep a detailed record of her fellow Shepherds' activities within her area of activity. She's not a snoop or a snitch; Sarah is more of a celestial accountant ensuring Servitors of Destiny are as effective and pragmatic as possible. At least, this is what she tells herself. Sarah sees herself as a coordinator and nothing more – others see her as a nosy and arrogant lackey, too afraid to dirty her hands with real work, instead focusing on useless details. There is hope for Sarah, though – all she needs is to open her eyes a bit – and this is why Yves sent her to Earth.



(Sarah is a balanced starting character, or a possible ally the PCs can use to research information (in the corporeal or celestial realms.)

Sometimes watching someone die is not enough. Rarely, *Les Temoins* must ensure someone's death to keep the wheel of destiny moving, or to realign it. These jobs, called Black Ops and assigned to trustworthy angels, are as integral to Destiny as fostering hope and understanding. And while they must be done, it pains Yves each and every time someone must be sacrificed for the greater good.

SOCIETIES OF DESTINY

Like all academic and theological institutions, Shepherds group and classify themselves into departments, branches, societies, and brotherhoods. It's almost a hobby for *Les Temoins* to belong to all sorts of fraternities and fellowships. Most deal directly with some aspect of knowledge, such as the Brotherhood of Historians, the Department of Scribes, and the Society of Angelic Poets, for example. It's rumored there are more Shepherd cabals than there are books in the Library. Below are fellowships of Shepherds that serve key and prominent roles within Yves' organization.

The Order of Redeemers (Redemption Squad)

The Order of Redeemers stands in almost total opposition to the traditionally reserved, contemplative, and bookish image of *Les Temoins*. Redeemers travel the Symphony looking for demons who are ready and willing to accept the error of their ways and rejoin Heaven once more. Although a dangerous assignment, most Shepherds see it as a great honor, the ultimate means of serving Destiny – rescuing one of the Host from the trap of fate and the pits of Hell.

Redeemers consider themselves crusaders for the souls of their Fallen and Hellborn brethren. All are willing to risk their own existence to make a Diabolical feel the love of God. Diligent, almost to the point of fanaticism, many Redeemers are often misunderstood by other angels who do not comprehend their holy mission. Because of their contact with the other side, some angels give the Redemption Squad a wide berth.

The moniker "Redemption Squad" was actually intended as a joke by a Michaelite, but the name stuck and even fellow Shepherds use it when referring to Redeemers. Among themselves, Redeemers call each other "the Order." In truth, the Redemption Squad is more of a network than a group.

Most Shepherds belonging to the Redemption Squad work alone, although all can count on the Order for help or assistance. In rare cases, two or three Squad-mates will travel together, but most prefer to work in isolation. Redeemers are either on-call, waiting for reports of

dissonant demons, or prowling the corporeal realm looking for possible candidates for redemption.

The Order is less of a military organization and more of a brotherhood of *Les Temoins* who tend destiny by bringing demons back into the fold. There is no real leadership, no "bosses" who hand out assignments or keep timecards. However, experience and age form a rough hierarchy of mentors among the Redeemers. Members of the Squad defer to their elders and come to them for advice or, occasionally, specific assignments.



Destiny's powerful hand has made the bed of my future, and it's up to me to lie in it . . . And you don't fight destiny! No sir! And, you don't eat crackers in the bed of your future, or you get all . . . scratchy.

– The Tick

Understandably, being a Redeemer is hazardous. Few demons readily admit they are looking for a second chance. Confused and Discordant Renegades are more likely to attack the Redeemer than accept his help. Even when the subject cooperates, the Redeemer may well attract the attention of the Diabolical's Prince, who is not going to let some nosy angel steal a minion of Hell.

For these reasons, only the most dedicated and persevering are invited to join the Redemption Squad. This is why it's a great honor among *Les Temoins* to serve as a Redeemer. Even so, burnout and Falling rates are high. The process is emotionally grueling. Redeemers invest so much of themselves that they can become easy targets for cunning demons who twist their good intentions into a downward spiral.

Traditionally, if a Redeemer sees potential in another Shepherd, he extends an invitation to join the Order. Candidates who don't think they are up to the task may serve as a supporting position if they choose. They provide safe havens, equipment, and any other resources they can contribute.

Yves' Malakim make up the bulk of the Squad, along with EloHITE and Seraph Servitors. Kyriotates are also common. Although other Archangels have their own versions of Yves' Redemption Squad, they are smaller and not as formal or well known as the Order.

Though there are as many different paths to redemption as there are demons to be redeemed, the Order has a preferred *modus operandi*. Once a candidate (most Redeemers frown on calling them "demons" or "Renegades") is found, he is taken to a safehouse for a period of observation and re-indoctrination. During this time, both the angel and the demon are isolated from their kind, both for protection and to avoid possible corruption.

After the re-indoctrination, candidates are given simple tasks to test if they can function in the Symphony without reverting to their infernal ways. The Redeemer usually engineers a number of trials during this time to test the candidate's determination and sincerity to join Heaven. Once the Redeemer is satisfied, the candidate is presented to at least two other members of the Order. When at least two Redeemers are in agreement that the candidate is sincere enough, he is presented to Yves – or sometimes an Archangel more suited to the subject's temperament. Upon passing, the newly redeemed angel is assigned to an appropriate Superior.

Candidates who fail, or waver in their sincerity, are usually destroyed. Those who spurn divine forgiveness do not deserve another chance.

*Note: The redemption process is left intentionally vague. Bringing a wayward celestial back into the fold is one of the greatest accomplishments for a Shepherd. The GM is encouraged to **roleplay** the process and not resort to game mechanics. For more information on the path to Heaven, see the **Infernal Player's Guide**, pp. 103-119.*

The Ivory Council

This august body, composed entirely of Scholars and Philosophers (see p. 108) is, in many ways, the middle leadership between Yves and more junior *Temoins*. Most members of the Ivory Council serve and advise Yves directly. While the Archangel of Destiny is open and approachable to all his Servitors, he confers most frequently with the Ivory Council.

The Ivory Council acts much like a group of university Deans, setting procedures and administrative policies, and recognizing the achievements of their fellow Shepherds through commendations and awards. Although it is Yves who really orchestrates the actions of his Servitors and decides on policy, the Ivory Council helps him with day-to-day management. Most Councillors have the authority to assign angels to specific tasks and duties.

When not meeting, the Ivory Council is busy tending destiny from afar, by coordinating the efforts of Shepherds on Earth or in the other realms, or acting as advisors, tutors, and mentors. The Department of Corporeal Affairs handles Earth, while the Departments of Ethereal and Celestial Affairs deal with the Marches and Heaven, respectively. To some this is an honor, to others a prison sentence.

Once granted a higher Distinction, the angel is removed from the day-to-day struggle of serving Destiny in all but the most abstract and detached means. Their understanding of Destiny and the Symphony is so advanced that younger angels often have a hard time communicating with their "profs."



OBSERVERS

Yves' Observers are similar to Dominic's Monitors. Both groups have been known to work together in the past.

The great enthusiasm and secret knowledge possessed by most Shepherds can lead them to overstep the bounds of their missions, and tempt them to think they know what's best for humanity. The Observers are Elohim assigned to keep a watchful eye on their peers – looking for Discord or hubris in the actions of their fellow Shepherds – two quick routes to Hell. Most Shepherds are wary of Observers, but understand the need for them. When tending destiny it is always easy to let one's feeling interfere. The Observers' purpose is to keep everyone on an even keel and honest, even if they can be annoyingly nosy sometimes.

The Observers work closely with Dominicans, but this doesn't mean they lack compassion or understanding. Yves' EloHITE Observers are quick to let small transgressions slide, usually offering a warning or helping the Shepherd right his wrongs. What no Observer can forgive is a lack of objective judgment. While they do not expect all Servitors of Yves to have the same detachment they have, Observers expect their fellow Shepherds to act only when Destiny requires it and not because of feelings of attachment or guilt. Offenders are usually brought to the attention of Yves, who handles the matter himself or hands the offender over to Judgment if that's "what's meant to be."

Often criticized for their excessive bureaucracy (the Ivory Council keeps detailed records on everything from Shepherd activities to the weather, all maintained by a legion of Scribes and relieves), the Council's true weakness is their detachment from the front lines of the War. Many Councillors, having spent centuries in the confines of the Library, tend to forget what most Shepherds do on a daily basis. They do not understand the fine line *Les Temoins* walk and that destiny cannot be pushed, even if it's "what's meant to be." This rift between "field" Shepherds and the Ivory Council has resulted in a few "ideological" conflicts over the ages, but nothing drastic or violent.

Yves is aware of this. It's the reason that he routinely assigns Councillors to the corporeal realm, usually as Seneschals or as mentors for younger Shepherds.

DEALING WITH OUTSIDERS

Les Temoins, as befits their scholarly natures, are congenial and open even though they can be eccentric from time to time. They understand that everyone serves a role, and hence they try to foster close ties with all of Heaven's Host.

Servitors of Yves work closely with the Servitors of Jean, Marc, and Dominic, all having certain traits in common. Together they form the unofficial bureaucracy of Heaven. Dreamers and Shepherds have over the last few centuries formed a close alliance. More and more Dreamwalkers are seen visiting the Library, and more Shepherds are seen in the Marches. *Les Temoins* also have a great deal of love and respect for Servitors of Gabriel, though more than one angel has attributed this to Yves' guilt in the matter.

DEALING WITH JUDGMENT

Yves understands that Judgment is necessary, and that Dominic is as much a part of the Symphony as Yves is. However, Yves knows the potential danger that lurks within Dominic . . . a fate darker than most could imagine and fueled with each transgression against God and the Symphony. Yves created the concepts of "right" and "wrong" that fuel Dominic; he knows if one stares too deeply into the shadows looking for secrets, sooner or later that's all one can see.

Yves has always tried to temper Dominic's fanaticism, to teach him the virtue of patience and understanding. Yves' Servitors perform the same function for Dominicans, who have the same tendency as their Archangel to develop tunnel vision. On the whole, the Dominicans appreciate this check on their objectivity – they are as devastated by a false judgment as Shepherds are by accidentally turning someone toward his fate. This shared weight of responsibility makes the Servitors of Destiny and Judgment feel a strong kinship, and there are rarely any bad feelings between them.

There is no such thing as chance;
and what seem to us merest accident
springs from the deepest source of
destiny.

– Schiller (1759-1805)

ADVENTURE SEEDS



DREAM SEEDS

WAITING FOR THE BARBARIANS

This scenario will suit PC Servitors of Dreams, who do not necessarily require vessels. It takes place entirely in the Near Marches.

The angels are approached individually in the Marches by a shadowy, shifting figure who rises out of a dreamscape unexpectedly. In each case, he watches each angel for awhile before making himself known as Aruviel (a name they may recognize as the *de facto* leader of Blandine's bodyguard, *The Incorruptibles*, p. 33), and asking them to report for a special briefing session. It is clear that this is to be secret from other angels, and the group is not sure whether Blandine herself is aware of it.

Aruviel tells the angels that he wishes them to travel out to a quadrant of the Vale that is on the very border of the Far Marches. The Warden of that Quadrant is an ancient Cherub, who has kept his area quiet and well controlled for millennia. He is also known to have a good relationship with several ethereals, even having helped them escape the Purity Crusade. However, Aruviel has had word that Dominic plans to send a triad out to investigate the Warden – headed by Seraphiel, the Angel of the Inquisition (*Angelic Players Guide*, p. 22) in person. The Dreamers must get to the Warden before the triad does, and make sure that there is no evidence of anything which

might be misconstrued as heresy. This includes the presence of ethereals. What is more worrying is that there *have* been reports of ethereal attacks on dreamscapes around the fringes of the Far Marches lately.

The angels will find that the Warden is an aged, kindly creature, with a mild interest in philosophy. His Quadrant is a very quiet one, which rarely has demonic incursions – and that's just how he likes it. He sees nothing wrong in dealing with ethereals; they often come to trade artifacts or relics with the angels in his service, and there have been no signs that they intend a mass invasion. They don't speak much, but they don't cause any trouble either. He's quite happy to show his visitors around, and proudly introduce them to some of his favorite dreamscapes. However, shortly after the PCs arrive, an angel of Dreams is soul-killed nearby. A witness describes the atrocity, and it sounds as if ethereals were responsible. The Warden is flustered, confused, and inexperienced with this sort of problem. The Inquisition is due any minute. Can PCs clear up the mystery?

In fact, the killing has been accomplished by a couple of Beleth's Calabim (Mr. Gibber and Mr. Hyperventilate), who have been operating from the fringes of the Far Marches with an ethereal ally. They have been pretending to be ethereals, and intend to create the appearance of a renewed policy of aggression to drive a wedge between the Warden and his ethereal friends. The way they see it, any "plan" which lets them kidnap and torture angels must have something going for it.

NORTHCOTT 2K



ONE NIGHT IN DREAMS

This scenario is suited for a group of PC Servitors of Dreams, or related Superiors.

The angels are summoned to meet with the Seneschal at a local Tether to Dreams. When they arrive, they are greeted coolly, and informed that Blandine has a special request, which will not take much of their time, but does require angels who have vessels and some Earth experience. A Dream Shade recently requested an audience with the White Lady at her Tower. The Shade was willing to abandon the Marches and enter Heaven, but was concerned for his son, still on Earth. He asked that angels watch the man, where he no longer could; and his plea was so eloquent that Blandine has agreed. After all, she understands love beyond death. The Seneschal gives the angels the son's name, and tells them that Blandine requires them to investigate him and make a report, so that she can assign an appropriate Cherub to guard him.

Unfortunately, Bill de Vries is not a pleasant person. He's a hard-nosed corporate shark and slum landlord, who seems incapable of seeing anything beyond the bottom line. Angels will be able to find information about him easily, in local papers or any other usual source. His business methods are infamous, as is the way he treats his staff. As they are visiting his house, or any location where he is often seen, the Dreamers sense a large disturbance. On investigating, they find a trashed car in a back alley, with flames erupting from it. A prone figure lies inside the car, and another man stands and glowers from the sidewalk. It doesn't take long to realize that the survivor

is a Malakite of Fire (he will resonate them, if nothing else). The Malakite tells PCs (proudly) that he has just eliminated the Fate Demon who was watching his current target – who is, of course, Bill de Vries. The Malakite now intends to put Bill to death – his cruelty should not be allowed to continue unchecked. However, if the angels are persuasive, the Malakite allows them one night in which to watch Bill's dreams and try to turn him around. If, the next morning, the man still registers as cruel, then he must die.

If the Dreamwalkers request help from Blandine or the local Seneschal, they will be offered more Essence, and advised to do their best. Any PCs who don't already have Dream Walking or Songs of Dreams will be lent relics that contain the Corporeal Song of Dreams/6. (If a GM is feeling kind, NPCs could also give them a copy of Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* to help with ideas.)

Now it's up to the angels to stage some dream scenes that will help their victim to realize the pain that his cruelty has caused, and decide to turn his life around. If they fail, he will probably be in Hell by the next evening. If they succeed, he will wake up the next morning racked with remorse and filled with good intentions, and the Malakite will sense the difference and allow his prey to go free . . . this time. If, during the course of the night, the dreamscape turns into a nightmare (GM's discretion), then a curious Djinn of Nightmares may decide to investigate personally.

(If the GM aspires to satire, substitute a famous politician or celebrity for Bill – anyone who would really benefit from having PCs running amok in their subconscious for a few hours.)

SEEDS OF FIRE

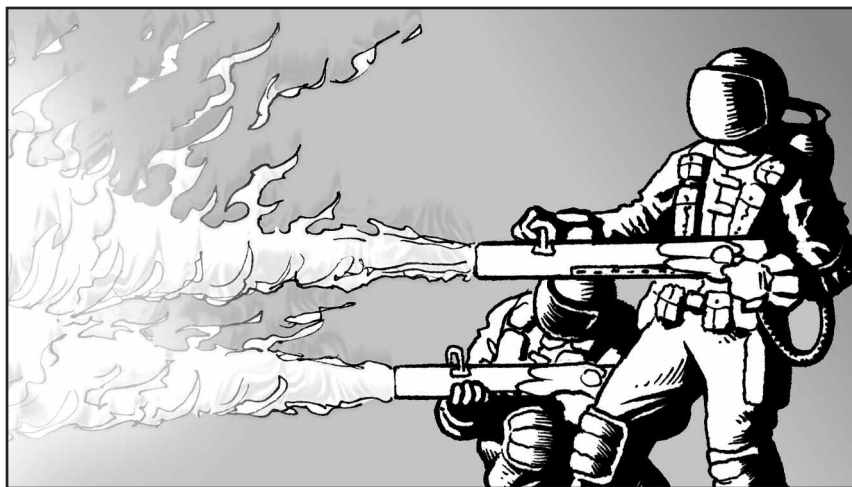
THE PLAY'S THE THING

Recently, a particular Mystery Cult (p. 96) has been expanding. This organization, Those Who Serve Through Blood And Fire, has a couple of human members (both Soldiers of Fire) who belong to a local Masonic lodge. The Soldiers have been putting out cautious feelers as to whether anybody there is also of Soldier material, or could be brought into the War – and have also shared a couple of their “private texts” with friends. These private texts are handwritten copies of dramatic rituals which deal with the cyclic nature of fire, the replacement of an old ruler with the new heir, and the constant affirmation of fire’s nature. Celestial readers, if viewing them with a suspicious eye, might even find correlations to the current situation of Gabriel and Soldekai, and suggestions that Soldekai should take Gabriel’s place . . . The situation is complicated by the fact that an angel of Stone (unknown to the Soldiers of Fire) is a regular member of this Masonic group, and is likely to see these documents soon. He’ll perceive the hidden meanings, too.

Inside the Mystery Cult, these new texts can be traced back to Zhol, an Ofanite of Fire and local beat cop, who has recently been rearranging some of the cult’s rituals. The others in the group trust his judgment, and have found the new works to be strangely compelling – perhaps even to have an element of truth in them. Perhaps Soldekai should hold more power than he does; Fire continues, after all, and if it’s only a matter of personal identity . . .

Zhol is as much a dupe as all the others. He recently met up with Pente, a self-proclaimed Seraph of Eli. Pente has been sharing the house where Zhol lives since then (having no other accommodation) and has been most helpfully discussing the ritual and practice of the cult. Zhol can’t quite remember how the subject came up, but he’s sure that Pente’s reliable. The Seraph is *clearly* an angel of Creation – he’s been inspiring all sorts of interesting new thoughts in Zhol, and has been so useful in providing suitable wording. Of course, Zhol hasn’t told the other cult members about Pente, because . . . well, it’s not as if it was really important, and they wouldn’t understand a Seraph of Eli joining them. Or something like that.

Pente is actually a Balsraph of Malphas, and was assigned this task personally by his Prince, when the Servitors of Factions managed to discover a vulnerable member of a Mystery Cult. Pente’s been carefully chosen for the job – he isn’t personally cruel, isn’t fleeing justice, and he *is* creative. He views this entire project as a wonderful opportunity to practice propaganda-writing – on angels, even! Once he’s managed to get the concept of “Soldekai should replace Gabriel” thoroughly into the cult’s collective beliefs, other Servitors of Factions will work on splitting them away from the rest of the angels of Fire. In the meantime, he’s doing his best to avoid any angels who might “blow his cover” and has spent enough time lying to the low-willed Zhol that the Ofanite will automatically come up with almost any reasonable excuse to keep the Balsraph out of the public view. Pente currently has a job at the local school, as a substitute teacher, and his students love him; he makes things so interesting. Another angel of Creation might be able to finger him as a ringer, but none of them have been around lately.



The Balsraph has no idea that the Soldiers of Fire have been showing his texts around, or that angels of Stone may get involved. Of course, if the Servitors of Stone should investigate, things may get even better – what more amusing option could there be than to try to divide the Stones from the Flames by suggesting (from a safe distance, naturally) that some of the angels of Fire were planning to betray their mistress? The truth would be ascertained eventually, of course, but rumors stick. The worst of the matter is that Pente *is* a good writer, and extremely effective at introducing concepts through metaphor or simile. This cult wouldn’t even have considered the Soldekai concept without him – but it’ll be a messy and humiliating (for them) job to get it out of their personal beliefs now.

LOST, STOLEN, OR STRAYED

A 13-year-old girl from a local foster home, removed from her previous family due to parental abuse, has gone missing – and the Cherub of Fire who had been watching over her has become Outcast, his Heart shattered. The evidence suggests that she was taken away by a “stranger” – but was this her abusive father (who’s also vanished), the Cherub (nowhere to be found), or someone entirely different?

The truth is that the child herself is just plain malicious, viciously cruel, and now Hellsworn. She ran into a local Balseraph of the War, who took to her on sight (it was the way she was kicking another child while he was down) and was delighted to discover she had the potential for 6 Forces. She’s vanished to live with her “new family” – and will doubtless have an excellent college education arranged. Her father’s been kidnapped by some other Hellsworn of the War, and will be executed by the girl herself in a couple of days as the Balseraph’s little initiatory present to her. The Cherub of Fire managed to track the girl down, but is refusing to accept the evidence of his own eyes, resulting in heavy dissonance and Heart-shattering – he still believes in her, and protects her (from a distance).

Investigation at her school may reveal some information about her “new uncle,” and checks at her foster home will show that she carefully removed her favorite belongings before going missing. Checks on the father may also reveal traces of his kidnapping, and provide some trails. However, the girl herself may be beyond saving . . . and can it all be sorted out before the Dominicans get curious?

FIRE INSURANCE

Some of Belial’s demons have a new trick – they’ve got control of an insurance firm, which specializes in fire insurance. They’re going through the records to find out which policies have weak points, then torching the buildings in question in such a way that the owners can’t collect on the insurance. (A couple of Hellsworn are doing most of the actual arson, to avoid too much Symphonic disturbance.) However, a Seraph of Fire happened to be reading the newspaper, and picked up some interesting Truths from a letter of complaint about the insurance firm. This needs investigating, but it’ll be difficult to root out the demons from the firm without harming the innocent humans employed there. Eventual checking should reveal that the next building to be torched is a local hospice for cancer patients (whose lawyers failed to get good insurance) – just in time for the angels of Fire to get there and try to stop it.

SEED OF FAITH

THE NEXT HOLIEST MAN ON EARTH

In *The Final Trumpet*, several Superiors conspired to trigger Armageddon by bringing about the Seven Signs of the Apocalypse. The Second Sign is: “The Holiest Man in the World Dies by Hands Not Mortal.” Khalid, as the Archangel of Faith, knows who the holiest man in the world is at any given time. Dissonant and despairing, he gave away that information, and the former bearer of that honor, an Iranian accountant named Ahmad Khan Qavam, died. (*The Final Trumpet, The Second Trumpet*, pp. 73-81.)

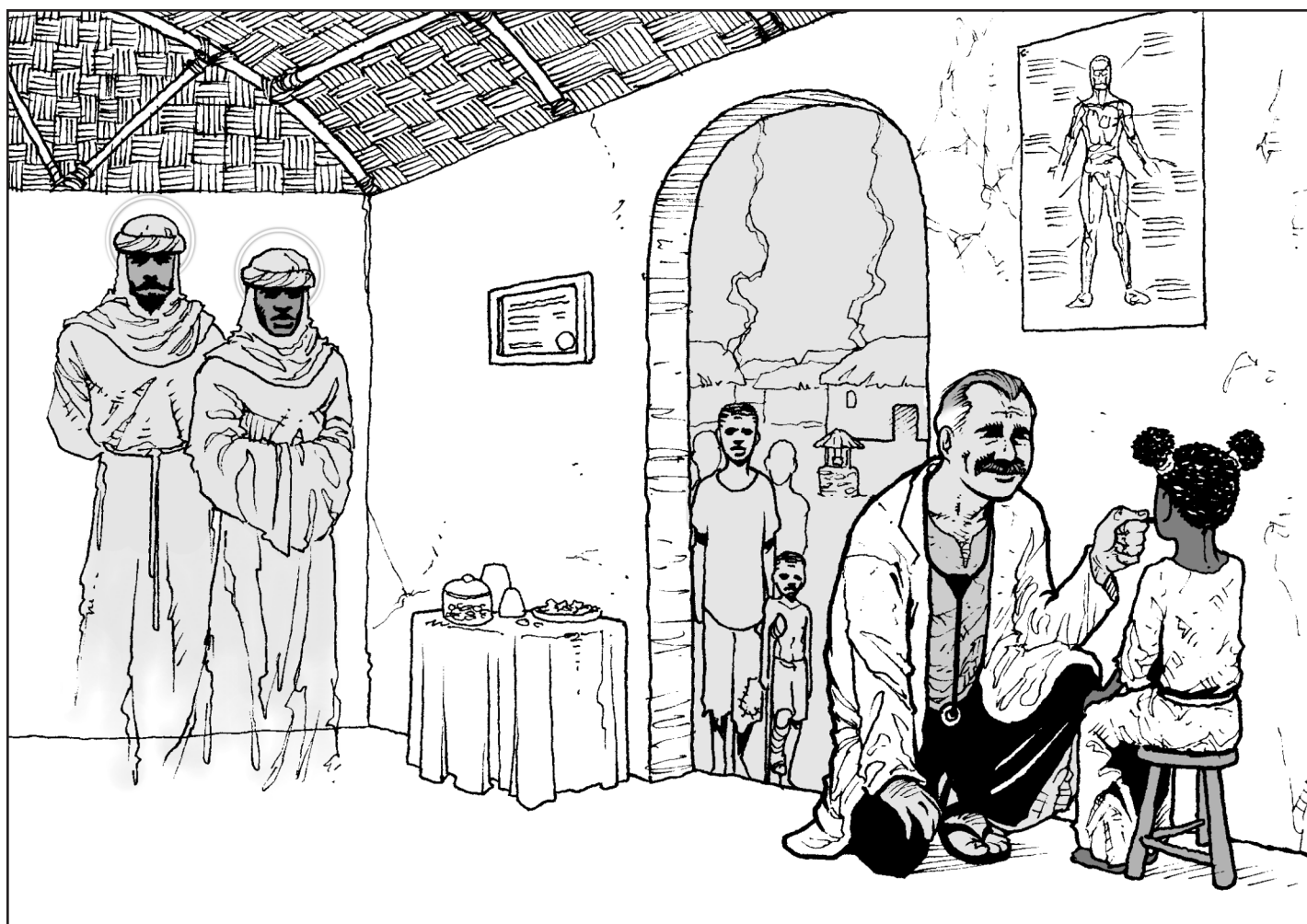
That crisis passed, and Khalid is more stable now. He has no intention of giving away the identity of the current Holiest Man in the World. Except . . .

The Holiest Man is an unbeliever.

Miles Foster grew up in a wealthy family on the East Coast of the United States. His parents died in a plane crash; he inherited a huge estate. At age 22, he gave away almost every penny to charity, keeping just enough to put himself through medical school. Upon completing his residency, he joined Doctors Without Borders, and works tirelessly to provide free medical treatment to the world’s poor. He is a true optimist who believes the best about humanity, despite the horrors he has to deal with on a regular basis. He is also a rationalist who believes in nothing without evidence, and has no use for beliefs that make no sense. His faith in human nature, he will point out, is essentially unprovable, and is more of a mindset than a belief. God, on the other hand, while a nice idea and one he’ll also admit can’t be disproven, doesn’t fit in his worldview. It would be irrational to believe in Him without evidence. Miles and an EloHITE could spend a long time discussing epistemology . . .

Khalid cannot accept an atheistic secular humanist as the Holiest Man in the World. Dr. Foster *must* acquire faith in God. Converting him to Islam would be nice, but even generic theism would be an improvement.

Of course, convincing a dedicated rationalist that God exists, without using any supernatural powers or other impressive stunts, will be difficult. (In fact, if Dr. Foster is *made* aware of the existence of angels and demons, it will completely shatter his worldview. Not only will he not gain faith in God, he will lose faith in *everything* and become convinced that all is pointless – humans are helpless pawns being jerked around by ineffable higher powers.)



When Khalid assigns some angels to bestow divine faith on an atheist, he will stress that it is very important that they succeed, and equally important that they not even come *close* to violating his dissonance conditions. He will not, of course, even hint at *why* Dr. Foster is so important. He'll also stress that disturbance is to be avoided at all costs. (The same Superiors who wanted Armageddon last time will be watching any mortals Khalid takes an interest in – they'd like to know who the new Holiest Man in the World is, for future reference.)

Dr. Foster is usually found in some Third World hell-hole. There are various approaches the PCs can take to bringing the Holiest Man in the World to God, but in the meantime, they'll have to tag along and try applying themselves to some purely mundane miseries, without being able to sling Songs and Essence around to fix problems. Running into diabolical opposition will be that much more of a challenge when the demons must be defeated with faith alone . . .

SEEDS OF DESTINY

THE ENEMY WITHIN

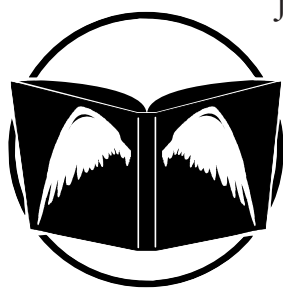
One of Yves' Redeemers, a EloHITE named Cassiel, is missing. Nobody, including other members of the Redemption Squad (p. 134), knows he has vanished, until the PCs stumble upon the demon Cassiel was trying to redeem. Devon, an Impudite of Death, hesitantly approaches the angels (or the Shepherd, if the group is mixed), tells them his story, and asks for them for help.

Cassiel discovered Devon about six weeks after the Impudite finally gave up on Saminga and Death. Tired of needless murder, Devon targeted only the sick and mercifully ended their lives – something that did not endear him to his Demon Prince. (Why kill humans who were dying anyway?) To the Impudite, death was a gift he bestowed on humans. But Saminga tainted its purity, turned death into something vile and putrescent. Devon became disillusioned with Death.

Cassiel picked up on Devon's dissatisfaction and showed the demon a way out of his predicament – redemption. Grateful for the support, Devon took the first steps back into the light. Unfortunately, Saminga was not about to let one of his Servitors become a turncoat, so he had his minions track down the duo and spring a trap. Devon escaped, having the advantage of knowing what his fellow Samingans were capable of. Cassiel was not as lucky.

Devon says that he fears his sponsor's disappearance will ruin his chances of returning to grace, but can the characters trust a demon? Devon appears sincere; he's not lying and if Divine Destiny is used on him, he has the potential to be a powerful angel. However, the Impudite is still an demon, and a Servitor of Death . . .

Potential Complications: As soon as Saminga tracks Devon down again, which he will, the Demon Prince will try to get both the Game and



Judgment interested in the characters. This puts the angels in danger of becoming Outcasts for consorting with a known demon.

Observers (p. 136) or Judgment triads could also get involved on their own, checking up on the characters or forcing them to chose sides. It

is also possible that Devon was playing Cassiel for a fool, and is now trying to involve the PCs, hoping to drag them down to Hell with him.

Cassiel: So where is Cassiel? The Samingans are holding him on Earth, hoping for a reward from Saminga. They also intend to use the angel as a bargaining chip. Saminga wants to make an example of angels who try to redeem *his* demons. But he also wants Devon back, to provide another example. The two demons are authorized to set up a trade for Cassiel, but it will be a trap – Saminga has told them that he expects them to bring both Devon and Cassiel with them, at any cost.

The angels who are seeking Cassiel will have to get him away from the demons, and make sure that Devon doesn't switch sides while their backs are turned. They may also have to dodge Dominicans and Servitors of the Game, who are both after them for the same offense.

Perhaps Cassiel has been able to affect his captors' hearts, as he did Devon's . . .

Yves' Role: The Archangel of Destiny watches events unfold from a distance. He sees the potential of Devon – although Devon would have a very long road ahead of him. Yves also wants to see how the angels handle the *possibility* of redemption, and whether they are willing to sacrifice Cassiel for Devon, or vice-versa.

TO ERR IS HUMAN . . .

Chris Balis was convicted 13 years ago for the murder of a family in upstate New York. In a brutal and random act, Balis butchered the family and then burned their home in a blind rage – but he claims remember nothing of the murder or of his life before that moment.

The press dubbed him “the Wayward Butcher,” and his trial lasted three weeks. His lawyers tried to enter of plea of not-guilty due to insanity, but aside from noting his severe amnesia, no psychologist would declare Balis insane. So, on October 12, 1986, Chris Balis was sentenced to die by electrocution. For 13 years he has waited on death row.

The angels become aware of Balis a week before his scheduled execution. They may see a news report about “the Wayward Butcher,” or see his photograph in a newspaper article. Any Servitors of Destiny *immediately* know there is more to Balis. It's almost as if he is calling to them – or at least his destiny is.

The angels have a week to uncover the truth behind Balis and that fateful day 13 years ago. But aside from the trial transcripts, there is little information; it's almost as if Chris Balis did not exist before the murders. And he didn't . . .

Chris Balis was once Kristof, a Malakite Shunned by Yves. Cast to the corporeal plane and cut off from Yves and Destiny, Kristof spent years wandering the backwoods of America. A Shedite of Belial found Kristof, and realizing that no one would aid the pariah, he tormented the Shunned angel. In desperation, Kristof prayed for Yves to help him, to restore his attunements, but Yves remained silent. The Shedite possessed a nearby family, attacking Kristof until all of his hosts were dead; the Virtue was drawn into celestial combat. Much to the amusement of the Shedite, Kristof lost, becoming a Remnant, and the Shedite framed him for the murder of the family – delighted in seeing a so-called Shepherd fall victim to his own fate.

If Servitors of Yves can talk to Chris, and physically touch him to invoke their attunements, they'll begin to unravel his tragic story – and become his only hope for salvation. That is, if they can look beyond Kristof's Shunned status.

Potential Complications: The Shedite responsible for the murders would probably come to witness, in one of his many guises, the final death of Kristof. It would be impossible for the characters to have the charges dropped; this would require them to prove the Shedite (or more accurately his old host, which is probably dead by now) committed the crime – impossible in a modern, corporeal court of law. The angels could, however, end Chris' torment by forcing the demon to confess to the Remnant, allowing the former angel to face death with a pure and free conscience.

INDEX

Abigail, Seneschal of the Hilltop Plaza, 3; *Tether*, 26.
Adventure Seeds, 137-142.
Ahaziah, Angel of Active Volcanoes, 60.
Akashic Record Attunement, 106.
Aisha, 103.
Aliah, Angel of the American Dream, 34.
Aluriel, 46.
Andrealphus, Prince of Lust, and *Blandine*, 17; *opinion of Blandine*, 16; *opinion of Gabriel*, 50; *opinion of Khalid*, 87; *opinion of Yves*, 116.
Angel of Dreams of Peace, the, 9.
Angel of Fear, the, 11-12.
Angels of Hope, *see Menunim*.
Archangel opinions, of *Blandine*, 15-16; of *Gabriel*, 47-49; of *Khalid*, 85-86; of *Yves*, 114-116.
Aruviel, 33, 137.
Asim, Cherub of Faith, 103.
Asmodeus, Prince of the Game, *opinion of Blandine*, 16; *opinion of Gabriel*, 50; *opinion of Khalid*, 87; *opinion of Yves*, 116.
Asylum, the, 23.
Attic, the, 121.
Attunements, *Choir*, 6-7, 39-41, 74, 105-106; *Servitor*, 7-8, 40-41, 75-76, 106-107.
Baal, Prince of the War, *opinion of Blandine*, 17; *opinion of Gabriel*, 50; *opinion of Khalid*, 87; *opinion of Yves*, 116.
Balis, Chris, 142.
Beleth, Princess of Nightmares, and *Blandine*, 11-14; *opinion of Blandine*, 17; *opinion of Gabriel*, 50; *opinion of Khalid*, 87; *opinion of Yves*, 114.
Belial, Prince of Fire, 46-47; *opinion of Blandine*, 17; *opinion of Gabriel*, 50; *opinion of Khalid*, 87; *opinion of Yves*, 116.
Bernard, Kyriotate of Fire, 67.
Blandine, Archangel of Dreams, 5-37, 47, 138; and *Andrealphus*, 17; and *Beleth*, 11-14; and *David*, 15; and *ethereals*, 18; and *humans*, 18; and *Kronos*, 17; and *Marc*, 16; and *Soldiers of God*, 18; and *Soldiers of Hell*, 18; and *the corporeal realm*, 25, 27; and *undead*, 19; *Choir Attunements*, 6-7; *Distinctions*, 8-9; *domain*, 20-25; *history*, 11-12; *Malakite oaths*, 10; *myths and misconceptions*, 12-13; *names, appearance, and manner*, 10; *organization*, 27; *priorities*, 13;

personality and outlook, 13-15; *politics*, 6; *relations*, 9; *rewards and punishments*, 28; *Rites*, 9; *secret allies*, 12-13; *Servitor Attunements*, 7-8; *Songs*, 9; *Tethers of*, 25-26; *variations on*, 19; *views on ethereals*, 15; *views on God*, 14; *views on humanity*, 14; *views on Lucifer*, 14; *views on the War*, 14.
Bollywood, 33.
Book of Names, 105, 122.
Bounded in a Nutshell Attunement, 7.
Bright Lilim, 7, 41, 74, 106.
Cassiel, EloHITE of Destiny, 141-142.
Castellan, the, 21.
Changing Superiors, from *Blandine*, 28; from *Gabriel*, 59; from *Khalid* 94; from *Yves*, 126.
Cherubim, 29-30, 61, 95, 128; *Choir Attunements*, 6, 39, 74, 105.
Choir Attunements, *see Attunements*.
Christianity, 44, 73, 79-80; *foundation of*, 39, 44.
Church of St. Tobias, the, 124.
Citadel of Fire, the, 12, 44, 53-54.
Convent of San José, Avila, 55.
Corridor of Histories, 121.
Creation, *Servitors of in service to other Superiors*, 32, 69, 101.
Crusades, the, 80.
Dance of the Atoms Attunement, 40.
Dariel, Angel of Charity, 96.
David, Archangel of War, 46, 79, 81; and *Blandine*, 15; and *Gabriel*, 47; *opinion of Blandine*, 15; *opinion of Gabriel*, 48; *opinion of Khalid*, 85; *opinion of Yves*, 114.
Destiny, and choice, 111; *Word of*, 109-110.
Devon, Impudite of Death, 141-142.
Dictorium, the, 54.
Dissonance, 6, 37, 39, 73-74, 105.
Distinctions, 8-9, 41-42, 76, 107-108.
Divine Destiny Attunement, 106.
Divine Logic Attunement, 106.
Dominic, Archangel of Judgment, 73, 80-81, 119, 136; and *Gabriel*, 44, 48, 53, 70; and *Khalid*, 85, 93, 100-101; and *Soldekai*, 57; and *Yves*, 114; *opinion of Blandine*, 15; *opinion of Gabriel*, 48; *opinion of Khalid*, 86; *opinion of Yves*, 114.
Dream combat, 24.
Dream scenes, 25.
Dream Shades, 14, 30, 138.
Dream Sight Attunement, 7.
Dream Walking Attunement, 7.
Dreambook, 7.

Dreams, *interpretation of*, 27-28; *Word of*, 10-11.
Dreamscapes, 21, 23-24, 31; *first appearance of*, 12.
Eli, Archangel of Creation, 32, 43, 79; *opinion of Blandine*, 13; *opinion of Gabriel*, 48; *opinion of Khalid*, 86; *opinion of Yves*, 115.
Elohim, 31, 62-63, 95, 129; *Choir Attunements*, 6, 39, 74, 105.
Emmanuel, Angel of Hope, 29.
Encyclopedia Somnorium, the, 22.
Ephemera, the, 22.
Eternity, *see the Asylum*.
Ethereal combat, 24.
Ethereal spirits, 30, 51, 89, 118; and *Blandine*, 12-13.
Eyes of Fire Attunement, 40.
Faith, *Word of*, 78.
Fall, the, 11-12.
Fast Attunement, 75.
Fate, *Word of*, 109.
Fire, *Word of*, 42-43.
Firemen, the, 46.
First Menunite, the, 29.
First redemption, the, 12.
First Tower, *ruins of*, 23.
Forgetful Words Attunement, 106.
Foster, Dr. Miles, 140-141.
Friend of the Divine Spark Distinction, 41.
Friend of Sleepers Distinction, 8.
Friend of the Faithful (Friend of Islam) Distinction, 76.
Friend of the Sages Distinction, 107.
Fugit, Angel of Messages, 60.
Gabriel, Archangel of Fire, 38-70, 73, 79-80, 102, 105; and *Belial*, 43; and *David*, 47; and *Dominic*, 43, 47, 53, 69; and *ethereals*, 51; and *humans*, 51; and *Jean*, 49; and *Khalid*, 84, 99; and *Laurence*, 49; and *Soldiers of God*, 51; and *Soldiers of Hell*, 51; and *sorcerers*, 51, 62; and *Yves*, 114; as a male, 52-53; *associations and societies*, 68-69; *Choir Attunements*, 39; *dissonance*, 39, 59; *Distinctions*, 41-42, 58; *domain*, 53-54; *history*, 43; *boly mysteries*, 45-46; *Malakite oaths*, 42; *organization*, 58; *personality and outlook*, 46; *politics*, 47; *priorities*, 47; *relations*, 42; *Relievers of*, 60; *rewards and punishments*, 58; *Rites*, 42; *Servitor Attunements*, 40-41; *sigil*, 47; *Songs*, 41; *Tethers of*, 54-55; *variations of*, 52; *views on ethereals*, 51; *views on God*, 47; *views on humanity*, 51, 60.

Gateways, 120.
God, 11, 43, 110-113, 118.
Guardian of the Marches, the, *see Blandine*.
Haagenti, Prince of Gluttony, *opinion of Blandine*, 17; *opinion of Gabriel*, 50; *opinion of Khalid*, 87; *opinion of Yves*, 116.
Halls of Remembrance, 121.
Healing Dream Attunement, 8.
Hebrews, 79.
Hilltop Plaza 3, 26.
Holiest Man in the World, 140.
Humans and humanity, 18, 29, 51, 60, 88-89, 94, 118; *faithless*, 72.
Ignes, the, 62.
Incorruptibles, 31, 33, 137.
Inez, Seneschal of the Convent of San José, Avila, 55.
Io, Angel of Dreams of Flight, 29.
Islam, 73, 79-83, 99, 112; *foundation of*, 39, 44, 105.
Ivory Council, the, 135-136.
Jabesh, Angel of Guilt, 66.
Janus, Archangel of the Wind, *opinion of Blandine*, 15; *opinion of Gabriel*, 48; *opinion of Khalid*, 86; *opinion of Yves*, 115.
Jean, Archangel of Lightning, and *Gabriel*, 49; *opinion of Blandine*, 16; *opinion of Gabriel*, 48; *opinion of Khalid*, 86; *opinion of Yves*, 115.
Jesus Christ, 43.
Jihad Attunement, 75.
Jobs, 131; *celestial*, 32, 64, 97, 132; *corporeal*, 32-33, 65, 97, 132; *ethereal*, 32, 64, 97, 132; *unusual*, 33, 67, 98, 134.
Johnson, Joe, Soldier of Dreams, 34.
Jordi, Archangel of Animals, *opinion of Blandine*, 16; *opinion of Gabriel*, 48; *opinion of Khalid*, 86; *opinion of Yves*, 116.
Judaism, 79.
Kaabah, the, 92.
Keeper of the Flame, *see Blandine*.
Khalid, Archangel of Faith, 71-103, 141; and *Dominic*, 85, 100-101; and *ethereals*, 89; and *faithless humans*, 72; and *Gabriel*, 84, 99; and *humans*, 75, 88, 94; and *Islam*, 78-81, 83; and *Israel*, 98; and *Laurence*, 73, 81, 84; and *monotheism*, 79; and *religion*, 79, 83; and *Saints*, 89; and *Soldiers of God*, 88, 94; and *Soldiers of Hell*, 88; and *terrorism* 73, 81-82; and *the Middle East*, 98; and *Uriel*, 73; and *Yves*, 85, 100; as *borderline-Outcast*, 72; as *Demon Prince of Fanaticism*, 72, 89; *Choir Attunements*, 74; *dissonance*, 73-74; *Distinctions*, 76, 91; *domain*, 90-91; *history*, 79-81; *legends and rumors*,



- 81-82; *Malakite oaths*, 77; *names, appearance, and manner*, 78; *organization*, 91; *personality and outlook*, 82; *politics*, 84-88; *relations*, 76; *rewards and punishments*, 93-94; *Rites*, 76-77, 93; *secret Songs*, 76; *Servitor Attunements*, 75-76; *Tethers of*, 91-92; *variations*, 89; *views on ethereals*, 89; *views on God*, 83; *views on humanity*, 88-89; *views on the War*, 83.
- Kobal, Prince of Dark Humor, and *Blandine*, 17; *opinion of Blandine*, 17; *opinion of Gabriel*, 50; *opinion of Khalid*, 87; *opinion of Yves*, 116.
- Kristof, Shunned Malakite of Destiny, 142.
- Kronos, Prince of Fate, 112; and *Yves*, 115; *opinion of Blandine*, 17; *opinion of Gabriel*, 50; *opinion of Khalid*, 87; *opinion of Yves*, 116.
- Kyriotes, 31, 63, 96, 130; *Choir Attunements*, 6, 40, 74, 106.
- Last Spark Attunement, 40.
- Laurence, Archangel of the Sword, 44-45, 80-81; and *Gabriel*, 49; and *Khalid*, 73, 84; and *Soldekai*, 57; *opinion of Blandine*, 16; *opinion of Gabriel*, 48; *opinion of Khalid*, 86; *opinion of Yves*, 116.
- Library, the, 54, 107, 119-123; *inhabitants of*, 122; *visitors to*, 122.
- Library Card Attunement, 106.
- Lilith, Princess of Freedom, *opinion of Blandine*, 17; *opinion of Gabriel*, 50; *opinion of Khalid*, 87; *opinion of Yves*, 117.
- Lucidity Attunement, 8.
- Lucifer, 11-12, 43, 79.
- Lyssah, Angel of Dreams of Children, 29.
- Magog, Prince of Cruelty, 79, 81; as *Angel of Fortitude*, 46, 79.
- Malakim, 31, 63, 96, 129; *Choir Attunements*, 6, 39, 74, 105; *common oaths*, 10, 42, 77, 109.
- Malphas, Prince of Factions, 81; *opinion of Blandine*, 17; *opinion of Gabriel*, 50; *opinion of Khalid*, 87; *opinion of Yves*, 117.
- Marc, Archangel of Trade, and *Blandine*, 16; *opinion of Blandine*, 16; *opinion of Gabriel*, 49; *opinion of Khalid*, 86; *opinion of Yves*, 116.
- Marches, the, 6-9, 12-14, 19-24, 54, 137; *Near*, 23; *overpopulation in*, 24.
- Master of Divine Knowledge Distinction, 108.
- Master of the Flame of Heaven Distinction, 42.
- Master of the Realms of Night Distinction, 9.
- Master of the Word of God Distinction, 76.
- Megeles, Seraph of Destiny, 133.
- Menunim, 6, 31, 36-37; and *humans*, 36-37; and *Soldiers*, 37; *check digit results*, 37; *Choir Attunement*, 6; *dissonance*, 37; *game mechanics*, 37; *manner and appearance*, 37; *resonance*, 36-37.
- Mercurians, 31-32, 63, 96, 131; *Choir Attunements*, 7, 40, 74, 106.
- Michael, Archangel of War, 12, 81, 119; and *Gabriel*, 39, 44, 47, 57; and *Yves*, 105, 115; *opinion of Blandine*, 16; *opinion of Gabriel*, 49; *opinion of Khalid*, 86; *opinion of Yves*, 116.
- Mordekial, 46.
- Moses, 81.
- Mosque, the, 90-91.  *Mudaafi'un*, 97.
- Muhammed, 79, 83, 99; and *Gabriel*, 39, 44, 80.
- Mujaabidun*, 96-98.
- Muslim angels, 93, 95, 100.
- Mystery Cults, 69, 139.
- Nathanael, Angel of Punishment, 60.
- Novalis, Archangel of Flowers, *opinion of Blandine*, 16; *opinion of Gabriel*, 49; *opinion of Khalid*, 86; *opinion of Yves*, 116.
- Nybbas, Prince of the Media, 33; *opinion of Blandine*, 17; *opinion of Gabriel*, 50; *opinion of Khalid*, 87; *opinion of Yves*, 117.
- Observers, the, 136.
- Ofanim, 30, 61-62, 95, 128-129; *Choir Attunements*, 6, 39, 74, 105.
- Order of Redeemers, *see Redemption Squad*.
- Oresto, the first redeemed, Angel of Dreams of Love, 12, 29.
- Oriflamme, the, 68.
- Pagans, 89.
- Past Lives Attunement, 106.
- Peace Faction, *formation of*, 12.
- Pente, Balsraph of Malphas, 139.
- Philosopher Distinction, 108, 135.
- Poitiers, Battle of, 81.
- Princely opinions, *of Blandine*, 16-18; *of Gabriel*, 50; *of Khalid*, 87-88; *of Yves*, 116-117.
- Purity Crusade, 30, 44, 62, 80.
- Quran, 80, 83, 100.
- Queen of the Night, *see Blandine*.
- Raphael, Archangel of Knowledge, 43-44, 79, 128.
- Rashid, Angel of Prayer, 96, 102.
- Rebellion, the, 11-12, 20-21, 43.
- Redeemed, the, 28, 60, 94, 126.
- Redemption, 28, 60, 129.
- Redemption Squad, the, 126, 134-135.
- Religion, 43.
- Revealed religion, 83.
- Rikbiel, Angel of Ascension, 60.
- Rite of Passage Attunement, 106.
- Rites, 9, 42, 76-77, 108.
- Rituals of Faith Attunement, 75.
- Saints, 89.
- Saminga, Prince of Death, 142; *opinion of Blandine*, 18; *opinion of Gabriel*, 50; *opinion of Khalid*, 87; *opinion of Yves*, 117.
- Scholar Distinction, 108, 135.
- Sentinel Distinction, 9.
- Seraphim, 30, 61, 95, 127-128; *Choir Attunements*, 6, 39, 74, 105.
- Seraphim Council, the, 11, 43, 45, 78, 80, 96.
- Servitor Attunements, *see Attunements*.
- Servitors, *of Destiny*, 125-136; *of Dreams*, 19, 21, 26-37, 64; *of Faith*, 64, 90-103; *of Fire*, 56-70; *of Judgment*, 35, 69-70; *sample*, 34, 66-67, 102-103; *Word-bound*, 29, 60, 96, 131.
- Shamans, and *Soldiers of Dreams*, 30.
- Shield, the, 57, 68.
- Smite Attunement, 40.
- Soldekai, Chamberlain of the Legions of Flame, 41-42, 47, 52, 54, 57-61, 64-67, 69-70, 85, 99, 139.
- Soldiers of Dreams*, 30; *of Faith*, 90, 94; *of God*, 18, 34, 51, 88, 118; *of Hell*, 18, 51, 88, 118.
- Soloists, 28.
- Sorcerers, 18, 51, 62, 89, 118.
- Special Collection, the, 122.
- Symphony, the, 109, 110-111; *pushing*, 124.
- Synchronicity, 107.
- Tarshish, Angel of Wisdom, 133.
- Temple Mount, *fall of* 45.
- Ternion, the, 122.
- Terrorism, *see Khalid*.
- Testers of Faith, the, 69.
- Tethers, 21, *end-points*, 123; *Flashpoints*, 123; *of Destiny*, 123-124; *of Dreams*, 25, *of Faith*, 91-92; *of Fire*, 65.
- That Which Moves Mountains Attunement, 75.
- Tower, Beleh's, 20-24.
- Tower, the, 20-22; *dual nature of*, 21; *lamp*, 12, 20; *Seneschal of*, 21.
- Trauma, 24.
- True Shape of Flame Attunement, 41.
- Tsayadim, 82.
- Undead, 19.
- Uriel, Archangel of Purity, 22, 43-44, 80; and *Gabriel*, 44; and *the Asylum*, 23; and *Khalid*, 73, 78; *captivity of*, 45.
- Usaathibun*, 97.
- Vale of Dreams, the, 23-24.
- Valefor, Prince of Theft, *opinion of Blandine*, 18; *opinion of Gabriel*, 50; *opinion of Khalid*, 87; *opinion of Yves*, 117.
- Vapula, Prince of Technology, *opinion of Blandine*, 18; *opinion of Gabriel*, 51; *opinion of Khalid*, 88; *opinion of Yves*, 117.
- Vassal of Destiny Distinction, 107.
- Vassal of Dreams Distinction, 8.
- Vassal of Faith, 76.
- Vassal of Fire Distinction, 41.
- Volcano, Gabriel's, 45, 53-54.
- War, the, 13-14.
- Warden of the Marches Distinction, 9.
- Wardens of the Four Quarters, the, 9. 
- Where There's Smoke Attunement, 41.
- Whisper of Inspiration Attunement, 41.
- White Lady, the, *see Blandine*.
- Word-bound, *see Servitors*.
- Wrath of God (Wrath of Allah) Attunement, 75.
- Yrian, Sentinel of Dreams of Artists.
- Yves, Archangel of Destiny, 44, 46, 49, 79, 104-136; and *Dominic*, 114, 136; and *ethereals*, 118; and *Gabriel*, 39, 43, 47, 114; and *God*, 105; and *humans*, 118, 126-127; and *Islam*, 112; and *Khalid*, 85, 100; and *Kronos*, 115; and *Michael*, 105, 114-115; and *naming*, 105, 117; and *philosophy*, 118; and *Raphael*, 128; and *religion*, 43-44, 105, 118; and *Soldiers of God*, 118; and *Soldiers of Hell*, 118; *Cathedral*, 22; *Choir Attunements*, 105-106; *dissonance*, 105; *Distinctions*, 107-108; *domain*, 119; *history*, 110; *Malakite oaths*, 109; *names, appearance, and manner*, 109; *personality and outlook*, 112-113; *politics*, 114; *priorities*, 113; *relations*, 108; *rewards and punishments*, 125-126; *Rites*, 108; *secret Songs*, 108; *Servitor Attunements*, 106-107; *societies*, 134-136; *Tethers of*, 123-124; *variations*, 118-119; *views on ethereals*, 118; *views on God*, 113; *views on humanity*, 118; *views on the War*, 113.
- Zhol, Ofanite of Fire, 139.
- Zuheyr, Angel of Cleanliness, 96.

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