

DEMON PLAYERS GUIDE



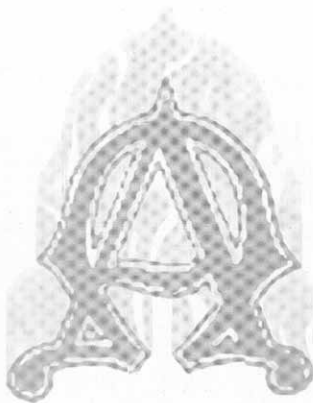
A Player Resource for *Demon: The Fallen*





DEMON

PLAYERS GUIDE



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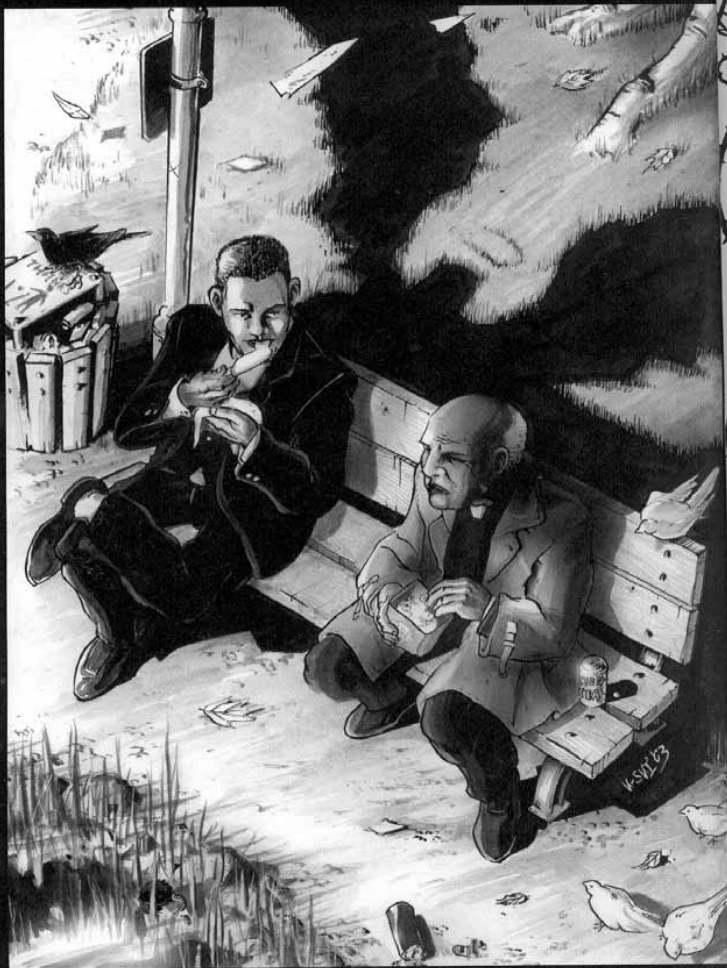
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PROLOGUE: BY HIS WORKS YOU SHALL KNOW HIM

The Reverend Matthew Wallace sat on a bench by the riverfront eating popcorn from a bag and drinking iced tea from a can. He was, once again, debating with a devil.

The devil sat beside him, calmly licking a fudgesicle. He looked exactly like Matthew's son Noah. He even ate the melting ice cream the way Noah would — carefully, holding a napkin under the stick with one hand to keep his clothing clean. But it wasn't Noah. Matthew knew this. He'd seen the demon's other shape and heard its other name.

Its other voice was not something you heard as much as something you felt — and obeyed.

"The essence of salvation is simple faith, then?" the devil asked, twirling the fudgesicle in his mouth as the minister replied.

"There's nothing simple about it, but yes. Faith is the key."

"Hm... so then the question is, can faith abide with certainty?"

"Is that the question?"

"Do you have faith that this grass is green, or that the sky above us is blue, or that your popcorn is warm and salty?"

"I see what you mean. This is about your... direct experience of God."

The devil nodded. "I could argue that you can have faith *because* you are ignorant. That ignorance of the divine is the prerequisite for faith. It explains a lot."

"Like why you were commanded to hide yourselves from mankind."

"Back when we were angels, yes." Noah looked out over the water, and his face was handsome with melancholy. "Before the Fall."

Matthew took a sip of tea. It was too lemony. The canned stuff always was. "So you're afraid that you can never have faith, because you simply *know*."

"I'd prefer the word 'concerned' to 'afraid,' but you're largely correct."

Matthew shrugged. "Others have experienced God directly. Mary, Moses, the Apostles."

"But they already *had* faith when they were exposed."

"Not Saint Paul. Revelation was his conversion experience."

"Paul believed strongly enough to persecute the early church. He believed in God all right, he just didn't believe Christ was the Messiah."

"All right, we're drifting here. The point is, proof of the divine did not take their faith away. Surely you'll agree to that, right?"

Noah bit the last lump off his fudgesicle stick and nodded.

"All right then. Maybe your challenge isn't to have faith in God, but to have faith in His love and benevolence."

Noah gave Matthew a thin smile. "Considering that by His word I was bound and flung into Hell... yes, that is a challenge."

"But that's what you must do, don't you see? That's the only way you're like a human being; the only way you're in the dark. You can't know the Almighty — you told me so yourself. So instead, you have to trust, blindly trust, that His will is good, even for you whom He punished."

"And you, Matthew. Remember that He punished you as well." Noah wrapped the fudgesicle stick in the napkin and put it in a trash can.

"Perhaps you need to forgive God."

"If God can do no wrong, for what can I possibly forgive Him?"

"For loving you enough to punish you." Matthew shifted and turned to Noah. "Plato said there were three levels of friendship."

"Plato said no such thing."

"Well, one of those Greeks. There's the first level which is just, you know, hanging out. Two people who enjoy one another's company, but no more than that, okay? The next level is a friend who'll help you, even when it costs him. Could be anything from giving up a Saturday to help you move to throwing himself on a grenade."

"There is no greater love..."

"Right right, but this is the Greeks, not the Bible." Matthew leaned in. "The third level is a friend who's

willng to help you be the best man you can be. Who tells you when you do wrong, even if it pisses you off. Even if it means losing the friendship."

"And that's the sort of friend God was to me?"

Matthew shrugged. "Does it make sense?"

Noah didn't say yes or no. He said, "Then all I need to do is *feel* that God is good and I'll be saved! Because that's a tall order."

"Ever hear of 'fake it 'til you make it'?"

"Where I act like I believe something until, eventually, I do?"

"Right. It's kind of funny, but it works. If someone wants to feel love, I tell them to act loving. The act makes them think about it, see things a different way."

"Another consciousness trick. The lie becomes the truth."

"I wouldn't put it that way."

"So I must do good."

"Without doing harm."

"Right." Noah nodded. "How about your church? I'd be delighted to work in your outreach program with the poor and the homeless."

Matthew squinted at him, his mouth set in a forbidding scowl.

"Oh," Noah said. "There's that suspicious look again. You think I'm up to something. You think this is all a sham."

"I'm not saying that."

"But you think it. You can't trust me. Why should you? I'm a devil; you're a minister of the Lord." He shook his head. "What must I do to prove the purity of my intentions?"

The ministers said nothing. Noah turned and looked at him.

"How about this? I fix things with St. Timothy's."

St. Timothy's was a Catholic church in nearby Mulesboro. Six months earlier it had gotten a new priest — a black priest. The defection of some white families to other area churches — some Catholic, some Protestant — had been an ugly source of tension in the small Missouri town. Then, only a week ago, St. Timothy's had caught fire — just as a predominantly black Baptist church had in 1999 and another before it in 1998. The police weren't saying the burnings were connected, but everyone was thinking it.

The church burning was a charged subject. Matthew and the devil had been present when it caught fire.

"Fix things?" Matthew asked.

"Wouldn't it be a blessing to this whole area if that ugly situation could be resolved? Would that be doing good without evil?"

Again, the minister said nothing.

"I'll sweeten the pot," Noah pressed. "If I don't find the culprit and satisfy the town that justice was done — satisfy them in a way that can give people real closure — I'll give you my True Name."

"I know your name."

"You know the name Gaviel," the devil replied, "and it has some power. With it you can call me from afar and I'll hear your words. But with my True Name you can command me completely, unmake me, steal my power for yourself... or exile me from this world and back into the Abyss."

Matthew gave him a sharp look. Noah narrowed his eyes and continued.

"You're thinking that if you had this, you could free your son from me, right? I've told you: Your son is dead. I'm in his body, that's all. You send me forth and all you get is Noah's corpse. But I suppose that would satisfy you, wouldn't it? Then you'd know I played you straight all along."

"I only have your word for all this."

"What have you got to lose?"

"That's the question. If you fail — and I figure you must have some edge, some inside track — I get this True Name." What if you succeed?"

"You mean, what if I prove I can do good without doing harm? If I accomplish a deed of unalloyed virtue? Well, in that case, you give me the chance to do more of them. You let me help you at your church."

Matthew thought about it.

"I'm adding one condition," he said.

"Name it."

"You do it in a month. And you do it without... without supernatural powers."

"That's two conditions."

"No deal without 'em."

"Then I'm afraid we're at an impasse. The month I'll cheerfully grant, but without 'supernatural powers' I can't occupy this body. I can't move about or interact with the world or do anything but remain in the Pit. What you're asking is impossible."

"All right you can... stay in the body. For now. But you can't use your powers to control people. You can't change into... into..."

"Right." Noah stroked his chin. "But what if I'm threatened? Can I use my... talents in self defense?"

"Why would you need to?"

"Come now. We're almost certainly looking for a church-burning racist. Do you think such a person would hesitate to kill a nigger like me to protect himself? Or do you expect me to go like a lamb to the

slaughter? That's a rather advanced exercise of Christianity, even you must admit that."

"All right, all right. Self defense. But only if they threaten you."

"Done. One month from..." he looked at his watch. "1:22. So, if you'll excuse me?" He stood.

"Where you going?"

"I have an arson case to solve."

↓ ↓ ↓

His first visit was to Father Deon Warwell, the priest who had caused such tension when he took over as pastor at St. Tim's. He greeted Noah warmly, as well he might. Noah had been on the scene when the church burned, and he'd pulled a woman named Lynn Culver out of the flames.

"Mr. Wallace! It's good to see you here."

"Please, call me Noah. How is Ms. Culver?"

The priest shook his head. "She's mending but... she seems badly shaken. Poor woman. Of all the people..."

"Oh?" Instinctively, Noah reached out, unseen... and stopped himself. He'd said he wouldn't, so he didn't. He'd have to deal with this man the human way.

"She's, er... had a rough time of it," the priest said.

"I see. Well, do the police have any suspects?"

"Plenty. Too many, really."

"So many who would burn a church? I can't believe it."

"Well, there's a lot of quiet old Klansmen around," Deon said sadly. "And those noisy, misled youth in Christian Identity and the White Aryan Resistance. That's who the police suspect."

"But no names? Just organizations?"

The priest nodded. Noah pursed his lips.

"How are your parishioners?"

"Oh, most of them are taking it well." Father Deon gave a twisted little smile. "I've seen some families come back because of this. And the community support has been remarkable. We'll have the building repaired in no time."

"Wasn't a big fire, then?"

"No, not like the last one."

↓ ↓ ↓

Noah was much less polite to Denise Cowper of the Muleshoro PD. She'd interviewed him about what he saw and did while St. Timothy's burned, and he'd noticed even then that she seemed uncomfortable with the case. When she'd come to him then, he'd turned on the charm as only a devil could. This time, he went to her acting like an angry human.

"... just don't understand why you're so upset!" she said, clearly puzzled.

"You don't? Are you really? Some madman is runnin' 'round, burning our churches, but you don't understand why we're upset? The police do nothing, get nothing done and can't see why we're unhappy? What, you expect us to sit on the porch, eatin' watermelon and waitin' for the arsonist to strike again?" He wondered if the watermelon hadn't been over the top, but it made her flinch.

"We're doing all we can!"

"Are you? Are you really? Someone does this in broad daylight in front of a dozen witnesses, and you have nothing? No one saw anything? No one knows anything? You must think I'm pretty damn stupid."

"No! It's... these things, they take time."

"Have you heard the phrase 'Uncle Tomming'?"

"I'm sorry!"

"Uncle Tomming. Have you heard that phrase? It's like playing dumb. You don't resist, you don't defy anyone, you don't refuse you just... don't do it. Goldbricking. Doing enough to satisfy, but not enough to accomplish."

"Are you accusing the police department of... of that?"

He said nothing, just gave her an insolent look.

"Mr. Wallace, I don't... I don't know what to say. We're doing everything. Everything. I mean, we've gone over and over it with the witnesses—"

"Oh, so it must be *their* fault? Poor dummies didn't see anything, weren't paying attention?"

"I didn't say that!"

"Then where are your results? Where are your suspects and arrests?"

"We have suspects, but we aren't... we can't—"

"I can't talk to you," he said, looking away.

"Mr. Wallace, please." She bit her lip, leaning over her desk. "I... I thought we..." She took a deep breath and tried again. "I don't know why you're so upset," she said. "If you think I'm not working hard on this case, you're just wrong, and I'll prove it to you if you let me."

"Yeah?"

"Please. You've, your testimony really helped, and I want you to know we're getting to the bottom of this. Okay?"

He straightened his clothes. "Maybe I was a little... hasty."

"I understand you're upset. Look, do you... want some coffee or something?"

"Iced tea?"

"I'll get some," she said.

About time, he thought. As soon as she was out of the office, he pounced on the file folders he'd seen on her desk.

Detective Cowper's prime suspect was George Lasalle. He'd been the prime suspect in the 1998 arson as well. He'd been arrested in 1977 when a Ku Klux Klan rally turned violent, but he asserted that he'd left the Klan after that. No one on the police force was convinced.

George Lasalle was a retired machinist, 62 years old, divorced and living alone. He had two convictions: a public nuisance from the '77 rally — plea-bargained down from assault — and a drunk and disorderly from 1981 — again, plea bargained down from assault — after an incident with a black man in a movie theater.

He lived alone, and Noah had high hopes as he knocked on the man's door.

"Go 'way," said a scratchy voice from inside.

He kept knocking, patiently, monotonously.

The curtain over the window by the door twitched, and Noah saw a bloodshot eye.

"Beat it," said the voice. "This private property."

Noah knocked and knocked.

The door finally opened, and a portly man stood there glaring. "Y're trespassin'," he said, "an' if you don't scram pronto, I'ma blow a hole in you big enough t' throw a football through."

Noah smiled a little. "That sounds like a threat."

"Damn straight."

"I'm not sure you're serious about it, though."

"You don't think I'm serious, boy?" The last word had a good fifty years of contempt packed in it. "You jus' wait." It took only moments for Lasalle to produce a small handgun and point it at Noah.

"Is the safety off?" Noah asked.

Click. "Is now."

"But how do I know it's loaded?"

Lasalle worked the slide, and a shell fell to the floor. "Okay... I just want to be absolutely, positively sure you're threatening me with deadly harm."

Lasalle raised the gun and aimed at Noah's face. "How much more proof you need? You get, or I'll kill you, un'erstand!"

"I'm glad we're clear on that."

Noah's smile became dazzling.

"Now GIVE ME THAT WEAPON," he said — speaking not as Noah, but as Gavriel the angel.

Twenty minutes later, Noah left Lasalle's house, vaguely inclined to go home and shower. The man had broken down, collapsed utterly under the glory of Gaviel's true form. He'd sobbed, had agonized about his loneliness, his uncertainty and fear, his fading health and terror of dying alone and unloved.

It had really been rather tiresome. *The man's got enough angst for two Oprah book picks*, the demon thought, idly looking down at the pistol he'd taken. With a shrug, he put it in his glove compartment.

The only really interesting thing he'd gotten from George Lasalle was that the man had not burned St. Timothy's.

† † †
The nurse at Chase-Rockney hospital flirted with Noah a little while showing him to Lynn Culver's room. He didn't mention that he'd been the one to save Lynn's life, figuring the nurse already knew. He didn't ask the nurse for her phone number.

"Ms. Culver?" he asked quietly. She looked up with drug-beared eyes.

"Deon!" she muttered.

"Are you feeling all right?"

The nurse gave his back a wistful look as she closed the door. He saw it in her reflection in the window but gave no sign.

As he approached, Lynn seemed to rally. She fumbled by the side of the bed and hit a button, which raised the mattress so she was sitting up.

"Oh," she said. "It's you."

"How are you doing?"

"Better." Her voice was raspy, coming out of smoke-scarred lungs. "I never got a chance to thank you."

"You're welcome."

"No, I mean... you're a hero. A real hero. If it wasn't for you, I'd have... have..." A tear trickled down her cheek.

"Shh. You're embarrassing me."

"I'm sorry."

"Don't apologize. I mean, what have you got to be sorry for? It's the guy who did it... *He* should be sorry."

"Yes..."

"They've got a guy, you know?"

"Hm?"

"They haven't made an arrest, but... well... everyone knows."

"Knows what?"

"Everyone knows he did it. It sickens me to think he might get away with it, but everyone knows it was George Lasalle."



"George... I don't think I know him."

"Well, don't you worry. He's gonna swing for this."

"You think they'd execute him?"

"That's probably too much to hope for. Since you got hurt in the fire, though, they could prosecute him for attempted murder. Doesn't really matter. He's pretty sick. I don't think he'll last long in prison."

"What if he didn't do it?"

Noah narrowed his eyes.

"So, why do you suppose Lynn Culver set her own church on fire?" Noah asked.

Father Deon Warwell looked surprised, but not astonished. "What makes you think she did?"

"She told me," Noah lied.

The priest sank back in his chair and sighed. As his breath whistled out, he seemed to shrink. "Oh... damn," he said at last.

"You didn't know it was her?"

Warwell shook his head.

"You suspected?"

"I didn't suspect, but I... I was afraid it was her."

"Why is that?"

Another sigh, a short one. "Because the night before the fire she... well, there was a scene."

"A scene?"

"Some women... mm, they have problems and they... well, they chase after the wrong men. Men they shouldn't have or that they can't have, you know? Married men or..."

"Or priests."

Father Warwell nodded.

"Wow."

"Lynn is a sad case. She... well, she's got a past. I thought I could help her, give her a job at the church, kind of... be there for her. I guess she took it the wrong way."

"Well, you tried."

"You know what they say about good intentions."

"The road to Hell, uh huh." Noah frowned. "So, what do we do now?"

"I suppose we tell the cops."

"You really think that's a good idea?"

"Well, they're... I mean..."

"Exactly who does that help? Lynn goes to jail and becomes a punchline for right-wing radio hosts across the nation."

"The congregation might..."

"Might what? Might forgive one of their own? Might accept you more when the whiff of a sex scandal oozes out? Might ignore future racial incidents be-

cause this turned out to be a Klan-free crime? Just what might happen with the congregation, Father?"

The priest was silent. "You can't suggest that we cover this up. I won't do it."

"Hmm. Yes, your church has been burned with cover-ups, hasn't it? So to speak." Noah ran his fingers up under his chin. "Give me a couple of days. I'll think of something."

In time, he went back to George Lasalle. The man was drunk and not happy to see him.

"Go 'way," he said, his voice afraid.

"George, let's not go through this again."

"Go 'way! I got a gun!"

"No, you don't. I've got your gun."

"You tricked me."

"George, you know that's not true. Take a deep breath and really let yourself remember. You know what you saw. You know what I am. You know what it means."

Slowly, the door opened.

"What do you want from me?" Lasalle asked, his voice small.

It was an effort to not really push the man, but Gaviel made do with Noah's native charm and warmth. They were really quite impressive, by human standards.

"Do you really think I'm here to get something from you? I'm here to give something to you, if you'll only accept it."

"What do you mean?"

Noah entered and sat on the couch. George took the easy chair.

"George, what have you got?"

Lasalle remained silent.

"You're not saying anything, George, 'cause really, you got nothing. No family you talk to. No friends left. No job to go to, even. You had hate for a while, but even that slipped away, didn't it? Now all you have is emphysema."

George said nothing, just frowned.

"Let me tell you what you could have. You could find a group of people who respect you. You could get forgiveness for all the shitty things you've done over the years. You could have the knowledge that you helped instead of hurt, healed instead of harmed, gave hope instead of hatred. That sound good?"

"I guess." Lasalle's eyes were still afraid. "What's the catch?"

"You're smart to ask that. The catch is, you have to come clean about St. Tim's."

"I didn't do it!"

"Oh, I know. But you must take the fall for it."

"What? That's crazy!"

"Look at it from a bigger perspective. The community is hurting because of this, because the story they're getting now is 'racist bastard burns church and gets away with it.' They don't know who the racist is, but they're certain there is one, you get me? Now. You go to the priest, confess, turn yourself in and tell the judge that you didn't mean for anyone to get hurt, that you're sorry. Hell, tell 'em you saw an angel if you feel like it. What's the story then? It's 'old man sees the light and repents.' People love a redemption story, George, and when someone repents, it's awful hard to not forgive him. You start attending St. Tim's, and people will treat you right because they'll feel too guilty if they don't."

"No... no. This ain't right. It's like I'm covering up for the real crook."

"The 'real crook' is a sad, messed up, broken woman. You won't be covering up for her, you'll be giving her a second chance. As Jesus took the blows for mankind, you'll take the blow for her."

George wavered, then shook his head.

"I can't," he said. "I'm... I'm too old. I just can't. I can't have all them eyes looking at me, people shaking their heads."

"You can and you will! Damn you, George, it's not everyone who gets a second chance handed to him from an Angel of the Lord! You're seeing my good side now, but if you anger me you'll regret it until you die and forever after! You think you got nothing to lose? Well the cops already have you made as their man, and if you go in kicking and

screaming, the only people 'round when you die will be your cellmates and maybe the warden." Noah stood and glared down at Lasalle. "The people need an inspiring story of faith and forgiveness, and I'm going to give them an inspiring story of faith and forgiveness if I have to *burn down your life* to get it! You hear me!"

George heard.

! ! !

"That poor man," Zola Wallace said. Zola was Matthew's wife and Noah's mother. She was delighted that her son had returned. Neither Noah nor Matthew was willing to tell her the truth.

The three Wallaces were sitting in the den of Matthew's home, watching an evening news segment interviewing George Lasalle and Father Warwell.

"...s like they say," George said. "Hate is like a drug. Only the thing is, like a drug it... it don't work so well over time. You get less of a... less of anything out of it. In the end, there you are, high an' dry."

Privately, Noah thought George's voice sounded better coming out of Matthew's graphically equalized and Dolby-filtered surround sound speakers than it did in real life.

"It's pretty amazing," Matthew said softly, sneaking a glance at Noah. "Most men like that... they're like a bad dog when it's sick. A sick dog bites anyone who comes near, even the people who'd help it."

"Pretty brave of him," Noah said. "It's never easy to admit you're wrong."

Matthew opened his mouth to speak, then closed it when he saw Zola gazing at her son with pride and adoration.

"Yeah," he muttered at last. "It's never easy."





INTRODUCTION

*Say first, for Heav'n hides nothing from thy view
Nor the deep Tract of Hell, say first what cause
Mov'd our Grand Parents in that happy State,
Favor'd of Heav'n so highly, to fall off
From thir Creator, and transgress his Will,
For one restraint, Lords of the World besides?*
—John Milton, *Paradise Lost*

Demon: The Fallen is a game of epic heroism and infernal glory set against a backdrop of the cynical, modern World of Darkness. Just as the fallen themselves are living dichotomies of humanity and divinity, the setting of the game is a merging of two worlds: the ancient, wondrous period of the Age of Wrath and the world of modern technology and science that we know today. As the demons escape the Abyss and seek to shape the World of Darkness according to their will, they become more adept at recovering knowledge from their ancient war and merging it with the new concepts and ideas that humanity has created in the aeons since. For good or ill, the world is changing under the influence of the fallen, and the game continues to grow to reflect this evolution.

The information provided in this book is both an expansion to concepts introduced in the core rules

and a wealth of new information designed to add flexibility and depth to the original game. Ultimately, however, every detail included in this book should be a stepping stone for your own ideas and concepts. As ever, our Golden Rule applies. If you don't like what you find in these pages, or better yet, what you read inspires a different vision of the characters and concepts contained therein, change it! It's your story. Make of it what you will.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

This book is divided into several chapters, each of which is designed to explore and explain a specific area of the game. Remember, though, that the most important "chapter" in a storytelling game is your imagination. Never let anything in this book become a substitute for your own creativity.

OPTIONAL RULES AND SYSTEMS

This book provides new systems and setting elements for *Demon: The Fallen* and offers the mechanics you need to make them a part of your game. Almost all of these systems are optional — they're not an official part of the game. You and your Storyteller must agree that any new systems and setting elements are appropriate additions to your chronicle before you can introduce them. Don't just show up to your next game with a new apocalyptic form for your character, for example, just because the means to change it are offered in these pages. Your Storyteller and the other troupe members must all be willing to use the new ideas, too. That way no one is left out and everyone has fun.

Each optional system and rule in this book is identified as such. Consider this book a collection of new opportunities to expand the horizons of your chronicle.

Chapter One: Fallen provides a wealth of suggestions and tips for creating a well-rounded, multi-dimensional *Demon* character. Beginning with guidelines for envisioning the origins, history and personality of the demon itself, the chapter then covers important questions to consider when creating a mortal host that complements (or contrasts) the character's infernal nature. The chapter concludes with advice on integrating these two aspects together through the events of the character's prelude.

Chapter Two: The Price of Glory focuses on how characters gain (or lose) Backgrounds, Virtues and lore through the course of a chronicle, and how to reflect these changes in play. Optional systems, such as recovering forgotten lore through meditation or seeking tutelage through infernal mentors are also introduced, as well as a new system called resonance for enhancing fallen evocations.

Chapter Three: Merits and Flaws provides a host of optional traits that players and Storytellers can use to further define their characters and give them added individuality. These traits are grouped into six categories: infernal, physical, social, mental, legal and economic, and they place a greater emphasis on qualities provided by the character's mortal host than further celestial abilities.

Chapter Four: The Nature of the Beast adds greater flexibility to the revelatory forms of the fallen by providing optional systems for custom-designing a demon's apocalyptic visage. These systems run the gamut from providing additional options for static forms built at character creation to a free-form method that provides the fallen with a mutable form that can change its abilities from turn to turn if the player desires.

Chapter Five: Infernal Engines presents comprehensive, detailed and complex optional systems for creating enhanced, enchanted and possessed relics, greatly expanding the options available to the demons of the Third House. Examples of present-day relics and some dating from the Age of Wrath are provided for inspiration and to suggest story ideas for your chronicle.

Chapter Six: Rituals provides rules for combining infernal lore to create larger, more complex effects than the House evocations are designed to provide. This chapter contains a comprehensive system for performing and creating infernal rituals that can be tailored to any effect you wish to create, as well as a large list of sample rituals possessed by each of the seven Houses.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Since the publication of the *Demon: The Fallen* core rules, several issues have arisen regarding errors or omissions in the first printing of the text, as have questions regarding the interpretation or use of various evocations listed in the game. The following section contains errata for the *Demon* core rulebook as well as answers to a number of frequently asked questions about the game.

APOCALYPTIC FORM ERRATA:

Extra Limbs: The apocalyptic form ability Extra Limbs provides the demon with two extra attacks per turn at the character's full dice pool or permits a block or parry without forcing the character to abort her intended action for the turn. (pages 182, 188, 192, 194, 200, 206 and 207)

ARMOR

All types of armor (including the Devils' apocalyptic form ability Scales) provide protection against aggravated damage as well as bashing and lethal. (page 239)

EVOCATIONS

Enchant Object (Lore of the Forge ••••): The number of successes required to successfully create an enchanted item is four times the number of Faith points invested in the item. Therefore, an item requiring one point of Faith to create would require four successes in an extended Dexterity + Crafts roll. (page 191)

Fade (Lore of Humanity •••): The player rolls Manipulation + Subterfuge, not Manipulation + Presence. (page 174)

Manipulate Flesh (Lore of the Flesh ••••): The effects of this evocation last for the duration of the scene. (page 208)

Sense Congruence (Lore of Patterns •): The text reads: "One success shows the location where the event will occur, but not when or where." It should read: "One success shows the location where the event will occur, but not when or how it will occur." (page 192)

Twist Time (Lore of Patterns •••••): The text reads: "Outsiders who enter the bubble's space do join its altered time unless your character wishes it." That should read: "Outsiders who enter the bubble's space do not join its altered time unless your character wishes it." (page 193)

FAITH

Faith cannot be used to soak bashing, lethal or aggravated damage. (page 239)

TORMENT

When making an evocation roll, compare your successes to your Torment. If a majority of the successes you rolled shows numbers equal to or less than the character's Torment, the high-Torment effect occurs. In the event of a tie, the low-Torment effect of the ritual is used.

Example: Magdiel wishes to use *Decay* on the body of a cancer patient. Magdiel's Stamina is 2 and her Medicine is 3, for a total of five dice, and her current Torment is 7. The difficulty for the roll is a standard 6. Adam rolls three successes: 7, 9 and 9. He has a majority of successes that are greater than his Torment, so the evocation works as planned. If he'd rolled 6, 6 and 8, however, the high-Torment effect would have occurred, decaying everything around the character.

Botches cancel successes starting with the highest successes rolled. (pages 161 and 169)

WILLPOWER

You cannot spend a Willpower point to avoid losing a Faith point if you botch an evocation roll. (page 163)

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

• **Does a demon's host body age after possession?** As long as a demon has at least one point of temporary Faith available, her host body does not age, nor is it susceptible to normal diseases or illness. If the demon expends all of her temporary Faith, her body will age normally and be vulnerable to sickness until she gains one Faith point.

• **Can extra actions gained by a character's revelatory form be further split into multiple actions by dividing the character's dice pool?** No.

• **Can a demon possess the thrall of another demon?** No. The bond forged between demon and thrall prohibits another demon from seizing the thrall's body. The only way a fallen could possess the body of another demon's thrall is if the thrall's master voluntarily revoked the Faustian bond, freeing the human from the demon's control.

• **Can multiple demons share a single thrall?** No. A mortal can have only one Faustian pact at any given time.

• **Can evocations be performed as a reflexive roll?** No. Evocations require careful thought and precise control to achieve their desired effect, something that doesn't lend itself to performing out of pure reflex. As ever, your Storyteller is free to make exceptions to this rule, depending on the situation.

• **What is the volume a Gaping Maw could swallow whole?** Gaping Maw provides a demon with a set of powerful jaws and a metabolic system that allows her to eat virtually anything. It doesn't increase the volume the character can swallow in a given action, but it affects what she can safely consume. A demon with Gaping Maw can eat a VW bus if she wants — one human-sized bite at a time.

• **What is the duration of Manipulate Flesh (Lore of the Flesh •••)?** The alterations made using Manipulate Flesh last for the duration of a single scene.

• **Can a character have a secondary lore path at the same level as her primary lore path?** For example, if a Slayer's primary lore was Lore of the Spirit •••, could the character also have Lore of the Realms •••? Yes. The only restriction is that a character may not possess a lore path at a higher level than her primary lore. So in this example, the Slayer could not have Lore of the Realms •••• because the character's has only three dots in her primary lore.

• **Can the Lore of the Beast be used to summon, control or possess supernatural creatures in animal form (such as werewolves, vampires in bat or wolf form, etc.)?** No. The lore path applies only to animals, not supernatural creatures that have assumed the shapes of animals.

• **Can a demon (or mortal) walking a path created by the Lay Path evocation still see her surroundings?** Yes, though the effect could be somewhat distorted and surreal depending on the nature of the path created. Lay Path manipulates spatial relationships between two points, creating paths that are entirely physical but don't necessarily correspond to three-dimensional space as the human mind perceives it.

• **If a demon makes a path through a fire, do others see him walking through the fire, or is he invisible as long as he walks on the path?** The demon would be visible walking through the fire — a created path doesn't make the character invisible. It is possible to look for or create a path that allows a character to move from point A to point B without being seen, in the same way that a person with knowledge of wilderness survival can sneak across a seemingly flat and open field by tracing a path that takes advantage of subtle dips and rises in the terrain.

• **Can a character step off a path after only walking half its length?** A character can exit a path at any point she wishes.



CHAPTER ONE: FALLEN

Cursed is every one who placeth his hope in man.
—St. Augustine, *On Christian Conflict*

Marshall sat with his back to the couch, staring at the dancing flames framed by the stone fireplace. Maryann traced her fingers across his shaved scalp. He took a sip of the wine. Her knees pressed comfortably against his sides. For a moment, he felt good.

"Marshall," she cooed, her voice soft in his ears. He enjoyed hearing that name. Part of it felt like a secret identity, a *nom de plume*; part of it felt like a reaffirmation of who he really was. Marshall Jakes. Or Nebiros. Two personas. Two selves. It was amazing that it felt so nice.

"Yes?" he asked.

"What are you thinking, baby?"

A staccato burst of images flared and receded in his mind's eye. A sky of angels clashing high in the air, so high they looked like warring hawks. Men swaying, bowing, scraping, praying. A black tower piercing the clouds. A face, a man's face, buried in the center of the sun and glaring balefully down upon him. So much fire. So much blood. Ash clouds coughed on bitter winds. And after all of

it, a wall of darkness, cold and ceaseless like a coffin's embrace. The loneliness of that time was one of the things he remembered without a hitch, with no need to strain for the memory. It sat inside his heart like a cold piece of coal. He shook his head, squeezed his eyes shut for a few seconds. Then he looked at Maryann, taking in her beautiful round face. Cherubic, even, he thought. It made him smile.

"Not much," he said. "Just thinking about you."

The fallen have a bad case of dueling personalities. Their brains are tottering see-saws with two identities striking an odd balance. One identity is an immortal being whose face was warmed by the first rays of light that the sun ever put upon the earth — an angel who defied the divine order and was locked away in an eternal prison for his insubordination. The other identity is like you or me — a fairly normal person with a job and a family, who has habits, foibles, goals and dreams that extend no further than his day-to-day life. The question, then,





is how do you as a player (or Storyteller) effectively portray this conflict of identities in the course of your **Demon** chronicle? What happens when your character is trying to remember who stood with him during the Siege of Sagun, but all he can call to mind is the last time he bought milk at the corner store? What happens when he's playing with his mortal children but all he can remember are the knifing winds of the Abyss cutting his soul to ribbons over and over again?

In **Demon: The Fallen**, you're playing a monster: an ancient being trapped in a bleak Hell for untold millennia who has essentially become *human*. Your character's ultimate identity would appear to be demon — the human body is just a monkey suit, right? A bag of flesh he wears like somebody else's old clothes. Only problem is, this outfit *smells* like the old owner. So much so that it constantly reminds your character of the old soul, even though he never knew him. It's a coat of memories, and many fallen find themselves lost in it, unable to fully recollect what wearing their own skin was actually like. Or, in another fashion, it's like your character having one of those dreams where he wakes up and, at least for a time, the memory of the dream supplants the memory of real life. Didn't the dream happen? Wasn't it real?

With demons, it becomes harder and harder to shake the memory of the dream and find the truth within the illusion.

This section should help you in that differentiation. It provides questions to ask and guidelines to follow when looking to fill in all the blanks that come with the two conflicting halves of your fallen character's personality. A demon needs both sides. The memories of millennia as an angel make up who your character is, but the human psyche is what buffers the character's soul against the terrible memories of the Abyss. The following chapter should help you further define this duality.

ANATOMY OF AN ANGEL

"It was nothing like that," Marshall said, squinting at the painting on the museum's white wall. His hands curled around the velvet rope separating the patrons from the paintings, and he enjoyed the realness of it for a moment, the soft certainty. The painting he stared at was the Garden of Earthly Delights, the triptych piece by Hieronymous Bosch. A triptych, his mortal memory recalled.

"Here, on the left panel," he said to Maryann, "it's all so insular, like the Garden was one tiny patch of land. A zoo, perhaps, or a tomato patch." He furrowed his brow. "And it looks like someone mowed the lawn. I remember, from time to time, just how big it really was. And untamed. An unkempt expanse, ever-changing; so alive that you could hear the plants growing, see the animals evolving..." He sighed. "And this part where the Allfather and the Allmother are holding hands with God? God wasn't there. Not like that. He was thunder before the rain. A face in the sun. But he was never a person."

Maryann continued to stare ahead.

"Middle panel; I don't know what that's about," he mumbled. "But this last panel? Is this supposed to be Hell? The fiery Pit?" He shook his head. "Got it all wrong, Mr. Bosch. Tsk-tsk-tsk. Men copulating with pigs? A bird-man devouring souls? And what's with the giant instruments or that strange rabbit? As demented as the scene is, I only wish the Abyss looked like that. At least it would've been something. Anything. Some splash of color. Some proof that the Creator had painted the place, even if he had used his dirtiest brushes." He sighed. "It was so much worse. I can't even explain. The absence of the Creator and the Lightbringer was infinitely more harrowing than this Freudian playground. It was like a storm you couldn't see. A darkness that was solid to the touch. Outside of us, you could hear humanity whispering, changing, growling, unleashed and unable to change its own diapers or stop fouling its own nest."

Maryann blinked.

"Torture. Pure torture. So many dribs and drabs from that time, like splashes of ink that don't quite make a whole picture. Scenes cut to other scenes, and I know there are countless years missing. A brother murdering a brother. Promising to heal all the huddled humans who had been afflicted with the Creator's plagues. A great cloud of flies descending upon a stone fortress as trumpets blared in our ears. All very frustrating. Sometimes it's like a deranged dream, other times it feels like it's happening all over again. I wish I remembered more, you know?"

Maryann turned off the Walkman and eased the headphones off her ears. She looked up. "I'm sorry, babe, were you saying something?"

He shrugged, and kissed her forehead. "I was just saying that the museum's closing in ten minutes. We should probably go."

The devil is in the details, they say, and in this case, the cliché is entirely accurate. Your character began life as a being beyond time, a creature literally responsible for designing and creating some aspect of the physical world. The fallen were eternal agents of the Creator long before they slipped

through the Abyssal cracks and found their way into human bodies. While they might not remember every element of their angelic nature, those elements are still very significant aspects of your character's identity. Here are a few suggestions and guidelines to help you further define the demon inside the mortal shell.

CREATING NAMES

Names are powerful symbols throughout the religions of the world. In Judaic thought, it was believed that the angels' names were quite literally their mission or the task given to them by the Creator. Raphael, for example, means "healer of God." Satan (or Ha'Satan) means "he who challenges." In both Egyptian thought and in the Genesis account, things are literally brought into being simply by naming them. Names also have power within supernatural circles, which is especially true of the fallen. Those who know your name — your True Name — hold dominion over you and your everlasting soul. A demon's names (both the Celestial Name and the True Name) are crucial aspects of his identity. A demon's Celestial Name is essentially reflective of his title, station or task as defined at the dawn of Creation. One could compare it to the original derivations of Western surnames. A person named "Miller," for instance, owes her surname to an ancestor that ground grain for a living at some point in the past. The True Name of a demon, however, is much more inscrutable. It's a description of his very soul, the equation of all the sounds, vibrations, numbers and syllables that add up to the sum of his very being. How then do we create these unique names for a Demon character?

CELESTIAL NAMES

The Celestial Name is a title or designation instead of the true harmonic vibration of the demon's soul, but that's not to say it's not important. The Celestial Name is what most demons will call your character.

If you're looking for good names to fit this role, mythology is replete with possibilities, especially Middle or Far Eastern mythology. You can scour books from the library or search the Internet for names of gods and other characters from Jewish, Christian, Zoroastrian, Hindu, Chinese, Japanese, Sumerian and Babylonian mythologies. A specific angelic mythology can be drawn from through books called "angel dictionaries." Also certain websites detail names and functions of angels, fallen angels and demons that appear in religious texts. One good site to check out is www.pantheon.org. This site is

an online reference of mythological characters divided by culture.

Another question to consider is whether this Celestial Name is the one your character originally held before the Abyss. If it was given or chosen during that vast swath of pre-history, then it's possible that other demons know your character and her history (even if she doesn't know it all herself). If the title is newer (gained in the Abyss or perhaps after the escape), however, other fallen might not recognize the name — which can foster suspicion.

There also might be a title associated with the Celestial Name. Prior to the Abyssal entrapment, Lucifer and his lieutenants granted titles to those who were present and worthy — titles of duke, baron, overlord, lord or fell knight. Does your character retain the title? It's also possible that, after the character's escape, the demon might have another self-granted title in mind. Titles like "Lord of Wishes," "Sword of the Dawn" or "Baroness of the Temple City of Lust" are all examples of titles created uniquely by a demon, for herself. Feel free to tie this choice into the Eminence Background in the **Demon: The Fallen** core book. If your character has three or more dots in Eminence, it's a smart wager to suggest that your demon had (or has) a title among other fallen. An Eminence 4 or 5 is likely to suggest that your character was important enough to be granted one of the chief positions by Lucifer in the time before the Abyss.

Example: *Beth gives her character, Marshall Jakes, the Celestial Name of Nebiros after looking online for demon names and discovering that Nebiros was a lower-ranking demon in Hell. She also decides that the character will have an Eminence of 3. Perhaps not enough to grant Nebiros an official title, but she decides that Nebiros called himself the "Blood Dragon" during the time before the Abyss because he was one of the angels who actually granted the physical life-blood to the Allfather and Allmother.*

TRUE NAMES

A demon's True Name is a vibrational utterance, the summation of his very soul in a complex series of sounds. It's important to remember that the demon's True Name is almost an abstraction of sound and isn't easily quantifiable into simple syllables, letters or other noises. It might be a high-frequency resonance, like a thousand children singing (or screaming), or maybe it's a precise sequence of dissonant sounds (pages turning, crows screeching, glass shattering). Perhaps it's not even a sound at all. Ultimately, don't worry so much about the specifics of this name — just be aware that it's more like a complex cipher than a spoken

name. Feel free to describe it, but don't concern yourself with a proper name.

CHOOSING A HOUSE

Choosing a House can be a very simple or a very difficult thing. It's simple if you've read over the House descriptions in the main book and you know exactly where your potential character fits in. It becomes more difficult the hazier the picture of your soon-to-be fallen is. If you're uncertain where to go, or where the genesis of this character really fits, here are some thoughts to help you choose a House for your new demon.

First, while this section is not about creating your mortal host, it's not a bad idea to have some idea already percolating about who the human vessel is (and was). This way, you can spare yourself the ugly contrast if you are planning on stuffing some war-hungry Devourer into the body of a meek 15-year-old girl. Or, alternatively, you might directly seek such a contrast (more on this in *Anatomy of a Mortal*, page 31). It's good to have this idea in mind so you can begin setting up the duality right from the beginning. Knowing who the mortal is will help you choose a House.

Second, the descriptions in the book for the Houses are hard-and-firm delimiters of angelic duties, but that's not to say that you can't have variations within each House. For instance, Devils may now be the "charismatic tempters and deceivers" that the main book portrays them as, but their original duties were that of conveying God's will. As such, there are multiple concepts available. A Devil could be a leader, commanding troops of fallen with a thunderous voice, or he could be a baron's right-hand-man, a skilled politico with a serpent's tongue. Other concepts exist, as well, outside of the normal. A Devil, with the lore available to that House as well as its general embrace of the Social Attributes, could have made an excellent bard or poet of the time before and since Rebellion. Or, as a scion of the First House, there's nothing stopping a Devil from being a warrior, as well — a hero of the earliest times, flaming sword in hand.

The point is, any concept is available to any House, but each House colors that concept with its own way of doing things. If you wanted to make a warrior, someone who fought with martial skills during the Rebellion, that concept could arguably be made to fit into any of the Houses. A Devil warrior might have been as described previously — a hero of angels, stalking the battlefields with honor and a commanding voice. A Scourge warrior might have been a defender of men, shepherding humans to safety while a battle raged around. A Fiend warrior could've been a military strategist whose theories could only be

implemented by time in the theater of war, gaining a sense of troop movements from the ground (or sky). A Slayer warrior could be a fearsome sight, indeed — a painted gladiator, a dark and frightening spirit ripping souls from angels while stalking the scorched halls of Sagun. A warrior from the Defiler House might have been something of a “battle muse,” a dervish of frenetic attack, howling songs of inspiration for her fellow fallen. A militant Malefactor might have run massive siege engines while alternately fighting off angels who sought to overturn his cruel war-device. And finally, the Devourer warrior... isn't much of a stretch. Let's ponder, instead, what a Devourer poet would be like. Perhaps a fallen who accepted war but didn't care for the glory and spent his quiet time contemplating the repercussions of the Rebellion in the form of meditative poetry?

Bottom line is, with the Houses, think outside the box. While the fallen were certainly different from humans, they still maintain their own individual spark of life that makes them individuals. They are only loosely defined by their jobs, much as we are only partially identified by ours.

Example: *Beth decides that, since Nebiros was involved in designing part of the mortal body, he was most likely a Scourge. She also likes this idea because it fits with the “guardian angel” concept she has in mind for the final fallen character.*

HISTORY

Time meant very little to the denizens of Paradise, but we can be sure that the angels' existence before their Abyssal sentence was one that comprised thousands of years. What that means is that, prior to the imprisonment and the subsequent escape into a mortal container, your character existed for a very long time. That's a lot of information for you to have to figure out. If you think about all a mortal can achieve in a single lifetime of 70-80 years, think about what an angel was capable of accomplishing in a hundred times that. Your demon was an angel, after all, who started off her existence actually *crafting* some portion of the world humans live in, from the dirt to the sky to the birds to the trees. And it only goes up from there. The fallen saw the birth of man, the growth and closure of Eden, and then, of course, we can't forget about the Rebellion instilled by the notions of the Morningstar. Even the time *after* the Rebellion is a war that takes millennia to conclude. Sounds like a daunting task to actually chart and map out what your character was doing during that colossal period, doesn't it?

Well, the good news is that you don't have to sketch out every year of your demon's life in the pre-history of

the world. Going that deep would take you so much time, you'd probably never even get to play the game. You should, however, be thinking about where your character fit into the grand scheme of things, as well as what your demon was doing during her time as a rebelling angel. And so we've come up with a few of what might be termed “tent-pole” questions for you to answer about your character's place in pre-history. These questions, like the poles in a tent, will help hold up your character and actually give it depth and body instead of just being a flat concept that wouldn't stand up to the scrutiny of the story.

WHAT PART DID YOUR DEMON PLAY IN FEAR LUX?

In the beginning, there was nothing, and that nothing was called God. God chose to create light through his will — but He needed the hands to implement His will, and so the angels were born. Once upon a time, your character was one of these angels — so what did she do during those seminal moments of Creation? It might have taken seven seconds or seven million years (time, as we mentioned, was undefined), but your demon played some key part in literally forging the world and the cosmos that surrounded it. Your House, provided you've chosen one by now, can help you further define what hand your angel played in Creation. Feel free to actually give your character dominion over some part of his House's “duties.” One Devourer might say (provided she can remember it when contained in the mortal mind after the Abyssal escape), “I helped to give life to the birds of black feather,” whereas another Devourer could claim, “I helped give life to the plants that are poisonous to men.” A Devil was an angel that conveyed God's will to the others — a mouthpiece of divine action — but what crucial message did your Devil carry? Did she carry the order to the Scourges to breathe life into a new human called the “Allmother?” Did she direct a collection of Fiends to create a cycle of night and day so the world may have periods of wakefulness and rest? None of this information is absolutely *crucial* to who your demon character is, but it will give a nice bit of flavor to them that could haunt them unknowingly throughout the story.

Example: *Beth has already decided that Nebiros was instrumental in the creation and implementation of blood into the circulatory system.*

WHY DID YOUR CHARACTER CHOOSE TO REVOLT?

Another key element of a fallen character is the reasoning behind her choice to go against the Creator's wishes and align with the Lightbringer's

decision to reveal the angels' presence to humanity as a guiding force. We know why Lucifer did it — why did your character do it? This is crucial information, as it's likely to color your demon's actions in the modern age whether she remembers precisely why she rebelled or not. The motivation for rebelling might have been very simple or terribly complex. It's possible that your angel simply loved humanity so much and felt great sorrow at their enforced ignorance. But there are other possibilities. Maybe your character had only a slight interest in humanity, but she opted to rebel because she loved Lucifer so much (or was simply swayed by his powerful declarations) that it seemed like the only thing to do. Or perhaps frustration was a motive. Consider that the angels worked miracles — sun-total wonders — within the cosmos as directed by God's yearning, yet humans were blissfully unaware of this work. They couldn't understand or appreciate everything the angels created, nor were they even aware of the angels at all. How frustrating that must be to an angel who realizes that his hard work in creating the beauty of an orchid, encoding its DNA, directing the actions of pollination and photosynthesis have all gone to monkeys who give the flower one look, one sniff, and then bumble off? It's even possible that your angel was *jealous* of the Allfather and Allmother. They were content in their idyllic state, given God's spark, but did angels have time to sit back and enjoy everything? Lucifer's decision to rebel could've theoretically opened a door to any other angel who sought to rebel — whether his motivations had anything to do with Lucifer's intentions or not.

Example: *Beth wants Nebiros to feel closely associated with and protective over humans because, in a manner of speaking, humans literally have a link to Nebiros. This protection is what leads him to rebel and aid in mortal enlightenment.*

WHAT DID YOUR CHARACTER DO DURING THE AGE OF WRATH?

The Age of Wrath is the period encompassing the time during and after God's punishment, when the fallen began shepherding the humans back into the light. As the ash storms died down, the fallen realized that their rebellion would continue — and they could remake the world in their image and teach the mortal flock accordingly. These were the earliest days, if they could be called such, of the demon's rebellion — and this time saw hope fostered among the rebelling host, often in the form of the legions. Was your character a part of these legions, or did he remain undecided or purposefully

unaligned? If he was a member of a legion, which one, and why? While certain legions were geared toward members of specific Houses, they did accept members from other Houses. The Alabaster Legion, for example, comprised largely Slayers, but other Houses had representation, however small. Your character might have been a Fiend in this legion, seeking to skulk away from the others and help to guide the future patterns of the foolish humans. Or maybe your angel was a Slayer who chose *not* to stand with the Alabasters, and instead fell in with the Ebon Legion, hoping to help punish those mortals who did not comply with the command to aid in the rebuilding of Eden. Again, feel free to think outside the box when it comes to the historical aspects of your character — he need not be the fulfillment of a stereotype.

Example: *Both reasons that Nebiros was faithful to Lucifer, and as such, joined the Crimson Legion with humanity's "best interests" in mind.*

WHAT DID YOUR CHARACTER DO DURING THE AGE OF WONDER?

This period was a strange time, and it's important to know your character's place in it. During this period, the fallen host lorded over man, beast and plant and began building vast, abstract structures — chthonian mazes beneath the ground, towers jutting from the tips of the most glorious mountain

PLAYER TIP: Laissez Faire

One option available to you, provided your Storyteller agrees, is to play "hands-off" and opt out of creating your character's demonic history. What this means is that the Storyteller will create it for you. In the beginning of the game, you start your character off as a fallen, but with a deep wash of mortal memories and only the slightest recollection of anything demonic. (This implies a low, or non-existent, Legacy Background.) Having created your demon's history much as you would've done, the Storyteller can then dole out bits and pieces of that history to you either as flashes of memory or through confrontations with other fallen who clearly remember more than your character does. It's the *amnesiac* approach to the demonic element of your character; one that could create a challenging level of mystery to your character. But remember, this is only an option if your Storyteller is kosher with it. Don't just assume that your Storyteller will magically have a history awaiting you if you haven't spurred her on to do so.

ranges. Meanwhile, battles continued on the fringes of the world, bizarre confrontations of sword and song that could astound — or destroy — mortals caught in the crossfire. What did your demon do during this time? Almost anything is possible. Was she a Malefactor who helped further the perfection of Lucifer's Gehinnom? Was she a Scourge who protected herds of nomadic mortals from the obscuring attacks of the Creator's angels? Or worse, was her Torment already accruing within? If this is the case, it's possible that she was a party to the Ebon Legion's depredations, creating grim wonders and cruelly demanding worship from the purposefully ignorant human herd. Maybe your demon knew of the Torment growing within her and therefore decided to live on the edges of existence and stay out of the cold and silent war, even opting out of educating the masses of mankind for a more contemplative lifestyle. Again, anything is possible. During this era, the angels of the fallen host were gods to the mortals, culling them, teaching them, loving them, cultivating worship from them. Where did your demon fit into this scheme?

Example: *Beth decides that Nebiros had enough of the dominance of demons during the Age of Wonders so he decided to live on the outskirts, enlightening mortals in a small ivory city on the fringes of existence.*

WHAT DID YOUR CHARACTER DO DURING THE TIME OF ATROCITIES?

The Time of Atrocities grew out of the act of Abel's murder as committed by Cain. This act tarnished the land in a wash of blood and lust, and all the fallen felt some part of the horror. The Ebon Legion's assault on Sagun was exemplary of what the rebelling host had become as they were inspired by the spark of brutality and bloodlust that man's actions had fostered. Your character, during this time, has many paths he could have chosen. For one, he could've felt the stab of murder brought by Cain and joined the ranks of the punishing fallen, steeping low and mirroring himself in the suffering of the innocent. He could've gone a different route with the anger within and levied the assault purely against God's remaining angels, attacking them while they were weak due to their inescapable horror (and the fact that many of the highest were off punishing Cain for his transgression). It's also possible that your angel stood with Lucifer, appalled at what had become of his brethren — after all, the war was with Heaven, not the humans, right? Finally, your character might very well have determined his own path — avoid the fight entirely, foster a cult of mortals away from the strife, or stride among the violent fallen and take



vengeance upon those who have gone against Lucifer's edicts. This time is a turning point for the insurgent host, a time when their mettle is truly tested. The war with the Heavenly Host reached new levels during this era, and the battles that had once contained themselves to the edges of Creation were now in the forefront, with casualties on all sides. Your character chose sides and acted upon that decision at some point.

Example: *Beth believes that the first murder had a profound effect on Nebiros, and while the fallen angel wasn't consumed with hate, he was consumed with a great jealousy for humanity. During this time, Nebiros became fiercely possessive of humankind, going so far as to attack other angels who felt that they could handle the duty of shepherding the humans.*

WHAT DID YOUR CHARACTER DO DURING THE TIME OF BABEL?

The decision came from on high, the Morningstar himself — elevate the humans and advance the War on Heaven. So began the Time of Babel, and contained within the beginning of this era was the promise that the fallen host's adversity was over and their true destinies at the helm of Heaven were close at hand. The Grand Experiment was set into motion, but a plot was hatched by traitorous hands — the Watchers went missing, the nephilim were born, and mankind crumpled like a paper cup underneath the duress of their new divinity. This age was quicker than the others, fostered to its supreme end — the Abyss — with alarming alacrity, but that's not to say your character didn't have some place in it. Did your character agree with Lucifer's prideful proclamation? Did he help protect the Ten in their charge, or was your character among the lower ranks of dissent that sowed the disloyalty to the Grand Experiment? It's possible that during the Civilization of Ashes, your character continued her old tasks, unfettered by the new "decision" levied by the Lightbringer. After all, the war with the Creator's Host had not been set on hold. Mortals still worshipped the fallen at all corners of Creation. Was your character a god among the humans? A humble teacher affronted that these new "Watchers" would force mortals to ascend to greater states of being? What of the nephilim? Did your character hate them, hunt them — or worse, help create them? This is a dark time for the fallen, though some higher-Torment beings would certainly see it as more of a silver age of so much potential ruined.

Example: *Nebiros, Beth believes, was greatly opposed to the Grand Experiment. Being jealous of the Ten,*

THE ABYSS

Descriptions of this prison outside of time and space are varied. Some describe the cutting winds flaying the love from the demons' souls. Others describe pure darkness, ash or merely the abstract absence of humans, the Creator and the remaining world. There was the pain of mortal-kind bleeding through the edges, staining the fallen trapped within. The suffering that humanity endured was layered upon the Abyssal demons a thousand-fold, fostering venom in the seats of their souls. Your character likely has memory of this time. He might have remained alone in this Sheol, or he might have been abused and commanded by maddened archdukes hissing his True Name. It was a time of terrible tribulation, and it will forever affect your character's demonic memories. There's no hard-and-fast rule for detailing what your character experienced, but always take care to consider it when coloring your character's memories of that time before history.

the demon decided that he was the only "rightful teacher" of mankind. He began a personal war against the Ten and was a bit player in the conspiracy to bring down the decision levied by the Morningstar.

JUDGMENT CALLS

Another key element of your demonic "half" is how the infernal character judges the nature of things, both in the past and in the current age. These opinions, for lack of a better term, shadow your demon's actions and help foster purpose and intent. They will also help you decide whether or not your character has allied with one of the extant factions.

HUMANITY

Humans, overall, were the lynchpin reason behind the rebellion and the Fall. Lucifer's decree and decision regarding the revelation to Adam Allfather and Allmother Eve is the single defining moment in every demon's existence, so each one is sure to have an opinion on the subject. These opinions are highly varied, and you'll need to nail down your character's perspective on the nature of mortals both then (pre-history) and now (the modern day). Were mortals the pride of Heaven, the bane of Hell or just stumbling monkeys? Are mortals still worth something to your character? Are they beings that inspire your character, or does your demon seek to inspire them? Are they just Faith lanterns holding a much desired spark (your basic Faustian ideal), or are they the last manifesta-

tions of God on Earth and worthy of all the help you can spare (a Reconciler perspective). It's possible that your character has become a Ravener in principle if not in alignment, seeing men and women as nothing more than bags of bone and blood worthy of contempt, pain and humiliation.

Example: *Beth has already decided that Nebiros loved humans so much that he fell into the belief that he was one of their "sole" educators. This obsessive protectiveness might translate, Beth decides, into the modern fallen character.*

LUCIFER

The Morningstar is inarguably the central figure in fallen legend, outside of the Creator. Lucifer was the pinnacle of the rebellion — the powerful charismatic Devil who was the first to stand against God and the Host. Whether she remembers it or not, your character will have an opinion about the Lightbringer, so it's a good idea to figure out what that opinion is, especially in these modern days when Lucifer has become such a topic of significance. If your character loves Lucifer and seeks him still in this current time, then your demon may be characterized as a Luciferan. If your character tends to be more "agnostic" about Lucifer and seeks to puzzle out all the enigmas associated with the Morningstar (not having been in the Abyss for those countless millennia), your character will likely associate with Cryptics. Any emotion can be connected to Lucifer. Did your character hate him from day one? Was she jealous of him? Did she love him then grow to deplore him due to his absence from the Abyss? Obviously, more complex opinions can be created, as well. Consider a demon who felt unrequited love for Lucifer but was always anonymous to him, a nobody. Then she spent her time in the Abyss obsessing over him with this feeling she called "love," which grew more and more twisted over the ages. Now that she's free, the Torment is reduced, but she still feels the fire inside to pursue a twisted quest to make Lucifer love her.

Example: *Originally, Beth feels that Nebiros followed Lucifer and was quite enlightened by the Morningstar's ideals. But Nebiros grew to feel that Lucifer was a great betrayer when he opted to assign the Ten to teach humanity, believing that this affront was a grievous error.*

THE CREATOR

God and the Host obviously are of momentous importance to the fallen. God is the being who created them and commanded them to create in turn, and the remaining host of angels was a constant barb in the sides of the fallen. What did your demon think of them back then? Hate them for their (literally) holier-than-thou attitude? Pity them because they

couldn't see the truth that was in front of their very eyes? What of God? Did your character oppose him happily, or did she do so only after coming to terms with the vast fear of the Creator? And now, in this current age, God and the Host are nowhere to be found. In no place has the divine fingerprint been discovered. Does your character see this as an opportunity to make herself a God and take back what's rightfully hers? That would make her a Faustian. Does she view the place as just a sunnier version of the prison she was condemned to for all those years, a place God has abandoned? (She would be a Reconciler if she loves humanity; a Ravener if she sees the place as a junkpile worthy of destruction.) Is God's absence a warrant of free will, a disturbing sign or a cause of anger and pain?

Example: *Nebiros, Beth decides, felt (and feels) sad that the Creator felt the need to create mortals and use them as little more than ignorant golems. Therefore, Nebiros spurns the Creator, but not out of hate — only out of severe disenchantment.*

ANATOMY OF A MORTAL

Maryann was on her side in the corner, trembling, sweating. A watery red fluid crawled from her ears and the corners of her eyes. Marshall lifted his head, thrashed about, tried again to smash the chair apart beneath him, but he just didn't have the strength. The man's — no, the demon's — breath washed over him, a feculent exhalation of decay. The torturer grinned, a spread of brown teeth, then held up a fistful of Polaroid pictures.

"Do you really think these were you?" he asked Marshall. The demon winked as he stared down at a photo of Marshall grinning like an idiot as water from a log flume ride blasted him in the face. He threw it to the ground. Same with a picture of Marshall blowing out candles on a birthday cake. And a strip of tiny photos from a photo booth, each picture showing him and Maryann making dumb faces at the camera. "Humanity disgusts me. Do you really think that ape's memory is you, Nebiros? Appalling. A long, long time ago you and I did some good work together. We practically invented the virus, you and I. Pus, tumors, chancres, a world of syphilis delight! We were plague kings, and here you sit, crying like a kitten over some cake you ate once? Ugh."

The tears were true. They moistened Marshall's cheeks as the name Nebiros pierced his brain like a fishhook. There was much about his ancient life he could remember, but the rest was a dream he couldn't reclaim. In its place was a buffet table of mortal memories. Carnivals, punch cards at work, favorite radio stations, death of a cousin, Maryann. So much of Maryann.

The demon licked its bruise-colored lips.

"Nebiros," he said. "I need to know where Ba'al-Berith is. Did she get out of the Abyss with you?" Marshall searched Nebiros's memories (or was it the other way around?), and there was a tingle of recollection. Then it was gone. The demon torturer saw the confusion on Marshall's face. "You don't even remember her, do you? Very disconcerting."

A snake-like tail, crusty and dry like cracked leather, eased around from behind the demon's back. Curled in its tip was a scalpel, dripping dark ichor. Flies orbited the ooze. The demon shrugged.

"Guess I have to play with Maryann after all. Your loss."

A demon needs his mortal host's memories. Without them, the torment of the Abyss would wash over him and destroy any semblance of his old self, leaving him a hateful being mired in rage.

Creating your character's human host is filling in the second half of your demon — without it, your character isn't whole. After all, the demon now sees the world through human eyes. Where once she helped create mortals and the world they lived in, now she is a mortal. Now she knows what it's like to be one of the very creatures that the fallen host helped to foster, and that's a big deal. The persona of their host is a powerful side, always striving for control. Can your character reach a balance betwixt her demon side and her human side? Has the human side taken precedence, so much so that she believes herself to be "Jane Smith" instead of "Abrazal, Fell Knight of the Sanguine Court?" Or has the demon side repressed the human memories, leaving your character with a greater sense of her original self but making her vulnerable to the eventual erosion that Torment fosters in her soul? Bottom line — this essay should help you figure out who the mortal was, and what it means to your fallen character.

THE CALLING

Something about your mortal's mind was like a beacon to your demon — a faint signal through the darkness and hatred that called her to the body. This is arguably the place to start when hammering out your human, because this is the first and most crucial connection between demon and mortal minds. Something about the human must resonate with the demon's personality. It's a rare thing to have a demon cast randomly, without intuition, into an unassociated body. Every House tends to have archetypes of people to which its members are drawn. Feel free to figure this in, but also look back to your character's specific demon history (which you have likely created by

now) for clues as to what kind of mortal she would have instinctively sought.

Take, for example, a Scourge who protected humans from the havoc caused by the battles with the Creator's Host or the brutal madness of the nephilim. His charge, back in the day, was the guardianship of humanity at any cost. And so, his martyr's soul was eventually cast into the Sheol of the Abyss, and now has found a rift in the darkness allowing him to escape. What soul calls to him, and why? Innumerable options are available, each one with a different reason as to why the demon may have been pulled to it.

Consider a rape crisis counselor. Perhaps the demon witnessed the rape of humans by malicious fallen during the Time of Atrocities, and the rape counselor's own motivations were similar enough to call her there (potentially making a Reconciler in the process). Or, what happens if the demon instead is attracted to a rape victim. Often, the obvious absence of the demon's ideals in a human mind might be what draws the demon in instead of the presence of her ideals. In this case, the demon sees the chance to empower the mortal, to close the book on her victim's nature — and in this way, the Scourge can be fulfilled. Perhaps the Scourge takes the body of a police officer downed in battle, knowing that the cop died for what he believed in, which was law, order and the protection of mortals. It's even possible that the Scourge seeks darker human material due to the overwhelming pain within the Abyss, so she finds a rapist as a vessel, using him to punish humans with her frustration over having never made a difference to the world in any way.

Puzzling out why your demon was "called" to the human is the key step. Was it the presence of the demon's own virtues and beliefs inside the human mind that called her, or was it the absence of these ideals that made her want to "fix" the mortal? Did the human have an overriding emotion that resonated with your character? Was it love, hope and empathy for others? Anger, lust and frustration over being a useless, ignorant being? Did the human suffer in such a way that it stood out like a stain to your character? Or maybe the mortal was a powerful, optimistic creature that stood out like a beacon to your character. Whatever the case, the mortal is the answer to the demon's equation, the summation of all she seeks in this current time, whether she realizes it or not. Figuring out this element of the character is the springboard to further detailing the mortal half of your character.

Example: *As the mortal half of her character, Beth creates the human called "Marshall Jakes." Why was the demon called to Marshall? Beth says that Marshall is a*

LEGACY

While this topic is touched on in the later text about the prelude (see page 32), the Legacy Background is also something to consider when constructing the mortal side of your character. Does a high Legacy score indicate that your character actively ignores (or can't remember) the human side instead of the demon side? Maybe, maybe not. That's up to you and the Storyteller. A lower Legacy score, however, definitely indicates a reliance upon human memories. Only a few (or more importantly, zero) dots in the Legacy Background? Then take extra special care to sharpen your human half of the character, because that's the horse that's coming first out of the gate. Eventually, the demon side might reveal itself and memories of the ancient world will begin seeping through the filters, but until then, it's mortal memories all the way. Use the Legacy Background as your guide.

disenchanted emergency room orderly, numbed by the pain and blood he sees day-to-day. Beth feels that Nebiros would seek out the desperation and sadness over the human condition that Marshall evokes. On top of that, Marshall is also in the healing profession, another hook that Nebiros might grab.

THE SPARK OF LIFE

Just as the angels once breathed life into the world, so you must breathe life into the mortal that your demon inhabits. Because the demon mind is subsumed beneath the waters of the human psyche (at least initially), you have to know as much as you can about the vessel your character occupies. Just as the demon half of your character had a history with hopes, dreams, relationships and motivations, so does the human half. Some of the questions below should help you define the life of your mortal host.

WHAT DID YOUR CHARACTER DO FOR A LIVING?

It's a simple question, and one of some relevance to the demon — after all, angels were defined by their “jobs” in the world. While it's not their sole identity, it does play a big part in the angel's character, so it should play a reasonable part in the mortal's, as well. Plus, a mortal's devotion to his job might play a part in why the demon was attracted in the first place. Someone who is a video store clerk might not reflect much through their vocation, but someone who is a fire chief might define himself through that position. Let's use the fire chief as an example. Someone who fights fires is likely something of a hero archetype,

who might call a Devil or a Scourge who is attracted to this selfless profession. Perhaps the fireman's motivations are not what they appear, however, and he enjoys the attention his job garners. This person could call a more Faustian Devil, or perhaps a Defiler who enjoys the “inspiration” that the mortal's acts can cause. If the human was a librarian, perhaps a knowledge-hungry Fiend would be called (or any Cryptic, actually). Serial killers/ rapists might draw any Ravener; engineers or computer programmers might earn the attention of a Malefactor; a mortician (or, conversely, an obstetrician) might attract a Slayer. Some connections between the mortal profession and the demon's House and/ or Faction might be obvious, or the connection could be less clear. Regardless of the connection's importance, profession (or lack thereof) is a significant element of a human's life and identity.

Example: *Beth decides that Marshall is a hospital orderly, specifically working in the emergency room.*

WHAT ARE HER PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS LIKE?

Just like job or career, our relationships with others help to define us. Nobody is an island in this world — we constantly choose to (or are forced to) co-exist with others. The nature of these relationships is not only critical in characterizing the purely mortal half of your demon, but it can insinuate why the demon was attracted to the mortal host in the first place. A woman who maintains a loving relationship with her husband might exemplify to a low-Torment fallen exactly what is good and right about humanity, and thus could attract such a demon when the time comes. A teenager who is constantly abused by his “peers” (and perhaps his parents), however, might lure the interest of an escaping Devourer who espouses ideals of revenge and empowerment. Beyond that, the mortal's relationships also help to further the mortal's story. A demon might enter the body, but that doesn't mean that the mortal's relationships are suddenly left by the wayside like so much highway wreckage. For one thing, the other parties involved are unlikely to just forget the character and sit content to be ignored. But even more importantly, the demon partially becomes the human. The demon is unlikely to want to just ditch the relationships that are intrinsic to that human. If the mortal loved her children, the demon probably loves those children as well, whether she wants to or not. Moreover, it's that love of children that provides the bulwark against the ever-threatening Torment of the Abyss. These extant relationships — and how the demon defines them and deals with them — really help to nail down the

whole character at hand. Does the demon take confidence in the honor and closeness of a best friend? Does the demon become Faustian and attempt to enthrall the friend? Does the friendship remind the demon of one she maintained before the Abyss took them all, thus only serving to frustrate and enrage her?

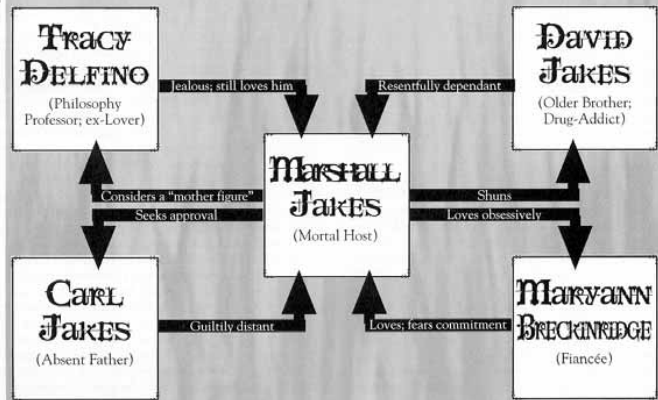
You need to figure out the mortal's relationships — friends, family, loved ones, co-workers, lost loves, mortal enemies, unrequited liaisons — and go into as much detail as you can. One way to do so is to draw a "relationship chart." In the center of a page, pencil in the human's name and a few key details. Then, in a circle surrounding the human's name, in a set of spokes like a wheel, draw in other character names and a brief description of *who* they are. (For instance: "Tommy Brown, loving husband," or "Mara Rosaleone, adulterous girlfriend.") Draw arrows connecting these characters to the demon's human host — one arrow goes from the mortal host to the "related" character, and another arrow goes from the relationship to the mortal host. Along these lines you can write adjectives or other descriptors that imply the relationships one feels for another. (For instance, let's say the mortal host is Clive Jones, and one of the related characters is "Dr. David Rousni, abusive step-father." On the arrow

from Rousni to Clive, you might write "Feels the step-son is worthless, and so abuses him emotionally and verbally." On the arrow from Clive to Rousni, you might write "Worships his step-father despite the abuse.") This wheel chart will allow you to drill down into the mortal host's many relationships, and it will also give your Storyteller a useful tool, allowing him to incorporate these characters into the story to make it a richer experience. (It's even possible to draw lines between the other characters, as well, to further indicate the network of characters that surround the human personality.)

WHAT WERE THE HOST'S WANTS OR NEEDS?

Characters are often defined by what they want and the lengths they will go to in order to get what they want. These wants manifest as hopes, dreams, desires and needs, and they help to provide depth to the human character and a greater connection to the inhabiting demon. An eco-terrorist known for his violent defense of the environment might merge well with a wilderness-minded Devourer who will do anything to stop the defilement of the wild and natural world. The human's connection with the environmental cause could draw a Scourge, many of whom often attach themselves to protective causes. What did the human want? World peace? Love? Sex? Knowl-

SAMPLE CHARACTER CHART: (NEBJROS EXAMPLE)



edge? Money? Power? Likely a combination of many things, actually. The further question, then, is how far would the human have gone to get these things? Was his life spent in vain pursuit of these things without ever achieving them? (And how did this lack of fulfillment reflect in the demon's attraction?) Or did the human so satiate himself on worthless objects and ideals that it left the mortal as an empty mess? Those who want power and money might call a Devil or a Faustian. Cryptics or Fiends often continue the quests of those who sought knowledge and wisdom. You can also identify the human's wants by more specific terms. You might say, "Uriah was a man who single-mindedly sought revenge against the drunk driver who took his wife and children's life," or, "Karl Fechter wanted to use the Internet to preach messages of white supremacy to frustrated teenagers." (You must then ask yourself how these wants reflect in the demonic mirror. Does Uriah's revenge continue with his Devourer host? Will the Fiend living inside Karl's skin continue his crusade of hate, or will he seek to reform the man's corrupted soul?)

Example: *Beth has already identified some of Marshall's wants and needs in the form of Maryann — she loves the woman and would do anything for her. She also decides that Marshall would really like to go back to school to be a doctor.*

WHAT WAS THE HOST AFRAID OF?

Fear is the other side of the coin in opposition to wants and needs. Fear defines us just as equally and often stands in the way of us obtaining success in our objectives. We might want to talk to the girl at the bar to get her phone number, but our fear of rejection stops us from actually doing it. Anxiety and terror might have been vital in the path a mortal traveled in life. For instance, someone who wanted nothing more than a career as a singer might have had great fear instilled by her parents. ("You can't get a job as a musician. How will you eat? You don't get benefits or insurance as an artist, you know. You'll die in a gutter before you become successful!") That fear blocks them from ever being who they really wanted to be in life. (Consider the opposite, too. The fear of failure might have spurred them to achieve their wants, but at what cost and sacrifice?) Everyone exists in fear — fear of crime, of loved ones' rejection, suffering, rape, murder. Some people fear getting too close in relationships; others are afraid of what happens when they're not close enough to their loved ones. There are irrational fears ("I'm afraid a piece of satellite is going to fall from space and kill me.") and rational ones ("I was molested when I was five, and I fear what men are capable of because of it."). Once you've figured that out, you can figure out where the

demon fits in. Fear is a flame that will draw the moths quite quickly, like an *apéritif* before possession. Someone with a paranoid fear of dying (not the standard fear, but a fear that discolors all parts of his life) might appeal to a Slayer who relishes the taste of that fear — or, alternatively, wants to help absolve the mortal of such terror. The aforementioned singer whose fear stopped her from pursuing her dreams might call a Defiler who seeks to fill that emptiness by allowing the mortal the gift of song. Likewise, the demon might exploit it by seeking power and worship through "selling out."

Example: *Beth believes that Marshall's fears are intrinsically tied into his wants. He fears losing his love, Maryann, and he also fears that he will fail if he tries to become a doctor, and this stops him from pursuing the goal.*

CHARACTER CREATION OPTIONS

Typically, it's better to create the demon part of your character first. After all, the demon's story really comes first, so why not design it that way from the ground up? Should you choose, however, you can reverse the process and plot out the human's life first. It doesn't hurt anything — it simply tends to place the story's reliance upon the mortal's story in the beginning. Doing so also allows you to retroactively match the demon's psyche with the human one you've already created. It might just be a case of you having a great person in mind but not yet a great demon to go with that mortal, so start with what you know and go from there. There's nothing wrong with this approach, but make sure to check with your Storyteller to make sure you're not going against her plans.

Another option available to you, should you choose it, is to flesh out every aspect of your character's infernal history and let the Storyteller handle the human half. This is certainly not something to do willy-nilly. You must ask your Storyteller for permission to do so, as she'll be the one actually doing a lot of the work. If she goes for it, you design all elements of the demon, and then the Storyteller has autonomous control over what mortal she feels the demon should fit best with — with your character and the general story flow in mind. She can then deliver unto you the mortal host your demon will be "entering," or she could handle it through an amnesiac perspective. (Your character would only remember parts of his demon mind in such a case, and hardly any of the mortal one.) As the game progresses, both personalities and histories begin coming through piece by piece via a combination of work done by player (you) and the Storyteller.



WHAT CIRCUMSTANCES LED TO THE POSSESSION?

The final question. Your character's human host somehow became empty, and in that moment's vacancy, the demon enters. Did the host die? If so, how? It's possible that the death of the human further attracted the demon from the Abyss. For instance, a human who perishes through the devastation of a sexually transmitted disease might attract a tormented Defiler who intuitively associates death with desire. The mortal's death is likely to have a large effect on the future of the character. The Defiler, for instance, might seek to reconcile the character's death and force her to lead a more loving (instead of lustful) life. Or it might swing the other way, and the Defiler could seek to further punish the human's body—and perhaps transmit the disease to others through the act of slaking her perverse lust.

Also, consider the possibility that it was not death that allowed the demon entrance. Some human souls wither while the body is still alive. Coma victims, the mentally ill or even victims of unimaginable brutality (abuses levied against them either by themselves or external forces) make excellent hosts for escaping fallen. If such is the case, it very likely defines the mortal's existence. A woman who was abused by a long

line of brutal boyfriends and husbands might leave room for a Devourer warrior ripe with anger. The same skill might also call a Scourge who can help protect women or a Faustian Devil who wishes to turn the tables on her aggressors and forge a weak woman into a strong one.

Example: Marshall, Beth decides, died ironically at the hospital, stabbed in the neck by a PCP-addict who came in with another overdose victim. She likes the irony that Marshall died by human hands, and Nebiros is fiercely protective of all of mankind—even murderers and addicts.

PARALLEL CONCEPTS

You've created a demon with an angelic history. Now you're working on the human half of the fallen equation, and you have an option before you. You can create the mortal host as a parallel identity to the demon's one. In other terms, you're creating two characters with more in common than not, a demon and a mortal who make sense together; who share principles and are thematically similar. For instance, say you've created a warrior Devourer as your demon, so in the hopes of designing a parallel human host, you give the mortal an identity congruent with that of a modern-day "warrior." Where once the Devourer fought for the fallen host, the human

character might fight crime as a police officer or FBI agent. Or he may be a “warrior” in an urban street gang that often clashes violently with other gangs. Other warrior archetypes include a member of the military, a security guard, a martial arts instructor. There’s also the possibility of taking the “warrior” concept and making it one that’s slightly more abstract. The human half might be a “warrior” in the fight against deforestation or a combatant on the “battlefield” of the football gridiron. Essentially, you’re marrying two similar concepts. You have the demon in mind, now you’re creating a like-minded human for the demon to inhabit.

Example: *Susan creates a demon she calls Vajrapani. Vajrapani was a selfish Devil who had mortals build cathedrals of glass for her during the Age of Wonders — Vajrapani was a Faustian to the core, a Devil who sought no harm of humans unless it helps her gain greater degrees of worship. Now, Susan is faced with the act of creating her human host that Vajrapani will dwell within, and she chooses to make the human similar to the demon. Susan creates Sylvia Jackson, ruthless CEO of a surviving dot-com company. Sylvia has managed to survive and keep her company afloat by stepping on the heads of those below her in station. Both Vajrapani and Sylvia Jackson are power-hungry manipulators, and Susan feels that the two concepts — human and demon — mesh well in both ideal and theme.*

CONTRASTING CONCEPTS

Your other option is to avoid the parallelism described thus far and instead create a human who contrasts (somewhat) with the demon that you’ve designed. This is definitely the road less traveled, as there will be a lack of cohesion between the mortal mind and the demon persona. Yet, this collision, however challenging, is likely to create a greater wealth of roleplaying opportunities as the character is literally conflicted between two minds.

Let’s say you were creating a Defiler who, during the time before the Abyss, was a maiden of lust bent on sating bodily urges — essentially, a “succubus” archetype. A creature who is willing to achieve pleasure in whatever way possible. What happens when this creature finds the body of a woman who fears sexual contact so much that she’s celibate? Or a man in a wheelchair who was, from a very young age, unable to sustain a physical relationship with anyone due to his physical handicap? Or a rape victim whose memories of sexual contact conjure up not pleasure, but only a wash of pain, regret and vindictive anger? Conflict occurs. The Defiler — theoretically a being of potent sexual energy — is now trapped in the walls of a human being who fears

sex or has been rendered so helpless by life’s grim circumstances that the two personalities are constantly at war with one another.

Again, let it be said that playing this type of character has to be done carefully, and we recommend working with the Storyteller to help develop this idea into one that will help a game and not hurt it. Also, it should be stated, even in creating a contrasting demon and human halves, there’s still some reason that the demon found the mortal host in the first place. In the preceding Defiler example,

EVERYDAY PROBLEMS

Okay, so you’ve created a demon. Great, powerful, commanding legions of mortals to do her bidding, right? Maybe — but maybe not. If you’re looking to inject a dose of reality into your character, you might look to saddle your human character with human problems that will be hard for the demon to escape. Such problems are many and varied, and they shouldn’t be hard to come up with. It’s a good bet that you yourself have very similar issues. Rent payments, bills, sickness, jobs, children to take care of, a spouse to pay attention to, family dinners to attend and all the other delightful predicaments that life inadvertently creates. It’s true that you’re a demon, pumped to the gills with lore and an apocalyptic form, but remember that there is always a price in using these powers. For one thing, going down to the bank and snowing the teller over with some expenditure of Faith might get you noticed — and not necessarily in the good way. Other demons, demon-hunters and the creatures of the World of Darkness might take note when you go blowing your Faith load every time you’re confronted with a tiny life problem. On top of that, if something should go awry when using infernal powers, you run the risk of bumping your Torment up another notch, and that’s rarely a good thing. Demon powers are cool, but they’re not a catch-all solution to all the problems that your mortal host likely was subject to. Keep this in mind when sketching your character’s human half. Maybe pencil in a list of human problems he has, and hand it off to the Storyteller to run with. Anything to make a better story.

Example: *While creating Marshall, Beth decides to give him a whole host of little human problems. He has \$18,000 of credit card debt. He shuns his brother and longs for the approval of his father. He works long hours and is exhausted all the time. He can barely pay his rent. Et cetera.*

there is still the theme of sex and lust running throughout — the absence or aversion to the Defiler ideals is likely what attracted the demon to enter that body in the first place. Using contrast doesn't mean that you concoct some random, utterly unrelated host body. It isn't meant for comedy or a "fish-out-of-water" scenario, it's meant to amp up the conflicts intrinsic in such an unlikely pairing.

Example: Marty creates the demon Ba'al-Berith, a Malefactor whose sole purpose before the Abyssal imprisonment was to design grand melee weapons for the various legions. Her work was renowned, and it afforded her great power and worship during that time. In the hopes of creating a contrasting human, Marty comes up with Marcie Murphy, a sexually confused computer programmer who is afraid of success and unwilling to assert herself and her craft. The two personalities have in common the element of creation and engineering — Ba'al-Berith was a crafter of weapons, and Marcie is a crafter of programming — but the demon was one of much confidence and success, whereas Marcie is one of low self-esteem with the specter of failure hanging over her head. Marty hopes that this contrast will afford him more roleplaying opportunities, as well as the chance to slowly reconcile each personality with the other over time.

THE PRELUDE

His mind felt like a bundle of nerve endings, unsheathed and raw. Every memory of the Abyss — all the hatred, disgust, brutality — every last bit of it sucker-punched him, and he could taste epidemics of infection on his tongue. He stared down, eyes wide, and looked at the human sprawled unconscious in the corner. He wondered what he could do to her. How badly it would hurt. The thought flickered through him — they had trusted the mortals. Taught them. Loved them enough to take the biggest, baddest bullet that prehistory had ever known, and they got nothing in return. He laughed. The Creator's little clay men. How simple, and how satisfying it would be to kiss her mouth and press disease to her tongue...

... but then, there was something, else, too. Bleeding in from the edges. Humanity. Mortality. A life lived with walks in parks, jazz music, raunchy sex, passive-aggressive arguments, the Internet, watering plants with a little girl, phone calls, coffee cups and Maryann. Always Maryann. It was like re-opening an old wound and then healing it again, but this time a little bit better. All the old stuff, the hatred of time immemorial, quieted down inside of him, and he was left with a strange feeling of grim harmony. He cried for a little while, bending down over her trembling body, then he picked her up and carried her over the lifeless shell that the demon torturer had inhabited for a time. He took her out of the room, whispering sweetness in her ear.

Things would be better now, he thought. It was like two halves inside of him had become two wholes. The two parts hadn't come together yet, hadn't joined hands in an effort to understand one another, but they would. Demon. Human. Somewhere, Marshall Jakes — Nebiros — sat in-between; a little bit happy, a little bit sad.

Thesis confronted by antithesis resolves into synthesis. That is the creation of any fallen character. Your thesis, the origin, is the angel who fell — the demon just escaping the Abyss. The antithesis of this is the human host — mortal, frail and vulnerable, with its own dominant history. When the two come together into one body, you have synthesis, the combination of both halves into your character. This section should show you ways to make the two merge seamlessly and to begin the game knowing where both halves stand in relation to the other. Along the way, maybe you'll find some new ideas on making the amalgamation of demon and human work better for you and the game.

UNEARTHING THE DEMON

Memory is a fickle creature. It exists in a gray area, sandwiched between fact and fiction. Our minds are filled with incorrect recollections, altered memories or blank spots. If we remember it, didn't it happen? Isn't it who we are? If we can't trust the stuff in our own head, what can we trust?

And so you run into one of the key problems the fallen (specifically those who have only recently fled the Abyss) are victim to — the untrustworthiness of memory. Consider the problem: Uthar is a fallen angel, a Devourer who existed in a time before humanity was crafted from the ether. Uthar has countless millennia of memories as an angel, as a demon, both in and out of the Abyss. Uthar escapes and is attracted to the body and spirit of a police officer who (mere moments ago) died in a shoot-out at a high school. Suddenly, Uthar's vast reservoir of angelic/demonic memory is submerged beneath the memories of the human police officer. The cop — whose name was John — leaves such a residue of remembrance behind that Uthar may not even know that he was a demon named Uthar anymore. He may very well see himself as "John" the cop, but all under the abiding sensation that something doesn't feel right. Confusion is rampant. John/ Uthar begins having memory problems. He knows he's just a guy who buys milk in the wee hours of the morning, likes a cold beer after his shift and is a good Catholic boy, right? What happens when those memories start to fracture like the very walls of the Abyss itself, and



"John" begins remembering Uthar's past? Suddenly, John remembers his high school graduation — and he also remembers clashing in the skies above an exploding volcano, a diamond blade in his hand and a pair of raven wings jutting from his back. This isn't just an image in his head — it's a memory. He can't help but believe that that winged creature was him. He doesn't remember it as a third-party affair. He remembers the blade cutting through an angel's thigh and biting into bone; he remembers the rush of scalding air blasting up from the disgoring magma below. (And this is only in the first week that Uthar's back in the world!)

It only gets more confusing from there. The nature of identity and memory begins turning to insubstantial mist before his eyes. As images from his angelic life begin bleeding over into recollections as a beat cop on duty, feelings of uncertainty begin mounting. Soon things start getting a little nutty. Questions of *who you are* versus *who you were* begin warring with one another. Some fallen come to terms with this duality, realizing the truth of what has really happened. These demons tend to understand the dichotomy of their identities and are able to embrace their duality. Others manage to remember one side of their persona more strongly than the other. Still others simply go insane in the process as

the two personalities crash and shatter. What follows is a series of steps that many fallen go through in the time after escaping the Abyss and anchoring themselves within a human vessel. These steps aren't hard-and-fast rules to adhere to, but they do represent one potential pattern.

DISTORTION

In the beginning, things aren't going to make a whole lot of sense to the newly escaped fallen. It's a struggle for birth with infant sensibilities, a mind-blowing event that can leave one reeling. As such, a distinct sense of distortion accompanies this process. During this stage, the demon is likely to think of itself as purely human. After all, the predominant mindset is that of the mortal host, and the demon memory is trapped and mostly inaccessible. Over time, however, the character is likely to begin feeling a distortion of both memory and time. Things will seem out-of-sorts, off-kilter, like the world (and her recollection of it) is made of lines conjoining at unusual angles. The character might begin questioning her own sanity or actually pondering if she is somehow *not* human.

There's also the chance for extreme emotions to come into play. For one, the character might feel an inexplicable sense of elation. (After all, escaping the

ageless torture of the Abyss is worth celebrating, even if the demon doesn't quite remember the details.) The time in the Abyss might have also left a dark veneer on the demon's emotions, so the character might grow depressed, angry or frustrated for no obvious reason. This might result in the "mortal" performing erratic actions; unable to grasp evocations, growing more confused as the nights and weeks go on. This stage isn't likely to last more than a few days to a few weeks.

DISSOCIATION

At this point, the demonic memories begin filtering in — if not memories directly (dependent upon the number of points in the Legacy Background), then a general pervasive feeling of the demon's infernal nature. During this time, the character is unlikely to embrace the demonic side, but she will probably begin viewing her human half with as much suspicion and disdain. While the character doesn't think of herself as "a fallen angel," she probably knows that she's not exactly human, either. Other elements begin showing, such as the presence (and necessity) of Faith in the character's life. The character might also erratically use an evocation or dip in and out of an apocalyptic form, unknowingly delivering a Revelation to unsuspecting mortals. Also, the demon will probably go down one of two routes. She will either have outrageous mood swings as she comes to terms with the reality of the situation, or she will lose all emotion for a time, becoming a cold and remorseless individual who views everything inside her own head with icy detachment. This stage can last anywhere from a week to a year, depending on the nature of the character.

RECONSTRUCTION

Here the character begins the road to acceptance — the demonic side has reared its head. The character likely remembers a few key details from her former existence — her True and Celestial Names, possibly, and her "function" in the pre-historical time. If the character has the Legacy Background, other signpost memories also start coming back — not all of them, but some of the key scenes you detailed when you crafted your demonic history (see *Anatomy of an Angel*, page 21). These memories tend to come through "triggers," or events, people or landmarks that actually signal a sudden surge of memory. Meeting another fallen is probably the most common trigger. The other demon might be one your character suddenly remembers from the time before the Abyss, or that demon might simply represent the character's "old self" that's continually attempting to push through. Triggers might be even more abstract. A character might find himself

thinking, "That tree isn't as nice as the ones in Eden, I remember how wild and verdant the forests were..." and suddenly, a major memory comes sweeping back. All of this culminates into the possibility that balance could begin to sway away from humanity in general. While the human memories remain and continue to provide a buffer against Torment, the demon side truly begins to emerge (and occasionally dominate). Another key characteristic of this stage is the search for whatever information is still missing. Gaps will remain, and the character might begin a quest of self-discovery to learn more about her submerged "angel." This stage can come in a flash of satori over a very short period of time, or it can literally last years as the character struggles to learn more about her ancient half.

REBIRTH

Rebirth occurs when the character emerges from her identity cocoon into the realization of what she was and has become. All of her past existence that she's capable of remembering (use the Legacy Background as your guide) have reached their apex. Nothing more will be remembered without also being incorporated into the story as a point of character growth (see "Increasing Backgrounds" on page 41). This doesn't mean the character recalls her entire past, however. Actually, it's possible she remembers very little of her old life at all. The vital element of this stage is the acceptance of both halves and the capability to act externally instead of internally. Up until this point, the character is confused, alienated, bouncing through the extremes of emotion as dark and bizarre memories heave to the surface. But by this point, the character has accepted her dual nature. She knows that she was an angel. She knows what happened. She entered the body of a human, and now she wears the human's skin and mind like a Halloween costume that she can't remove. And she knows what she has become. She is a fallen angel — a fusion of human and demon with the memories of both. That's not to say she's healthy,

THE STORYTELLER IS YOUR FRIEND

A lot of what is discussed in this chapter provides you with a guide to help you create and portray your character in your *Demon: The Fallen* game. Much of it also relies upon your relationship with the Storyteller, however, so we encourage you to work with her instead of keeping your character's history and motivations secret. Getting together with your Storyteller and deciding what can and should be revealed about your character is likely to make a better experience overall for everybody involved.

balanced or sane after all these discoveries, but she has more than likely dealt with it and come to an understanding of it.

LEGACY REVEALED

No matter how much your character comes to accept the infernal side of his psyche, his memories will never outpace that which his Legacy score allows. A character with no points in Legacy won't have full cognition of his angelic history. In fact, he'll remember little more than befuddling insights. As such, the Legacy Background really dictates potential roads that your character might travel. It allows you to configure the balance between mortal and demon personalities and to see just how heavy each end of the psyche see-saw is.

LEGACY 0-1

Characters with one or no dots in the Legacy Background are effectively crippled with regard to their demonic memory. No recollection is concrete. They remember only a few things with certainty, and everything else lingers like the fading remembrance of last night's dream. Names exist independent of faces, vignettes from the beginning moments of Creation haunt the character's waking mind, and the chilling eternity of the Abyss probably colors her thoughts when she sleeps, but nothing is firm. If ground is gained in reclaiming lost memory, it's a major event, like an amnesiac waking to a single conclusive recollection. What this means is that the mortal memory is absolutely dominant. The character might very well think of herself as a demon, but no matter how much she tries, she can't dodge the memories of eating ice cream with her niece or getting raped under the football field bleachers back in high school. Characters with low Legacy scores tend to live life still according to the mortal's memories and are most likely to embrace humanity and live according to the codes and morals that mortal civilization enforces. Human relationships are considerably important to these demons, as they're the only relationships they really have. These fallen are the ones who are most likely to maintain some semblance of career and family, and they might even continue to enjoy the simple habits and hobbies of the human host (sailboats, clubbing, drug addictions, journal writing, whatever). It's up to you whether the character believes she's a demon, human or some mixture of both, but the fact remains that she can remember startlingly little of her life as a member of the fallen host. This fact translates into the possibility of a low-Torment character as well, because she also doesn't remember the horrors of the Abyss, either. Characters of this ilk often make good Reconcilers, as they

still have their human minds and human compassion (provided the host had any) to hold onto. Many also end up as Cryptics, if only through the ceaseless search for clues to their true past.

LEGACY 2-3

Having more points in the Legacy Background allows for a greater breadth of infernal memory to merge with (or intrude upon) the mortal host's remaining mind. Two or three dots in the Background is enough for the character to get a pretty good idea of the general scope of events of the Fall, the war, the Abyss and her place in all of it. She could even theoretically cobble together a vague time-line of the events she recalls witnessing. Of course some confusion will still exist ("Did the Ten go missing after the birth of the nephilim? Did the Crimson Legion exterminate the nephilim totally, or did a few escape our clutches?"), but she'll still be capable of penciling in a more complete sketch of her infernal existence. Doing so will probably result in a more complete fusion of mortal and demon halves. While the mortal memory remains more complete, the demon half supplies millennia's worth of semi-fulfilled remembrances. That alone is enough to keep the character balanced in both worlds. A character with this mindset might operate equally in both spheres. She could still go to work as a venture capitalist during the day, then involve herself in the social and political maelstrom of the local infernal court at night. These characters probably have an equal number of human and demon allies, and thralls are commonly treated more as humans than as ignorant cattle. These characters often end up as Luciferans (they still remember Lucifer but not any negative feelings or history associated with him) or as Cryptics (they remember much, but there are holes that need filling). Many of these fallen also end up as low-Torment Faustians — willing to do what it takes and embrace the combination of their human and demon potential.

LEGACY 4-5

Fallen characters with high-end Legacy scores remember an extensive portion of their ancient lives — damn near all of it, actually. A few details slip through the cracks ("Didn't Belphegor have a little boy-toy consort for most of the Age of Atrocities? What was that consort's name?"), but generally speaking, these demons remember a fairly complete picture of their ancient past. Characters with high Legacy scores remember exactly what legion they were a part of, remember who betrayed them during the attack upon Machonon, and where they hid their herd of soon-to-be-enlightened humans in the

Mountains of Sorrow. Details are prevalent — including all the emotions and feelings associated with them. Prevalent enough, in fact, to dwarf the memories of the mortal host. A high Legacy rating sways the character's mind in favor of the demon within, and the human soul is left by the wayside. It's doubtful that these fallen continue on the charade of a human life, and any involvement in the machinations of the mortal world probably cease. After all, they're just borrowing the body and mind like a pair of shoes. Why buy into the illusion that it's anything more than that? Demons with this much Legacy really tend to involve themselves solely in the circles that other fallen travel in — learning new lore, politicking in the courts, hammering away at grudges gained an eternity ago. Who cares about human family and friends? What's feeding the dog or perusing the photo album really going to do for the demon inside? Nothing. (Of course, a rejection of the human side opens the door to Torment, which is always a dangerous path to travel.)

Characters of this ilk tend to make the most excellent Faustians, as the prevalence of their demon side pushes them to new heights of self-interest. Also, Luciferans are prominent due to the high capacity of memory accessible by these demons. And finally, many become Raveners. As Torment infringes and their old memories begin drowning the mortal persona, they simply see the world as a porcelain toy begging to be broken.

UNCLEAN SPIRITS

Sometimes the incorporation of demon and human is a bit more *direct* than other times. This most often occurs in cases where the human host didn't die, but it still able to be possessed by the escaping demon. In these cases, the human soul is more complete and could be more adamant in its assertion of dominance. That's not to say that the mortal mind and the demon persona consciously struggle for dominance, it merely suggests that possessing a still-living human might provide a greater push from the human vessel. There are many potential ways for a human to become "open" without dying (some fallen call these mortals and their possessors fontanelles, indicating "weak membranes"). Somehow, the spirit must be weakened in a manner allowing the demon to home in on the vessel and then possess it. What follows are a few of these possibilities, though more might come to you to suit your character.

MENTAL ILLNESS

The toll a mental illness (or a compounding of such illnesses) takes on a mortal's mind and body is

incalculable. It fractures the very psyche of the patient, making it harder and harder for him to deal with the day-to-day world. Some derangements are less troubling than others, and only certain types of mental illness could theoretically leave a human vulnerable to demonic possession. Problems such as obsessive-compulsive disorder or phobias are unlikely to present such a broken vessel for a demon's control, but more debilitating diseases could. Clinical depression, for one, will leave its victim in a constant emotional haze, a ditch of sadness and sorrow that is inexplicable and inescapable. Such depression can often lead to suicide. Prior to suicide, it can leave the human's mind so detached from the soul and buried beneath such desperate sorrow that a demon is able to take residence with little difficulty.

Another derangement that could pave the way for possession is Antisocial Personality Disorder, or sociopathy. This illness makes a conscienceless, emotionless monster out of its victim — one who thinks nothing of lying, stealing, hurting or even killing others. Unfortunately, this disease translates to "soullessness" to a degree, which again opens the door for a demon to take control. The same goes for many of the schizophrenia disorders (all of which are essentially a mish-mash of other serious derangements). Schizophrenia leaves one with deep paranoia and bizarre logic, and it can even result in a comatose state. While all of these conditions could allow for possession, one of the key elements is the habit of schizophrenics to hear voices — often voices from "angels" or "demons" telling them to do things. Their minds are open to the possibility of possession, and they are attuned to the "supernatural" chatter that goes on in the world, which further fractures their minds and allows for a demon to slip in through those cracks.

ADDICTION

Addiction is a demon all its own, and it can leave one in some pretty dark places. A dependence upon the harder drugs (heroin, crack, cocaine) can lead one to an overdose or a comatose state. Right there, a demon has an in, since any body in a comatose state is ripe for theft. Addiction can allow for demonic possession in other, subtler ways, however.

Consider the addict who pushes himself further and further into the pits of habitual drug use, who so requires his "fix" that he will do anything to get either the money to buy the drugs, or the drugs themselves. People will prostitute themselves, steal from others, *kill others* — anything to feed their craving. As the person slips down the moral ladder



one rung at a time, a bit of his soul withers and dies, and the resultant “holes” could allow a demon to enter the body and assume power.

BRUTAL LIVING

Some people molest their own souls *without* the addiction demanding it. Living in a dangerously careless way, pushing one's body and mind into new pools of depravity, will definitely tear ragged chunks out of one's soul. Again, prostitutes, thieves, murderers — anybody who has essentially “sold their soul” and forsaken much of their humanity — *could* (though not necessarily) be a gateway for an escaping fallen. A prostitute might be happy with her life, might be safe and sane and her soul will be largely intact, but the hooker who braves night after night of sleet and rain, gets her teeth knocked out by pissy johns and is a breeding ground for countless sexually transmitted diseases might not be so lucky.

There are other ways to live brutally, however. Consider the party-boy whose life is a sequential run of depraved experiences — drugs, sex, liquor, vomit, disease. Or the housewife who gets a fistful of her husband's anger every night — who gets beaten when she doesn't take out the trash or beaten when she *does*? Abuse, whether it's levied against you by

someone else or by your own hand is still abuse, and it corrupts. Demons can scent this corruption like a hound, and they might see such a vessel as empty enough for possession.

VIOLENT TRAUMA

Sometimes, a character gets hurt but doesn't die. If she's hurt enough, the experience might open her up just enough to allow a fallen angel entry. Some of this possession could be a result of a comatose state — someone in a drunken accident who's left a half-vegetable in a hospital room might be good enough. Sometimes the trauma and following possession occur moments after the damage. A person who is attacked and beaten within an inch of his life by his assailant might have a single moment of vulnerability, a nanosecond when the soul recoils and the body is wracked with the trauma of the moment. That time is sufficient for possession.

CHOOSING POSSESSION

It is also possible that a human invites possession willingly into herself, actively opening the gates instead of passively letting life wreck her until she is an empty vessel. There are many paths to this potential “invitation,” some of which are detailed here.

DEAL WITH THE DEVIL

Myth and folklore is peppered with people who made deals with the Devil his-own-self, or with fey spirits or tricky gods. In the World of Darkness, such begging and bartering is a dangerous gambit that sometimes ends in possession. A human who calls out, pleading to whomever (God, the heavens, the Devil, the sky) with enough emotional resonance might attract the attention of an escaping demon. The human must be begging for something intimate and critical to his very existence, be it revenge, love, death or some other high concept. If his heart is truly in it and he displays enough desperation like grim fireworks, a demon might be able to offer services to grant a solution. The solution, however, is almost always possession.

OCCULTISM

Amateur occultists exist in the World of Darkness. They might not be crawling out of the woodwork, but every city is home to people who have skipped the path of standard religion and begun to toy with real or imagined "magics" to achieve selfish wants and desires. Anybody who stumbles upon normally restricted information (rituals, prayers, summoning spells) might accidentally call a demon to himself. It's also possible that he finds a book that was *planted* by another fallen somewhere down the road, or he might even willingly beg the demon through prayer and absolutions to come to them and take possession. Any demon summoned in this manner can choose such a hapily willing victim.

CULTISTS

In the current time, modern Faith is like a rubber ball from a grocery store machine — it features an unstoppable, erratic bounce that comes from all angles. There's no one religion to unite the people. Even the big players in the West (Christianity, Islam, Judaism) are scattershot, and are countered by countless New Age, pagan or pseudo-scientific religions. All of these religions are real and valid in our world and in the World of Darkness, but in the World of Darkness, there also exist various splinter sects (quasi-religious cults). Most of them appear harmless (self-empowerment groups, self-help therapy groups, faux groups devoted to made-up religiosity), though some are façades that hide more sinister natures behind happy curtains. A mortal who gets caught up in these cults (a weight-loss group, for instance) might slowly slide down the slippery slope of the group's practices (fat-loss leads to weird prayers of "self-enlightenment," and that leads to nightly worship of strange "angels"). And at

the bottom of the slope, a mortal might willingly — though unknowingly — invite a demon to take possession. Many demons have set up such cults to work this particular style of gris-gris.

THE HUMAN SOUL

When possession occurs inside a human who was alive, not dead, what happens to the human soul? When a demon possesses the recently deceased, the human soul is essentially kicked out with only the detritus of memory lingering behind. But what happens when the soul remains? It's trapped somewhere inside, pushed into submission by the bullying infernal soul. The soul is not driven out in the standard fashion, so what are some options for both you and your Storyteller to provide drama in game surrounding this issue? (Obviously, should you and the Storyteller decide that the still-living possession acts in an identical

CAN NORMAL PEOPLE BECOME POSSESSED?

We've detailed ways here for a human to become possessed without dying, yet those ways involve a debilitation of the spirit and soul. Can a regular person who hasn't lived through heavy addiction or abuse or self-molestation become possessed, though? Are there times when this is possible?

Typically, no, but our Golden Rule applies. Whatever makes your story and character stronger in your mind goes. First things first, be sure to talk to your Storyteller about it. If she says go for it, then feel free. But even if she does say so, you should still probably stick to some cardinal rules if this is a path you're willing to travel.

Regular, happy-go-lucky John Does are not vulnerable to possession. Happy people who are content and blind to the injustices of the World of Darkness do *not* make good fallen vessels. Their spirit is strong whether they're religious or not. If you do want a demon to possess someone just walking down the street, you should at least make concessions and some kind of reasoning behind it. "Well, Justin is vulnerable because his girlfriend just broke up with him and he crashed his car and his house burnt down all in the same month. He's feeling very hopeless right now." Or, "Jessica lives a content life during the day, but at night she is wracked with nightmares, and these nightmares leave her open for possession." Just be sure to find out exactly why the spirit is enfeebled. This weakness of soul is necessary for possession, even if it's for a fraction of a moment.

fashion to what happens when a demon possesses the recently dead, go for it. The issue doesn't need to be complicated if you don't wish it to be. Whatever's best for your character and the story.)

THE LIVING GHOST

What if the human soul resides inside the demon's mind like the quiet voice of a ghost? The fallen exists, perhaps relying more upon demonic memories, but the mortal mind is more active and vocal. Of course, this would mean that the merging between the two character halves is disjointed, but it's something that might make an interesting character arc. Resolving the chattering voice inside one's head (especially one that's probably going further down the road to insanity as the days go on) might be a fundamental part of your character's story. Is the voice a ceaseless presence, or does it only come up when the demon is tired, sleeping or high on Faith? Does it trick the character, providing false information? What other options exist to make this partnership even more demented?

ENSLAVE THE SOUL

Perhaps the demon knows of the soul's presence and is able to dominate it through simple personality, which makes it able to bully the lingering soul into giving it information — or even Faith (at the Storyteller's behest). Is it possible, then, that the human soul is able to bully and trick the demon mind in return? Can the balance change? If so, an option might happen as follows:

ENSLAVE THE DEMON

While this frightening option is rare, it's not impossible to suggest that the human personality remains tenuously dominant while the demon mind is the constant voice in the back of the head. The two halves might be so separate that the infernal side is actually a demanding — but not dominant — voice always egging the human on, always offering power in an effort to erode the human's soul and take eventual control. (For an example, see **Hunter: Fall From Grace**, specifically the character of John Coaler.) This situation then raises the question of whether it is possible for the two halves, while sentient and separate, to ever reconcile and work together. Can the two halves forge a symbiosis and work for mutual benefit?

DRIVE THE SOUL OUT

Potentially, one of the personal quests of your character in the story might be to drive the human soul out through ritual, prayer or just rigorous and debauched living. Of course, repercussions will arise for such an action, which are ultimately up to the Storyteller to decide. Driving the soul out might mean that that fallen memory becomes 100% dominant and the human memories are wiped clean. But does this *tabula rasa* infer that your characters' Torment will skyrocket in the process? Torment is held back by the warm blanket of human memories, so what happens when the human soul is punished and ejected?



CHAPTER TWO: THE PRICE OF GLORY

The man who never alters his opinion is like standing water, and breeds reptiles of the mind.

—William Blake, *Proverbs of Hell*

When a demon tears free from Hell and takes root in the body of a human, she finds herself in a new, alien world. A world where she has little of her old power, where her memories are clouded, and where she must work diligently and in secret in order to get what she wants. In short, a newly emergent demon finds herself starting at the bottom, and there's a long way to go before she can reclaim her former power and reach her goals.

This process of learning, growing and regaining one's full demonic strength is represented by **Demon's** experience system. As a player guides her character from one story to the next, she gains experience points, which she can then use to improve her character's traits. This growth is a fundamental part of a **Demon** chronicle, but it can also be a great source of roleplaying opportunities and story elements. The character changes when a trait changes, and that change can be reflected in the context of the story, whether in the process of improvement or in the effects of the changes that occur.

The traits with the most roleplaying opportunity are those that influence the character's personality and lifestyle. Backgrounds show how a character lives and what effect she has on the world around her. Virtues describe how a character thinks and feels, as well as how she balances her demonic and human sides. Lore shows the character's infernal might and to what extent she can remodel Creation.

This chapter looks at what's involved in improving and changing these traits. It also shows how you can go beyond the simple expenditure of experience points to find new roleplaying opportunities in your character's development.

BACKGROUNDS

Backgrounds are unique and very important traits in **Demon**. While other traits measure what your character can do, Backgrounds measure what she has done, what she's accomplished and how she lives her



life. They show your character's lifestyle, access to money, capability to influence society and the world around her. They measure a character's success in life and growth as a person.

For a demonstration of how much Backgrounds matter, consider two characters with completely identical Attributes, Abilities, Nature and other traits — except that one has Resources 5 and Influence 5, while the other has no dots in either Background. Identical characters with completely different lives and roleplaying possibilities.

If Backgrounds measure a character's life, then her life must notably change when those Backgrounds change. The struggling student gets a cushy job and starts raking in the cash; the nobody becomes a famous actor; the ignored demon becomes a force to be reckoned with.

A Background change is an important part of a character's story — too important, and too *interesting*, to simply take effect off screen. While you can simply increase Backgrounds between stories by spending experience points, most Storytellers will want a justification for the increase — a reason *why* your character has more money, stronger memories of the ancient past or new, loyal followers. Don't think of this as jumping through hoops to satisfy your Storyteller, though. It's an opportunity to roleplay through major events in your character's life, setting up changes and improvements during the course of the chronicle and then cementing them into place with experience points.

Life isn't perfect, and while a character's life can improve, it can just as easily get worse. Therefore, Backgrounds can actually *decrease* as time goes on. A character could suffer huge gambling losses and go bankrupt; an ally might turn his back on his demanding associate; a change of government could eject a demon from the corridors of power. These downward changes to a character's Backgrounds are normally dictated by the Storyteller, based on the events on the chronicle and the consequences of the character's actions.

Speaking of consequences, the effects of a Background increase (or decrease) are also prime roleplaying material. If you increase your Firearms Ability from 2 to 3, you simply become more proficient with guns. But if you increase your Resources from 2 to 3, you've leapt into the upper classes, with vastly more money and access to equipment — and also new responsibilities and problems leading from your newfound wealth. Exploring the effects of a Background change is as much a source of fun roleplaying as building up to the change in the first place is.

Backgrounds in **Demon** are mixtures of the mystic and the mundane — from friends and contacts to

magical skill and memories of the Age of Wrath. All of these Backgrounds are rich with roleplaying potential; the following suggestions are just the tip of the iceberg.

ALLIES

Sometimes it's not *what* you know, but *who* you know. Allies are more than just friends and acquaintances — they're *useful* people who can give your character a helping hand when the chips are down. A character with a low Allies rating might have plenty of friends but few with any real ability to help her pursue her goals. Conversely, a character with a high Allies rating might not be all that friendly with his associates, but he knows plenty of people who will come to his aid if he can make it worth their while.

When you design your character and select allies, try to create individuals that have different capabilities than your demon so that you will have a wide array of options available when you need help. If you're playing a studious character with few combat abilities, a good ally might be an ex-cop with excellent physical skills and access to weapons. Alternatively, you might want to come up with characters who complement your character's strengths. If you're playing a vengeful warrior, a good ally might be the owner of a gun store who can keep your character supplied with black-market firearms.

Almost anyone can be an ally. Fellow demons are an obvious choice for the fallen, but mortals make strong allies as well. Don't forget that your character had a life before being possessed; some of her allies might come from that period — and might not know the details of her new existence. It's even possible, if your Storyteller gives her permission, that your character could have a supernatural creature, such as a vampire or werewolf, as an ally.

GAINING ALLIES

Through the course of a **Demon** chronicle, the players' characters are likely to meet lots of different Storyteller characters, occasionally striking up deals and temporary alliances with many of them. Any of these friendly characters, mortal or demon, could become a new ally for your character.

It's not enough just to say that the two characters become friends, though; you need to spend story time cementing the relationship. Before a character can become a formal ally, she ought to feel friendship or at least respect toward your character. That's probably going to take quite a bit of positive interaction and quid pro quo arrangements, spaced over several chapters. The character might even demand a special favor or need help with her own problems before she enters a stronger relationship with your character.



Of course, the Allies Background doesn't just measure how many allies your character has, it also measures the capabilities of those characters. Instead of adding another ally when increasing your Allies rating, you might instead want to improve the value of existing allies. Maybe your ex-cop friend has been honing his skills and beefing up his gun collection, or that librarian you know might have learned a few occult tricks.

This improvement might not even need to be based too strongly on game events — minor increases in an ally's Abilities can probably take place entirely in downtime. More meaningful improvements — things that drastically alter the character's capabilities and make him much more useful as an ally — should stem from in-game events. Before your librarian friend learns summoning rituals, she should make several appearances in the chronicle and have a chance to learn about such rituals.

Once your character has improved her Allies rating, she then has to start thinking about how to maintain this new relationship. Allies don't work for free, after all; your character will have to keep all of her allies happy if she wants to make use of them. Different allies might have conflicting needs, or they might even hate each other. An ally who's suddenly become more

useful to your character might start demanding greater payment and assistance in return for her help. Juggling the demands and needs of his various allies can be a major demand on your character's time — and a good source of roleplaying opportunities.

LOSING ALLIES

The world of **Demon** is a dangerous one, and a character's allies are no more invulnerable than he is. It's all too easy for an ally to die — perhaps in battle at your character's side, perhaps assassinated in silence by your enemies. You'll just have to do without his help from that point on.

An ally might also break off relations with your character if she feels like she's not getting her fair share out of the arrangement. If you use your character's allies as tools and weapons and don't give them the respect or payment they require, you shouldn't be surprised if they stop returning your calls. If you've really pissed them off, they might even start actively working against your character.

It's also possible — but rarer — to lose dots in Allies because one of your allies loses a degree of her competence or power. If a demon loses her position of influence in the infernal court or the ex-cop suffers a crippling injury, the Storyteller might decrease your character's rating to reflect these changes.

The possible consequence of a drop in Allies is that your character could gain a bad reputation. If she's mistreated and driven away her allies, word will get around that she's not worthy of respect. If her allies have been killed in action or assassinated, she risks a reputation as being a dangerous person to befriend.

CONTACTS

Like allies, contacts are individuals your character knows and can use to his advantage — but with an important difference. Allies play an *active* role in the chronicle, appearing on stage and working alongside your character under the control of the Storyteller. Contacts, on the other hand, play a *passive* role, rarely appearing in person or being portrayed by the Storyteller, and they usually provide just one thing — information.

Because contacts stay primarily off stage, you don't need to spend as much time defining them as you do your character's allies. While an ally probably requires a full character sheet or at least notes on his abilities, a contact really just needs a name and an area of expertise. Make a quick note of your character's contacts, along the lines of "Sergeant Phillips, 14th Precinct," so that you can quickly decide who your character is consulting when you make a Contacts roll.

When deciding on your character's contacts, pick areas of expertise that your character can't readily access himself. If your character works for a newspaper, he already has access to the paper's archives and news feeds, so a contact at the paper isn't going to be very useful. Better to gain a contact in the mayor's office or at police headquarters who can tip him off to newsworthy events. Similarly, don't double up on contacts — your character doesn't benefit much from having two contacts at different newspapers. Instead, give each contact a widely different area of expertise. That way, your character has plenty of options when trying to gain information.

With your Storyteller's permission, a contact might be useful for more than just information. A fence might be able to provide your character with forged passports or black-market weaponry in addition to information; a reporter for a major TV network might be able to help your character gain public visibility and popularity. This kind of assistance can start to overlap with the benefits of the Allies Background, so it's up to the Storyteller to approve such use of Contacts. If she does, you still make a Contacts roll to take advantage of the contact, and the difficulty is likely to be higher than usual.

GAINING CONTACTS

The easy way for your character to gain dots in Contacts is simply to make new contacts. Over the

course of the chronicle, your character is going to run into all sorts of people — journalists and judges, cops and crooks, slumlords and stockbrokers. Any of these characters might make a good contact if your character can establish a working association with them.

While a prospective ally probably wants a cooperative relationship with the character, prospective contacts really just need one thing: to make the effort worth their while. Promise the operator at the phone company a hundred bucks when you need a number, and he'll probably be happy to help. A potential contact doesn't even have to *like* the character. She can actively dislike him but will still provide information as long as she gets paid for her trouble. In fact, you can even turn someone who *hates* your character into a viable contact if your character can blackmail, extort or threaten information out of the person.

When your character gains a new contact, he also gains a little more notoriety and visibility. Contacts are likely to talk about their new connection, since they aren't as concerned with protecting the character's interests. Such a thing might be good or bad, depending on what services the contact provides. It's a good idea to impress the need for secrecy on any contact who provides sensitive or confidential information. Your character might also find that his new connections sometimes feed him information without being asked. They just assume that he'd want to know about something juicy (and would be prepared to pay for the knowledge).

LOSING CONTACTS

Like allies, contacts are vulnerable beings who might get killed off during the course of a story. It's much less likely, since contacts are rarely involved directly in the chronicle, but accidents can still happen. If the character tells the wrong person about his friend at CNN, she might end up having a nasty accident. It's also possible that the contact may cease being useful due to the events of the chronicle. If the characters burn down City Hall, you can't really get any more help from the clerk who used to work there.

Contacts can also cease working for the character if he stops making it worth their while. Contacts want to be paid or otherwise compensated for their efforts, and the information might dry up if a character is too stingy. Some contacts will still cough up information if threatened or beaten, or they might sell out the character to his enemies.

There aren't many effects that follow losing dots in Contacts except for a loss of access to information. It's possible that disillusioned former contacts might

badmouth your character to their friends — or to the character's enemies — but on the whole, contacts don't play an active part in your character's life. He won't be much affected, then, if the contact breaks off the relationship.

EMINENCE

A character's Eminence Background measures her standing in demonic society and, to some extent, her position in an infernal court. A character with a low Eminence rating is simply another lackey to the rulers of the court. With a better Eminence rating, she becomes a respected courtier or powerbroker; with a high rating, she can become one of the great powers and decision-makers in demonic society.

Not every **Demon** character is involved in demonic politics, of course — many chronicles focus on characters who operate outside the bounds of a court and perhaps even work to subvert demonic society. Yet even these outsiders can benefit from having dots in Eminence, because the Background also determines the level of respect and perhaps even obedience she can command from other demons. One outsider with a few dots in Eminence might have had great political power during the Age of Wrath but now chooses to remain outside the current power structure. Another might have amassed a reputation as a rabble-rouser since returning to the mortal world.

Eminence allows you to bring a degree of authority and reputation to bear in your character's social interaction with other demons. If she's dealing with a recalcitrant demon who won't give her the information she needs, use her social standing as a way of putting pressure on the demon. Eminence can be used to make threats ("Cooperate with me or my powerful friends will destroy you."), or bribe and cajole ("Cooperate with me and my powerful friends will elevate and reward you.").

Eminence also presents the character with a new set of problems and responsibilities. Characters with low Eminence get very little respect from their fellow demons, and they run the risk of being used as pawns or scapegoats by more politically powerful characters. A character with high Eminence has the power to pursue her own agenda but must fight constant political battles to safeguard her position and subvert the plans of her power-hungry rivals.

GAINING EMINENCE

Since Eminence is a measure of how *other* demons see and respect your character, you need to impress others — primarily Storyteller characters — in order to increase your Eminence rating. One good way to do so — and something that comes up in many chronicles

— is to perform onerous duties or work for the betterment of an important court member or influential demon. If your character works well in the service of such a Storyteller character, she's likely to be rewarded with status and promotion within the court (though she likely won't be able to rise to a higher position than that of her patron). Similarly, if your character acts to protect an important demon from the political machinations of a rival, she could easily be rewarded with an increase in Eminence.

For characters working outside the infernal courts, raising Eminence is usually accomplished by gaining a reputation of some sort. If your character foils the plots of the local court, disperses the cult of an Earthbound demon or finds a major clue to Lucifer's fate and shares this information with others, she'll gain a certain notoriety and fame among demons. It's difficult to leverage fame into influence if you work outside the courts, however, and the Storyteller may limit such characters to just two or three dots of Eminence — enough to make social interactions easier, but not enough to gain *real* social power.

With greater Eminence comes greater responsibility. Other demons will come to your character looking for favors, for patronage and for political aid in their own endeavors. The character is also going to attract new rivals and new enemies — demons desperate to stay on top of the political pecking order and jealous of her new level of influence. Characters outside the courts will experience this phenomenon as well, but to a lesser degree. Her few petitioners will be other outsiders and a few desperate courtiers, her enemies other outsiders scabbling for crumbs of power. A much greater danger for an eminent outsider is the risk of being labeled an enemy of the infernal order and hunted by the forces of the courts as a rebel and dissident.

LOSING EMINENCE

No one likes a loser, and the easiest way for a character to lose prestige and Eminence is to fail in her duties. A botched mission for the court is liable to cost the character a great deal of influence and position. Your character might also lose Eminence as a result of a ploy or political gambit on the part of her enemies. A popular tactic is to force a demon to give up political ground in order to save her own life or other assets that are dear to her. On top of all that, your character can lose Eminence simply for doing *nothing*. If you aren't working the system on a regular basis, you'll lose prestige as other demons steal your political power and social standing.

Just as outsiders find it a little more difficult to gain Eminence, they also suffer less risk of losing prestige. Minor failures are unlikely to threaten a

character's reputation — it takes a major screw-up to accomplish that kind of social damage. Botched endeavors or important losses to your enemies can damage a reputation, particularly if your character starts to look ineffectual or sloppy. An outsider's Eminence can also drop through inactivity. If you don't stay visible in the eyes of other demons, they'll start to forget about you.

Loss of Eminence can actually make a character's life simpler. Some of her enemies will ignore her once she falls past a certain level of importance. It's more likely, though, that with her social defenses weakened, the character's enemies will try to swoop in for the kill. Another drawback of lost Eminence is that more influential demons will stop looking to the character for aid, preferring to trust more useful or popular retainers. Alternatively, loss of Eminence makes the character more popular as a servant — but only because her new patron wants a disposable pawn or a deniable asset. Outsiders who lose Eminence have to deal with a world that's starting to forget them — and have to work twice as hard when dealing with demonic society.

FAME

Fame is the headiest drug and most powerful religion of the 21st century, and that's a power many demons want to tap into. From authors to actors, preachers to professional wrestlers, singers to serial killers — being famous is an end in itself for some, while for others it's a only a tool for getting what they really want. Some demons — the lucky ones — possess the body of someone who's already famous at the point of their escape from Hell and can start taking advantage of their host's fame and influence right away. Other demons become famous after possessing their host, using their powers and abilities to gain attention and notoriety.

Fame is generally most useful in social situations. A famous name or face can be a huge advantage when dealing with mortal society. Even if the cop investigating you isn't a fan of your movies, he still has to treat you with deference to avoid bad publicity for his department. There's also a good chance that other demons will react to your fame — after all, most demons pick up some of their host's personality and interests. You might not have the Eminence to make a demon courtier bend to your will, but she might just do what you want if her host's favorite author signs a copy of his latest book.

Fame isn't always a positive thing — there are plenty of famous terrorists, criminals and serial killers. Negative fame usually means a character is widely reviled, disliked or feared by mortal society. It could

even mean the character is a wanted criminal. This kind of fame isn't as easily useful as positive fame, but it has its uses. An infamous character has a good chance of intimidating or frightening mortals. In the World of Darkness, even infamous criminals and murderers have their fans — morally bankrupt mortals who will do anything to help their dark idol.

GAINING FAME

All you really need to do to become famous is to have people notice you, and there are plenty of ways a character can do that. Characters with no fame can get themselves on the news through their heroic (or depraved) actions, perhaps write a book or release a single. In fact, in this media-soaked world of reality TV and overnight celebrity, a person can almost become famous just by acting as if they were already famous. Once you get your face on TV, people will treat you differently, and you can use that attention as a launch pad to further fame.

Characters who possess one or more dots in Fame already have a reputation and some media attention. To increase the Background, they need to improve their media profile by doing whatever it is that made them famous. An actor needs to star in a new movie, a designer needs to release a new clothing line, a mass murderer needs to go on a killing spree. Characters might want to consider hiring a publicist or media agent to assist in these projects. A simple press conference or media release can do wonders for increasing a character's public profile.

With increased fame come added problems. The character might no longer be able to appear in public without being recognized, which is not only inconvenient, but downright *dangerous* for a demon trying to achieve his goals in secret. There's also the danger of unwanted personal attention. Crazy fans might begin to stalk your character, or he might be named in a bogus palimony suit. And certain responsibilities come with fame, such as managing your income to avoid excessive taxes or endless personal appearances and charity events. For a character with negative fame, an increase in the Background could mean a nationwide manhunt or having his face being plastered all over *America's Most Wanted*.

LOSING FAME

One of the quirks of modern society is that it's difficult to actively make yourself less famous. You can make yourself less *popular* — by speaking out against mass opinion, hitting a pedestrian while driving drunk or calling your fans mindless sheep in an interview — but that doesn't mean the media will pay any less attention to you. In fact, you're likely to gain notoriety, and perhaps even a few particularly unhinged fans.

(Society loves a bad boy almost as much as it loves to see celebrities self-destruct.)

The only real way to become less famous is to stop appearing in the public eye. Stop writing books, stop making movies, and *certainly* stop killing people if you're a wanted terrorist. The media is a hungry beast that constantly needs novelty, and it quickly gets bored with celebrities who don't *do* anything. Your character can withdraw from the public deliberately, or the Storyteller may rule that your character loses Fame if he doesn't do enough to keep drawing public attention. Failure is another way to lose Fame. If your new movie, book or fashion line is a flop, the media will desert you, and many of your fans will follow suit.

The effects of a loss in Fame is generally just a lessening of public attention. Your character is now safe to go out in public to shop, but she no longer enjoys discounts in stores or the best seats in restaurants. She also runs the risk of people turning on her. Employees and retainers might desert her, hoping to leech fame from a new celebrity. You might also find a few members of the public becoming antagonistic toward your character. Many people resent their celebrities even as they worship them, and a former star can become a target for ridicule or even physical attacks. For a character with negative Fame, a drop in the Background might mean a drop in attempts to arrest him, but people might no longer fear him the way they used to.

FOLLOWERS

Followers are mortals who work in your character's service. They differ from contacts in that they often appear on stage and carry out tasks for the character. Followers are less capable than allies, however, in that they are always normal mortals without supernatural abilities or elite skills. Followers can be extremely useful in some situations, though, because they feel far more loyalty to your character than her allies or contacts do. Your followers need some degree of reward for their efforts, and they won't take endless abuse without rebelling, but they will still do almost anything your character asks.

Many demons set up cults and hidden religions, and an obvious kind of follower is the loyal acolyte or worshipper. Other kinds of followers do exist, however, and almost any character can amass a group of loyal retainers. An artist might have a stable of students and assistants; a businessman might have a number of loyal staff members; the captain of a SWAT team might have her subordinate officers. The main thing that differentiates followers from other mundane retainers is simply their loyalty. The

businessman has plenty of staff under him, but only his personal secretary and chauffeur are so loyal that they'd *die* for him.

The primary use for Followers is to perform your character's legwork. Legwork covers tasks that are generally too minor for your character to take care of personally or too mundane to warrant roleplaying out in detail. Someone needs to drive your character around, take care of her taxes and deliver important packages while she's engaged elsewhere. Followers are also useful for dangerous tasks that aren't worth placing a player's character at risk. If you need to lure out the maddened demon who's stalking and killing prostitutes, you could dress as a hooker and lure him out, but it's safer and perhaps a better strategic option to use your loyal worshipper as bait. Followers can also sometimes serve as backup in dangerous situations. An ally would be more competent in a crisis, but followers can be counted on to fire wildly, distract opponents and drive the injured to safety.

GAINING FOLLOWERS

Recruiting new followers isn't particularly difficult — in fact, your character might be spoiled for choices. If your character maintains a cult of worshippers, she's probably always looking for new members. Characters without acolytes still have plenty of options for finding followers. Almost any normal mortal could qualify as a new follower — all that's needed is to choose a useful candidate, then work to ensure that the mortal becomes loyal. Another good possibility is to promote an existing mortal retainer to follower status. Again, all that's needed is to make the mortal more devoted to your character.

So how does your character inspire this loyalty? Plenty of options are available, and different demons have different methods. One possibility is to use evocations and demonic abilities to bind a mortal to you — the Lore of Humanity, Radiance and Longing are all useful for this kind of evocation. A demon can also demand loyalty as part of a pact he enters into with the mortal. For a non-supernatural method, characters with strong psychological skills can condition or brainwash mortals into unthinking loyalty (although such followers often suffer from emotional instability). And never forget the potential of a simple good deed. If you help out a mortal in need, she might be so grateful as to enter your service willingly.

An increase in the Followers rating often makes the character's life that little bit easier. She can now command others to do the mundane tasks and minor jobs that took her attention before, allowing her to devote herself completely to her own goals. This increase in focus can make a character more driven and



capable and could even provide a rationale for increasing other traits with experience points. The downside of gaining a new follower is that you now have to provide for that person. Followers are loyal and demand little, but they need *something* for their troubles — a paycheck, a place to live or simply the love and attention of their demonic mistress. A character gains convenience by gaining followers, but if she doesn't satisfy their needs, that convenience could quickly be lost, as disgruntled followers stop performing their tasks properly.

LOSING FOLLOWERS

While followers are as fragile as any mortal, they're not particularly likely to die in a character's service, simply because it's rarely worth placing them in physical danger. A follower is competent, but not extraordinarily so, and most are not effective combatants. Best to save the danger for your character and her allies, and keep the followers in reserve. (A follower pilots the plane but generally doesn't parachute into the enemy's stronghold at your side.) Of course, if your character wants to put her followers in the front lines, she's free to do so, but she shouldn't be surprised if they drop quickly. Followers *are* at risk of being killed by their mistress's enemies, of course — killing off her mortal entourage is a good way to send your character a message or make a threat.

The other main way your character might lose followers is if they simply decide to stop working in her service. Such a thing isn't very common, though. After all, these are mortals who are strongly loyal to your character and might even die for her if necessary. Yet even loyal minions have limits. If your character pushes her followers beyond their limits, it's entirely possible that they might jump ship. If a character constantly mistreats her followers, forces them into combat situations or refuses to see to their needs, they will eventually rebel — and hopefully they won't clean out their former mistress's bank account when they leave.

The main effect of losing followers is that the character will have to start doing her own dirty work again. Responsibilities that once could be trusted to a minion will have to be taken care of personally — and it's galling in the extreme to be forced to miss a vital court meeting because you're doing your taxes or being forced to use public transportation. The other drawback of losing followers is the risk that those former minions will start working *against* your character. Followers aren't competent enough to be a personal threat to your character, but they can sell her secrets to her enemies, encourage her remaining followers to leave or simply badmouth her so that she gains a reputation as a harridan and a harsh mistress.

INFLUENCE

Influence measures a character's capacity to control and manipulate mortal society, just as Eminence does the same for demonic society. A character with a high Influence rating might have thralls in place within the halls of government, the media, the police or other organizations. Alternatively, the character could be in a position of power himself — a demon can be the chief of police, a senator or the owner of CBS. Like Fame, Influence might be something the demon inherits from his mortal host — possessing the body of the mayor — or the demon might have used his powers and abilities to gain Influence after escaping from Hell.

A character's dots in the Background govern the strength of his influence, but you should also think about what *kind* of influence your character possesses. Does he have political power? The capacity to manipulate the media? Does he have a syndicated televangelist program that lets him mold public opinion and sway his loyal viewers? Characters with the same Influence rating can have very different styles of influence and control, so pin down just what your character can control and manipulate.

The primary use of Influence in the chronicle is to allow your character to manipulate mortals at a distance. Influence can let you control crowds or even entire cities, far beyond even the greatest demonic evocations. If you want a city block to be deserted while you invade your enemy's stronghold, you can arrange to have the area cordoned off by the police or stage a parade elsewhere to attract public attention. How to thwart an Earthbound cult? See how it copes with a police raid or endless demonstrations by concerned mothers. Influence can also be used to inconvenience or harass demons, most of whom still have to interact with mortal society on a daily basis. Your enemy might be the tyrant of the local infernal court, but she might still fear getting audited.

GAINING INFLUENCE

To increase his personal influence, your character has to gain greater control over the structure of mortal society. Doing so often involves insinuating your own thralls into positions of power or making mortals who are already in those positions into your pawns. For low levels of Influence, it can be fairly easy to do so — place a few thralls in the mayor's office and the police force, and you're in charge. Higher Influence ratings require more work, and your thralls will have to be more prominently placed. Influencing policy decisions across the USA requires more than a White House page as a thrall — you need to put senators and advisors into

power. That means winning elections, smoothing out irregularities in their security clearance and gaining regular access to the corridors of power.

Another way to gain control is not to use pawns but to place your character into a position of real power. Sure, you can control the mayor — or you can be the mayor, with all the power of the office at your fingertips. Again, it's easier to gain low levels of Influence. For example, winning a mayoral election or taking command of the local CBS affiliate might take only a single story for a determined demon. Gaining a high Influence rating becomes much harder. If you want to move from mayor to senator to governor to president, that's going to require constant work over the course of the entire chronicle, and it'll be difficult to keep your character's other activities hidden during the process.

Once you've attained a higher Influence rating, your character is going to have to work hard to keep his newfound power. Human politics and power struggles are just as cutthroat as demonic politics — perhaps more so — and your character will have amassed many enemies and rivals on his way to his current position. Those rivals will constantly be working to undermine his endeavors and unseat him from power, so he'll have to spend a lot of time keeping — and using — his power. Influence also brings with it a level of visibility. Even a character who works from behind the scenes is going to face at least some level of scrutiny, if only from those he interacts with. Keeping his demonic nature secret will be almost as great a challenge as controlling human society.

LOSING INFLUENCE

Like Eminence and Fame, Influence is a Background that requires a certain level of maintenance. Power is an addictive drug, and others will be jealous of your character's position. His rivals will be trying to unseat him, thwart his plans and subvert his staff and retainers. Unless your character is willing to spend all of his time propping up his position, he runs the risk of leaving his affairs unattended at a critical time. And if he focuses too much on his private agenda and the events of the chronicle, he's almost certainly going to lose some of his political power.

Influence is also prone to falling due to situations outside the character's control. After all, Influence is all about controlling mortals and their political structures, and those are prone to change at a moment's notice. If the balance of power changes, the character might be forced out in the cold. (It does you no good to control the mayor if he loses an election.) Similarly, your syndicated religious TV show could fall in the ratings and be cancelled, and your powerful

corporation could be slammed with tax fraud indictments. The Storyteller decides if such misfortune befalls your character — a botched Influence roll is just one possible reason for such an event.

As with Eminence, a loss in Influence can bring with it a reduction in some headaches and responsibilities. When your character becomes a less inviting or dangerous target, his rivals might stop attacking him. That's generally small consolation for the loss of prestige and control a drop in Influence forces on the character, though. He might have to get used to a much less easy lifestyle — a life where the police won't wave away his speeding tickets and senators won't return his calls. Your character might also attract a reputation as a failure and a loser, or at least as a fading power — further weakening his capacity to influence others and possibly affecting his role in demonic politics as well.

LEGACY

Unlike most Backgrounds, which measure a character's external relationship with others and society, Legacy is completely internal — a measure of the character's capability to access her vast cache of memories. Demons have lived for untold eons, and they can recall events from before the dawn of man. But there simply isn't room for those memories in the limited space of the human brain, which can barely contain the life experiences of the demon's host. So a demon must "fold" her memories, compressing the vast bulk of them and storing them in the unused portions of her host's mind — much like a computer can compress rarely used files and store them away. Legacy allows a character to reach those memories when needed, accessing a sort of mental index to pin down a block of her memories, then unpack them and recall the details as usual before submerging them back into her unconscious.

That's a very clinical metaphor, though; the reality is usually very different. For most demons, the inability to readily access their deepest memories is extremely frustrating. It's as if the most important parts of your mind and identity were lost in a mental fog, only occasionally glimpsed in day-to-day life. A demon still knows that she is a demon, but with her demonic memories so far removed and the memories of her human host so near, confusion frequently sets in. Many demons strive hard to hold on to their memories and gain greater access to their past, often by distancing them from their host's life as they try to embrace their demonic nature. Others meditate for hours or days on their pasts or attempt to surround themselves with relics and data that might jog their memories to the surface.

In play, Legacy serves as a way for your character not only to flesh out her demon's history but to learn new and useful information that will aid her over the course of the chronicle. Your rival in the court might have a weakness that you could remember, or you might be able to recall the location of a cache of relics from the Age of Wrath. Sometimes the sight of a location or a demon's face is enough to warrant a Legacy roll if the Storyteller feels it's appropriate. More often, you'll ask the Storyteller if you can roll Legacy to get information for your character. Accessing these memories might be a simple task, or it could require your character to spend time meditating or racking her brain.

GAINING LEGACY

The best way to increase Legacy is through direct experience — the more your character tries to remember her past, the more she's likely to get better at it. Obviously, if you're making a Legacy roll in every scene, your character is getting plenty of practice, but that can start to get boring after a while. It's more interesting to start fleshing out the process by which your character accesses her memories. Does she meditate on her past? Submerge herself in visions for hours at a time? Pore obsessively over volumes of occult lore looking for anything that jogs her memory? Come up with a couple of remembrance rituals for your character, methods she uses to focus on her past. You might even ask the Storyteller if you can play out a scene from your character's past as a flashback, which gives your Storyteller an excellent chance to foreshadow or elaborate on the current story.

A common side effect that often accompanies an increase in Legacy is a distancing from the demon's host and the mortal world. There's only so much space in the human mind for memories, and some demons actually lose some of their host's memories in order to make room for their own past. More common, though, is an emotional disconnection from the host as the character focuses more on her demonic side. A demon with high Legacy can find it harder and harder to communicate with mortals, who don't share her vast memories and demonic perspective. Such high-Legacy characters tend to associate more with other demons, and can become socially awkward with mortals. Some demons completely abandon their connections with the mortal world and live solely among demons. Your character might not go this far, but she's still likely to run into problems when interacting with mortals or with her host's memories and lifestyle. These problems can manifest as penalties to Social rolls when dealing with mortals, or her other Backgrounds might end up dropping.

LOSING LEGACY

It's fairly difficult to lose Legacy. A demon's memories are simply too powerful, too much a part of her being, to simply be *forgotten*, but a character can develop difficulties in accessing those memories. This generally happens when a character neglects her demonic side in order to focus on her interaction with the mortal world. A demon that gets too caught up in the life of her host, rarely accessing her memories of Hell or the Age of Wrath, might find those memories sinking even further into her subconscious and becoming even more difficult to access. The Storyteller generally decides if such is the case. If you don't attempt any Legacy rolls for several stories, or your character neglects the demonic side of herself to focus on her mortal career, she might lose dots in Legacy. The Storyteller might also reduce your character's Legacy rating if you botch a Legacy roll — your character might be so overwhelmed by the force of a particular memory that she subconsciously blocks access from that point.

A reduced Legacy rating usually brings with it a growing confusion between the character's mortal and demonic identity. Demons aren't human, make no mistake, but they live inside the minds and souls of their hosts, and most demons identify with their host to at least some extent — taking on board elements of their host's personality after possession. As access to the memories of her demonic existence fade, the memories of your character's host tend to grow stronger. In extreme cases, these mortal memories might overwhelm a demon to the point where she forgets her real nature for a period of time, living out the life of her host. More likely she still remembers who and what she is but feels more comfortable with mortals than with other demons. This might lead to her throwing herself further into her host's identity and lifestyle (possibly causing *further* loss of Legacy), losing face and favor in the courts or even suffering penalties to Social rolls when interacting with other demons.

MENTOR

A mentor is a Storyteller character who has taken your character under her wing. Most appropriate mentors are fellow demons — one wiser, better situated or simply more powerful than your character, who is willing to aid her in her endeavors. With Storyteller approval, your mentor could be a mortal, but this is rare. Such a character would have to know something about the demonic condition and your character's secrets. Conceivably, a mortal mentor might not know that your character is a demon, but such a mentor would have very limited abilities to aid your character. If your character is an up-and-coming businessman

who's guided by an established entrepreneur, she could classify as a mentor, but she'd only be able to aid him in mortal finances and politics and would have to kept in the dark about her protégé's double life.

The primary support that a mentor gives is usually advice and information. The mentor will have better knowledge and skill in specific areas than your character and can aid him in those areas. If your mentor is a wise Fiend with a mastery of the occult, she might be able to tell you how to design a summoning ritual or where to find an ancient artifact. Mentors with greater power and influence, whether in the demonic or mortal spheres, might also bend that power to your character's aid. The Storyteller decides on the Backgrounds your character's mentor possesses. If those Backgrounds are better than your character's, he might be able to make use of them on occasion. Your character might only have Resources 2, but he can make use of his mentor's four dots in Resources — though only occasionally, and only if she approves of how he wants to spend her money. Some rare mentors might take an active role alongside the character — fighting by his side, creating magical devices for his use — but this is solely at the Storyteller's discretion. Mentors generally don't take such an active role — that's the purpose of allies — but the Storyteller may allow this if it enhances the story.

Mentors help their protégé's for many reasons. Some mentors respect or even love their charges; some need a useful agent and see the character as having potential; some dislike or even hate their charges but need someone to perform tasks they cannot handle alone. What's common to all mentor-protégé bonds is that the mentor doesn't help your character for free. Your mentor wants *something* in return for her help — and if you can't provide the help she needs, she'll stop supplying you with her advice and influence. She might want money, political aid, a lieutenant for her army of worshippers or almost anything else — and she might not want others to know that your character works for her. When you create your character, work with the Storyteller to decide what the character's relationship is with his mentor, and what she wants in return for her help.

GAINING MENTOR

In order to increase your character's Mentor rating, you have to increase the power, prestige or usefulness of the mentor. She needs to be able to place more power behind your character, and that means your character has to send that power your way. All the things your character can do to improve his own Eminence, Influence, Resources or similar Backgrounds can also work to improve his mentor's Backgrounds,

and thus increase her power. It's possible that both your character and his mentor might benefit from certain acts, but it might also be that your character doesn't gain anything for himself from his work. Even worse, he might have to damage his own position in order to elevate his mentor.

An alternative to improving your mentor, of course, is getting a new mentor — one more powerful and influential than your former teacher. Maybe there's another power in the infernal court willing to aid you, one with more influence than your former teacher — or maybe you switch your allegiance to a rebel demon businessman, whose powers extend into a different world than your old mentor's did. If your character can find a new mentor, he can try to change allegiance — if the new mentor will accept him. There's bound to be a price, and it might include the betrayal or denunciation of his former mentor. It might instead (or *additionally*) include a special mission for his new teacher in order to prove his loyalty and to give her a reason to accept him as a student.

With a more powerful mentor comes greater responsibility for her protégé. Just as a character would have to work to maintain his own gains in power, he will have to work to keep his mentor ensconced in her new position. His mentor's rivals will want to unseat her from power, and he'll have to protect her from their efforts — and perhaps also protect himself, if they try to cast him down in order to get to his mentor. Extra complications exist for a character who trades up to a more powerful mentor. He might amass a reputation as a user and an opportunist — or worse — if he betrayed or hurt his old mentor. And if his former mentor is still around, she might be looking for a chance at revenge.

LOSING MENTOR

Just as your character can lose his own political power and influence, so too can his mentor. This can happen for reasons completely outside the character's control — after all, the mentor is a Storyteller character who can make her own mistakes. Yet there are also plenty of ways in which the character's actions can lead to her mentor's downfall, such as a failed endeavor, a secret told to the wrong person or simply neglecting to maintain his benefactor's estate effectively. The mentor falls down the ladder of influence, and your character falls along with her.

The character's Mentor rating can also fall if he changes to a new benefactor who is less powerful and capable than his former mentor. He might have traded down because he's fallen from favor with his old teacher. If he doesn't do enough to meet her needs, she might spurn him for someone who will. The demotion

might also be the result of political maneuverings — the mentor might *have* to let your character go in order to keep her power. He might even willingly change to a less powerful mentor if he has a better relationship with the new benefactor or if she can provide a different kind of assistance.

(There's one other reason why your character might lose Mentor dots, of course — the death of his mentor. This would remove *all* the dots in the Background, unless he finds a new mentor to fill the void.)

A loss in Mentor brings with it a loss in social power and position, as the character can no longer benefit so much from his benefactor's influence. There are fewer options now, and your character will have to learn to rely more on his own abilities and resources. It's quite likely that his mentor will be bitter about her reduced circumstances and take her anger out on him — perhaps even sabotaging his endeavors to teach him a lesson. If the loss in rating was caused by a change to a less influential mentor, the character is likely to attract a reputation as a failure or a liability — or perhaps a fool if he was the instigator of the change.

PACTS

This Background determines how many pacts your character has established *at the start of the chronicle*. That last part is important, and it means that Pacts is different enough from the other Demon Backgrounds that it warrants a separate discussion.

Other Backgrounds can be increased with experience points, but Pacts can't be increased in this way. Once the chronicle has begun, your character can make new pacts *only* by offering a mortal favor in return for Faith (see the **Demon** core rules, p. 252). New pacts gained in this fashion don't increase the Pacts Background — you keep a separate record of those new thralls and the terms of the agreement they have with your character.

The Pacts Background can decrease, but this won't happen very often. The Background won't decrease unless you lose so many thralls — through death or a breaking of your character's pact — that you have fewer remaining pacts than the Pacts Background. For example, say your character starts the chronicle with Pacts 2 then gains another three pacts during the course of the game. During a crisis, one of her original thralls dies, and two others break their pacts. Although one of the original thralls covered by the Pacts Background is gone, she still has two pacts in place, so her Pacts rating does not decrease. If she loses one more thrall for some reason, her Background will drop by one — and if the last one goes as well, she loses the Background

completely. This one-sidedness is just one reason why demons should protect their thralls from danger and make sure that pacts aren't broken.

When you create your character, give some thought to her existing pacts. Who are her thralls? What is the nature of the agreement she has with each one? How did she come to this agreement in the first place? What does she have to do to keep up her end of the bargain? Do other demons know about these pacts? How does she protect these thralls from her enemies?

PARAGON

All demons have the capability to perform evocations, manipulating the names and identity of reality itself through their lore. A character with the Paragon Background is a master of her primary lore. She can use her mystical knowledge so skillfully that she rarely fails to evoke the lore as she chooses. A character with a high Paragon rating can use her primary lore more frequently, with little risk of losing Faith or uncontrollably evoking the high-Torment effects of the Lore.

It's worth noting that Paragon covers your character's *skill* with her primary lore, not the *power* of her evocations — that depends on how many dots she has in the lore itself. A character with a high Paragon rating but a low rating in her primary lore

can evoke only minor effects, but she can do so with an ease and control that a demon with more raw power can only envy. A demon with high ratings in both Paragon and her lore can do almost anything with her evocations.

Characters with high Paragon ratings often become very confident with their evocations. After all, they can afford to use minor effects whenever they like, with no risk of failure or uncontrolled effects. More powerful evocations still cost Faith to use, of course, so your character won't use them so readily, but lesser evocations can be used almost casually. A skilled Scourge of the Ellil visage might always be surrounded by breezes and winds; a skilled Malefactor of the Antu visage always takes the best and easiest path to her destination. A high Paragon rating might make evocations more reliable, but it doesn't protect the character from the side effects of evoking her lore. Mortals will still be at risk of Revelation if they witness an evocation, and other demons will still be able to detect your character when she uses her power.

GAINING PARAGON

Practice makes perfect, and the best way to become better at using your lore is to use it on a regular basis. A character who evokes her primary lore often, who experiments with different uses of her evoca-



tions is likely to improve her Paragon rating. Many practices that help improve her lore could also improve Paragon (see Lore, p. 64, for details). Frequent assumption of the character's apocalyptic form could also assist in improving Paragon. A character's primary lore is more than just a magical power she can use — it forms a major part of her identity and abilities as a demon. A demon who manifests her revelatory form is immersing herself in the power of her primary lore, and that can, in turn, hone her capability to evoke that lore.

Because of this bond between the character's primary lore and her demonic nature, an increase in Paragon can also lead to some changes in personality for the character. As she grows stronger in her demonic abilities, she might grow more distant from her mortal half. Immersed in the ebb and flow of Creation, the character begins to think in terms of True Names and evocations, rather than paydays and families. She might begin to lose her connection with her host's life — or with mortals in general. Another risk is overconfidence. If the character becomes blasé or casual about evoking her lore, she might inadvertently shock mortals in Revelation. Other demons might seek to punish her for attracting unwanted mortal attention, and they might find it easy to track her down, following the echoes of her many evocations.

LOSING PARAGON

It's rare for a character's Paragon rating to fall. You don't just forget how to perform a skill, and that's even more true for Paragon. After all, the character's capability with her primary lore is a central part of her demonic nature. In rare cases, though, a character falls out of practice with her evocations, to the point where she cannot perform them with her former expertise. If the character goes for a long time without evoking her primary lore, she might end up losing dots of Paragon. This happens if she's prevented from evoking her lore — perhaps she's imprisoned for a long period in a soul trap (see Chapter Five for details) or bound by a pact that forbids her to use her lore. Another possibility is that a demon becomes so bound up in living a mortal life that she simply doesn't use her lore for a very long period — perhaps several years.

In the event that your character *does* lose dots of Paragon, it can lead to major upsets in her personality. The loss means that she grows more distant from her primary lore and visage and grows closer to the identity and personality of her human host. Her former expertise fades into the fog, perhaps along with her vast memories of her demonic existence. A loss in Paragon could cascade into a fall in Legacy and perhaps a drop in Eminence as the character drifts too far from her demonic identity. Other demons are likely to view a

character whose expertise has faded with suspicion. Even if she *hasn't* begun to identify with her host, they're likely to believe that she has been corrupted by mortal life, which might inspire them to send her back to Hell for reeducation.

RESOURCES

Your character's Resources Background measures just how wealthy he is. Resources doesn't just focus on cash and bank accounts, though, it also covers the character's income, job, investments, home, assets and useful equipment — anything and everything to do with money. Almost all characters will have at least a dot or two in Resources — it's just too difficult to live in the modern world without a source of income and a roof over your head. Still, some characters are forced to live without money, owning just their clothes and a little cash. Such a character might be homeless, a child dependent on his parents, an escaped prisoner or a refugee from the Third World.

If your character does have dots in Resources, you should think about what that rating represents and how the character's finances shape his life. Just like in the real world, your income and job play a huge part in how you live. If your character has a low or medium Resources rating, this means he probably has a job (though he might be living on a small trust fund or scholarship as an alternative). Think about just what he does to make ends meet and what demands that job makes on his life and his demonic activities. A character with high Resources is likely to be independently wealthy, managing a corporation or living on the dividends of his investments. Still, certain responsibilities come with wealth — reporting to shareholders, making investment decisions, or filling the needs of your family — and you should think about the demands made on your wealthy character.

The main use of Resources in the chronicle is, of course, to buy things: weapons, equipment, favors, secrets, allies and anything else that can be bought or sold. Resources also shape your character's standard of living, which will modify how other people treat him. A rich character will have little trouble getting into exclusive nightclubs or winning the respect of unctuous (and bribable) public officials. A poor character might be barred from entering the havens of the wealthy, but he has a better chance of making useful connections with the disenfranchised and others who resent the wealthy elite. With your Storyteller's permission, you might be able to occasionally use Resources in place of other Backgrounds such as Influence and Contacts, representing your chances of buying information or assistance. If your

Storyteller does allow this, she's likely to put a limit on what aid you can buy, which will probably increase the difficulty of any associated dice rolls for using the Background.

GAINING RESOURCES

There are several ways for a character to increase his personal wealth and standard of living. A character with a low Resources rating can get a better job (or simply get a job), or he can work toward a promotion in his current position — possibly by working hard, possibly by blackmailing his superiors. He also has the option of developing a stock portfolio, taking on a second job, running criminal scams on the side — anything people could try in real life is a possible option for your character. For characters with high Resources, it's perhaps a little more difficult — the difference between Resources 4 and 5 is much greater than the difference between Resources 2 and 3. But even tycoons have plenty of options — mergers with other companies, bold new stock portfolios, speculation on art and antiques, and all the cut and thrust of business and high finance. Attempts to increase an already high Resources rating can provide lots of exciting roleplaying opportunities, full of intrigue, bargaining and deception.

Another possible source of an increase in Resources is a one-time windfall. Your character might win the state lottery, claim a reward for turning in a wanted bank robber or rob a bank himself. These windfalls can assist in improving the character's Resources, but they're rarely enough on their own to justify an increase. After all, the Resources Background is more than just money in the bank or shiny new cars — it's also a measure of income and how long a character's wealth can be maintained. A briefcase full of stolen money is useful in the short term, but in the long term, that money will vanish into bills, expenses and spending sprees. Windfalls need to be turned into investment in order to become a permanent increase in Resources. Perhaps a more exciting use for such windfalls is in short-term gains — use it to buy new equipment and items, bribe informants or take a well-earned vacation.

It'd be nice if an increase in income simply made life easier, but such simply isn't the case. An increase in Resources brings with it a whole new slate of responsibilities and problems. The more money you have, the more things you can spend that money on — and the more you *have* to spend that money. There are mortgages, expenses, bills, credit card fees and a whole host of other costs. Characters with jobs have to keep working at those jobs to keep the money coming in, and those with vast fortunes need to employ a staff to manage their business. On top of the headaches of

maintaining your wealth comes an increased visibility. Even characters with modest incomes can become the target of thieves, while rich characters can be hounded by tax collectors or journalists who want to report on the lives of the rich and famous.

LOSING RESOURCES

Unfortunately, it's much easier to lose money than it is to gain it. Characters with low Resources can lose what little money they have in a whole host of ways. Muggings, unexpected medical bills, theft, house fires, a demotion, getting fired, simply losing your wallet and credit cards... the list goes on and on. Look to all the financial dangers and pitfalls in your own life — every one of those problems could fall upon your character. Richer characters can weather those storms with impunity, but they are prey to their own financial dangers. A wealthy character might be wiped out in a stock market crash or have his accountant embezzle from him. He could be indicted for tax fraud, have to liquidate assets to prop up his failing company or lose half his wealth in a disastrous divorce settlement.

A reduction in Resources might not happen overnight; in fact, it's much more likely to occur in stages. All it takes is for your character to spend a little more than he can afford, write off his car during a high speed chase or get burned on an illegal arms deal. Suddenly there's not enough ready cash to pay the mortgage or bribe the desk sergeant for information, and you have to sell a few assets to make ends meet. Then you need that motorbike, pistol or computer to make a living, and things keep sliding. Seeing his fortune run through his fingers like water can be a terrible thing for your character. Because this is a process, though, your character can make it change if he tries hard enough. A period of hard work, saving or scamming could be enough to stop the rot and pull your character's finances together before the Background decreases.

A whole host of new problems and dangers come with a reduction in Resources — money makes the world go 'round, and a loss in Resources changes your whole life. A character who drops down to a very low level of Resources — or worse, loses all his dots in the Background — is in for a very hard time. He might lose his home, car and even his family; he might have to work two jobs to make ends meet. Minor purchases of food, equipment or information became major expenses, and luxuries are a thing of the past. Richer characters have to settle for the rigors of a middle class lifestyle — they face inconvenience rather than life-threatening financial danger. Such a character will face enormous social backlash, however — shunned by his former friends, abandoned by his business asso-

ciates and shut out from the corridors of power. After all, no one likes a loser.

A LIFE IN FLUX

Demon characters lead mutable and unpredictable lives, and their lifestyles can change overnight. New opportunities mean new problems and responsibilities, every new gain can lead to a corresponding loss, and every sacrifice can pay off in spades.

The process of gain and loss, payment and payoff can form a major part of your character's story. The gain part usually comes from the experience system — characters grow, learn and improve their lifestyles. Some Storytellers might want to give their players more options, however — specifically, the capacity to make gains through loss, effort and sacrifice.

The following optional system allows players to modify their characters' Backgrounds during downtime — moving dots from one Background to another. This shift represents deliberate changes on the part of the character, who gives up one part of her life in order to improve other areas. It could represent spending large amounts of money to recruit a new ally, selling out demonic secrets in order to gain mortal political power or giving up second-hand humanity to regain the corrupt wisdom of your demonic nature.

There are rules to this process, which control just how you can move these Background dots around. As with all optional systems for **Demon**, you can use this system only if your Storyteller allows it.

- Changes only occur in downtime. The process of changing your character's life might *begin* during the chronicle, but it only solidifies and resolves between stories.

- Only *one* Background can be reduced in each period of downtime, and it can normally drop by only one dot in each period — changes are gradual. The Storyteller may make an exception if the circumstances of the change are drastic. If you have four dots in Mentor and your mentor is killed outright, it makes sense to reassign *all* of those dots. If this occurs, you can spread the dots among multiple Backgrounds, as long as you follow the next rule.

- You can't increase a Background to a level greater than the original level of the Background you're decreasing. If you have two dots in Resources and four dots in Influence, you can't drop your Resources to 1 and increase Influence to 5. Great gains require great sacrifices, and the power you give up must be at least as great as the power you gain.

- The Pacts Background can't be changed using this system.

These rules don't apply to changes the Storyteller enforces on your character's Backgrounds — those are out of your character's control. Life isn't fair, and sometimes your character simply goes broke or loses her teacher without any kind of compensation. The Storyteller may *choose* to make up for these changes, however, letting you improve other Backgrounds with the freed-up dots.

The following examples show ways in which you can turn a dot in one Background into a dot in another, and vice versa. Plenty of other pairings can be made — almost any two Backgrounds can be played against each other.

Allies vs. Contacts: A former associate becomes tired of risking her life alongside yours, so from now on, she'll help you with information only. A long-time contact gets drawn further into your activities and starts supplying you with more than just advice and scuttlebutt. He now wants to take an active role in your endeavors.

Contacts vs. Followers: One of your contacts becomes convinced of your power, holiness or infernal nature. He doesn't want to help you anymore, he wants to *worship* you and give whatever minor help he can. One of your flock is becoming disillusioned with your agenda, tired of seeing her friends die in your cause. She stays in contact and feeds you data, but she won't sacrifice her life for you anymore.

Eminence vs. Fame: You call in favors from other demons in the infernal court to help boost your climb to fame. They come through for you and increase your public profile, but you've used up a strong measure of your influence with them. Pulling away from the lure of fame, you turn down several movie offers in order to focus on demonic politics. You gain influence, but your popularity and visibility as an actor begins to fade.

Fame vs. Legacy: Pursuing the memories of your past with renewed fervor, you channel those memories into a rambling, incoherent book. You form a powerful remembrance ritual around reading your notes, but the novel is a commercial and critical flop. You dedicate yourself to writing popular and best-selling novels, ignoring your demonic nature. With your imagination and mind filled with the details of your fiction, there just isn't *room* for the memories of your true self.

Followers vs. Mentor: Your master demands that you maintain his household while he focuses on his political career, so you place some of your followers in charge of his daily affairs, letting him concentrate on gaining power. As your mentor's star fades, one of his other servants confesses her devotion to you. She

brings her talents into your service, abandoning her role in your mistress's affairs.

Influence vs. Paragon: None of your fellow senators can understand why you're taking time off, leaving your political power to be stolen by rivals, but you're heading for the eye of a massive hurricane, spending time honing your grip on the Lore of Storms. The call of mortal politics is strong, and you've dedicated yourself to gaining power with all your might. You've made great gains, but it's been so long since you evoked the weather that your skill with the Lore of Storms has faded.

Legacy vs. Eminence: The past is dead and gone, and only the present matters for demons. You dedicate yourself to climbing the ladder of the infernal court, even as you forget the path that brought you to this new position. You become obsessed with remembering your past, and you retreat into your memories. You relearn much about yourself, but your enemies take advantage of your absence to steal your power.

Mentor vs. Resources: You take blood money from your mentor's enemies to sell out his plans and secrets. You become wealthier, but he takes a terrible political beating and loses a measure of his influence. Your mistress needs more money for a land-investment scheme. She gains political power when the plan succeeds, but you're the one subsidizing the gain out of pocket.

Paragon vs. Allies: You enter in a strict and binding pact with another demon, someone whose aid you desperately need. You gain his help, but the pact forbids you from using your primary lore, and your skills atrophy. One of your allies, a master of the primary lore you share, agrees to help train you if you release her from her obligation to help you. You learn a great deal, but she parts ways with you afterward.

Resources vs. Influence: Bribes, kickbacks, gifts, secret payments and funding to lobbying groups — you're gaining a great amount of political power, but the cost is almost bankrupting you. You've decided that luxury is better than power, and you start selling off areas of your political power to your erstwhile rivals. You don't have the clout of old, but the mansion and yacht make up for it.

VIRTUES

In the beginning, demons were angels — creatures of pure, holy virtue, beings of boundless love and unquestionable devotion. The horrors of the Age of Wrath, however, stripped away the demons' former perfection, turning them into creatures of rage and wickedness.

But possession of a human host changes that. Every demon on Earth, from the vilest Ravener to the most gentle Reconciler, felt *something* when they possessed their hosts — a shock of emotion and morality spilling out from the fleeing human soul. Some mortals' basic human virtues were weak, and they did little to change the twisted nature of their demon possessors. Other demons are fundamentally changed by the innate humanity of their hosts. All fallen are affected by the touch of humanity. All of them remember, even if only for a moment, what it was like to be an angel, to be virtuous.

Virtues are not *alien* to demons, they have simply been *forgotten*. All demons, even high-Torment horrors, possess ratings in all three Virtues — Conscience, Conviction and Courage. These qualities defined their personalities when they were angels; now they serve to control the torment of their demonic nature and push back the hate and suffering of untold eons.

Virtues perform two functions for **Demon** characters. First, they work to prevent the demon gaining Torment from performing sinful acts. If your character can touch the core of holiness and *humanity* within herself, she can understand that what she did was wrong. Her remorse and sorrow stop her from slipping away from humanity, from giving herself over to her pain. Second, Virtues give a character a chance to redeem herself — if only a little — by performing moral acts. If she listens for the voice of purity and follows its advice, if she fights the darkness in her soul, she can push herself away from the memories and anger, and move just a little closer to regaining her forgotten divinity.

Note that while your character's Virtues can influence her actions, they don't *dictate* them. A character with Conscience 1 can protect and nurture a homeless child, and a character with Courage 5 can still run away from danger. What Virtues do is affect how your character internalizes these moral decisions, and whether or not she's able to grow as a person — or demon — in doing so. The low-Conscience character can act compassionately, but she is unlikely to really *believe* in the worth of her actions. The high-Courage character can be cowardly, but if that cowardice causes her to sin, she might realize the wrongness of her actions and draw enough resolve from her innate courage to stop her slide into darkness.

Does that mean that if your character has a high Conscience rating, she can actually act *more* carefully — sinning constantly but never gaining Torment from doing so? Of course not. It's important to remember that a successful Virtue roll gives the character the *chance* to learn from her actions and redeem herself — it isn't just a shield against the

consequences of her actions. If you succeed in a Virtue roll but your character still acts in a sinful manner, your Storyteller is justified in giving your character a point of temporary Torment as normal. She might claim to feel remorse, but that claim is meaningless if she doesn't act on that feeling. If he feels so inclined, the Storyteller may allow you to make a Virtue roll *before* your character completes her sinful action. If the roll succeeds, the character has a chance to pull back from the action and not damn herself. If she keeps going, though, she should gain a point of temporary Torment.

From a mechanics standpoint, you increase your character's Virtues by spending experience points. In character, though, her Virtues improve as she exercises them by resisting her darker impulses and performing acts of kindness and nobility. In order to grow in Conscience, she must act with compassion and decency, working to understand human morality. To improve her Conviction, she must act with determination and resolve, aiding others in their search for meaning. Gaining Courage requires her to be brave and resolute, stepping into certain danger to do what needs to be done. Before you spend experience points, spend time in the story roleplaying your character's virtuous actions and get a feel for how she changes and grows as a person.

CONSCIENCE

Conscience is a broad Virtue that covers much of what we call human decency. It's the capacity to tell right from wrong, to care about the plight of other human beings, to feel remorse and joy. Conscience is the first emotion that floods into a demon newly settled in a human host, and those who are overwhelmed (or *healed*) by their host's conscience often become the rebellious fallen.

Characters with low Conscience ratings can usually still understand the difference between right and wrong, good and evil — they simply don't care. A few low-Conscience demons are confused about the difference, struggling to understand what makes one thing right and another wrong, but these are uncommon exceptions. Characters with high Conscience ratings are usually highly empathic, fundamentally decent beings who instinctively grasp the difference between right and wrong in any situation.

Your character's Conscience rating governs his reactions to sins of cruelty, violence and anger — acts that hurt the innocent and undeserving. Some examples would be mugging a passer-by, cheating on your wife, torture, murder, starving your child or kicking a dog. A successful Conscience roll means that your character is flooded with shame and regret at what

he did, rather than growing more callous. If the character doesn't act on that remorse and work to redeem himself — making up with his wife, taking his victim to hospital, telling his child he loves her — the Storyteller may rule that he still receives a point of temporary Torment.

If the character wants to take a more proactive bent, many different acts of kindness are based around Conscience. Think of every kind act that makes you smile in real life, that gives you hope for the human race, that establishes a connection between you and another — those are acts of Conscience. Caring for the sick or injured, talking someone through an emotional crisis, buying a meal for a homeless person, volunteering at a shelter — these acts of decency and humanitarianism can pull a demon back from the depths of despair and anger.

CONVICTION

Conviction covers a character's sense of honor, dedication and purpose — the ability to make decisions and abide by the consequences, to make promises and keep them, to stay sane and focused in the face of stress or disaster. Conviction is a much less comfortable Virtue than Conscience — it's about making hard choices and standing resolute. While Conscience focuses on your character's interaction with others, Conviction is about her sense of *self*.

Characters with low Conviction ratings tend to be uncertain of their own purpose, or even that there is any kind of purpose and structure to Creation. She cuts corners and takes the easy outs, unconvinced of any benefit to be gained for herself for following an ethical code. A character with a high Conviction rating understands how much she gains, and how much society benefits, from a sense of purpose and adherence to ethical standards. She can make decisions based on more than just instant gratification.

Conviction covers sins of convenience and deception — acts that violate society's ethical values. Lying, breaking a promise, embezzlement, acting without honor, encouraging others to commit crimes, cheating, premeditated assassination or betraying a loyal friend are all crimes of Conviction. With a successful Conviction roll, your character sees how her actions violate social order and how she's compromising herself. She can then learn from the experience and create a stronger internal ethical framework. If she keeps on breaking her word and ignoring her sense of ethics, the Storyteller may still award her a point of temporary Torment.

Positive uses of Conviction are not so much acts of kindness as they are acts of *responsibility*. If a character acts with honor and forethought, working to improve



the lives of others in an ethical fashion, she can push back the darkness through her discipline. Appropriate acts include brokering a peace treaty between warring gangs, managing the accounts of a charity, keeping your word despite great personal sacrifice, teaching children about ethics and responsibility or helping someone overcome drug addiction.

COURAGE

Courage is the most active of the three Virtues, dealing with the character's bravery, determination and strength of character. While Conscience controls how you feel about others, and Conviction controls how you feel about yourself, Courage is not about feeling — it's about *acting*. Courage helps your character act on his moral or ethical choices, to withstand pain and hardship, and to make the sacrifices that are demanded of him. It doesn't mean that he doesn't feel fear, but with Courage, he can defy his fears and act despite them.

Characters with low Courage ratings aren't necessarily cowards (though some certainly are). Such characters are reluctant to face doubts and fears, though, preferring to compromise their position rather than risk confrontation. Such a confrontation might be physical, but it can also be emotional — many

characters will happily embrace action and physical danger but avoid any kind of emotional pain. A character with high Courage understands the need for sacrifice and risk, and he is prepared to stand up for the things that matter to him.

Sins of Courage are primarily acts of cowardice — failing to live up to what you know is the right or proper thing to do. Good examples include fleeing when a friend is attacked, covering up mounting gambling debts, sabotaging your marriage rather than confronting your emotions, shooting an enemy in the back, attacking someone you know won't retaliate or allowing others to perform crimes rather than preventing them. With a successful Courage roll, your character feels guilt and shame over his fear and can attempt to put things right by standing up, raising his voice and defying the thing that scares him. If he continues to compromise and back down, he might receive a point of temporary Torment anyway.

Worthy acts of Courage are almost self-explanatory — your character must face his fears and be brave. Even if he's still afraid — especially if he's still afraid — he must actively work to overcome his doubt and do what he knows is right. Good examples include standing up to a bully, intervening in an attack on another person, testifying against a powerful mobster, talking

OVERLAPPING VIRTUES

Virtues in Demon are not three distinct, separate things — they're three facets of the same thing, the lost nobility and purity of a demon's soul. As such, there are many times when the lines between Virtues will blur, and a situation seems applicable to two or even all three Virtues. If a character runs from a battle, it could be a sin of Conscience (she doesn't care about her comrades), Conviction (she betrays her friends to her enemies) or Courage (she's too frightened to do what's right). Similarly, throwing herself in the line of a bullet can be an act of Conscience (protecting the innocent target), Conviction (saving someone more meaningful) or Courage (sacrificing herself for a cause).

In cases where multiple Virtues could play a part, pick the one that best reflects *why* your character does what she does. If you're not sure, or you feel that she's equally torn between multiple impulses, then you generally roll the Virtue with the highest rating. The Storyteller, however, can rule that you should roll on a specific Virtue if he feels it's most applicable.

through his relationship problems with his spouse, publicly speaking against a tyrant or admitting to his family that he has a drug problem.

COMBINATIONS

Your character's Virtues don't *dictate* her personality, but they do *influence* it. A high rating in one Virtue will be reflected in her Nature, as will a low one. There's also an interaction between high and low Virtues — someone with strong Courage and Conscience ratings has a different personality than someone with just a strong Conscience.

The following combinations show how high Virtues (four to five dots) interact with low Virtues (one dot). Each combination includes a list of some typical Natures that reflect that combination, but that doesn't mean your character *must* have one of those Natures. Different people think in different ways, and perhaps your character internalizes her Virtues in a unique way.

Low Conscience/Low Conviction/Low Courage: This person lacks any real strength of character. She feels little in the way of moral or ethical obligations but lacks the willpower to actually pursue what she wants. Such passive, unengaged people generally aren't suitable Demon characters, and no starting character will have low ratings in all three Virtue. Many characters with this combination of Virtues

possess negative Natures such as Addict, Conformist and Monster, but you could just as easily have a neutral Nature like Child, Deviant or Rogue.

High Conscience/Low Conviction/Low Courage: People with this set of Virtues tend to be compassionate but weak. Such a character cares about others and usually has many friends, but her life is lived in the short-term — she can't dedicate herself to a goal. Even if she could, she wouldn't — she lacks the courage to reach for the things she wants, preferring to wait and hope that she lucks out. Typical Natures for such people include Bon Vivant, Caregiver, Child and Gallant.

Low Conscience/High Conviction/Low Courage: This is the mark of a person with a strong capacity to plan and dedicate herself to a goal — but whose goals always focus on herself. She can't connect well with others, and she might see people as pawns or tools. She works toward goals, but they're usually easy goals — she sees risk as unacceptable and tries to avoid any kind of confrontation. Typical Natures include Autocrat, Conniver, Curmudgeon or Pedagogue.

Low Conscience/Low Conviction/High Courage: This is a person who's brave and prepared to be confrontational to get what she wants. Unfortunately, she rarely wants anything except what's right in front of her. With little in the way of morality or forethought, she prefers instant gratification. Her courage means that she will fight to the bitter end, against all odds, for something that will satisfy her for only a short time — then it's on to the next fight, the next plaything. Typical Natures include Bravo, Loner, Masochist and Thrill-Seeker.

High Conscience/High Conviction/Low Courage: With this combination of Virtues, a person possesses morality and ethics, compassion and surety but lacks the courage to pursue what she wants. Such a person connects well with people and has assistance in her plans — plans that minimize all risks and aim low, avoiding complications. She also avoids emotional risks. She might have many friends and relationships, but most are shallow, without depths and dangers. Typical Natures might include Architect, Director, Judge and Traditionalist.

High Conscience/Low Conviction/High Courage: A person with this combination is always able to get what she wants, but she probably doesn't want much. Her many friends will give her what they can, and she'll risk much to help them and to reach her goals. Her goals all tend to be simple, short-term things, with no plan to them, though. Her tendency to leap before she looks means that she ends up in trouble often — trouble she could avoid if she thought things

through. Typical Natures include Bon Vivant, Caregiver, Gambler and Trickster.

Low Conscience/High Conviction/High Courage: This combination of Virtues is the mark of a very dangerous person — someone who stops at nothing to get what she wants. She constructs careful plans and scoffs at risks — not just the risks to herself, but to others. This person considers her goals so important that any sacrifice is appropriate, be it her own or those of unwilling others. She probably doesn't *like* to endanger or hurt others, but she will do what is necessary. Typical Natures include Competitor, Fanatic, Perfectionist and Survivor.

High Conscience/High Conviction/High Courage: Some rare individuals have high ratings in all three Virtues and serve as examples of what we could all aspire to be. Such a person is compassionate, honorable and fearless. She builds grand plans but will not endanger others. She cares about others and is willing to sacrifice herself for them but not sacrifice her ideals. Mortal or demon, these exemplars stand out in society and are likely to attract admiration even from their enemies. Typical Natures include Martyr, Penitent, Rebel and Visionary.

VIRTUES AND HOUSES

Demons feel a wide range of emotions — even more so after taking on the personalities and memories of their human hosts. It's difficult to make generalizations about any demon or to say that all members of a particular House all act in a similar way. Still, it's possible to make fairly broad generalizations about the typical personality of a given House, and to predict how a Devil's morality might differ from a Malefactor's.

The following are general comments about the different Houses and what combinations of Virtues are most common. Don't feel constrained by these generalizations, though. Every group has its exceptions, and your character can always be one of them.

Defilers: A central contradiction of the Defilers is that they usually care about the mortals they destroy — loving them even as they corrupt them. Reflecting this, Defilers usually have high Conscience but low Conviction. A Defiler knows right from wrong and often cares about mortals, but he needs something *now*. It's easier to use a mortal for his immediate gratification than dedicate himself to a slower, more ethical path. Defilers also tend to have low Courage ratings. Not only do they avoid combat, but they also avoid emotional confrontations that might cause them pain or inconvenience.

Devils: As a counterpoint to the Defilers, Devils tend to have high Conviction ratings but low

Conscience. Devils are the fallen paladins of Heaven, and they still hold to twisted systems of honor and dedication to their cause. While Devils are ethical creatures, though, they're rarely moral. A Devil will use mortals as tools because she doesn't really *care* about what happens to them. Devils also tend to have good Courage ratings. They were the champions of both Heaven and Hell, and they rarely fear either engaging in battle or confronting their unspoken concerns.

Devourers: These feral demons usually have low ratings in both Conscience and Conviction. Right and wrong, wise and foolish, ethics and morals — these are civilized mortal concerns, rather than the laws of nature and the wild. Devourers are creatures of *immediacy*, living in a world of instant decisions and survival rather than long-term planning and soft compassion. That being said, few demons can rival the Courage of a Devourer. Warriors and destroyers, these demons rarely run from a fight or fail to act on their emotions.

Fiends: Born to set the stars in the sky and guide the growth of humanity, Fiends naturally tend to have high Conviction. These demons have a strong focus on structure and laws, and their aptitude for seeing the patterns of the future encourages them to set down long-term plans. Their Conscience ratings, on the other hand, tend to be low. Fiends simply don't have a lot in common with mortals, and they don't connect to them easily on an emotional level. They also tend to have low Courage ratings — this is a House that is uncomfortable with confrontation of any kind.

Malefactors: The Malefactors are unusual in that they don't tend to have any extraordinarily high or low Virtues. Malefactors care about mortals but have problems connecting to them emotionally — hence a moderate Conscience rating. They are long-term planners and builders, but they bow to practicality over principle if necessary, so they have moderate Conviction ratings. And while Malefactors can often be warriors without physical fear, they shy away from emotional confrontation, leading to moderate Courage ratings. These demons are Hell's jacks-of-all-trades, shying away from extremes, and their Virtue ratings reflect this tendency.

Scourges: Former guardian angels, Scourges have perhaps the deepest emotional connection to mortals. Therefore, most Scourges have high Conscience ratings. This compassion is usually controlled by a strong Conviction rating as well. Scourges care for humanity as a *group*, but not always as *individuals*. Sometimes hard decisions must be made for the greater good — a disease must be used to control the mortal population, a sacrifice must be made. While Scourges are often prepared to sacrifice others, though, they are rarely

prepared to sacrifice themselves, so these demons generally don't have high Courage ratings.

Slayers: Like Scourges, Slayers both care for mortals and have to temper that care with resolve and discipline. Slayers love mortals — but their touch brings death and an end to all things. By necessity, Slayers must damp down their innate love of humanity, not allowing themselves anything more than a moderate Conscience rating. Doing so requires incredible discipline and dedication — small wonder, then, that most Slayers have extremely strong Conviction ratings, perhaps rivaled only by the most honorable of Devils. Slayers also tend to be emotionally brave, if not physically so, and have good Courage ratings.

VIRTUES AND FACTIONS

While it's difficult to generalize about the Virtues of the different Houses, it's much easier to do so for the major demonic factions. After all, these groups form around a common agenda, a common attitude. Factions are based on *personality*, while Houses reflect a demon's purpose and nature. Most demons in a faction have similar Virtue ratings, although some exceptions do arise — mavericks attracted to a faction for unusual or hidden reasons.

Cryptics: Almost all Cryptics have very high Conviction ratings. This group is dedicated to solving puzzles and slowly piecing together hidden secrets — tasks that need determination and structured thinking, and require the individual to think in the long term. Cryptics also tend to have decent (if not extreme) Courage ratings. They need to ask the hard questions, and they can't afford to shy away from answers that frighten them. Cryptics can have any level of Conscience, though, since the faction has room for cold-blooded inquisitors and compassionate seekers after truth.

Faustians: This faction is based around a contradiction — Faustians both care about mortals and seek to use them mercilessly. Faustians care about mortals as beings, but not necessarily as *people*. Even if a Faustian is concerned about a mortal's well being, he might not care if that person is actually *happy*, as long as she is healthy and her Faith can be harnessed. Therefore, Faustians tend to have moderate Conscience ratings, but moderate-to-high Conviction — they have compassion, but that compassion can be cold and controlled. Faustians can have any level of Courage, whether high or low.

Luciferans: This is a faction of idealists, throwbacks to the rebellion and Lucifer's call to battle. They believe in the values of those first rebels — love for mankind, honor, dedication and standing defiant against the forces of Heaven. No surprise,



then, that Luciferans tend to have strong ratings in all three Virtues — anything less would fail to live up to the memory of the Morningstar's manifesto. If one Virtue stands above the rest, it's Conviction — honor and unflinching determination is the core value of the group — but Conscience and Courage will also be high.

Ravengers: In total contrast to the Luciferans, Ravengers are noteworthy because they tend to have low ratings in all three Virtues. This is not a faction that respects honor, compassion or even bravery — all it respects is destruction. There are exceptions, though — not every Ravener is a maddened, craven anarchist. Many Ravengers are warriors with strong Courage ratings. Some have good Conviction ratings and develop strategies to maximize long-term destruction. Few if any Ravengers have high or even moderate Conscience ratings, though. Compassion and morality fit poorly with the desire to reduce the whole universe to ashes.

Reconcilers: Conscience is the primary Virtue of the Reconcilers, who seek not only to redeem themselves but also to restore humanity to Paradise. Compassion and love are pivotal parts of the Reconciler philosophy, and almost all members of this faction will have high Conscience ratings. Courage ratings also tend to be high. It takes a brave soul to admit a mistake, and a braver one still to face the challenges and risks required for reconciling demons and mortals. Reconcilers can have any Conviction rating — some are planners and thinkers, other live for the moment.

CORRUPT RESOLVE

Torment is a problem for all **Demon** characters, not just those fallen who are trying to fight the forces of Hell. High Torment ratings make a character unable to control his evocations, occasionally forcing him to evoke a destructive effect instead of the useful effect he desired. Even a character who hates humanity still has to worry about Torment and needs to counterbalance his darker urges with the Virtues of his lost angelic past.

But some characters don't succeed in resisting the darkness — or they gleefully embrace the power of destruction. These high-Torment characters are dangerous, tragic beings, slowly losing their self-control and perhaps their identity. Such demons still possess Virtues, but those Virtues become increasingly twisted. Your character is at as much risk as any other **Demon** character of falling into the pit of Torment. His Virtues are the only things that might pull him out of that pit, but they can also become dark, corrupt things that keep him in there.

Virtues, even high-rated ones, become corrupted as your character's Torment increases. You still make a Virtue roll after he commits a sin, but fewer and fewer acts become sinful in your character's eyes. A character with Torment 8, for example, no longer considers unpremeditated violence, destruction or even *murder* to be sins — such acts don't cause him to question himself or feel any remorse. What does this mean for your character's personality? What does virtue mean to a high-Torment character — someone who no longer considers it wrong to murder someone in a fit of pique?

Virtues are still important for high-Torment characters, but the emphasis of the Virtues subtly changes as the character spirals down into corruption. For a normal character, Virtues represent his capability to feel shame and regret for his actions — to realize that what he did was wrong. High-Torment characters take a different angle. Virtues now help the character rationalize his sins and convince himself that what he did was necessary.

When your high-Torment character commits an act so heinous that even he feels it to be sinful — premeditated assassination, pointless carnage, systematic torture of an innocent person — you make a Virtue roll as usual. If the roll fails, your character embraces the horror of his act. Not only does he feel no regret, he enjoys his atrocities and falls even further into irredeemable damnation. If the roll succeeds, he cannot internalize the act, cannot become inured to the horror, but his warped value system does not recognize the act as wrong. Instead, the demon can fool himself into believing the act was a necessary aberration — regrettable, certainly, but unavoidable. He doesn't punish himself for the deed or feel remorse. Rather, he avoids thinking about it further or finds spurious reasons to justify it. *It won't happen again*, he promises, but on some level he knows he's lying to himself.

High-Torment characters use the same mechanics for Virtues, but the meaning of those Virtues — and the personality of the character — changes in the following ways:

Conscience: This Virtue represents a high-Torment character's capacity to rationalize away moral crimes and sins against innocent beings. The high-Conscience character knows the difference between right and wrong, but he tries to believe that that distinction doesn't apply in this instance. He might commit cold-blooded murder, claiming that this death will save the lives of others — innocents that he would have been forced to harm if his victim had lived. Alternatively, the character might become a sociopath, claiming that most

other people are soulless drones or intrinsically inferior to enlightened demons.

Conviction: "You can't make an omelet without breaking a few eggs" is the catchphrase of a high-Torment, high-Conviction character. He might lie, cheat, steal and break promises every day, but in his eyes, it's all for a good cause, all necessary sacrifices that others must make to help him reach a worthy goal. The character might construct sprawling meta-ethical frameworks, linked webs of justifications to explain how a breach of trust or act of dishonor is actually an excusable lapse that'll work out in the long run.

Courage: A high-Torment, high-Courage character isn't a coward, oh no — he's *sensible*. He doesn't take needless risks or put himself in jeopardy when it isn't necessary. Instead, he'll make a tactical withdrawal and return when it's a fair fight — that is, when the odds are two-to-one in his favor. He won't admit it, but this character is a bully, always looking for a way to increase the odds in his favor by any means available. He approaches emotional risk the same way. If he thinks he risks being hurt in a relationship, he's likely to try to hurt his partner more than she hurts him.

There's no exact point at which the meaning of your character's Virtues change. It's a gradual process, linked to the changes in his personality and values that accompany his growing Torment. You can have a great deal of fun exploring this slow decline through roleplaying, changing your character's Nature and Demeanor as his Torment grows and his desperate rationalizations grow thinner and thinner. Similarly, if a character who claws his way back to decency and decreases his Torment rating, his Virtues will slowly change back into a nobler, more emotionally meaningful system of values.

LORE

Even if he's not actually *doing* anything, a demon is still a being like no other on Earth. A marriage of celestial and mortal souls, the demon's spiritual nature allows him a wide range of passive abilities: the power to see through illusions, resistance to disease and poison, the capacity to hear his name being invoked and a memory that covers untold aeons of time. The demon also has a number of more active abilities, such as the capability to repair the injuries of his host body and the power to manifest his apocalyptic form.

But one facet of demonkind most clearly shows their difference from humans — the power to govern the forces of Creation itself with no more than a word, a breath or a thought. These are the evocations of a

demon's lore, his knowledge of the secret mechanisms of the universe. The power to evoke his lore is the flashiest and most impressive of a demon's abilities, but it's a power that's far more impressive and complex than it might appear.

It's important to remember that your character's lore is more than a simple collection of magic spells or super powers. The character's lore — particularly his primary and House lore — is an *intrinsic part of his very nature*. The demon has the power to evoke lore because, in the core of his being, he is that lore — or, more clearly, he's a reflection of that lore. Yes, lore is a knowledge, but it's a knowledge of the *soul*, not the mind, and that knowledge reshapes your character's soul in its image.

Nothing illustrates this point more strongly than your character's visage, the apocalyptic form related to his primary lore. When your character manifests his apocalyptic form, his lore is more than just knowledge, it's the substance of his being. A Devourer manifesting his Zaltu visage isn't just taking on a different form, he is a beast, an amalgam of all creatures of the wild. Similarly, a Malefactor manifesting the Kishar visage infuses his body and soul with the power of Earth. Even though his flesh doesn't become stone, it takes on the spiritual essence of stone. When Torment warps a character's nature and personality, his soul becomes corrupted, and the visage of his revelatory form becomes corrupted in turn, just as the evocations of his lore become warped and destructive.

Because lore is more than just knowledge, it can't simply be learned like any mundane skill. Your character doesn't just learn a new formula or pick up a new trick. Instead, gaining lore requires making changes to the very soul and nature of your character. These changes might be due to the character slowly regaining the memories and energies of his demonic soul, suppressed by his confinement to a human host. Alternatively, the changes could be very new. It's possible for a demon to *gain* new lore from a teacher, altering the shape of his soul to take on new spiritual knowledge. No matter how the character's lore improves, though, a wealth of roleplaying potential lies in the improvement process, and many ways exist to explore the ramifications of the changes in your character's abilities.

MEMORI

Before being imprisoned in the Abyss, most demons were masters of their lore. Such a virtuoso receives a great shock when arriving in the mortal world — she finds she's *forgotten* how to evoke much of her store of knowledge! Long aeons in Hell, unable to

manipulate Creation, have served to dull her abilities. What's more, though, the fabric of Creation has changed so much since the Age of Wrath that the demon must relearn much of her former knowledge. This is hampered even further by the problems of living in a mortal host. Most of the demon's memories are inaccessible, too great to contain in her host's brain, and without the immediate memory of her lore, relearning her skills will be even more difficult.

Difficult, but not impossible, that is. With time and practice — and expenditure of experience points — your character can remember or relearn any lore she once knew. It's up to you to decide what lore your character actually knew before her time in Hell, depending on the character concept and your vision of how skilled the character is/was. You can increase the lore that your character once knew in the normal manner, by spending experience points during downtime. Doing so represents the character remembering the evocations of old or learning how to perform those evocations in the changed environment of the modern world.

Your character's primary lore is a given — all demons were masters of their primary lore before their time in Hell. Many demons also mastered their other House lore, and you can assume that your character can eventually recall all the evocations of her House unless you feel that she should have been deficient in that lore for some reason. Your character might have been skilled in the common lore, or she might not — that's a decision you should make based on your character concept. Mastery of lore from other Houses is rarer, and few demons could evoke powerful effects from other lore even during the Age of Wrath. If you feel that your character *should* have known a particular non-House lore, talk to your Storyteller. He might allow the character access to that lore, or he could prohibit access. He might rule that your character can remember that lore, but perhaps only to a certain level, with the more powerful evocations available only if the character seeks training.

FUGUE

For demons with the Legacy Background, another option exists for relearning the forgotten evocations of their past. Your character can enter a fugue — a catatonic state — in which she relives ancient memories of the Age of Wrath, when she was at the height of her power. When she finally emerges from her reverie, she brings with her greater recollection of her primary lore, and she might even be able to perform new evocations immediately.

The following optional system allows characters to enter a fugue and gain greater facility with their

primary lore. This system is available for use only with Storyteller permission. Only characters with the Legacy Background can enter a fugue, and only their primary lore can be improved in this way.

To enter a fugue, your character must deliberately retreat deep into her buried memories, first retrieving a specific memory, then reliving it in great detail. Doing so takes a significant amount of time — from hours to even days, depending on the memory accessed. Once in fugue, your character relives the memory of having used a specific evocation — the next one on her primary lore path. So if your character has three dots in her primary lore, she recalls a time when she used the fourth-dot evocation of her lore.

This memory is so vivid and enthralling that, for the duration of the memory, the character doesn't even realize she's reliving a memory! For all intents and purposes, the character is taking part in a scene from her past. The Storyteller can use this as an opportunity for roleplay, assigning new roles to the other players and playing out the scene in detail. It can be a fun cut-scene that adds new dimension to the chronicle, and it can even be used to introduce new story elements. If the Storyteller or other players don't feel like doing so, the remembrance process can simply be abstracted while your character bows out of the story for a scene.

Once the fugue ends, the character emerges with a new grasp on her primary lore. Make a roll (difficulty 6) using your Legacy Background as the dice pool. Each success on this roll gives you an experience point that can be spent *only* on improving your character's primary lore (record it separately on your character sheet). Thus it becomes that little bit cheaper to purchase another dot in your character's primary lore. Furthermore, if your character entered fugue in the middle of a story, and you have enough experience points available to improve her primary lore, you can do so *immediately*, rather than in downtime!

Entering fugue is a useful way of improving lore, but it has limits. During play, the character must spend a complete scene in this fugue state, unable to react to the world around her or defend herself from attack. If she takes damage, the fugue ends prematurely. She not only gains no benefit from the recollection attempt, but she'll be groggy and unfocused for the rest of the scene (increase the difficulty of all tasks by one). Fugues can also be entered during downtime, which is generally safer. In this case, the Storyteller decides how much time is required for the attempt. The character can enter a fugue only once per story, or once per period of downtime. And finally, you can never gain more bonus experience

points at one time than your Legacy rating. Only once those points are spent on a new dot can you benefit from entering fugue once again.

TEACHING

Many demons can recall their past mastery of lore without undue difficulty, but some feel that they need to learn the evocations of another House's lore in order to survive and thrive in this strange new world. These demons need teachers — other demons who have mastered the lore in question and can impart their knowledge to others. Teaching can also be useful if a demon wants help in recalling lore that he has forgotten.

It's usually up to the Storyteller as to whether your character needs training and a teacher in order to learn a new evocation. Your Storyteller may rule that all characters require teaching if they want to gain lore from another House, or even common lore. She may decide that a teacher is useful but not *essential*, or she could decide on a case-by-case basis, depending on the character and the needs of the chronicle. Similarly, she might decide that your character can't seek teaching for a lore, and must either recall old knowledge or learn the lore from scratch.

FINDING A TEACHER

Before your character can be taught by another demon, he needs to *find* a teacher. Any demon with a greater knowledge of the lore in question can serve as a teacher. If your character has no dots in a particular lore, then someone with just a single dot in that lore could teach him basic evocations. Once your character's knowledge of the lore equals that of his teacher, he must find another, more skilled, instructor or attempt to improve his capabilities on his own. Ideally, the teacher should be a demon who possesses that lore as her primary lore, or a House lore. These demons have the best understanding of that lore, and they make the best instructors. It's not essential, though. A Scourge could teach a Malefactor the Lore of Radiance if needs be, although she'll be a less skilled teacher than a Devil of the Qingu visage.

While *finding* a teacher can be a simple task, it might be more difficult for your character to persuade her to teach him the lore. Even if a suitable demon is willing to teach your character, she's not going to do it for free. To get her tutelage, your character will have to pay some kind of price or seek out another (perhaps less suitable) instructor. The character's price might be cash, but that's unlikely — demons have lots of ways of getting money if that's what they want. It's more likely that the demon will demand a favor from your character, perhaps a task he must

complete or a relic he must retrieve. Fulfilling the teacher's demands may be a story in itself, one in which the rest of the troupe can participate.

THE LEARNING PROCESS

Once your character has found a teacher and fulfilled her demands, it's time to knuckle down to the process of actually learning the new evocation. This is harder than it sounds. As stated earlier, lore isn't just a normal skill that can be learned through practice or rote memorization — it's a spiritual power that demands the character's very *nature* change in learning it.

To a mortal observer, the act of learning lore from another would look very different from learning how to drive from an instructor. After all, the student can't perform the evocation he's trying to learn until he's learned it — he can't even make clumsy attempts to perform it. The best he can do is perform lesser evocations from the same lore. Similarly, the teacher can't just perform the evocation a few times and expect her student to pick it up (although that probably will play a part in the process). Instead, the student must increase his intuitive understanding of the lore in question, and reshape his spiritual nature (and perhaps even his personality) in order to truly see the part the lore plays in Creation. Only then can he come to understand how to command that facet on Creation in a new way.

Many things can increase a character's understanding of a lore path. Here are some suggestions for tasks or lessons a teacher might set her student; your Storyteller will come up with other tasks your character might need to perform.

- The teacher performs the evocation several times, while the student uses his supernatural awareness to feel how Creation is manipulated.
- The student watches others perform the evocation, looking for how their methods differ from those of his teacher.
- The student observes the apocalyptic form of a demon whose primary lore is the lore in question, and he ponders how this form reflects the lore.
- The student undergoes a remembrance ritual (if he has the Legacy Background) to recall instances where he saw others performing the evocation.
- The student evokes lesser effects of the lore in new ways and ponders on how Creation is changed by the evocation — and how Creation resists the change.
- If he is low in Torment, the student deliberately evokes high-Torment effects of the lore. If he is high in Torment, the student tries hard to evoke low-Torment effects. He then ponders the difference between effects and on how the effects are related.

- The student surrounds himself with a resonance of the lore and meditates on how that resonance affects reality.

- The student acts as if he had a different personality, one more in tune with the lore (altering his Demeanor in accordance with the lore's resonance).

BENEFITS OF TEACHING

If the character works hard, he should eventually learn the new evocation from his teacher. This is likely to take some time, usually the length of a complete story—weeks to months, depending on the flow of the chronicle. It's up to the Storyteller to decide when your character has learned enough and whether you can finally spend experience points on improving your character's lore. If your character has spent a significant amount of time working on improving his lore—practicing or learning at least once a chapter over the length of a story—the Storyteller will generally allow you to spend the experience points.

Your Storyteller might rule that the lore costs just as many experience points to learn from a teacher as it would to learn from memory. After all, if your character never knew the evocation, he wouldn't be able to learn it *at all* without a teacher's assistance. Alternatively, the Storyteller might decide to allow you to purchase the new dot of lore at a slightly reduced cost.

After all, your character took a lot more time learning it than he would have spent simply remembering a forgotten evocation. The following optional system may be used at the Storyteller's discretion to reduce the cost of the new dot.

At the end of a story in which your character has been learning the new lore, the Storyteller rolls a dice pool equal to the teacher's rating in the relevant lore during downtime. The difficulty of this roll depends on the lore that was being taught.

- If the Storyteller character was teaching her primary lore, the difficulty is 6.

- If she was teaching a House lore (but not her primary lore), or teaching common lore, the difficulty is 7.

- If she was teaching lore from a different House, the difficulty is 8.

Example: Gary's character is attempting to learn from a Scourge of the Anshar visage. If his character was attempting to learn the Lore of the Firmament (his teacher's primary lore), the Storyteller would roll against difficulty 6. If the character was learning the Lore of Humanity or the Lore of Awakening from her, the Storyteller would roll against difficulty 7. If the character was trying to learn the Lore of the Earth, the difficulty would be 8.



Each success on the roll gives you a bonus experience point that can be spent only on improving the appropriate lore (record it separately on your character sheet). Your character can spend several stories learning from a teacher, amassing more bonus experience points in each period of downtime, but he can never have more bonus points at one time than his teacher's rating in the lore. Once you reach that point, any excess points are lost. Only once you spend the bonus points on improving the character's lore can he benefit from further teaching.

RESONANCE

In the beginning, before Paradise was destroyed, Creation consisted of an almost infinite number of levels of meaning. Every object possessed multiple levels of existence — a sword might also be a song, a rose, a spirit and a philosophy, and it existed as all of these things at the same time. Creation was a complex, interlocking engine powered by meaning and symbolism, and the Elohim could use symbols and meaning to affect the fabric of Creation. Through the power of her lore — her capacity to affect all the levels of Creation — an Elohim could recite a poem and cause a star to be born because the star and the poem were the same thing.

After the Creator devastated Paradise, Creation lost much of its richness and complexity. Angels and demons alike found that it was no longer as easy to use their lore to manipulate Creation, because the multifaceted nature of things had been reduced. Indeed, some objects or concepts no longer had a multiple nature and were simply single, lonely entities. Still, interactions existed between things even in this reduced Creation. While two objects might now be separate things, rather than two facets of the one entity, they still had a connection. One object acted as a symbol or weak reflection of the other — and by manipulating one, a demon might be able to manipulate the other in some way. A poem and a star were no longer the same thing, but by changing the poem in a particular way, a demon might have been able to change the star in certain, similar ways.

As the Age of Wrath progressed, each body of lore accumulated a body of symbols and connections. These resonances reflected the connections and interactions that still existed in the underpinnings of Creation. Demons and angels alike used resonances to make their lore more powerful, using a symbol as a lens to magnify the power of their evocations. A demon might not have been powerful enough to crack a mountain in half with an evocation, but if he used a symbol that had represented the mountain,

such as a particular gem, he could increase the strength of his evocation and destroy the mountain.

In the new and confusing modern world, demons are finding that resonances have lost a great deal of their former power. Creation is weaker and thinner than ever before, and the symbols of lore are no longer powerful enough to magnify the strength and effect of evocations. Creation is still a maze of interactions and connections, however, and symbols still have some power. By using an item that resonates in some way with certain lore, a demon can better control the fabric of Creation with an evocation, even if the strength of that evocation remains unchanged.

One rare advantage of the modern world, for demons, is that far more objects and concepts resonate with lore now than in the Age of Wrath. While demons were locked in the prison of the Abyss, humanity went about putting its own stamp on Creation, building new devices and ideas. Because these inventions were spun from the established building blocks of Creation, they incorporated the existing symbols and resonances. When new creations were built, they were added to the library of connections and resonances that underpin their lore. Creation is thinner now, but also larger, more crammed with objects and ideas and people. As a result, symbols have been diluted in strength, but widened in scope. When once only a particular piece of music might have resonated with the Lore of Longing, now almost all music has a connection with that lore, no matter how tenuous. Similarly, that music could have a resonant effect on an evocation even if it is performed on an instrument that didn't exist in the Age of Wrath, such as an electric guitar. The guitar is based on the same principles and symbols as all instruments and music, and all music was born from the Lore of Longing.

USING RESONANCES

The following optional system allows demons to gain small advantages by incorporating resonant symbols, objects or concepts into their evocations. By establishing a symbolic connection between themselves and their lore, demons find it a little easier to evoke their lore and manipulate Creation.

A normal evocation is simply an instant act of will — an act as natural to demons as flexing a muscle is to a mortal. The demon decides what effect she wants to create, then flexes her lore — tugging on the hidden mechanisms of Creation that she helped build at the dawn of time. If her skills aren't polished enough, the evocation fails; if her muscles are strong, she evokes her lore, hopefully in the way she wished.

When a demon incorporates resonant elements, the process of evocation changes. What was once an

instant act of will becomes a more complex performance. The demon must actively use the new element in the evocation, building a new understanding of her lore and feeling how it resonates in this symbol. Doing so might not take much more time than a normal evocation, or it could take much more time, depending on the resonance used. A demon might simply step into a bonfire to resonate with the Lore of Flame, taking just an extra second to evoke the lore — but a Defiler using dance to resonate with the Lore of Longing will need to spend several minutes dancing to gain a benefit. Similarly, what was once a mostly invisible act of will becomes a visible interaction with the resonant object or concept. If your character isn't using resonance in a way that makes the evocation obvious in some ways to others — even if they don't realize what she's actually doing — it's probably not going to aid her evocation attempt.

When you want to incorporate resonance into your character's evocation, tell the Storyteller just what your character is doing. Is she reciting a poem to capture someone's loyalty? Drinking a cocktail of blood and drugs to alter her body chemistry? Burying herself in the soil she hopes to soon control? Describe just how your character is using resonant elements. More powerful evocations require more significant resonance — the more you hope to achieve, the more you need to do to gain an advantage. It might be enough to simply read a Tarot spread for a minor evocation of the Lore of Patterns, but for the most powerful evocations, the demon might need to engineer hundreds of computers into a predictive network.

The benefit of using resonance is simple. If the Storyteller is satisfied with the particular use of resonance, the difficulty of the evocation decreases by one. The evocation becomes that little bit simpler to perform. It's usually not possible to gain any greater benefit from using resonance, no matter how many resonant elements you use. In this debased age of Creation, resonance is too weak to give more than a minor boost to evocation. Still, a minor boost might be just what your character needs at a crucial time. Resonance isn't a way to empower your character, it's a way to make evocations more interesting, allow for some cool visuals and provide a minor reward for player creativity.

Lore is an art, not a science, and demons are artists of Creation, not technicians. As they become accustomed to this world, they can learn to manipulate a vast new array of symbols and resonances, and to incorporate those symbols into the art of lore to assist in their evocations. But no hard-and-fast rules dictate how resonance can be used. A demon's understanding of lore is a unique and personal thing, and no

two demons evoke or even think of lore in quite the same way. A resonance that triggers a memory or inspires an easier way of tweaking the mechanisms of reality for one character might mean nothing to another character, so that demon gains no benefit from incorporating that particular resonance into the art of his evocation. The Storyteller is always the final arbiter of whether a given resonance will aid a particular evocation, and he's well within his rights to rule that it won't, even if your character benefited from the exact same resonance last time she performed the same evocation.

The Storyteller can also, at his discretion, allow players to use resonance with other lore-related rolls, such as assuming apocalyptic form, empowering thralls or crafting relics. Any bonus gained from resonance will be small — a reduction in difficulty by one, or perhaps an extra die for your pool — but every advantage helps.

RESONANCE AND PERSONALITY

Objects and items aren't the only things that resonate with Creation. Ideas, philosophies and feelings have just as much resonance, just as much influence over lore and evocation. If a demon performs an evocation in the grip of a particular emotion, the Storyteller might decide that the emotion is a strong enough resonance to aid the evocation or that the emotion, combined with other resonant elements, is enough to reduce the difficulty of the evocation.

One important factor, though, is that the relationship between personality and lore is not a one-way street. Just as your character's emotions and personality might influence her use of lore, so too can her lore shape and control her personality. A demon's lore is a spiritual knowledge, a force that shapes and forms her soul and essence. Demons with strong ratings in a particular lore *tend* to gravitate toward those personality types — Natures — that resonate strongly with that lore. A demon with strong ratings in several bodies of lore will gravitate more toward the Natures associated with her primary lore. This is only a tendency, though. Your character can, of course, have any personality you like. Still, she might feel drawn toward a resonant Nature when she is low on Willpower, or she could act in accordance with a particular Nature as a way of better studying a lore path.

SPECIFIC RESONANCES

The following is a list of several items, classes of items, ideas, concepts and Natures that resonate with each lore available to **Demon** characters. This list is by no means exhaustive, of course. If you think that a certain thing should resonate with a certain

lore, run your idea past your Storyteller — who will also, no doubt, be coming up with new resonances of his own.

You'll notice that several resonances crop up under multiple lore paths. Light is a resonance of the Lore of Light, of course, but natural light also resonates for the Lore of the Celestials. Color is also a resonance of the Lore of Light, but the color red resonates for the Lore of the Flesh, while the color green resonates for the Lore of the Wild. Creation is, after all, a complex maze of interactions, and many things resonate for different bodies of lore. Such resonances can come in particularly handy for evoking conjoined effects (see Chapter Six, for details).

Lore of Awakening: This lore resonates with symbols of health, life and vitality. Examples include dawn and the morning, cold water, children, pregnancy, owls, hospitals, medicine, the colors blue and green, the heart, laughter, love, comfortable warmth (but not uncomfortable heat), clay and flowers. Resonant Natures include Bon Vivant, Caregiver, Child and Gallant.

Lore of the Beast: Naturally enough, this lore resonates with symbols of animals. All animals resonate with this lore, especially wild and untamed animals. Other resonances include fur, leather, collars, cages, the colors red and brown, strong odors, raw meat, whips, blood, feces, hunting and the howls of hunting animals. Resonant Natures include Bravo, Competitor, Loner and Survivor.

Lore of the Celestials: A variety of different symbols resonate with this lore — not just symbols of angels and demons, but also symbols of purity and celestial bodies. Examples include birds, bats, diamonds, astronomy and astrology, stars and planets, diamonds, natural light (sunlight or moonlight), feathers, the color white, crowns and crystals. Resonant Natures include Autocrat, Judge, Perfectionist and Traditionalist.

Lore of Death: Human society has obsessed over symbols of death and mortality for thousands of years, and there are a wealth of resonances for this lore. Examples include cemeteries, dirges, decaying food or clothing, dust, coffins, clocks, the colors black and white, lilies, ravens, marble, sadness and funeral processions. Resonant Natures include Caregiver, Gambler, Loner and Penitent.

Lore of the Earth: Obviously, earth and stone are resonances of this lore, as are all gemstones and metals, from gold to iron. Such materials are more resonant in their raw forms than in a worked form, though, so a lump of raw iron or an uncut emerald is more resonant than a steel sword or a fine emerald ring. Other resonances include earthquakes, mountains, mines,

farms and the colors black and brown. Resonant Natures include Architect, Conformist, Curmudgeon and Traditionalist.

Lore of the Firmament: This lore resonates with symbols of communication, especially communication over a distance. Obviously television and radio are strong resonances, but other examples include books, the Internet, telephones, chanting, urban legends, aerials and antennas, birds, wings, running and any kind of large organization (including religions). Resonant Natures include Director, Pedagogue, Perfectionist and Visionary.

Lore of Flame: Fire, in all its forms, is the primary resonance of this lore — from candle flames to bonfires to electric heaters. The emotions and symbols we associate with fire and heat are also relevant. Good examples include the color red, spicy food, passion, lions, rubies, deserts, oil and volcanoes. Resonant Natures include Bon Vivant, Competitor, Pedagogue and Trickster.

Lore of the Flesh: Living flesh is the primary symbol of this lore — whether animal or human. Dead flesh is a less potent symbol, but it is still useful, as is any symbol that evokes thoughts of biology and bodily functions. Good examples include hospitals, morgues, blood, drugs, medicine, the color red, doctors, sex, tattoos and body art. Resonant Natures include Bon Vivant, Masochist, Monster and Survivor.

Lore of the Forge: Tools, inventions and objects crafted by mortal (or immortal) hands are the greatest resonance of this lore. Items created by a single smith are more resonant than mass-produced objects — an antique Toledo sword or crude stone axe is more resonant than a car or computer. Other symbols include blacksmiths, anvils, hammers, coal, sculpture, welding masks and clockwork. Resonant Natures include Architect, Director, Pedagogue and Perfectionist.

Lore of the Fundament: Symbols of the laws of physics and mechanics symbolize this lore. Good examples include science textbooks, the sun and stars, clocks and clockwork, complex mechanical or electronic devices, pendulums, circuitry and fast-moving objects. Because of the impersonal nature of this common lore, no Natures especially resonate with it. Masters of the lore might manifest any personality.

Lore of Humanity: Human beings, in all their glory and squalor, are the first and last symbols of this lore. The things that resonate with this lore are the things that resonate with human beings on a personal level — beauty, emotions, relationships, politics, cities and societies. Because this lore encompasses all things human, all Natures resonate with it, and almost any emotional state could have an effect on evoking this lore.

Lore of Light: All kinds of light — and all symbols associated with light and images — can resonate with this lore. Examples include strobes, television shows, painting, photography, lenses, glass, mirrors, prisms, rainbows, spotlights, all colors, transparent clothing and hallucinogenic drugs. Resonant Natures include Child, Gallant, Trickster and Visionary.

Lore of Longing: This is a lore of emotion and inspiration, and almost anything that can evoke emotion — especially love, lust or desire — can be a resonance. Good examples include poetry, music, art, touch, clothing, good food, wine, beauty, love letters and pornographic movies. Resonant Natures include Bon Vivant, Caregiver, Conniver and Thrill-Seeker.

Lore of Paths: Any symbol of travel or path-finding can resonate with this lore. Vehicles are an extremely potent symbol of the Lore of Paths, especially vehicles driven or directed by a single person. Other good examples include compasses, maps, shoes and boots, mazes, atlases and races. Resonant Natures include Autocrat, Conformist, Fanatic and Visionary.

Lore of Patterns: Anything that possesses a complex pattern, or that pieces together patterns in something else — such as a method of divination or prediction — is a possible resonance of this lore. Examples include astrology, cards (regular or Tarot), circuitry, computers, the stock market, gemstones, spider webs, looms and clockwork. Resonant Natures include Director, Gambler, Perfectionist and Visionary.

Lore of Portals: All kinds of portals — whether they open into real or imagined spaces — can resonate with this lore. Good symbols include doors and windows, or course, but also works of fiction, mirrors, tunnels, mathematics about spatial dynamics, movies, rings, cave mouths and magic circles. Resonant Natures include Judge, Rogue, Thrill-Seeker and Visionary.

Lore of Radiance: Nobility, command, the divine right of kings — these are the images that resonate with this lore, as do symbols of light, power and wisdom. Good examples include crowns, flags, sunlight, wealth, rich robes, scepters, swords, thrones, podiums, manifests, gold and the color purple. Resonant Natures include Autocrat, Director, Pedagogue and Traditionalist.

Lore of the Realms: The symbols of this lore don't just include things that suggest the afterlife, but almost anything that suggests another world or another space alongside our own. Major resonances include mirrors, painting, shadows, shrouds, works of fantasy, ghost stories, ferries, the color black, mists and optical illusions. Resonant Natures include Deviant, Loner, Monster and Rogue.

Lore of the Spirit: Images of ghosts and spirits are highly resonant of this lore, as are symbols of communication or control over spirits. Good examples include ouija boards, crystals, shadows and silhouettes, rituals, religious celebrations, masks, Tarot cards, cages and magic circles. Resonant Natures include Conniver, Judge, Martyr and Visionary.

Lore of Storms: Water in all its forms is the primary resonance of this lore, from a calm ocean to a raging storm. Those things found within water, such as fish, currents and lightning, are also useful symbols. Good examples include ice, rivers, hurricanes, tidal waves, the colors green and blue, fish, electricity, clouds, crystals, aquamarines and boats. Resonant Natures include Caregiver, Conformist, Loner and Rogue.

Lore of Transfiguration: Symbols of change, mutability and instability are the resonances of this lore, as are images that emphasize appearance rather than substance. Good examples include mirrors, clay, water, mercury, masks, all kinds of clothing, actors, distorting lenses, cameras, makeup and dice. Resonant Natures include Conniver, Deviant, Rebel and Trickster.

Lore of the Wild: It should come as no surprise to find that plants of all kinds, from tiny ferns to giant redwoods, are resonances of this lore. Wood usually isn't, though, nor are wooden objects — living plants are the symbols that truly suggest the Wild. Other examples include forests, jungles, swamps and other wild places, the colors green and brown, the sounds of nature, natural pigments and natural fibers. Resonant Natures include Caregiver, Loner, Rebel and Survivor.

Lore of the Winds: Air is the primary resonance of this lore, especially moving air — from the smallest breeze to a roaring gale. Other Resonances include tornadoes and hurricanes, chimes, the color blue, music, stringed or wind instruments, light clothing, smoke, kites and birds, especially eagles. Resonant Natures include Bon Vivant, Deviant, Gambler and Visionary.





CHAPTER THREE: MERITS AND FLAWS

He is a self-made man, and worships his creator.
—John Bright

Sometimes the dots on a character sheet just don't cut it. You have a vision in mind of the character you want to play, but the **Demon** rulebook's broad categories of Attributes and Abilities just don't capture all the strengths and weaknesses that you want to portray.

That's where Merits and Flaws come in. These additional traits combine with those in the rulebook to allow you to add finishing touches to your character that make him complete and unique. By using them, you can help pin down the advantages and disadvantages that make your character a whole person — at least in game terms.

If you're familiar with other games in the Storyteller system, you're probably familiar with Merits and Flaws. Those for **Demon** are a little different

from the others, though. Most of these qualities largely focus on the mundane aspects of the life of your character's mortal host — the little things that help or hinder many of us in the real world. Your character's host might have been a naturally talented liar, and now your character can use that gift to his advantage. At the same time, your demon character might have an ex-wife to whom he has to make alimony payments that diminish his income. These traits help balance your character's mortal qualities against his infernal nature, allowing you the chance to add more depth and detail on a mundane level to complement or contrast his epic, infernal nature. Reconciling the two makes for great roleplaying and offers you a better insight into the character's actions and motivations.



Many Merits and Flaws establish details about your character that need to be explained in his backstory. You and the Storyteller should work out the details, and the Storyteller can use those conditions or situations as inspiration for stories about your character and his life.

Use of Merits and Flaws is purely optional, though, so your Storyteller may declare them off-limits in your chronicle.

BY THE NUMBERS

Here's how Merits and Flaws work. You can usually choose them only during character creation. Merits have a cost, allowing you to buy them with freebie points. Taking Flaws gives you their rating as bonus freebie points, however, in addition to the ones you already receive during character creation. You can buy as many Merits for your character as you wish, provided you have enough freebie points to do it, but you may take no more than seven points worth of Flaws. That gives you a maximum freebie pool of 22 freebie points to spend, if you take the maximum number of Flaws. You may spend extra freebie points gained from Flaws to acquire anything that can be purchased with freebies, such as Attributes, Abilities, Backgrounds or Merits.

The Storyteller has to agree if you want to assign Merits and Flaws to your character after your chronicle is already underway. Normally, you need to have some freebie points still leftover from character creation to do so. The Storyteller might decree that the only freebie points you can spend on Merits must originate from any Flaws you take, up to the seven limit. Therefore, if you choose four points of Flaws for your established character, you could choose up to four points of Merits. Freebie points gained from Flaws after play has begun can be spent only on Merits—not on Abilities or Attributes or Backgrounds—and these traits can be acquired only one time after the chronicle has started. You can't go back to the Merit-and-Flaw well repeatedly during your chronicle.

Traits chosen during play should reflect who your character has proved to be thus far, perhaps with a few qualities such as a terminal illness to be revealed or exposed in future stories. They could also be chosen based on what your character has experienced in his struggle to survive and further his goals in the mortal world. Essentially, if you use Merits and Flaws after play has begun, don't suddenly change your character into someone or something he wasn't before. A demon whose mortal body is perfectly healthy one day wouldn't suddenly become hard of hearing the next, unless something tragic occurs in his life or in your stories.

INTANGIBLE BENEFITS

Some (but not all) of these Merits and Flaws involve tangible system benefits or disadvantages, such as increasing or decreasing the difficulty numbers of particular rolls. These mechanics help make your character's genuinely human identity an actual part of the game.

Other traits involve no systems. This is not to say the latter kind are of no use. Quite the contrary. These "soft" traits establish roleplaying guides for you or the Storyteller to take into account during a story. If they're integrated thoroughly into your game, they enhance the story by allowing for a deeper level of realism as your character and the world interact.

Sometimes a Flaw can make a story truly compelling. Just look at the number of flawed heroes in fiction and movies. Characters' imperfections are often what make them interesting. Similarly, a Merit can help explain aspects of your character's life that you otherwise might have trouble justifying in a narrative fashion. For example, balancing a character's mortal identity with its social ties and obligations against obligations to hell-bound fallen overlords is difficult in the extreme. An appropriate Merit can explain in game terms why her friends won't desert her, why her boss won't fire her or why her boyfriend won't leave her. Not to say that you couldn't explain these things yourself, but Merits and Flaws help make such character qualities identifiable.

LOSING MERITS AND FLAWS

As your chronicle continues and your character pursues his goals, the inspiration, explanation or justification for some of his Merits and Flaws might change. He might undergo corrective surgery for a physical impairment, for example, or be healed through the application of lore. The negated trait is usually withdrawn, and it's up to you and the Storyteller to decide how to reassign freebie points. Sooner or later, the points from an alleviated Flaw must manifest in other disabilities and disadvantages, usually dictated by ongoing story events. If your character's Chronic Illness (4-pt. Flaw) is alleviated, you have four freebie points to reassign to Flaws. These new challenges can be related to your old one, say your character is now Medicated (as a 1-pt. Flaw) to remain healthy. Or Flaws can be completely new and unique. Multiple low-level Flaws can replace the lost one, or a single equally rated Flaw can be acquired. The Storyteller must approve the choice of a new Flaw, or he might decide one for your character based on story events. He might not even tell you what your new Flaw is until it's made clear during unfolding events.



THE APOCALYPTIC FORM

A demon's apocalyptic form is the manifestation of the character's true Celestial nature, reshaping the flesh of her mortal host into an idealized expression of her divine essence. In the blink of an eye, an out-of-shape, middle-aged housewife can change into an iron-skinned giant or a shadow-garbed reaper of souls. The limitations and imperfections of their host forms are swept away in a blaze of infernal glory. Crippled — or missing — limbs are restored, illnesses vanish, and deformities are healed for an all-too-brief time, only to return when the display of Faith fades once more.

When a demon manifests her apocalyptic abilities, even selectively, the expression of Faith reshapes her body into a more idealized form. Physical impairments — and even some advantageous abilities — are supplanted by the character's Celestial nature. Therefore, when your character fully manifests her apocalyptic visage (i.e., her physical body alters to fit the appearance described in Chapter Seven of the *Demon* core rules) she is freed from the limitations of her physical and mental Flaws. By the same token, she can't take advantage of her physical or mental Merits either. (Her Catlike Balance or Eidetic Memory is momentarily lost or supplanted as her mortal body is transformed into a divine entity.) As soon as the character reverts to her mortal body, the Merits and Flaws return.

The freebie points liberated by a lost Merit should also be reassigned based on chronicle events. Sooner or later, your character gains some new kind of advantage. Freebie points made available by a lost Merit must be spent on other Merits. They can't be spent to gain more Attributes, Abilities or Backgrounds in play.

CATEGORIES

Merits and Flaws are divided into the following groups.

INFERNAL

When the fallen were consigned to the Abyss, they lost everything — their power, their possessions and their relationships to their mortal followers. This category deals with the few advantages and disadvantages the fallen carry with them into their new existence in the World of Darkness.

PHYSICAL

A demon's host body is the one tool he has available at all times, no matter how much Faith he

currently possesses. This category deals with the advantages and disadvantages inherent to the physical frame.

SOCIAL

For all their power, the fallen live in a world of mortals. To succeed and survive, the fallen have to interact with society, as a means of both gaining temporal power and sources of Faith. This category catalogs potential social benefits or problems that your character might have.

MENTAL

A demon's mind is just as much part of her armory as is her body. This category deals with internal cognitive abilities and states that help or hinder her pursuit of power, revenge or redemption.

LEGAL

Demons can't just step out of society and do what they want, despite their earth-shaking powers. They have to conform to society's laws or deal with the world as a wanted fugitive. This category presents you with options that make dealing with mortal society easier... or much more complicated.

ECONOMIC

Money makes the world go 'round, but it's also the root of all evil, or so the clichés go. For all their wisdom and arcane knowledge, the fallen are as dependant on material wealth as anyone else, especially if they now have a family to take care of. This category explores the financial advantages or disadvantages your character might face.

MERITS

Merits are particular facets of your character's mortal host or lifestyle that were advantageous to him in the course of his everyday life prior to becoming possessed. Now they are valuable benefits your character can exploit in his dealings with mortal and fallen alike.

INFERNAL

ANGELIC AURA (1-PT. MERIT)

Your character exudes the nobility and grace of a Celestial even in her unaltered mortal state. Despite her physical appearance, she radiates an aura of wisdom, confidence and transcendent authority that belies her mortal condition, even as her Torment begins to weigh heavily on her soul. The difficulty of all Charisma and Appearance rolls decreases by one when your character interacts with mortals.

ANGELIC GAZE (1-PT. MERIT)

The eyes are the windows to the soul, and the act of possession has altered the eyes of your character's mortal host to reflect his celestial nature. A Devil's eyes might be the color of the golden sun or the sullen red of banked embers; a Devourer's eyes might be the lantern yellow of a wolf or lion. The difficulty of all Leadership, Intimidation or Empathy rolls decreases by one.

DEBT OF GRATITUDE (1- TO 3-PT. MERIT)

Another demon owes your character a debt of gratitude because of something either he or his liege did for her during the war. The depth of gratitude the demon owes depends on how many points you wish to spend. One point might mean that the demon owes your character a favor; three points might mean that she owes your character her life.

ATAVISTIC FORM (2-PT. MERIT)

Upon their return to the mortal world, the fallen have discovered that many of their past exploits have lived on in human legend. Although time and the interpretations of human minds distort these legends, demons are nevertheless able to tap into these atavistic memories through the appearance of their apocalyptic form. Your character's revelatory form is an iconic image in human myth, be it a visage of a dragon, a fire giant or a winsome siren. The difficulty of all Social rolls decreases by one when interacting with mortals when the demon is in apocalyptic form. Additionally, the difficulty to resist the effects of Revelation increases by one.

DREAMS OF THE PAST (2-PT. MERIT)

When dreaming, your character is able to recall especially vivid memories of the Age of Wrath, dredging the recollections from deep in her host body's subconscious. Your character has no conscious control over what memories she revisits while she is asleep, but many pertain specifically to the situations and challenges that your character is dealing with at the moment. The Storyteller can use this Merit to impart useful information to your character that she might not otherwise know. Additionally, if your character has the Legacy Background, this Merit reduces the difficulty of all Legacy rolls by one.

FAMOUS LIEGE (2-PT. MERIT)

Your character is the vassal of a legendary lord of the infernal host, which grants your character an aura of authority and influence beyond her own accomplishments. Most low-ranking demons will be eager to curry your character's favor, hoping to be

remembered later when her dark lord has returned in triumph. Upon learning your character's identity, most low-ranking demons will treat you with a certain degree of deference and respect, giving you the benefit of the doubt in most questionable situations. Note that this Merit is separate and in addition to the Eminence Background, which reflects your character's personal rank and influence. The character who possesses both is able to open doors and gain respect in any growing demonic court by virtue of their identity. The Storyteller is the final arbiter as to how much influence and respect your character can command based on the needs of her chronicle.

PHYSICAL

ACUTE SENSE (1-PT. MERIT)

One of your character's senses, be it sight, smell, taste, touch or hearing is exceptionally keen. The difficulty of any roll involving this sense decreases by two.

GOOD RIGHT HOOK (1-PT. MERIT)

The power of your character's punch belies her actual strength. Maybe she took up boxing at the gym, or perhaps she's just been in a lot of fights. Regardless, people tend to fall over when your character hits them. Add two dice to your damage roll for any Brawl-based attack.

HOLLOW LEG (1-PT. MERIT)

Your character can drink like a fish. The amount of alcohol she can put away during a binge is truly phenomenal. What's more aggravating to her buddies is how little she suffers for it. Anyone who gets in a drinking competition with your character quickly regrets it. Halve any penalties your character suffers for consuming alcohol.

LIGHT SLEEPER (1-PT. MERIT)

Although your character sleeps well, she is awakened quickly by a commotion. Any disturbance, from an exorcist picking the lock of your character's apartment to a cat getting amorous on a neighboring roof, wakes your character immediately.

NATURAL RUNNER (1-PT. MERIT)

Your character's mortal host enjoyed running ever since she was a kid. While most people wheeze and complain about exercising, running has always been an absolute pleasure for her. As a result, your character can run like the wind when the occasion demands it. Your character's Dexterity counts as one point higher than it actually is for purposes of determining movement rates.

PERFECT BALANCE (1-PT. MERIT)

Your character's sense of balance is superb. Not even the narrowest of ledges scares her because she has such a good command of her physical equilibrium. She's probably a good dancer, too. This Merit allows you to reduce the difficulty of all balance-related rolls by two.

ROBUST HEALTH (1-PT. MERIT)

Your character has the constitution of an ox. She rarely gets ill, if at all, and food poisoning is a stranger to her. Reduce the difficulty of any roll to resist illness or poisoning — including alcohol poisoning — by two.

SEA LEGS (1-PT. MERIT)

Your character is no landlubber, but a salty sea dog at heart. She's at home on a boat even when traveling rough seas. She suffers no penalty incurred due to rough seas or unpredictable ship motion on any actions performed while aboard.

BUNDLE OF ENERGY (2-PT. MERIT)

Your character is full of energy. She can subsist on five or six hours of sleep a night, being unable to stay in bed any longer. Her days are full of physical activity, and she can work long into the night without penalty.

CATNAPPER (2-PT. MERIT)

While your character needs six to eight hours of sleep per night, she doesn't need it all at once. She can catch her Zs as and when she can. As long as her naps total six to eight hours in a 24-hour period — and they usually do unless she's forcibly denied naps — she can function as normal.

FORGETTABLE (2-PT. MERIT)

It's not that your character is ugly. It's just that, well, people's eyes tend to slide over her. She's of average height and build, unremarkable looks and run-of-the-mill dress. People have problems remembering her appearance after they meet her, unless she has talked with them for a long time. Certainly, people won't be able to give a useful description of her if they only see her briefly. Your character must have an Appearance of 2 or 3 and a Charisma no higher than 3 to take this Merit. If either of those Attributes moves outside that range through play, you lose this Merit. This Merit applies solely to your character's physical appearance. She might have a dreadful credit rating, a police file as thick as the phone book and a sexual history that would make a porn star blush, but people just don't remember her on the street.

GOOD NIGHT VISION (2-PT. MERIT)

Maybe your character's mortal host spent a lot of time camping. Maybe she's just a fisherman who's used to getting up before dawn. For whatever reason, your character's night vision is excellent. The difficulty of Perception rolls decreases by two at night.

SEXY (2-PT. MERIT)

Your character's one sexy mutha. She might not necessarily be that classically good looking, but there's something about the way she moves and acts that exudes sexuality. As a result, she draws in members of the opposite sex, or homosexual members of her own sex, with raw animal magnetism. You may reduce the difficulty of any Social roll by two when dealing with a character who is attracted to your character. If you actively attempt to use your character's charms against someone, you may reduce the difficulty by three.

DAREDEVIL (3-PT. MERIT)

Your character loves taking risks, and the adrenaline rush she gets helps her succeed at stunts. Whether it's leaping from a moving train or taking on a Devourer in face-to-face combat, your character lives for danger. When attempting such a dangerous action, you can add three dice to your roll and ignore one botch die that results. In general, the action attempted must be at least difficulty 8 and have the potential to inflict three health levels of lethal damage or six levels of bashing damage if you fail. The Storyteller is the final arbiter of when this Merit applies, and he may impose a cap of one hair-raising feat per game session.

HUGE SIZE (3-PT. MERIT)

Your character is one big individual. He's at least 6'10" in size and 300 pounds in weight, making his physical presence nearly impossible to ignore. Because of his sheer bulk, your character gains an extra bruised health level. Your Storyteller might also award bonuses for attempts to push objects, break down doors or resist being knocked down.

SOCIAL**APPROACHABLE (1-PT. MERIT)**

There's something very approachable and non-threatening about your character's mortal persona. People find it very easy to start a conversation with her. Reduce the difficulty of any Empathy rolls involving other people or demons by one.

EARLY ADOPTER (1-PT. MERIT)

"Wow! Look at that new palmtop computer. I just got to have one." Your character's mortal host was the

kind of person who wanted to have the latest gadgets and technology. It's a drain on your character's cash, and her apartment is cluttered with some neat-seeming technology that turned out to be crap, but you have a solid sense of how to use the latest gadgets. You quickly understand and use most new consumer-level technology. Add two dice to any Technology roll when trying to figure out how to use a new gadget.

FUNNY (1-PT. MERIT)

Your character can make people laugh. Her timing and sense of the absurd is second to none. She's always being invited to parties because she's so much fun. Most importantly, your character is also very good at judging the appropriateness of her humor. Sometimes the right joke can lift the spirits of people when everything seems to be going against them. Therefore, she does what she can to make life more bearable for her friends and compatriots, even when the situation seems darkest. Reduce by two the difficulty of any Social roll that is intended to boost morale.

GOOD LISTENER (1-PT. MERIT)

Your character has a keen interest in people. She enjoys hearing what they have to say and is prepared to take the time to hear them out without interrupting with her own opinion. Others can sense this, and they open up to your character without really meaning to. The difficulty of all apparently friendly Social rolls that involve people talking to your character decreases by two.

GOOD TASTE (1-PT. MERIT)

Your character has a knack for choosing the right food from the menu, telling the right anecdotes and giving the right presents. She's seen the right films for discussion in cultured company, and she wouldn't know who starred in *Dumb and Dumber*, let alone have the first clue about the plot. Her taste makes forging social contacts among the upper classes much easier, whatever her origins. Reduce the difficulty by two for any Social roll intended to gain acceptance or to impress in a high-society or business situation.

GOSSIP (1-PT. MERIT)

Your character is an incurable gossip, and other gossips recognize a kindred spirit in her. She's more than happy to spend hours shooting the breeze with complete strangers, all the while discussing the minutiae of other people's lives. Reduce the difficulty by two for any Interrogation rolls made in a social situation, without bullying or intimidation.

IN LOVE (1-PT. MERIT)

Your character has fallen for someone (or her mortal host had), and the feeling is reciprocated. The

world seems a better place. Colors are brighter, music is more enchanting, and life just seems less desperate. Even the slightest success boosts your confidence. Regain two Willpower instead of one when your character wakes up each morning.

MEDIA JUNKIE (1-PT. MERIT)

TV, radio, newspaper, magazine, film — your character can't get enough. She's a voracious consumer of pop culture and is always up on the latest movies, music and current affairs. Reduce the difficulty by two on any Social or Research roll that involves pop culture.

NATURAL LEADER (1-PT. MERIT)

Your character has been gifted with a certain bearing and personality that naturally makes people defer to her opinion or orders. You receive two extra dice on Leadership rolls. Your character must have a Charisma of 3 or greater to purchase this Merit.

NATURAL POLITICIAN (1-PT. MERIT)

Your character is right at home among the devious minds of the political world. Whether it's the cut and thrust of office jockeying or the showboating of regional politics, she knows how to get what she wants. You receive two extra dice on Manipulation rolls in social situations that involve an element of politics, such as an office or gun-club meeting. Your character must have a Manipulation of 3 or more to have this Merit. The Politics Ability has no bearing because this Merit represents raw talent, not the knowledge gained through long experience.

PUNCTUAL (1-PT. MERIT)

Your character is a master of the virtually lost art of turning up on time. If she has a meeting at 10:00 AM, she's sitting in the reception room at 9:59. If she has an 8:00 PM dinner date with her inamorato, she'll be in the restaurant at 8:00 on the dot, so he doesn't end up waiting. Barring deliberate interference in her plans, your character almost always manages things so that she turns up on time. It makes her a great organizer, assuming her allies come through for her.

SMOOTH (1-PT. MERIT)

Your character might come from the wrong side of the tracks. She might not have known the proper etiquette in every situation. She probably don't have a clue which fork to use when eating out. Yet none of that matters. She presents herself with such an easy grace and carefree attitude that people forgive her most errors. They might not like her much, but they enjoy her company so much that her rougher edges are quickly forgiven and forgotten. Reduce the difficulty of any Manipulation rolls by two.

WONNETH WORDS (1-PT. MERIT)

Language is a finely honed tool, not a blunt instrument. Your character is able to create exactly the effect she wants by choosing her words carefully, in both written and verbal communication. Gain two dice on any Expression roll that involves words.

BEST FRIEND (2-PT. MERIT)

Your character has the good fortune to have a best mate. He stands with your character through thick and thin. They've shared jokes, tragedies and all the highs and lows of life over the years, all of which has forged a bond between them that some married couples never achieve. Perhaps they were at school or worked together. While your character might not be able to share the truth of her real nature with her friend, she can rely on him to back her up to the best of his abilities without asking too many difficult questions. A best friend is closer to you and more committed to helping you than an ally (see the Allies Background on page 153 of the *Demon* core rules), but he demands far more in return. He goes that extra mile to get her out of trouble that an ally wouldn't, but he counts on her to do the same for him.

ENCHANTING VOICE (2-PT. MERIT)

Your character has the most incredible voice. It has a quality that makes people unable to ignore it. If she whispers seductive words in someone's ear, his heart melts. If she demands that someone do something, he springs into action at her behest. The difficulty of all rolls involving the use of your character's voice to persuade, seduce, charm or give orders decreases by two.

FASHION SENSE (2-PT. MERIT)

Your character doesn't just dress well, she has an innate sense of what sort of clothes suit a particular occasion. This sense isn't a case of slavishly following the latest trends from the hottest designers either, it's a matter of knowing when to dress smart and when to be casual and having the know-how to carry it off on a limited budget. Subtract one from the difficulty of Social rolls in situations where dressing appropriately is important, such as in a business meeting, chatting at a club or attending an upper-crust function.

FLIRT (2-PT. MERIT)

Your character's mortal friends claim that she's a terrible flirt, but that quite manifestly isn't true. She's great at it. She's an absolute master at all the subtle signals that give off that particular combination of promise and denial that makes teasing so much fun. At her best, she can make members of the opposite sex, or members of the same sex, putty in her hands. Add two dice to all Social rolls in such circumstances.

GOOD SENSE OF CHARACTER (2-PT. MERIT)

Your character has an innate instinct for reading a person. She can make an appraisal of the kind of person someone is after meeting him for a few seconds, based on little more than gut instinct. She is rarely wrong. Decrease the difficulty by two on any Perception roll based on assessing a person or demon.

GREAT Liar (2-PT. MERIT)

Lying comes naturally to your character. Even the most involved deception sounds like God's own truth when it comes tripping off her honeyed tongue. Gain two dice on any Social roll that involves lying to or deceiving another person or demon.

Laid-Back Friends (2-PT. MERIT)

Everyone needs good buddies, and your character has a particularly good bunch. They're pretty cool about when they see her; they don't get all uptight if she's not in contact for a while. They're also great at not interfering with her life. Sure, she's gone through some changes of late, but that's her choice. They'll be there if she wants to talk or needs help, but they'll otherwise keep the hell out of her hair. If these guys are also your character's allies (as per the Background), they'll help her without asking too many difficult questions. Hey, that's her business, right?

PEOPLE PERSON (2-PT. MERIT)

Your character is a social animal. She just likes being around others. Hell, they like being around her. Her open and gregarious nature makes people warm to her quickly. The difficulty decreases by two on any Social roll to create a good impression on another.

Pillar of the Community (2-PT. MERIT)

Your character is a fine, upstanding person, respected by those around her. Through participation in local events, helping out with community groups or helping others, she's become well liked and trusted by those who live around her. When she brings them a warning of potential danger or offers an explanation of strange, miraculous events, they're likely to believe her. She might even be able to call upon their aid in a pinch, but she shouldn't count on help every time things go sour.

SEASONED TRAVELER (2-OR 4-PT. MERIT)

Your character is adept at finding accommodation, supplies and local help wherever she goes in her home country. With the 4-pt. version, the same applies to foreign countries. She might not speak the language well, or at all, but she knows how to go about obtaining things and learning about the local culture without offending the natives, through a combination of prior research and general street smarts.

Socially Aware (2-PT. MERIT)

Social interplay is an open book to your character. She's the first to spot the hidden relationships between people after only a few minutes of observation. Such subtle clues as body language and position, voice tone and choice of words speak volumes to her about the underlying connections between people. Gain two dice on any Perception roll involving interaction between other people.

TRIVIA CHAMP (2-PT. MERIT)

Where does your character come up with this stuff? Whether it's through plenty of reading, too much TV or just an eclectic bunch of friends, she has the oddest collection of facts stored away in her skull. Once in a while, at the Storyteller's discretion, one of them turns out to be just the piece of information she needs. Your character might not actually be very bright, but the sheer amount of anecdotal knowledge she's picked up makes her appear to be.

UPRIGHT CITIZEN (2-PT. MERIT)

Up until the moment of possession, your character's mortal host was a model citizen. Not even a whiff of scandal has ever tainted her. Her working life has been good without being extraordinary. Her friends would be hard-pressed to come up with any embarrassing secrets about her, and even her ex-lovers are complimentary about her most of the time. Your character just doesn't have any dirty secrets to come back to haunt her, and people who know her have a hard time believing anything bad about her.

VIBRANT NEIGHBORHOOD (2-PT. MERIT)

Your character lives in a part of the city where everything goes, and does so most of the time. The streets are fairly busy late at night, and the inhabitants are up to all sorts of strange things. If anything odd happens, people tend to dismiss it as just another part of the local routine.

CORPORATE SAVVY (3-PT. MERIT)

Your character's mortal host has been a warrior of the cube battlefields for a long time and now your character knows how the corporate mind works. She understands the dynamics of money, business, information and power that make up companies, and she can manipulate them for her own ends to a limited degree. Add two dice to any roll involving manipulating a corporate structure or a corporate employee.

Media Savvy (3-PT. MERIT)

There's a knack to dealing with the media, and your character has it. She's learned what journalists want, and she does her best to provide it in a way that best suits



her. She can create, suppress and redirect stories with a fair amount of effectiveness, just by the spin she puts on them. Most of the time, she tries to set up situations so the media reads them the way she wants. Add two dice to any Social rolls in which your character deals with journalists or reporters.

SUPPORTIVE FAMILY (3-PT. MERIT)

Sure, your character's acting strange these days. There's something going on that she can't or won't tell them about, but it's important to her. That much is clear. They're her family, they love her, and they'll be there for her. They're sure she'll get around to telling them the whole truth sooner or later. Until then, they have no choice but to trust her. Unless you have also taken the Allies Background for your character, her family won't go out of the way to help her. They just don't ask the questions that she can't answer.

LUCKY (4-PT. MERIT)

Your character's mortal host was normally a very lucky sort of person. Since she was a kid, things always worked out her way. Maybe she took a job with a small firm just before the business went through the roof, leading to her rapid promotion. Once per chapter (game session), the Storyteller may decrease the difficulty of a critical roll you make by two. If you succeed, it's because some random factor makes things easier for your character.

MENTAL

COMMON SENSE (1-PT. MERIT)

Your character has been gifted with practical, everyday wisdom that allows her to avoid making stupid, obvious mistakes. Whenever she's about to act in a way that's contrary to common sense, the Storyteller can make a suggestion as to the likely outcome of the action, possibly warning you off. Unlike Demon's Intuition Ability, this Merit doesn't allow you to make good guesses, nor does it offer you any particular insight. It just helps you avoid doing especially dumb things.

CONCENTRATION (1-PT. MERIT)

Your character is rather good at shutting distractions out and focusing on the task at hand. She's unaffected by disturbances — such as screaming kids, loud noises, hanging upside down or DJs playing really terrible music — when she focuses on a particular action.

GOOD MAP READER (1-PT. MERIT)

Your character is the Holy Grail of drivers everywhere: someone who can read a map well. Whether it's

using an old map and a road atlas to locate an Earthbound's lair, or the New York subway plan and a street atlas, she can find her way to where she needs to be.

FAST READER (1-PT. MERIT)

Your character can read and understand a piece of writing far faster than most people can. While this Merit can make long train or plane journeys expensive propositions due to the number of books and magazines she goes through, it allows her to quickly extract useful information from anything written in her mortal host's native language.

GOOD RECOGNITION (1-PT. MERIT)

Your character is great at remembering people's names and places she's been. She can call to mind the name of somebody she met briefly at a party three months ago, while a bit drunk, as clearly as if she met them only yesterday. She can also remember the streets she staggered down on the way home. She's even good at remembering the names of people mentioned in newspaper stories and TV reports, as well as locations glimpsed in photographs or on TV.

HEALTHY CUSCISM (1-PT. MERIT)

Your character is good at separating truth from fiction, and someone has to be up pretty damn early to catch her off guard. She rarely takes what people say at face value until she's able to check the details herself. This Merit allows you to reduce the difficulty by two on any roll to perceive a lie. It should also be roleplayed as much as possible.

TIME SENSE (1-PT. MERIT)

Your character has an almost uncanny sense of time. She can estimate the amount of time that has passed, as well as the approximate time of day, without using a clock or any other means of measuring time.

CODE OF HONOR (2-PT. MERIT)

Your character has a personal code of ethics to which she adheres strictly. This code might be related to her experiences in the war or something of a legacy from her mortal host. You should work out the details of your code with the Storyteller before play begins. You gain two additional dice to all Willpower rolls when accomplishing a major feat in accordance with that code.

DETERMINED (2-PT. MERIT)

Your character is one tenacious bitch, determined to go her own way. It can be really difficult for people to persuade her otherwise. Gain two dice in any resisted roll in which someone tries to persuade her to do something. You might also have the Stubborn Flaw (see p. 82).

EIDETIC MEMORY (2-PT. MERIT)

Your character has a photographic memory. As a result, she can remember things she's seen, heard or read in perfect detail. Entire conversations, documents or pictures can be committed to memory with only minor concentration. Should she attempt the same feat under stressful conditions, such as trying to memorize a long list of names while three Earthbound thralls pound at the door, you must make a Perception + Alertness roll (difficulty 6) for her to summon enough concentration to finish the job (unless your character also has the Concentration Merit, which allows her to commit information to memory flawlessly).

INTERNET SAVVY (2-PT. MERIT)

The Internet is becoming increasingly common, but it is far from universal. Many users never progress beyond the basic email/simple surfing to "sites whose address you know" stage. Characters with this Merit are adept at using the Internet in all its vast, rambling confusion — no small feat for the technologically challenged fallen.

NATURAL LINGUIST (2-PT. MERIT)

Your character's mortal host had a gift for other languages, reading and speaking them with the fluency of a native. When your character learns a language, reflected by increases in her Linguistics Ability, she learns it in more depth and with greater fluency than most do. You may add three dice to any roll involving writing, reading or speaking a language your character knows, barring her native tongue.

FAST LEARNER (3-PT. MERIT)

Your character learns the basics of a subject very quickly indeed. She can cram simple information about virtually any subject into her head quickly and easily. It takes the normal time to develop a deeper knowledge, of course, but your character starts getting the hang of things very quickly. The cost to gain a new Ability is one experience point instead of three. The costs for higher levels are normal, however.

NATURAL APTITUDE (3-PT. MERIT)

Your character has a particular Ability at which she excels. She's just a natural or has studied it so extensively that the Ability comes easily to her. You pay fewer than normal experience points to gain dots in the Ability, and each level is achieved as if it were one lower. The first point of the Ability costs only one experience point to gain if your character learns it after play begins. You also gain one extra die on any roll involving that Ability.

UNFLAPPABLE (3-PT. MERIT)

Your character's mortal host was a naturally placid person who took most things in stride. She was almost hit by a car? That was close. Her husband ran off with the kids? Ah, well. While she feels emotions like everyone else, she doesn't let them affect her the way others do. You gain two extra dice on any Willpower roll that involves staying calm or not overreacting to mundane experiences.

DIRECTION SENSE (4-PT. MERIT)

Your character has an innate sense of where she is and the distance she's traveled. She can make a good guess at which way is north, even without clues like the position of the sun. She rarely gets lost and can estimate the distance between two points pretty well. She might even be able to navigate her way through London's one-way systems. Maybe.

OPTIMISTIC (4-PT. MERIT)

Despite everything that has happened to your character, she refuses to accept the fact that life cannot and will not ultimately change for the better. Regain two Willpower when you wake up each morning, rather than the usual one.

LEGAL**SPECIALIST DRIVERS LICENSE
(1-PT. MERIT)**

Your character's driving repertoire extends far beyond the SUV or sports car. She is qualified to drive trucks, farm vehicles or some other specialized form of vehicular transportation.

DUAL NATIONALITY (2-PT. MERIT)

Thanks to being born from parents of different countries, your character's mortal host has dual nationality. She might even have two passports. This makes it easy for her to operate in two different places and even hide out in another country if things get too hot in her normal place of residence.

FIREARMS LICENSE (2-PT. MERIT)

The effect of this Merit depends on the country in which your game is set. In some countries (such as the UK) it indicates that your character is allowed to carry weapons. Without this Merit, possession of a firearm is illegal. In countries where individuals have a right to bear arms, it indicates that your character has a license to carry unusual or powerful firearms such as automatic weapons.

ECONOMIC**ALIMONY RECIPIENT (1- TO 3-PT. MERIT)**

Your character's host's marriage has failed, but at least that cheating bastard has to pay for it. The level

of Merit you buy indicates the number of Resources points your character can have (that must be purchased separately) for which she doesn't have to work. Her rating also suggests how wealthy her ex was or how badly he was beaten in court. Chances are she has the Children Flaw, too.

EYE FOR A BARGAIN (1-PT. MERIT)

Your character's mortal host had a knack for getting things cheaply. Sometimes she gets the goods she needs in sales. Sometimes she gets them through wholesalers. Other times, she just hunts around until she finds a bargain. However she does it, the difficulty of any Resources roll you make decreases by two.

**INDEPENDENT INCOME
(1- TO 5-PT. MERIT)**

Through hard work, heredity or phenomenal good fortune, your character's Resources rating is an independent income for which she doesn't have to work. The level of Merit you buy indicates how many dots of Resources (which must be purchased separately) your character has that do not require her to work.

**GOOD CREDIT RATING
(2-PT. MERIT)**

Your character's mortal host always paid off her debts on time and built up enough financial security to keep the most cynical banker happy. She can access a decent amount of credit as a result. Your character must have a Resources rating of 3 or more to purchase this Merit.

WEALTHY PARTNER (2-PT. MERIT)

Your character's "other half" is pulling in a fortune, at least by her earning standards, and he's happy to be the breadwinner. With him covering the bills and living expenses, she can get away with a part-time job that allows her time to fulfill her obligations to allies, superiors at court and so on.

FLEXIBLE JOB (3-PT. MERIT)

Your character's job allows her to work flexible hours or allows her to travel a lot. Or perhaps she's effectively her own boss, with no one monitoring her activities. However she does it, she can earn her Resources rating through a job that doesn't significantly restrict her infernal activities.

PAID MORTGAGE (3-PT. MERIT)

Your character's house is her own. She's paid off the bank, so mortgage repayments are no longer an issue, nor is repossession a threat. No matter what happens, she at least has a roof over her head.

FLAWS

Flaws are failings or problems that plagued your character's mortal host through life and possibly contributed to his downfall. These difficulties are part of the mortal legacy your character has inherited, hindering the pursuit of his goals.

INFERNAL

ANCIENT ANIMOSITY (1-TO 3-PT. FLAW)

Your character still holds to an ancient feud with another demon that dates from the War of Wrath. Even if the object of her animosity remains in the Abyss, he will make every attempt to even the score against her through allies and proxies. The amount of points spent on this Flaw indicates how far your character's foe is willing to go to strike back at her. One point indicates a minor or largely forgotten feud; the other demon will take steps to make your character's life difficult only when it is convenient for him to do so. Two points indicate that your character's enemy is actively working on plans to make your character's existence as difficult as possible, enlisting the aid of friends and allies to strike at her whenever the opportunity arises. Three points indicate that your character has gained an implacable foe that thinks of nothing else but your character's demise. He bends all of his energies and resources to make her life a living Hell.

CURSED BY GOD (1-TO 5-PT. FLAW)

Your character has been especially cursed by the Creator for actions taken during the War of Wrath. The strength and pervasiveness of the curse depends upon how many points you wish to gain. Examples follow:

- If your character passes on a secret she is entrusted with, her betrayal will come back to harm her in some way. (1 pt.)
- Your character stutters uncontrollably when she tries to describe what she has seen or heard. (2 pts.)
- Tools break or malfunction when your character tries to use them. (3 pts.)
- Your character is doomed to make enemies of those whom she most loves or admire. (4 pts.)
- Every one of your character's accomplishments or triumphs will eventually become soiled or fail in some way. (5 pts.)

Your character might or might not have a way to atone for her actions and free herself of this curse, at the Storyteller's discretion.

TRUE REFLECTION (1-PT. FLAW)

It was once believed that mirrors reflected not one's physical appearance, but the true nature of one's soul. Your character's reflection reveals her actual celestial nature. When she looks in the mirror, she sees her apocalyptic form rather than her mortal guise. This reflection changes as her Torment increases or decreases. Mortals who see this reflected image are not subject to Revelation (see page 253 of the **Demon** core rules for details), but they will react with shock, amazement or alarm.

INFAMY (2-PT. FLAW)

Your character's actions in the War of Wrath have earned her a degree of ill repute and hostility among her fellow demons. The difficulty of all Social rolls increases by one when your character is interacting with other fallen.

NIGHTMARES (1-PT. FLAW)

Your character's sleep is plagued by visions of the horrors she saw during the war. You must make a Willpower roll (difficulty 7) in order for the character to sleep through the night without being tormented. The day after, add two to the difficulty of the first Ability or Attribute roll you make to deal with other demons.

WAR WOUND (2-PT. FLAW)

Your character endured a terrible wound during the war that scarred the very essence of her being, manifesting itself even to this day when she reveals her Celestial nature. When your character adopts her apocalyptic form, she automatically suffers one health level of aggravated damage above and beyond any damage she currently suffers. This damage cannot be healed by any means.

CANNOT ENTER HOLY GROUND (3-PT. FLAW)

Your character's intense regret and guilt following her rebellion against God is so great that she cannot bear to enter holy ground or handle holy objects without suffering intense pain. No matter what her Torment level is, your character still suffers damage from holy ground and sanctified items such as crosses and holy water.

FLASHBACKS (3-PT. FLAW)

Like veterans of many mortal wars, the sights your character witnessed during the War of Wrath haunt her still, filling her dreams with visions of horror and destruction and occasionally overtaking her during moments of stress. When the character is under intense pressure or involved in combat, your character might experience powerful flashbacks of



ancient battles. The Storyteller can call for a Willpower roll (difficulty 8) at appropriate moments. If the roll fails, the character thinks she's back in the war as she is caught up in a hallucinatory episode of incredible vividness and detail. As soon as the threat or source of stress is gone, you may begin making Willpower rolls (difficulty 7) for the character each turn to see if she can emerge from the visions of the past.

HUNTED (4-PT. FLAW)

Your character is pursued by a fanatical demon-hunter who believes (perhaps correctly) that she is a danger to humanity. Everyone with whom your character associates, be they mortal or fallen, might be hunted as well.

PROBATIONARY FACTION MEMBER (4-PT. FLAW)

Your character is a defector. She turned her back on her prior faction and still has much to prove before she is accepted by the demons to whom she has defected. Other demons who are members of her current faction treat her with distrust and even hostility, and her reputation might even sully those demons with whom she regularly associates.

PHYSICAL

ALLERGIES (1-PT. FLAW)

Your character's mortal body is allergic to a rather common substance such as cat hair that causes coughing, watery eyes and other distracting symptoms. The difficulty of all actions increases by one when exposed to whatever triggers her allergy.

ARTHRITIC (1-PT. FLAW)

Your character's joints, especially her hands, are tender and often swollen. When she attempts anything that requires fine and careful touch, such as sewing or repairing a watch, increase the difficulty of your roll by one.

COLOR BLIND (1-PT. FLAW)

Your character has trouble distinguishing between hues. You must make a Perception roll (difficulty 6) for your character to accurately determine the color of a given object.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTIC (1-OR 2-PT. FLAW)

Your character's mortal body has a physical feature that makes her very easy to pick out in crowds, such as elaborate tattoos, a scar or an obvious birthmark. This Flaw is worth one point if the characteristic is hidden easily under clothes, two points if it is not.

HEAVY SLEEPER (1-PT. FLAW)

Your character tends to sleep right through most disturbances, from the loud stereo playing next door to the exorcists laying a binding sigil around her bed. You must make a successful Willpower roll (difficulty 6) for the character to wake up quickly. Failure means she spends the equivalent of a combat turn waking up. A botch means she sleeps right through the disturbance, pending the Storyteller's judgment on the situation.

LAZY (1-PT. FLAW)

Your character has trouble motivating herself to do anything. She'd rather sit around the house watching TV and thinking of doing something with her life than actually getting up and doing it. She tends to complain loudly when there's work to do, and she likes to let things slide until the last possible moment. You must make a Willpower roll (difficulty 6) to take care of any routine tasks not directly related to your character's demonic activities, such as paying the electricity bill or getting the car's tires rotated.

LOW ALCOHOL TOLERANCE (1-PT. FLAW)

Alcohol goes straight to your character's head. While this can be an advantage when she tries to enjoy a night out on the cheap, it can be deadly when hunted by exorcists or worse. Double any penalties your character suffers for consuming alcohol.

MEDICATED (1-OR 5-PT. FLAW)

Your character's mortal body requires daily medication to stay in good health. As a one-point flaw, her medication is important for her long-term health but has little effect on her day-to-day well being, as with prescription drugs that keep your cholesterol down. The five-point version represents insulin shots or something else that is necessary to keep your character alive. If she should miss a day's worth of medicine, she automatically suffers a bashing or lethal level of damage for every 12 hours that pass without her medicine, as determined by the Storyteller. This damage heals at a rate of one level per 12 hours that pass once you resume your regular medication schedule. Time spent in apocalyptic form is not counted toward the total time without medication.

MOTION SICKNESS (1-PT. FLAW)

Your character becomes queasy and nauseated on boats, when traveling long distances by car or on amusement-park rides. Increase the difficulty by two on all actions your character takes when dealing with these conditions.

NO SENSE OF SMELL (1-PT. FLAW)

Your character has no sense of smell. Her mortal host might have simply been born without it, or she lost

it due to some freak accident. She can't smell anything, no matter how strong the odor is. Food tastes somewhat bland to her. On the good side, she isn't bothered by the stench of sewers, rotting flesh or other nastiness.

NO SENSE OF TASTE (1-PT. FLAW)

Your character's taste buds simply do not function. She cannot appreciate a fine meal, and she has trouble gauging the difference between good and bad food and drink.

NON-SWIMMER (1-PT. FLAW)

Your character never learned how to swim, and she has no natural talent for it. If she ever finds herself in a position where she has to try to swim, she can manage a pitiable doggie paddle. Increase the difficulty by two for any Athletics rolls involving swimming.

POOR EYESIGHT (1-OR 3-PT. FLAW)

Your character's mortal host is either severely nearsighted or farsighted. Increase the difficulty by two for any rolls that involve visual acuity. The one-point version is correctable with glasses or contact lenses. The three-point version is not.

POOR HEARING (1-OR 3-PT. FLAW)

Your character's hearing is exceptionally bad. Increase the difficulty by two on any roll involving hearing. This Flaw is worth one point if it is correctable with a hearing aid or similar device, three points if it is not.

SICKLY (1-PT. FLAW)

Your character is constantly coughing and wheezing, and she has trouble shaking colds. Her mortal host suffered almost every childhood illness imaginable, and she's only become worse as an adult. When checking to avoid catching a disease or developing an infection, increase the difficulty of the roll by two.

VICE (1-TO 3-PT. FLAW)

Your character is addicted to some sort of substance. The one-point version of this Flaw represents an addiction to a substance that is legal and easy to satisfy, such as cigarettes. The two-point version represents a legal or mildly illegal substance that inhibits her abilities to a serious degree, such as alcohol or marijuana. The three-point version represents an addiction to a highly illegal or highly dangerous "hard" drug such as heroin. Your character is always under the effects of your chosen vice unless she assumes her apocalyptic form.

UNTHIRTY APPEARANCE (1-PT. FLAW)

Your character's mortal host looks like she did in high school. She always gets carded at bars and often has to produce identification to buy even cigarettes. In

order to gain entry to clubs, concerts and bars, or to purchase alcohol, your character needs to present a valid-looking ID.

DISFIGURED (2-PT. FLAW)

Your character's host's face is misshapen or maimed. Increase the difficulty by two on any rolls involving social situations when your character is not in his apocalyptic form.

INSOMNIAC (2-PT. FLAW)

For whatever reason, your character has tremendous trouble getting more than a few hours of sleep. She is often groggy and slow-witted as a result. Increase the difficulty of any Alertness, Awareness and Intuition rolls by two.

LOW PAIN TOLERANCE (2-PT. FLAW)

Your character's mortal host had a very low threshold for pain. Your character turns into a whimpering, blubbering ball of misery at the first sign of it. While your character soaks damage normally, she suffers an additional -1 die-pool penalty when she is injured.

OBESSE (2-PT. FLAW)

Your character's host body is seriously overweight, large enough that she has trouble using the seats in most theaters. Add two to the difficulty of any Dodge or Athletics rolls you make. Your character moves at half the normal rate.

OLD INJURY (2-PT. FLAW)

Your character's host body was hurt pretty badly back in her younger days, and she now pays the price with chronic pain and swelling. Increase the difficulty of any Athletics roll by two.

POOR NIGHT VISION (2-PT. FLAW)

Your character's eyesight is poor in low-light conditions. Increase the difficulty of any action attempted in dim light, such as that from a flashlight or when under starlight, by two.

SHORT (2-PT. FLAW)

Your character's host body is less than five feet tall, making it difficult to reach and use many objects designed for adult use. Your character's movement rate is also half that of normal-sized people.

CRIPPLED LIMB (3-PT. FLAW)

Your character's mortal body is either missing a limb or has injured one so badly that it is unusable. If one of her arms is crippled, increase the difficulty by two for actions that normally require two hands, such as firing a rifle. If one of her legs is crippled, she

moves at only one-quarter normal speed without some sort of cane, walker or wheelchair. With the appropriate aid, your character can move up to half normal speed.

ELDERLY (3-PT. FLAW)

While your character's mortal body is just as strong and quick as a younger host, it doesn't have the endurance or resilience of youth anymore. You make soak rolls against a difficulty of 7 instead of the normal 6. In addition, increase the dice-pool penalty for each of your character's levels of injury by one.

SHAKY HANDS (3-PT. FLAW)

Your character has trouble keeping herself composed under pressure. In any extremely stressful situation such as combat, her hands shake so badly that she has trouble completing any tasks that require a delicate touch or intense concentration. Examples include picking a lock, loading bullets into a revolver or typing at a computer. Increase the difficulty of any rolls for such high-stress actions by two.

MISSING EYE (3-PT. FLAW)

Your character's mortal body is missing an eye. Increase the difficulty by two for any Perception rolls involving eyesight. The difficulties of all die rolls involving depth-perception (such as ranged-weapon attacks) increases by two as well.

CHILD (4-PT. FLAW)

Your character's mortal host is pre-pubescent. She's much smaller than the average adult, and she moves at half the rate of adults. Also, since the host body isn't fully developed physically, your character may not start play with more than three dots in any Physical Attribute. Similarly, your character does not have the experience of an adult, so he cannot start play with more than three dots in any Knowledge Ability.

CHRONIC ILLNESS (4-PT. FLAW)

Your character's mortal body suffers from a debilitating illness such as chronic fatigue syndrome or even cancer. She frequently feels weak and is injured easily. Add two to the difficulty of any Athletics and soak rolls.

DEAFNESS (4-PT. FLAW)

Your character cannot hear. You automatically fail any test that requires hearing, and the difficulty of appropriate Alertness rolls increases by three.

BLIND (6-PT. FLAW)

Your character can't see. Increase the difficulty of any rolls involving hand-eye coordination by three.

SOCIAL

BAD LIAR (1-PT. FLAW)

Your character's mortal host had tremendous trouble lying. The spontaneous excuses that she came up with were usually unbelievably elaborate or easily refuted with the bare modicum of research. While telling a lie, your character stutters, stammers, blushes and generally looks guilty. Increase the difficulty by two on any roll that involves verbal deception.

BALDING (1-PT. FLAW)

Your character barely has any hair left on his head, whether it's due to old age or cruel genes. He is relatively easy to pick out of crowds and has problems making a good impression on the opposite sex. Increase the difficulty by one for any Ability rolls involved in attempting to seduce a member of the opposite sex.

BULLY (1-PT. FLAW)

Your character tends to push people around when she can get away with it. This aggression doesn't necessarily take on a physical display. It is often purely social. She chafes under the leadership of more forceful personalities and can be a malcontent when she isn't in charge.

CHILDREN (1-PT. FLAW)

Your character has children for whom she is the primary emotional, social and economic provider. She takes a lot of joy in her kids and prides herself on being a good parent, but clawing for rank and title in the infernal court gets in the way of parenting. If your character goes more than three days without seeing her kids because of work or activities related to her infernal agenda, she feels tremendous guilt. Your character ceases to regain a Willpower point after a night of rest until she sees her kids.

CHRONICALLY LATE (1-PT. FLAW)

Your character is always running behind schedule. If she agrees to meet someone at a particular time, you must make a successful Willpower roll (difficulty 6) to arrive on time. Failure means your character arrives between 15 and 30 minutes late. A botch means she shows up an hour late or not at all.

CHRONICALLY SHY (1-PT. FLAW)

Your character becomes very nervous and ill at ease when dealing with strangers in social situations. She often goes out of her way to avoid meeting new people. Increase the difficulty by two for all Social rolls involving strangers. If she becomes the center of attention in a large group of strangers, increase the difficulty of any Social rolls by two.

CHRONIC PESSIMIST (1-PT. FLAW)

Your character thinks the glass is half-empty, that the water in the glass is contaminated, and that the glass will probably be dropped any second now. Others practice pessimism out of habit, but it's an art form for your character. Nothing can ever go right, especially plans that others propose. She is the implacable voice of gloom and doom, always ready to point out a potential problem no matter how remote a chance it has of coming to pass. Add two to the difficulty of your Leadership rolls.

CLASSISH FAMILY (1-PT. FLAW)

Your character's family is as loving and supportive as anyone else's, but they don't take kindly to strangers. Your character's relatives either disapprove of her friends or they like to keep favors in the family. Your character's family members don't do anything that directly or indirectly helps anyone beyond their own.

COLLABORATOR (1-PT. FLAW)

Some time in the recent past, your character allied with demon-hunters (or possibly an Earthbound) to injure or eliminate a fallen rival. Or the gossip at court reports her doing so, whether it's true or not. Either way, word has spread through the local or widespread fallen community, and many demons mistrust your character.

CRUDE (1-PT. FLAW)

Your character's mortal host never learned any manners while growing up. As a result, your character talks with her mouth full, burps loudly and slurps her soup. When interacting with others in any refined or formal environment, increase the difficulty of all Social rolls by two.

CULTURAL SNOB (1-PT. FLAW)

Your character's mortal host had nothing but disdain for popular music, TV and movies. She couldn't name any of the current top-10 songs, and she thinks knowledge of TV is a sign of poor taste and incorrigible stupidity. Unfortunately, this means your character has a hard time relating to people who aren't equally snobbish about such things. When dealing with strangers who don't share your character's allegedly enlightened views, increase the difficulty of any die rolls involving socialization by two.

DEFENSIVE (1-PT. FLAW)

Your character's mortal host had problems taking responsibility for her actions. Perhaps she viewed herself as a perfectionist, or maybe she was simply too immature to accept the blame for failure. When things go wrong, your character tends to look for ways to blame others. She rarely accepts blame or criticism for her actions without contention.

ECCENTRIC APPEARANCE (1-PT. FLAW)

Your character's mortal host dyed her hair pink, wore clothes that were fashionable only among fringe subcultures such as goths or punks, and otherwise appeared nothing like the average citizen. When dealing with people who are not familiar with your character's host's particular subculture, increase the difficulty by two on any Social rolls you attempt. Your character's appearance unnerves mainstream people and makes them wary of her. Furthermore, her appearance is eye-catching, though people tend to focus on her mode of dress rather than her actual physical characteristics.

GAMBLING ADDICT (1-PT. FLAW)

Your character's mortal host was addicted to wagering money on games of chance. A sizeable chunk of her income goes toward this habit, and even when she wins she inevitably gambles the winnings away. Your character is too much of an addict to walk away with a profit over any extended period of time. Increase the difficulty of any Resources rolls you attempt by two.

GHOUlish SENSE OF HUMOR (1-PT. FLAW)

Your character finds humor in situations that make most people uncomfortable. Her bad taste doesn't make her particularly resistant to the horrors of gruesome sights. Her defense mechanism is simply to belittle the situation or those involved in an off-color way. When confronted with a horribly gory scene or otherwise uncomfortable situation, she tends to crack jokes and sling insults. The difficulty of any Social roll you make under such circumstances increases by two.

ICy DEMEANOR (1-PT. FLAW)

Your character is uncomfortable relating to people on an emotional level, which is reflected in her mannerisms and speech. She clams up, seeks escape or avoids eye contact. Increase the difficulty by two for any Empathy rolls made toward your character, as people have trouble identifying with her.

IGNORANT (1-PT. FLAW)

Your character tends to miss common cultural references that others take for granted, such as knowing that the Statue of Liberty is in New York City. Your character is not necessarily dumb or uneducated, though. A cloistered college researcher could just as easily dive so deeply into his field of study that he dismisses anything outside it. She does tend to give people the impression that she's slow or uneducated, however.

IMPRACTICAL DRESSER (1-PT. FLAW)

Your character's mortal host tended to dress with more of an eye toward impressing others than

personal comfort. Unless you explicitly state that your character dresses appropriately for physical activity, she wears high heels, tight jeans or something else that hampers physical activity. Increase the difficulty of Athletics or Dodge rolls by two when your character wears such clothes.

INSENSITIVE (1-PT. FLAW)

Your character has problems understanding how to gauge others' emotional reactions. She can be rather blunt in handling delicate matters, and she often finds herself apologizing without really understanding what she's done to offend someone. Add two the difficulty of any Empathy rolls you attempt.

INTOLERANT NEIGHBORS (1-PT. FLAW)

Your character's neighborhood is exceptionally placid, and people like it that way. Any odd noises or disturbances coming from your character's home invariably cause someone to call the police.

MISINFORMED (1-PT. FLAW)

Your character's mortal host upheld some odd belief, such as a conspiracy theory or a UFO visitation, that flies in the face of accepted science or common wisdom. Your character now tends to incorporate this misinformation into her worldview. Whenever you test a Knowledge that in some way relates to your character's belief, increase the difficulty by two. This penalty kicks in when you roll a failure, and it represents your character's tendency to come up with off-the-wall answers that are obviously incorrect to others.

MISTAKEN IDENTITY (1-PT. FLAW)

Your character's mortal appearance bears a striking resemblance to a notorious figure. This person could be a wanted criminal or an obnoxious local lout, or your character might simply look like an infamous media star. While most people can quickly figure out that your character isn't who they think she is, hotheads might not think twice before confronting her.

NEEDY FRIENDS (1-PT. FLAW)

Your character's mortal friends and other non-fallen social contacts have a pattern of falling into bad situations and turning to her for help. She is the bedrock in their lives. Whether they need some advice dealing with a girlfriend or need bail money, they look to her. If your character has the Allies Background, this effect is magnified even more, at the Storyteller's discretion.

NO INTERNET ACCESS (1-PT. FLAW)

Your character does not have an email address, web access or perhaps even a computer. She must do her research through non-digital outlets such as libraries or by old-fashioned legwork.

NO PHONE (1-PT. FLAW)

Your character does not have a regular phone number through which she can be contacted. Therefore, she can be very hard to get in touch with on short notice, and mortals find her difficult to track down.

NON-CONFRONTATIONAL (1-PT. FLAW)

Your character's mortal host had a hard time bringing up difficult subjects with others. Now, your character is willing to make a lot of sacrifices to avoid interpersonal confrontations. She lets people have their way simply to avoid fights, and she often steps into arguments and attempts to end them without giving any thought to the outcome of the discussion. She has a hard time coping with pushy people and finds herself making compromises that she later wishes she hadn't. Add two to the difficulty of any roll that involves debating or arguing with someone who is normally friendly with your character.

POOR DENTAL HEALTH (1-PT. FLAW)

Your character's teeth are obviously in need of serious work. They jut out at weird angles, and some have fallen out. When interacting with her preferred sex in superficial social settings such as a nightclub or bar, increase the difficulty of any Social roll by two.

POOR PERSONAL HYGIENE (1-PT. FLAW)

Your character often goes days without showering, and she only brushes her teeth when they start to gain a dark yellowish cast. She often smells quite bad and her breath is atrociously offensive. Add two to the difficulty of any die roll that involves interacting socially with others.

POOR TASTE (1-PT. FLAW)

Your character's mortal host wallowed in bathroom humor, lowbrow jokes and other practices that make more refined people uncomfortable. She had seen movies like *Dumb and Dumber* dozens of times and didn't plan on giving up on them any time soon. Your character's sense of humor makes her an instant pariah in any reasonably cultured company, and she can't help but let her true colors shine through in even short-term social contacts. Add two to the difficulty of any Social roll that involves people who might dislike your character's brand of humor.

SOCIALLY OBLIVIOUS (1-PT. FLAW)

Your character has trouble picking up subtle hints from others. She often overstays her welcome at parties, and she tends to blurt out topics that everyone else takes great pains to avoid in conversation. Your character isn't a socially repellent person, just occasionally tactless. Add two to the difficulty of any Etiquette rolls you attempt.

SPEECH IMPEDIMENT (1-PT. FLAW)

Your character stutters, stammers or otherwise has trouble speaking clearly. Increase the difficulty by two on any roll involving verbal communication.

STUBBORN (1-PT. FLAW)

Once your character's mind is made up, there's no changing it. She clings to her beliefs with the tenacity of a rabid bulldog, and she is equally pleasantly comported when others challenge them. She hates being proved wrong and will go to extremes to avoid enduring the shame of it. Increase the difficulties of all Social rolls by two when someone challenges your character's behavior.

SUPERSTITIOUS (1-PT. FLAW)

Your character's mortal host adhered to a superstition doggedly, such as knocking on wood or tossing salt over her shoulder. While everyone has foibles, she took the behavior to an extreme, often tying misfortune to her inability to obey a superstition and crediting any success to paying proper respects. Your character's new obsession doesn't lead her to risk her life, nor does it have a pervasive sway over her. She tends to raise warnings and make superstitious suggestions frequently, though. Add two to the difficulty of any Social roll when dealing with people who know about your character's superstitious bent and who frown upon it.

TRUSTING (1-PT. FLAW)

Your character tends to follow her instincts when dealing with strangers. Sadly, her instincts often tell her that she can trust people. Your character wants to believe the best about everyone she meets. As a result, she tends to put herself in situations that could be dangerous, such as accepting a ride home from a recent acquaintance, going home with a person she just met at a bar or taking a stroll in a poorly patrolled city park after dark.

ABUSIVE PARTNER (2-PT. FLAW)

Your character's mortal host is married to or living with someone who routinely abuses her physically. Make a Stamina roll (difficulty 6) every time she spends a night at home. Failure indicates that your character has suffered one health level of bashing damage. A botch means that she suffers two health levels of bashing damage. Though it seems strange that a demon would submit herself to such a situation willingly, the psychological dependencies that kept her mortal host bound into the same cycle of violence hold sway over her as well.

COMPULSIVE Liar (2-PT. FLAW)

Your character can't help but put her personal spin on the truth. She doesn't necessarily do so out

of spite or maliciousness; she might even come to genuinely believe the tall tales she tells (especially when she spins them often enough). This trait is especially troublesome when other demons rely on your character for information. You might have to spend a Willpower point to force your character to be honest, especially if it means publicly revealing a previous lie.

CONSPICUOUS CONSUMER (2-PT. FLAW)

Your character's mortal host tended to blow a lot of money on useless items and overpay for brand-name clothes and other impractical items. Your character still tends to live above her means and is always short of cash. Add two to the difficulties of Resources rolls.

DOGGED BY FRINGE MEDIA (2-PT. FLAW)

Your character has somehow attracted the attention of an amateur reporter, one who operates a fringe website or publishes a 'zine that covers the bizarre or paranormal. This crank occasionally follows her, trying to uncover any dirt on her. Unfortunately, and in true modern journalist style, he tends to catch your character in the most bizarre circumstances that he simply can't understand. Of course, he tries to interpret them anyway.

FOREIGNER (2-PT. FLAW)

Your character's mortal host is not native to the area in which she's been living. While your character might understand the language and the general customs, she has trouble with many of the finer details. She has a distinguishing accent (which makes her easy to identify), and the difficulty of any Streetwise and Etiquette rolls you attempt increases by two.

HONEST TO A FAULT (2-PT. FLAW)

Your character always tries to tell the truth, regardless of the situation. She won't stretch it, bend it or manipulate it to take advantage of others, unless lives are in jeopardy. If she does attempt to lie to someone, the difficulty of any roll involved increases by two.

LUSTFUL (2-PT. FLAW)

Your character can't resist the advances of the appropriate gender. She is easily seduced and often exhibits very poor judgment when dealing with sexually attractive people. The difficulty of any attempts to seduce her decreases by two.

MIRENIN SCANDAL (2-PT. FLAW)

People in your character's community tend to recognize her for all the wrong reasons. Maybe her mortal host was involved in a scandal involving a

local politician, or perhaps she was charged but not convicted in a sensational case. No matter what the cause, your character tends to attract a lot of unwanted attention wherever she goes. People look down on her, though they don't necessarily hinder or harass her. Add two to the difficulty of any Social rolls that involve people who know your character's mortal past.

MONSTROUS CONNECTIONS (2-PT. FLAW)

Your character has to deal with a monstrous demon as part of your mortal job or even your family life. Perhaps it's your character's boss or an important family figure. The demon is not necessarily hostile toward your character, but it's in a position to cause her a lot of trouble should it choose to.

NOisy NEIGHBORS (2-PT. FLAW)

Your character's neighborhood is exceptionally rife with gossips and busybodies. Her neighbors are always dropping by for unannounced visits, and they take an active interest in her comings and goings. What's worse, they aren't shy about sharing what they know with anyone who asks.

POOR JUDGE OF CHARACTER (2-PT. FLAW)

Your character's mortal host was the type of person who always ended up hanging out with the wrong crowd. Maybe she just liked to date dangerous men or was a sucker for a woman in trouble. Whatever the reason, your character has a very hard time figuring out whom to trust. Increase the difficulty by two for all Awareness and Intuition rolls you attempt in social circumstances. Also, your character's friends and acquaintances tend to be leeches and other lowlifes.

STALKED (2-PT. FLAW)

Someone has an unhealthy obsession with your character. Despite repeated calls to the police and several restraining orders, he continues to follow and occasionally harass her. Your Storyteller should create game stats for the stalker. Any time your character heads out on the town, the Storyteller can make a Perception test on your character's behalf (difficulty 6). If it fails or botches, the stalker has managed to tail your character throughout the night and might put in an appearance when it's least helpful.

TECHNOPHOBIC (2-PT. FLAW)

Your character's mortal host was severely intimidated by computers and other technology. Therefore, your character never uses an ATM if a teller is available, and she gets nervous at the sight of a keyboard. You must make an Intelligence roll (difficulty 6) for your character to perform even

simple tasks on a computer, ATM or similar device. Increase the difficulty of any Computer or Technology roll by two.

GREEDU (3-PT. FLAW)

Your character's mortal host lived to make money. Family, friends and other concerns were trivial when compared to the all-mighty dollar. If someone offers your character a bribe, you must make a Willpower roll (difficulty 7) to resist. If the bribe involves something that won't directly result in any injuries or lasting damage as far as the character knows, increase the difficulty to 8. Your character also tends to victimize demons who have a lot of material wealth.

CRIMINAL ENTANGLEMENTS (4-PT. FLAW)

Your character's mortal host owes someone on the wrong side of the law a lot of money or a big favor that she now refuses to pay. While hit men aren't being sent after her quite yet, the threat hangs over her constantly. The exact nature of the debt and the figures behind it are left to the Storyteller, but they should suit your character concept.

UNLUCKY (4-PT. FLAW)

Your character's mortal host dealt with bad breaks all her life. From the struggling Internet company she quit two months before its billion-dollar IPO to that true love who had to move across the country, your character seems to make the wrong moves at the wrong time. Once per game session, the Storyteller may increase the difficulty of a critical roll you make by two. If you fail the roll, it's due to some random, hard-luck factor. Your character's bad luck seems to crop up at the most inconvenient times. You may not take this Flaw and the Lucky Merit.

DACIPIST (5-PT. FLAW)

Your character utterly refuses to use violence against anything, even if her life or the lives of others are in immediate danger. Furthermore, your character works hard to prevent others from using violence, though she does not recklessly endanger herself or expect others to do so. She never carries weapons, and she refuses to procure them. A Willpower roll (difficulty 6) might be required to resist the temptation to engage in violence when a gross offense is committed before or against your character, such as a loved one being harmed. If she defies her nature and succumbs to violence at some point, she cannot regain Willpower each morning until she comes to terms with her indiscretion or she changes life philosophies altogether.

MENTAL

GULLIBLE (1-PT. FLAW)

Your character's mortal host had a lot of trouble separating truth from fiction. Your character is not stupid, she just tends to believe what people tell her rather than taking things with a grain of salt. Increase the difficulty by two on any roll to detect lies.

NO DIRECTION SENSE (1-PT. FLAW)

Your character's mortal host got lost all the time. Maps, compasses and detailed directions never seemed to help. She now has a lot of trouble figuring out where she is in relation to landmarks that aren't immediately obvious, and maps are largely incomprehensible to her. Increase the difficulty by two on any roll that involves following convoluted directions, backtracking a route or navigating a confusing set of city streets.

POOR SENSE OF TIME (1-PT. FLAW)

Your character has no intuitive sense for the flow of time. She can't even begin to guess the current time without looking at a clock, and she always over- or underestimates the amount of time that has passed since (or that remains before) a specified event.

SHORT TEMPER (1-PT. FLAW)

Your character is easily driven to distraction by what would otherwise be minor failures and other frustrations. If you fail to gain any successes on any single roll during an extended action, increase the difficulty of all subsequent rolls by one, cumulatively.

TERRIBLE WITH NAMES (1-PT. FLAW)

Try as you might, your character almost always forget people's names, especially when meeting large groups for the first time. You may not write down the names of any people your character meets during the game unless your character has a pad and paper handy. Your character also has problems with recognizing faces or remembering if she's been somewhere before. Make an Intelligence roll (difficulty 6) to recall such information.

ABSENT MINDED (2-PT. FLAW)

Details and important facts slip your character's mind constantly. Once per game session, when your character attempts to use an item that she normally carries with her, the Storyteller might require you to make a Willpower roll (difficulty 6) to see if she remembered to bring it or if she can remember where it is. The item turns up again after an hour or so of searching.



ATTENTION-DEFICIT DISORDER (2-PT. FLAW)

Your character has a hard time sitting still and paying attention to anything for more than a few minutes. If she must sit still and quiet for more than 10 minutes, such as when keeping watch over an enemy or standing guard, make a Willpower roll (difficulty 6). On a failure, your character loses interest in her task and is distracted from it.

DYSLEXIC (2-PT. FLAW)

Printed information of any sort, from written text to maps, is nearly indecipherable to your character. While she is not necessarily illiterate, she struggles to read the simplest sentences. In order for your character to interpret a map or read anything, you must make a successful Intelligence roll (difficulty 8). On a botch, she interprets the message to have its nearly opposite meaning.

EATING DISORDER (2-PT. FLAW)

Your character's mortal host had an unhealthy obsession with her appearance and had chosen to starve herself in order to lose weight. Increase the difficulty of any Stamina-related rolls by two.

LANGUAGE BARRIER (2-OR 3-PT. FLAW)

Your character cannot speak the language in the region where she lives. In order to communicate with

the locals without using any lore, your character must find a translator or rely on a language handbook to attempt rough translations. Taking the two-point version means your character can read the language but has trouble using it in conversation. The three-point Flaw means that your character can neither speak nor read it.

OVERCONFIDENT (2-PT. FLAW)

Your character either overestimates her own skill or underestimates her opponents'. Once per game session, the Storyteller may secretly add two to the difficulty of a non-combat action that your character takes. This increase represents her tendency to plunge headlong into activities that are beyond her capabilities.

PAINT OF HEART (3-PT. FLAW)

The sight of gore and blood shocks your character to the core. If she witnesses a gruesome scene, you must make a Willpower roll (difficulty 6) to keep your character from suffering debilitating nausea for five to 10 minutes. The difficulty of all actions increases by one when your character is ill.

INCOMPETENT (3-PT. FLAW)

Your character's mortal host was spectacularly bad at something. Unfortunately, your character is the only person around who doesn't know this fact.

Pick a single Ability. Your character believes that she has the proficiency of three dots in that trait, when in reality she almost always messes up any attempt at it. When you try to use the Ability, treat the outcome as if you rolled a botch.

LOW SELF-ESTEEM (3-PT. FLAW)

Your character's mortal host had trouble accepting her own value and worth. She tended to highlight her failures and overlook her triumphs. Whenever your character has the opportunity to gain Willpower from accomplishing a goal (not from resting), make a Willpower roll (difficulty 6). If you fail the roll, your character does not gain the bonus. If you botch, your character loses a temporary point of Willpower.

SLOW LEARNER (3-PT. FLAW)

Your character's mortal host always lagged behind in school, and even the most patient people found it frustrating to teach her the simplest concepts. Your character isn't dumb, she just takes longer than most to wrap her brain around things. For the purposes of figuring out how many experience points it costs to raise an Ability, add one to your character's current rating. Acquiring a new Ability costs four experience points, not the usual three.

WEAK WILLED (3-PT. FLAW)

Try as your character might, it's challenging for her to summon inner reserves of courage or toughness. While others shoulder extra burdens in pursuit of their goals, your character simply finds the going harder and harder. Your character isn't a coward, she just doesn't have the fortitude necessary to make truly heroic efforts. Add two to the difficulty of all Willpower rolls. As long as your character has this Flaw, her Willpower rating may never rise above 8.

AMNESIA (4-PT. FLAW)

The life of your mortal host before possession is a blur. Your character remembers nothing of her host's existence before she was possessed, although that doesn't mean that her old life has forgotten her. Your Storyteller creates the details of your character's host's old life and the circumstances surrounding her amnesia.

DEPRESSION (4-PT. FLAW)

Your character's mortal host was mired in a pit of bleak, mind-numbing sorrow. She refused to seek professional help, convinced that her eternally dark mood was completely natural — or deserved. Your character does not regain a point of Willpower per day as most characters do. Instead, she gains Willpower only through actions, and even those must ardently reaffirm her goals.

ILLITERATE (4-PT. FLAW)

Your character's mortal host never learned to read or write. She can understand most traffic signs and warning labels that rely on pictographs, but written instructions and warnings are completely beyond her comprehension.

LEGAL

POLITICAL RADICAL (1-PT. FLAW)

Your character's mortal host had connections to a radical political organization that many people view with suspicion, such as the Nation of Islam or the KKK. Your character is an active member of the group, and local law enforcement has an open dossier on her. While she does not necessarily have a criminal record or engage in illegal activity, the local police view her as a troublemaker and suspicious character. At any given time, she might be the target of undercover observation prompted by the activities of her organization.

REVOKED DRIVER'S LICENSE (1-PT. FLAW)

Your character's mortal host has lost her driver's license due to a poor driving record. If your character is pulled over for reckless driving or is otherwise caught driving, the police will attempt to arrest her immediately and impound her car.

SUNDAE DRIVER (1-PT. FLAW)

Whenever your character goes out with friends, no one wants her to drive. She pays almost obsessive attention to traffic regulations and makes a conscious effort to drive below the speed limit. Alternatively, your character has no patience for traffic, right of way or signs, or she simply fails to pay attention to the road. The difficulty of any Drive rolls you make during a chase or other high-speed situation increases by two.

CRIMINAL RECORD (2-PT. FLAW)

Your character's mortal host had a bit of a shady past, having been convicted for several misdemeanors or perhaps for a minor felony. Your character is unable to buy firearms legally, and she receives exceptionally poor treatment from law-enforcement officials who know her record.

PROBATION (2-PT. FLAW)

Your character's mortal host is currently on probation for some minor offense. She has to meet with a case officer on a regular basis, and she is subject to random drug tests and searches of her apartment and person. She must also commit — or seem to commit — herself to becoming a good citizen by maintaining a job, keeping an apartment and engaging in other aspects of respectable life.

ILLEGAL IMMIGRANT (3-PT. FLAW)

Your character's mortal host lacks proper legal permission to be in the country in which she currently lives. She does not have a legitimate ID and will most likely be deported back to her home country if she is placed under arrest. Your character cannot hold a job unless it pays under the table.

WANTED BY LAW ENFORCEMENT (3-PT. FLAW)

Your character's mortal host is the prime suspect in a felony crime. The police actively look for her, and she cannot move openly about her usual hangouts. If she encounters cops who know that she's wanted, they'll call in backup and try to bring her in.

ECONOMIC**AUDIT (1-PT. FLAW)**

Your character's mortal host is currently undergoing an audit by the national tax authority. She cannot purchase illegal goods totaling more than \$500 without attracting the attention of the officers assigned to her case. Any money she wishes to use for illegal purposes must be laundered first. Increase the difficulty by two for all Resources rolls.

DEMANDING CAREER (2-PT. FLAW)

Your character's host's current job requires long hours and frequent travel, making it challenging for her to both work and pursue her goals. She must always carry a pager and keep in touch with the office, and she can be called back to work at almost any time. If she should quit her job to free up time for her infernal agenda, reduce your character's Resources by at least one point.

PRIMARY BREADWINNER (2-PT. FLAW)

Your character's mortal host is the primary income-earner in her family. She pays the bills, from the heat and electricity to the weekly groceries. She must maintain a steady paying job, despite the demands of her infernal obligations. At least two points of your character's Resources score must be dedicated to supporting her family. If her rating drops below that level, her family begins to suffer. The difficulty of all Willpower rolls you attempt increases by two thereafter, because of the deep shame and embarrassment your character feels for not providing for her loved ones.

UNINSURED (2-PT. FLAW)

Your character's mortal host either cannot afford insurance or has simply chosen to go without it. She must pay for all medical expenses and any damage incurred from accidents out of pocket.

ALIMONY PAYMENTS (3-PT. FLAW)

Your character's mortal host is financially responsible for his ex-spouse and perhaps children. He must hold down a steady job and meet monthly payments or risk having his assets frozen and his possessions seized. Your character can never have more than three dots of Resources because of the economic hardship of keeping up with payments.

HOMELSS (4-PT. FLAW)

Your character lives on the streets. She can never have any dots in Resources, and she doesn't have a secure place to rest and recuperate. Your character cannot heal any aggravated damage naturally while living on the street, and she must carry all of her possessions with her at all times or hide them and hope no one finds them.

MISSING



C. Wilkins

CHAPTER FOUR: NATURE OF THE BEAST

"The Devil twisted and writhed, and now it was some kind of jackal, a flat-faced, huge-headed, bull-necked creature, half-way between a hyena and a dingo. There were maggots squirming in its mangy fur, and it began to walk up the steps."

—Neil Gaiman, *The Graveyard Book*

Seeing a demon's apocalyptic form is one of the most terrifying — though occasionally uplifting — things a human being could ever experience. The demon's form can embody terror, carnage, hope, despair or any number of concepts, depending on what the angel was originally created to do (see *Anatomy of an Angel*, page 20). The exact nature of a demon's revelatory form depends on her primary lore, and the **Demon** rulebook provides a basic template for each of the 21 House lore paths. Although each form has its own appearance and special abilities, the system barely scratches the surface of the myriad possibilities open to the former agents of Creation.

This chapter offers new options for building and customizing a demon's revelatory form, both during the character-creation process and later over the course of play. These systems should be considered optional, though. A player who wishes to simply use

the apocalyptic form traits listed in Chapter Seven of **Demon** is certainly welcome to do so.

During game play, it is possible to change the abilities of a demon's apocalyptic form, either by consuming other demons' souls or by remaking the revelatory form on the fly through the expenditure of Faith. It is also possible to change one's form gradually using experience points.

BUILDING A DEMON

When building your demon's revelatory form, consider the character first. What sort of angel was she? Why did she join the rebellion? What was her role in the War of Wrath? An angel of the sea who spent much of the war spying on the enemy from rivers and streams might assume a sinuous, iridescent form that confuses the eye. An angel of the wild who pursued her foes across the world's newborn savannas might be



lean and long-limbed, able to run without tiring and possessed of supernatural physical senses. With the fallen, form definitely follows function.

Once you've decided what kind of capabilities the character's apocalyptic form should incorporate, take a look at the three basic visages manifested by her House's lore paths. If any of those visages is exactly what you'd pictured, your work is finished. If, however, you envision something different for your character, feel free to use the system presented here to build an apocalyptic form based on the character's House and primary lore.

SYSTEMS

A player begins with 16 "form points" with which to build an apocalyptic form. Each capability has a point value ranging from one to four. These lists include "common" form powers (available to demons of any House) and more specialized powers listed by House. The player must purchase eight revelatory capabilities (four normal and four high-Torment) for the character, thus establishing the character's beginning revelatory form abilities.

Note: These "form points" do not transfer into freebie points; a player cannot choose to spend 10 form points building his character's revelatory form and then spend the other six to buy additional Attributes or Abilities. By the same token, a player cannot use freebie points to buy additional or more expensive form characteristics for his demon's apocalyptic form.

A starting character's revelatory form is still based on her primary lore to some degree, so it must have at least one of the basic template's special abilities as described in Chapter Seven of the *Demon* rulebook. This one special ability can come either from the normal or high-Torment abilities of the visage. Additionally, the Houses each have their own capabilities that come more naturally than others. Devils, for example, excel at inspiring (and terrifying) others, but they possess limited ability to change their own bodies, whereas Devourers almost universally manifest aspects of the natural world in their revelatory form. In addition to a list of "common" form abilities, each House has its own list of specialized abilities. A player who wishes to purchase a form capability from a different House list pays one more point than the listed cost. For example, if a player wanted to give her Devil character the Scourge's Aura of Vitality, she would have to spend five form points to do so instead of four, as the ability is not available on the Devil House list or the common ability list. The Storyteller is the final arbiter on whether a charac-

ter may choose a form ability that is not normally available to a character's House or on the common powers list.

The abilities presented on the following lists can be taken as either normal or high-Torment powers. Abilities purchased to fill high-Torment slots cost one point less than the listed cost. An ability preceded by a "*" symbol may be taken only as a high-Torment ability at the listed cost.

COMMON FORM ABILITIES

The capabilities listed here are available to all demons of all Houses. In some cases, the cost is slightly higher than those listed under a House power of a similar nature. (A Malefactor's player, for instance, could purchase Master Artisan at a lower cost than that listed for Enhanced Ability in order to bump up his character's Crafts Ability, but he would still pay the cost listed here for Enhanced Ability in order to bump up his character's Brawl.) If a demon can purchase a form capability at two different costs from the House list and the common form abilities list, the lower cost applies. This list is by no means exhaustive. If a player wishes to create a unique ability for her character, the Storyteller should work with the player to decide its game effect and point cost.

- **Armor (4 points):** Whether his armor comes from the stony hide of the Visage of the Earth or the thick, leathery skin of the Visage of the Beast, the character is extremely hard to hurt. Add four dice to the demon's soak pools to resist bashing, lethal and aggravated types of damage.
- **Casts No Reflection (2 points):** The demon's image does not appear in a mirror, nor can it be captured in a photograph or by a video camera.
- ***Claws/Teeth (1 point):** The character manifests claws and fangs that inflict Strength + 2 aggravated damage.
- **Damage Resistance (3 points):** The demon is capable of shrugging off damage that would cripple a normal human. She may ignore any wound penalties for the duration of the scene. Penalties for injuries incurred while in apocalyptic form apply again once human form is resumed.
- **Enhanced Ability (3 points):** The difficulty on rolls involving any one Ability drops by two while the character is in her apocalyptic form. This bonus might be due to preternatural quickness (Athletics), an awe-inspiring wreath of flame (Intimidation), a special kinship with animals (Animal Ken) or enhanced knowledge of ancient secrets (Occult). The player must specify which Ability this power affects at the time of purchase, and he

cannot change it to a different Ability later. Enhanced Ability may be purchased multiple times, but each purchase takes up one of the character's eight available slots, and each one must be allocated to a different Ability.

- **Enhanced Senses (3 points):** The character's five senses are heightened to superhuman levels, reducing the difficulty of her Perception rolls by two.

- **Enhanced Mental Acuity (4 points):** The character receives a mere taste of the clarity of thought she once knew. The character adds four dots to her Mental Attributes in any combination at the player's discretion. The allocation must be determined when the ability is purchased, and it may not be changed afterward unless the rules for modifying the apocalyptic form during play are being used (see page 126 for details).

- **Enhanced Social Traits (4 points):** The character's physical appearance, poise and grace leave humans in stupefied awe. The demon gains four dots to add to her Social Attributes in any combination at the player's discretion. The allocation must be determined when the ability is purchased, and it may not be changed afterward unless the rules for modifying the apocalyptic form during play are being used (see page 126 for details).

- **Extra Actions (3 points):** Faith points can be spent to gain extra actions in a turn at the rate of one point per action. These actions occur in order of descending initiative, so if a Devil with an initiative of 7 gains an extra action, she takes her normal action at 7 and her extra action at 6. The player must decide to purchase extra actions at the beginning of a turn before any other actions have been taken.

- **Extra Health Levels (3 points):** The character's vitality provides three extra Bruised health levels for the purposes of absorbing bashing, lethal and aggravated damage.

- **Extra Limbs (3 points):** The demon grows a second set of arms or a prehensile tail, at the player's discretion. Extra arms allow a character either to parry or block hand-to-hand or melee attacks without sacrificing her own attack, or to make up to two additional attacks of her own per turn using her full dice pool. A prehensile tail is half the character's height, uses only half the character's Strength (rounding down) to lift objects and allows the character to hang suspended.

- **Gaping Maw (2 points):** The demon can chew and digest anything it can get its teeth on. Metal, stone and flesh can all be ground up and digested with ease. The difficulties of bite attacks decrease by two, and the maw inflicts Strength + 4 aggravated damage.

- **Horns (1 point):** A pair of curved ram or bull's horns protrude from the character's forehead. If attacked in close combat, the character may make a free counterattack at his foe. Roll Dexterity + Brawl. If successful, the character inflicts aggravated damage equal to Strength - 1.

- **Improved Attribute (3 points):** One of the demon's Attributes increases by two in revelatory form. This must be the same Attribute every time, unless the rules for modifying the apocalyptic form during play are being used (see page 125 for details).

- **Improved Initiative (1 point):** Add two to the character's initiative score.

- **Increased Size (3 points):** The character's body grows to a third again its own height, adding the following bonus traits: +2 Strength, +1 Stamina, and one extra Bruised health level for the purpose of soaking bashing, lethal and aggravated damage. Difficulties to strike the character in ranged or melee combat drop by one.

- **Lashing Tail (1 point):** The character manifests a long, reptilian tail tipped with a curved, bony spike that inflicts Strength - 1 aggravated damage.

- **Pass Without Trace (2 points):** The difficulty of the character's Stealth rolls decreases by two, and her passage does not disturb the surrounding environment in any way. She leaves no footprints and disturbs no foliage.

- **Regeneration (4 points):** The demon regenerates one health level of bashing or lethal damage per turn automatically as a reflexive action.

- **Wings (3 points):** A pair of wings extends from the character's shoulders. At full extension, each wing is a third again as long as the character is tall. The character can glide up to three times her running speed per turn. These wings might resemble those of a raven, owl, swan or eagle or (if the demon uses a high-Torment application of this power) the leathery wings of a bat. At a cost of one extra form point, the demon can take off from a standing position and actually gain altitude by flapping her wings.

DEFILERS

The Lammasu might seem like social butterflies, but they were once angels of the deep, inspiring the rebel host to fight against overwhelming odds for the sake of mankind. They are capable of great insight and passion, and their apocalyptic forms often reflect this, granting them a surprisingly diverse array of powers and capabilities. One Defiler's revelatory form might resemble a beautiful, untouchable Adonis, while another might appear as a winged, androgynous horror made of kelp and seawater.

Tormented Lammasu likewise vary in their capabilities. Some take on the forms of the meaner creatures of the sea, while others develop insidious ways to meddle with the hearts of mortals.

- **Alter Size (3 points):** The demon can alter her physical size in order to slip through narrow gaps or crawl into impossibly small spaces. She can reduce her size to as little as a third of her original volume. The difficulties of attacks directed against the miniature demon increase by two.

- **Distortion (3 points):** The demon's form shifts and shimmers as if the viewer were looking at the Defiler through water. The difficulties of all ranged attacks against the demon increase by two, while those of close-combat attacks increase by one. Other demons can resist these effects as they can any other illusion (see page 171 of the **Demon** rulebook for details).

- **Enhanced Empathy (1 point):** The difficulties of all Empathy rolls decrease by two.

- **Enhanced Intuition (1 point):** The character's uncanny insight lowers the difficulties of all Intuition rolls by two.

- **Ichor (2 points):** A foul black ichor covers the demon's body, making him difficult to grab or restrain. The difficulty of any grapple attempts directed at the demon increases by two.

- **Immune to Electricity (2 points):** The Defiler suffers no damage from any kind of electricity-based attacks.

- **Improved Dexterity (2 points):** Add two to the character's Dexterity.

- **Ink Cloud:** The demon can expel a cloud of indigo ink that hangs in the air and blinds her foes. Individuals within a number of feet equal to the demon's Faith score are blinded for a number of turns equal to the demon's Torment, unless a successful Stamina roll is made. The cloud of ink lingers for a number of turns equal to the demon's Torment. Victims are subject to the Blind Fighting rules on p. 240 of **Demon**.

- **Lyrical Voice (1 point):** The difficulties of all Leadership or Subterfuge rolls decrease by two.

- **Sea's Beauty (3 points):** The character's physical appearance, poise and grace leave humans in stupefied awe. The demon gains the following bonus traits: +2 Charisma, +1 Manipulation, +2 Appearance.

- **Shark Hide (3 points):** The demon's shark-like skin acts as armor, providing four additional dice to soak bashing, lethal and aggravated damage.

- **Shocking Touch (2 points):** The character's touch inflicts a number of bashing levels of damage



equal to her Faith score. This special ability may be used only once per scene.

- **Spines (2 point):** A long ruff of spines runs down the demon's back and along the backs of her arms. She inflicts an additional health level of aggravated damage with every successful attack in unarmed combat.

- **Venom (3 points):** The demon's saliva contains an intoxicating venom that affects a victim's will. If a victim is exposed to the demon's saliva (through a successful bite attack, through an already open wound or via a kiss), she loses one Willpower point per point of the character's Torment unless a successful Stamina roll is made (difficulty 7). If the victim loses all of her Willpower in this fashion, she falls into a deathlike coma. The effects of the venom last for a number of days equal to the character's Torment.

- **Weather Sense (1 point):** The character can always intuitively sense changes in the weather up to a distance of 10 miles times her Faith score.

DEVILS

The Namaru's command over faith, fire and the Celestial Word bestows their apocalyptic forms with the bearing of the angelic savior — or the infernal destroyer. Depending on her primary lore, a Devil might appear as a warrior wreathed in holy fire, or a resplendent angel with beautiful, blinding features. Most Devils have at least one form capability that allows them to influence the hearts and minds of others in some way.

Their monstrous forms abandon subtlety, however. While the normal revelatory form powers of the Namaru allow them to appear as beatific creatures of God, their apocalyptic forms can't hide the truth of their infernal nature. Many of them sprout fangs, claws, tails or other crude manifestations of their inner Torment. When the Devils reach their breaking point, everything within reach must burn.

- **Affirm (3 points):** By making eye contact with a mortal, the Devil can reaffirm that mortal's place in God's plan. The player rolls the demon's Faith (difficulty 6). If successful, the mortal regains a point of temporary Willpower.

- **Beckon (2 points):** The demon is so beautiful that those who lay eyes upon him cannot help but follow him, entranced by his preternatural charisma. Any mortal who fails a Revelation check (see page 253 of the **Demon** rulebook for details) must follow the Devil as best he can, keeping the demon in sight at all times. The mortal snaps out of his reverie if he is attacked or simply shaken. The demon can choose to turn this effect off at will.

- **Corrosive Spit (2 points):** The demon's spit burns like acid. A bite inflicts an additional health level of aggravated damage, or the character can spit at a target up to 10 feet away with a successful Dexterity roll. The spittle inflicts one die of aggravated damage plus any extra successes rolled. Targets such as mortals that do not deal in aggravated damage suffer lethal damage instead.

- **Dread Gaze (4 points):** Individuals (mortal or demon) who meet the demon's gaze and who fail a Willpower roll (difficulty 7) must forfeit their actions for the turn.

- **Fiery Blood (4 points):** The character's blood burns like magma. Inflammable objects that touch more than a few drops burst into flame, and opponents in close combat suffer one level of lethal damage each time they successfully inflict damage on the character.

- **Immune to Fire (3 points):** The Devil suffers no damage from fire or heat of any kind.

- **Increased Awareness (2 points):** The fallen is especially attuned to the fabric of reality, reducing the difficulty of all Awareness rolls by two.

- **Inhuman Allure (2 points):** The character's voice and features are refined to inhuman perfection, adding the following bonus traits: +2 Charisma, +1 Manipulation, +1 Appearance.

- **Lordly Mien (2 points):** The character's aura of divine authority reduces the difficulty of her Charisma and Manipulation rolls by two.

- **Radiant Aura (1 point):** The character's body is wreathed in a corona of shifting, multicolored hues that distract and confuse her foes. The difficulties of all ranged attacks directed at the character increase by one.

- **Scales (3 points):** The character's skin is covered with dark, lustrous scales that provide four dice of armor protection against bashing, lethal and aggravated damage.

- **Sense the Hidden (1 point):** The character is supernaturally adept at sensing mortals or demons who attempt to hide from her. The difficulties of all Perception rolls to detect hidden individuals within the character's line of sight decrease by two.

- **Spark of Faith (3 points):** The Devil can cause a mortal's Faith to flare up with a touch. The Devil must touch her target to use this ability; the player then makes a Faith roll with a difficulty equal to the target's Willpower. If the roll is successful, the demon heals one health level of bashing damage per success. If the character possesses Spark of Faith as a high-Torment special ability, the player rolls Torment instead of Faith and *inflicts* a level of bashing damage per success.

• **The Host (2 points):** Fanged mouths appear on the character's body. The character inflicts Strength + 3 aggravated bite damage per turn with a successful grapple. When they are not otherwise occupied, the mouths whisper blasphemies in any language the character knows.

• **Voice of the Damned (1 point):** The demon's voice booms with the authority of God, or, alternatively, seethes with inhuman hate and malice. The difficulties of all Intimidation rolls decrease by two.

DEVOURERS

The savage rebels of the House of the Wild took on the forms of beasts and plants in days long past. Their apocalyptic forms, confined and stunted by their time in the Abyss and by the modern world, retain much of that primal strength. The Rabisu are not necessarily cruel or vicious, but all of them accept that in the never-ending cycle of predator and prey, some things must die. A Devourer's low-Torment revelatory form is often just as monstrous as another demon's more monstrous form. Claws, fangs and other natural weaponry is commonplace among the Rabisu.

When their Torment overwhelms them, however, the natural world is left by the wayside and the Devourers live up to their sobriquet. Monstrous Rabisu exhibit powers that no living creature on Earth should ever possess. In those moments, they truly become abominations.

• **Aura of Vitality (4 points):** Living beings (plant or animal) within a number of yards equal to the character's Faith are infused with restorative energy. Individuals within this area heal any bashing damage at the rate of one health level per turn.

• **Chameleon Skin (1 point):** The demon's skin allows it to blend with its surroundings. The difficulties of all Stealth rolls decrease by one if the demon is on the move; two if he is standing still.

• **Disperse (3 points):** The demon can dissolve her body into a mass of maggots, spiders, insects or other tiny creatures. The player rolls a number of dice equal to the character's Torment (difficulty 6). If the roll is successful, the transformation is instantaneous. The Devourer retains control over this swarm, and he can use this power to flow through tight openings or simply to terrify opponents. The character can choose to attack opponents while this power is in effect; see the Swarm rules on page 72 of the *Demon Storytellers Companion*. Successful attacks inflict aggravated damage.

• **Enhanced Social traits (3 points):** The refinement of the character's features, mannerisms and voice

provides the following bonus traits: +1 Charisma, +1 Manipulation, +2 Appearance.

• **Enhanced Survival (1 point):** The difficulty of all Survival rolls decreases by two.

• **Frenzy (2 points):** The Devourer flies into a rage, hurling himself at his foes again and again despite the pain of his wounds. The demon is immune to wound penalties during frenzy, but the player must make a Willpower roll each turn with a difficulty equal to the character's Torment. If the roll fails, the character must attack the closest person, friend or foe, with whatever weapon is at hand. A Willpower point may be spent to gain an automatic success on this roll.

• **Immune to Poisons (3 points):** The character is immune to damage or impairment from any toxins, including alcohol and nicotine.

• **Natural Weaponry (3 points):** Each time this ability is purchased, the player can choose from the following abilities: Claws/Teeth, Gaping Maw, Horns, Lashing Tail or Spines. Note that these natural weapons are low-Torment abilities. For one form point less, each natural weapon chosen can be a high-Torment ability.

• **Nimble Hunter (3 points):** The difficulties of all Athletics rolls decrease by two. Also, the demon's leaping distance doubles.

• **Primal Mind (3 points):** The Devourer can make contact with the small part of a mortal's mind that retains its ignorance, that remembers what it is to live only to survive like a beast. To use this ability, the demon must physically touch his intended target. Then the player rolls the demon's Torment in a resisted roll against the mortal's Willpower (difficulty 6 on both rolls). If the demon wins, the human loses all Knowledge and most Skills (though such Abilities as Stealth or Survival may remain at the Storyteller's discretion) for one scene and generally acts on survival instinct — fleeing from fire, attacking with tooth and claw if cornered, et cetera.

• **Relentless (1 point):** The demon can walk or run without need of rest, enabling her to cover superhuman distances without pause. As long as she stays in motion, she is unaffected by fatigue or hunger.

• **Sun's Bounty (2 points):** By standing in direct sunlight for one full hour, the character can heal all bashing damage suffered or one level of lethal or aggravated damage. This power can be used only once per day.

• **Thick Hide (2 points):** The character's leather-like skin acts as armor, providing an additional four dice to soak bashing, lethal and aggravated damage.

• **Thorns (1 point):** The demon's shoulders, chest and arms are covered with needle-sharp, black thorns that inflict one level of aggravated damage to any attacker who successfully strikes or grapples the demon in unarmed combat.

• **Toxins (3 points):** The claws and saliva of the demon are poisonous. Targets exposed to the venom (either by a successful claw or bite attack, through an open wound or via a kiss) are subject to a dice pool of lethal damage equal to the demon's Torment. This damage can be soaked.

FIENDS

The long aeons in the chaos of the Abyss took a toll on the ordered Neberu. Where once they could recognize the beautiful machinery of all Creation, the fallen angels of fate can see exactly how bad things have become. Their revelatory form, far from the physical perfection of the Namaru, reflects the cracked and disjointed nature of the universe, even without taking their Torment into account.

Ironically, however, when the Fiends assume their monstrous aspects, they become more recognizable, if more terrifying. Many of them become silvered, reflecting the degradation of the world around them like a garish funhouse mirror. Quick-silver tears often stream from their empty eyes as they regard the world through the distorting lens of their Torment.

• **Aura of Misfortune (3 points):** Any individuals caught within a distance in yards equal to the demon's Torment score suffer a botch on any roll of 1 or 2.

• **Cloak of Shadows (2 points):** The demon is shrouded in a pall of darkness, making her features difficult to see in the best light and rendering her nearly invisible at night. The difficulty of all Stealth rolls decreases by two whenever the demon stands in shadow or moves in darkness. If the character is attacked, the rules for Blind Fighting apply to the attacker (see page 240 of the *Demon* rulebook for details).

• **Chimerical Attack (3 points):** The swirling illusions that surround the demon attack opponents engaged in close combat with the fallen. These chimerical figures have the same initiative as the demon, and they attack a single opponent in close-combat range. Use the demon's Torment score as the dice pool for the attack, inflicting a base damage of four dice plus any extra successes on the attack roll. This damage is aggravated.

• **Dread Mien (1 point):** The difficulties of all Leadership and Intimidation rolls decrease by two.

• **Enhanced Dodge (1 point):** The difficulties of all Dodge rolls decrease by two.

• **Enhanced Intuition (1 point):** The character's uncanny insight reduces the difficulties of all Intuition rolls by two.

• **Enhanced Mental Acuity (3 points):** The character receives the following bonus traits: +1 Intelligence, +1 Wits, +2 Perception.

• **Eyes of Fate (4 points):** The Fiend knows instinctively whether a given being is important to him or his plans. The player rolls Perception + Awareness (difficulty 6). If the roll is successful, the character gains a general sense of whether or not a target is potentially important to the demon's current plans or goals. As a side effect, and at the Storyteller's discretion, the Eyes of Fate can often detect whether or not a mortal has an especially high Faith potential.

• **Hypnotic Visions (3 points):** The aura of light and shadow surrounding the Fiend distracts and quiets the mind of her foe. An attacker's player must make a Wits roll against a difficulty of the demon's Faith or Torment score (depending on whether this power is purchased as a low- or high-Torment ability). If the roll fails, the attacker may not act until the end of the turn. Demons (and thralls gifted with the power) are able to resist the effects of these illusions thanks to their inherent powers (see page 171 of the *Demon* rulebook for details).

• **Increased Awareness (1 point):** The fallen is especially attuned to the fabric of reality, reducing the difficulties of all Awareness rolls by two.

• **Night Sight (2 points):** The character can see clearly in utter darkness.

• **Rend the Soul (3 points):** The Fiend lays a hand on a target and shows him, for one split second, how infinitesimally small he (the target) is in the grand scheme of Creation. Roll the character's Torment (difficulty 7). For each success, the target loses one temporary Willpower point. If his Willpower score is reduced to zero, the target can do nothing but sit and weep. Demons are unaffected by this power.

• **Sense the Hidden (1 point):** The character is supernaturally adept at sensing mortals or demons who attempt to hide from her. The difficulties of all Perception rolls to detect hidden individuals within the character's line of sight decrease by two.

• **Sibilant Whispers (1 point):** The difficulties of all Subterfuge rolls decrease by two.

• **Unearthly Glamour (1 point):** The difficulties of all Manipulation rolls decrease by two. Demons (and thralls gifted with the power) are able to resist the effects of these illusions thanks to their inherent powers (see page 171 of the *Demon* rulebook for details).

MALEFACTORS

The Malefactors built the Earth, adding layers upon layers for humanity to explore and learn for themselves the wonders of Creation. They never thought that the humans that they so loved would destroy the world and carelessly discard anything that didn't seem immediately valuable. The rebellion was, for them, a desperate cry for appreciation, and now that they are free again, many have noticed exactly how little their toil apparently meant to humanity.

The Annunaki are each unique in their revelatory forms. These forms definitely follow function — a Malefactor who was originally charged with shaping the flow of lava will likely have a rocky hide, whereas one given the task of coloring the gemstones to be seeded in the earth might cause anything she touches to change color briefly. Their Tormented forms, however, remind anyone nearby how terrifying the Earth can truly be. A monstrous Annunaki might shake the earth with each step or even spew ash into the air with every breath.

- **Alter Size (3 points):** The demon can alter her physical size in order to slip through narrow gaps or crawl into impossibly small spaces. She can reduce her size to as little as a third of her original volume. The difficulties of attacks directed against the miniature demon increase by two.

- **Conjuration (2 points):** The character is capable of supernatural sleight of hand, seeming to conjure items out of thin air, only to make them vanish again with a flick of the wrist. She can draw an item from a pocket or conceal an item without detection on a successful Dexterity + Athletics roll.

- **Dead Reckoning (1 point):** Your character is always aware of where she is in relation to known landmarks, no matter how far away those landmarks are. Unless she is affected by spatially distorting evocations such as Warp Path, she can never lose her sense of direction.

- **Ichor (2 points):** A foul black ichor covers the demon's body, making him difficult to grab or restrain. The difficulty of any grapple attempts directed at the demon increases by two.

- **Immune to Bashing Damage (4 points):** The character suffers no damage at all from any attack that would normally inflict bashing damage.

- **Immune to Fire (3 points):** The Malefactor suffers no damage from fire or heat of any kind.

- **Iron Skin (3 points):** The character's iron-like skin acts as armor, providing four additional dice to soak bashing, lethal and aggravated damage.

- **Irresistible Force (2 points):** The difficulty of any feat of strength (see p. 232 of the *Demon* rulebook) performed by the character decreases by two.

- **Magnetic Field (2 points):** The demon is surrounded by a magnetic field that is intense enough to disrupt electronic devices within a radius in yards equal to the character's Faith.

- **Master Artisan (1 point):** The difficulties of all Crafts rolls decrease by two.

- **Night Sight (2 points):** The character can see clearly in utter darkness.

- **Relentless (1 point):** The demon can walk or run without need of rest, and she is able to cover superhuman distances without pause. As long as she stays in motion, she is unaffected by fatigue or hunger.

- **Spikes (1 point):** The demon's body is covered in stony spikes, adding two dice of aggravated damage to the Malefactor's unarmed attacks.

- **Thunderous Voice (3 points):** The character's shout shatters glass and makes stone tremble. Individuals within a number of yards equal to the character's Faith suffer four dice of bashing damage. This ability can be used only once per scene, and it requires an action to perform.

- **Tremor Sense (3 points):** The Malefactor can sense the slightest tremors passing through the earth around him, allowing him to sense even the stealthiest movements. The demon automatically acts first in combat, and he cannot be surprised unless a foe scores more successes on a Wits + Stealth roll than the demon's Faith or Torment (depending on whether this power is purchased as a low- or high-Torment ability).

SCOURGES

During the War of Wrath, the Asharu were superlative spies and couriers, and their reappearance on Earth has led many of them into similar roles. They take wing once again, carrying word to their various factions and carrying hope and protection — or occasionally a truly ill wind — to the teeming masses of humanity.

Most of the House of the Rising Wind can fly, or at least glide on winds summoned by their lore. Their revelatory forms vary based on whether they follow their original dictates to breathe life into those who live on Earth or whether they perform their tasks among the winds and the firmament. (The former can appear almost human but for the holy light that softly surrounds them, while the latter are quick and mercurial, rarely brightly colored, but always beautiful.) Tormented Scourges seem to be made of smoke and diseased flesh, and many leave a foul wind in their passing.

- **Aura of Vitality (4 points):** Living beings (plant or animal) within a number of yards equal to your character's Faith are infused with restorative energy. Individuals within this area heal any bashing damage at the rate of one health level per turn.

- **Caustic Bile (2 points):** The demon is capable of vomiting a stream of corrosive bile at her foes within a number of feet equal to her Faith score. A successful Dexterity + Athletics roll is needed to hit a target. The bile inflicts Strength - 1 aggravated damage.

- **Cloak of Shadows (2 points):** The demon is shrouded in a pall of darkness, making her features difficult to see in the best light and rendering her near-invisible at night. The difficulty of all Stealth rolls decreases by two whenever the demon stands in shadow or moves in darkness. If the character is attacked, the rules for Blind Fighting apply to the attacker (see page 240 of the *Demon* rulebook for details).

- **Dead Reckoning (1 point):** Your character is always aware of where she is in relation to known landmarks, no matter how far away those landmarks are. Unless she is affected by spatially distorting evocations such as Warp Path, she can never lose her sense of direction.

- **Enhanced Dodge (1 point):** The difficulty of all Dodge rolls decreases by two.

- **Enhanced Intuition (1 point):** The character's uncanny insight lowers the difficulty of all Intuition rolls by two.

- **Immune to Falling Damage (2 point):** The demon can fall any distance and land safely on her feet.

- **Improved Physical Capabilities (3 points):** The fallen gains the following bonus traits: +1 Strength, +1 Dexterity, +1 Stamina.

- **Miasma (3 points):** The demon's breath reeks of gangrenous rot that can have a debilitating effect on her foes in close quarters. The demon can affect victims up to a distance in feet equal to her Faith score. Mortals and demons caught in the path of her exhalation forfeit their actions for the turn unless a successful Stamina roll is made (difficulty 7). If the Stamina roll botches, the victim is also infected by a virus or disease at the Storyteller's discretion.

- **Mist (4 points):** The demon can summon up a concealing cloud of mist. Doing so requires a Faith or Torment roll (depending on whether the power is chosen as a high-Torment capability) at difficulty 6; each success obscures a 100-square-foot area. The mist lasts for one scene if conditions are good — a strong wind will blow the mist away in a few turns. High-Torment applications of this power summon choking smoke instead.



• **Multiple Eyes (2 points):** The demon gains four to six extra eyes, which sprout from her head and/or neck. These extra organs give the demon 360-degree vision and reduce the difficulty of all Perception rolls by two.

• **Perfect Balance (1 point):** The difficulty for all Athletics rolls involving leaping and tumbling decreases by two.

• **Quills (1 point):** The demon's shoulders and upper arms are covered with a ruff of sharp quills that pose a hazard to foes in close combat. An attacker who hits a demon in close combat suffers one health level of lethal damage unless his player makes a successful Dexterity roll (difficulty 7).

• **Supernatural Vision (1 point):** The character can see five times as far as a normal human can, allowing the demon to see objects at 50 yards as clearly as if they were 10 yards away as long as even a weak source of light (such as moonlight) is present. This effect also reduces the difficulty of all visual-based Perception rolls by two.

• **Viscous Flesh (2 points):** The diseased flesh of the Scourge sloughs away when he is pinned or trapped, leaving a would-be assailant covered in rotting flesh. The difficulty of grappling the demon increases by two, and the character can escape from bonds such as ropes or handcuffs with a successful Dexterity roll.

SLAYERS

The Halaku did not fight as fiercely in the War of Wrath as many of the other angels did. Much of the host on both sides were thankful; the Slayers were terrifying warriors, grim and silent, swooping into combat to simply do what came naturally — ending lives. Many of the Angels of the Second World remained on the fringes during the battles, however, tending to the humans who had recently been made mortal. Death, they explained time and again, is not the end, but simply the beginning of a new and more mysterious existence.

Therefore, the Halaku were horrified when they emerged from Hell to find a world that not only feared death, but had every reason to do so. The lands of the dead were torn asunder, and the still-living humans sensed the pain of the afterworld, even if they didn't know it. Every human is born knowing, somehow, that her time on Earth is limited. And this perhaps is why when the Slayers appear in revelatory form, silent, pale and beautiful, the most common reaction is a silent prayer.

Of course, Tormented Slayers do not elicit such a response. Regardless of their particular form, wings or no, whatever the colors of the demon's cloak or the particular sheen on her eyes, a human who sees a

monstrous Halaku knows that he has looked into the face of death itself.

• **Aura of Dread (2 points):** The demon is surrounded by an aura of fear that saps the will of her foes. Targets within a number of yards equal to the character's Faith lose their normal initiative unless a successful Willpower roll is made against a difficulty equal to the demon's Torment. Affected individuals act last within a given turn. The Willpower roll is made every turn in which a person or another demon is in the character's apocalyptic presence. Normal initiative resumes for a victim as soon as a successful Willpower roll is made.

• **Aura of Entropy (2 points):** Plants wilt in the demon's presence, and living beings are suffused with an icy chill that saps their strength. Mortals and other demons within a number of yards equal to the demon's Faith lose one die from their dice pools unless a successful Stamina roll (difficulty 6) is made. The effects of this capability persist for the duration of the scene.

• **Cloak of Shadows (2 points):** The demon is shrouded in a pall of darkness, making her features difficult to see in the best light and rendering her nearly invisible at night. The difficulty of all Stealth rolls decreases by two whenever the demon stands in shadow or moves in darkness. If the character is attacked, the rules for Blind Fighting apply to the attacker (see page 240 of the *Demon* rulebook for details).

• **Conjuration (2 points):** The character is capable of supernatural sleight of hand, seeming to conjure items out of thin air, only to make them vanish again with a flick of the wrist. She can draw an item from a pocket or conceal an item without detection on a successful Dexterity + Athletics roll.

• **Dead Reckoning (1 point):** Your character is always aware of where she is in relation to known landmarks, no matter how far away those landmarks are. Unless she is affected by spatially distorting evocations such as Warp Path, she can never lose her sense of direction.

• **Death-Grip (4 points):** The demon's spirit can cling to life past the point of human endurance. If the demon's host body suffers eight levels of lethal or aggravated damage, she can still hold onto life with a successful Willpower roll. If successful, the character falls into a coma until the following dawn, at which point she rises with one health level and one less temporary Faith. If the demon has no Faith remaining when she enters the coma, she loses a permanent Willpower point instead.

- **Dread Gaze (4 points):** Individuals (mortal or demon) who meet the demon's gaze must forfeit their actions for the turn unless a successful Willpower roll (difficulty 7) is made.

- **Enhanced Awareness (2 points):** The fallen is especially attuned to the fabric of reality, reducing the difficulty of all Awareness rolls by two.

- **Enhanced Social Traits (3 points):** The angel's beatific appearance provides the following bonus traits: +2 Charisma, +1 Manipulation, +1 Appearance.

- **Ghost Sight (2 points):** The angel can see the spirits of the dead that linger in the mortal realm, whether the ghosts wish to reveal themselves or not, with a successful Perception roll (difficulty 6).

- **Howl of the Damned (1 point):** The voices of the dead echo in the demon's words. The difficulties of all Intimidation rolls decrease by two.

- **Night Sight (1 point):** The character can see clearly in utter darkness.

- **Reaper's Breath (3 points):** The demon can exhale a chilling breath that affects victims up to a distance in feet equal to her Torment score. Mortals and demons caught in the path of her exhalation suffer a number of health levels of bashing damage equal to the character's Faith. This ability can be used only once per scene, and it has no effect on creatures that do not breathe.

- **Relentless (1 point):** The demon can walk or run without need of rest, able to cover superhuman distances without pause. As long as she stays in motion, she is unaffected by fatigue or hunger.

- **Touch of Death (3 points):** The Slayer must be able to touch her intended target to use this ability. Thereafter, as long as the demon maintains physical contact, the target cannot move, speak or feel at all. The target cannot feel pain, and unless this power is chosen as a high-Torment ability, he is strangely at peace. (The monstrous version of this power traps the hapless target in his own body as the demon inflicts whatever damage upon him she wishes.) The target can escape by spending a Willpower point, but then he must best the demon in a resisted Dexterity + Brawl roll (difficulty 7) to get away. Otherwise, the power takes effect again. This power has no effect on demons or supernatural beings that are already dead.

VISAGES

Chapter Six of *Demon: The Fallen* provides everything you need to create a functional character, but this section devotes special attention to shaping the demon's true visage, or revelatory form. In many cases, a demon feels more at home in this

form than he does in the stolen human flesh he currently inhabits. After all, this flesh is a temporary shell, and a borrowed (or, more accurately, stolen) one at that. The revelatory form, however, offers a small taste of the freedom that all angels once enjoyed, and a more fitting manifestation of the demon's true nature than a human flesh-cloak. The apocalyptic form is more than a war form or a weapon for the fallen; it is a reflection of their goals, their dreams and their high-forgotten purpose as agents of Creation.

When creating a character, read over the description of the demon's visage, as determined by the character's primary lore. Also, have a look through the suggestions for incorporating the visage more completely into your character concept (see the God's Intent section). Even if you wind up choosing entirely different powers for your demon's revelatory form, this visage still applies to some degree. While one Dagan might cause flowers to spring into bloom and any who look on her to feel stronger (the Aura of Vitality and Affirm abilities) and another might soar invisibly through the night watching over her chosen thralls (Wings and Pass Without Trace), the very fact that both embody the Visage of Awakening means that they shine with life, in whatever ways their players interpret that characteristic. Decide how the character embodies her primary lore and why she chose to specialize in it in the first place. Was it integral to her duties under God? Has she fallen back on a particular lore path because the years have eroded her knowledge of her previous specialty? (See Chapter Two for a more detailed description of learning lore.)

GOD'S INTENT

The various types of lore that demons now evoke is but a weak cousin to the power they once wielded during the War of Wrath. When God created each of the angels, He did so with a specific purpose in mind. That purpose shows through, if only a little, in a fallen angel's visage. Even those lore paths that grew out of necessity during the war manifested revelatory forms that harked back to an angel's original role in Heaven's plan. Although the Lore of the Forge didn't exist prior to the Fall, those fallen who dedicated themselves to mastering the lore still bore skin like iron and the molten veins of an angel of the deep earth. Whatever the fallen have become, even after countless ages of torment, their appearance still hints at the luminous glory of their origins.

Some suggestions follow for the original purpose for angels who exhibit each of the visages. Consider

your character with regard to her purpose as mandated by the Creator (and expressed through her primary lore) when describing the details of her visage.

It might seem as though a given purpose could arguably fall under a number of different visages. For example, an angel responsible for hope might now be a Slayer with the Namtar Visage (old things die, but new things take their place), an Ishhara Defiler (longing is not far from hope, ideologically) or even a Devil who exhibits the Visage of the Celestials (in God's Word there is always hope). This kind of overlap is deliberate. Although the angels never questioned God on the matter, the assumption was always that two pairs of eyes on a project are better than one. Therefore, if a subject falls under multiple jurisdictions, it prevents any one angel from having the last word on the subject's usage and specific traits.

• **Adad, the Visage of Storms:** The Adad were once Angels of the Deeps, designed by God to watch over the boundless oceans and to carry water inland by drawing the life-giving waters up into themselves. Elemental angels, they represented the physical side of the water (which their sisters, the Ishhara, embodied spiritually). As a result, Adad tend to be the most basic and grounded of the Defilers. Yet a grounded nature mixed with the raw fury of the Visage of Storms in no way makes them safe to be around. Angels remember days when most of the world was not covered by ocean. Even when the waters receded enough to allow humans and animals to walk on land again, much of the world remained submerged (and does to this day). The Adad are proud of this fact. Where God did not trust man, He trusted them. The Adad embody one of the great truths about the nature of the world — they can be deadly and unforgiving at the very same moment that they sustain and create life.

Modern-day Adad remember, if vaguely, that God charged them with the world's destruction once. Some of them wish only for the chance to do so again. An angry Adad is the fury of the hurricane and the tsunami both, but a tormented Adad takes on the appearance of the modern seas — choked with chemicals and smelling of foul pollution. This is the Adad's greatest lament. The mortals, whom they so loved, have now corrupted even the seas.

• **Anshar, the Visage of the Firmament:** The Lore of the Firmament is a poor cousin to the power the Angels of the Firmament once held. They were once the angels that *forged* the spiritual connections between beings. Predator and prey, mother and son, plant and sunlight; none of these would interact without an Anshar to bridge the gap between them.

The Dagan breathed God's life into the world, but the Anshar made that breath possible. They, truly, were the divine messengers. The Fall saw the end of this power, but the Anshar slowly developed the Lore of the Firmament as their new *raison d'être*.

Most cultures recognize a connection between all living things. What exactly that connection stems from — an element that makes up all life, a shared soul, the touch of God — isn't always agreed upon, but in many philosophies, everything on Earth is a part of everything else. For the Anshar, this fact isn't idle speculation or philosophy, it is their reason for being. Implicit in that focus on connections was the concept of distance. It was the Anshar who placed the stars as far away from Earth as they did. Some Scourges walking the Earth today note with pride that the light of some of the stars they placed *still* hasn't reached human eyes. That pride is tinged with longing, however. It might be thousands or millions of years before they gaze on their own handiwork again, if ever.

The Scourges' power and responsibility changed after the war, of course, but they did retain the knowledge of how to create and maintain connections. Lost forever, though, was the ability to create a new and unique relationship between beings. They could (and can) see through their thralls' eyes, yes, but they cannot cause their thralls to draw strength from their very presence. Modern Anshar are wary of growing too close to things of this world, lest they be hurt again, but they can't fly to the stars anymore either. Torment removes them even further from Earth, sapping their life and vitality, making them thinner and dimming their eternal light. An Anshar who succumbs entirely to Torment is likely to fade away, not having the strength to connect with any part of the world.

• **Antu, the Visage of Paths:** Reality was once layered, such that any living thing could exist on any number of levels. As the world began to grow more complex, however, and humans began to move through it, God created the Antu to make paths through the innumerable realms of Earth. The Antu were responsible for creating the currents, the jet streams, the game trails and even other methods of traveling from place to place. That meant that they also worked hand in hand with their brothers the Kishar, making sure that time would erode certain pathways that might be used in coming centuries. Most of the Antu worked on the ground among humans and other inhabitants of Paradise, invisibly influencing the growth of a tree or the fall of the rock. Some few worked above with the Angels of the Winds, making sure

that storms and other weather followed their God-given paths.

The modern age panics many Antu, who see billions of people wandering the world without the first idea where they mean to go. Antu are direct; when they travel, there's a reason, and they arrive at their destination quickly. In times past, they were very efficient angels, and their work ethic has changed little. Cars, airplanes and other modes of transport fascinate them but are also cause for worry. After all, they built pathways into the world — and between worlds — that only angels were meant to tread. The Antu hear stories of mythological figures journeying to the shadow lands, and they wonder where some of their paths might now lead. After all, if the entire world has become warped, they can no longer be sure that the trails they once laid lead to the same destinations. What if the humans, in their current faithless and meandering state, were to find these paths?

High levels of Torment rob these demons of their focus on destination. Instead, they lose their way and pull others into that state of confusion and helplessness as well. Their physical forms begin to fade at the edges, making their boundaries indistinct and blurry. Their voices, likewise, begin to echo, as though emanating from somewhere other than their mouths.

- **Aruru, the Visage of the Flesh:** Once, the Angels of Flesh were the most powerful of the Angels of the Wild, creating the very laws by which life abided. With a touch, an Aruru can stop a mortal's heart or reshape his flesh so that even his mother won't recognize him. While this is impressive, it is nothing compared to the wonders that the Aruru worked in times past, and this makes them bitter. The Lore of the Flesh is all that remains of what the Aruru once were.

Cynics often point out that any human emotion, faith included, can be quantified as an electrochemical pattern in the body. The Aruru don't see this as evidence against God; they, after all, were charged with creating those patterns. Living biology is immensely complex, and it involves so many reactions and variables that God created only a few Aruru, rather than risk too many cooks spoiling the primordial soup. These angels, unlike their more basic cousins, were charged with making sure that life could flourish, even in the immense variety that God had bestowed upon the Earth. The fact that humans are still discovering new species does these angels proud, as does the fact that many organisms are adapting to environments for which the Aruru never intended them.

Like the Antu, the Aruru are efficient. They might like to experiment, sometimes with their own bodies, but on the whole they keep their revelatory forms simple. Many of them simply idealize their human hosts, making them healthy and physically perfect. They rarely bother with aesthetics, although they do tend to correct any physical asymmetry they find. The new sciences of cloning and genetic tampering horrify most Aruru; God granted powers such as these to the angels for a reason, after all. More progressive (or cynical) demons simply point out that God never granted the power to fly to humans, yet they do. Even these demons, however, must admit that the power to reshape a life form on so basic a level does not seem to be a wise thing to put into mortal hands.

- **Bel, the Visage of the Celestials:** The Bel were the leaders of the Host, designed by God to be managers, generals and when necessary, disciplinarians. Granted power over Faith itself — the very building block of the universe, in ancient times — the Bel used their authority to direct and command the other angels. Unlike their Nusku brothers, who actually carried and commanded the Fire of Heaven, the Bel used their lore to spread the Word of God, spreading understanding as well as illumination, that everything in the universe might know its place. The Bel were among the angels who rarely took any particular form at all. Like the Shamash, they preferred to travel as light or sound. Being forced to adopt physical bodies as the world grew thin is a phenomenon that all of the Bel deeply resented. Conceptually, some Bel worked with notions such as inspiration and creativity, while their sisters among the Ishhara actually provided inspiration. The Bel made it possible for mankind to get ideas; other angels then supplied the imagery and physical trappings that activated them. Bel were angels of potential and, in many ways, faith.

Like all Devils, Bel were made for leadership, and their visages are always striking, regardless of the details. Almost all Bel glow with inner light — they resemble a "classical" angel in many respects. Whether they do because legends of angels stemmed from memories (or visions) of the Bel or because the Bel choose this form to be better able to influence human thought is an academic question. As a Bel's Torment increases, her effect on those around her changes from awe-inspiring glory to unholy terror. Many Bel find that their physical forms change quite beyond their control, spiraling away from the spiritual purity of light and Faith into the base power of natural weaponry. Therefore, monstrous

Bel often exhibit such traits as wicked fangs and claws or an increase in size.

- Dagan, the Visage of Awakening:** The Angels of Awakening were present for the birth — and, perhaps, conception — of every living thing on Earth before the Fall. They brought the breath of God to the newborn children of all the world's creatures, from the crawling insects to the mightiest leviathans. For a seed to germinate, a Dagan was necessary to give it the essential spark of life. The Angels of the Dawn might have spread God's word, but the Dagan swept across Creation interacting with life directly. As such, they tended to be the most grounded and practical of the Angels of the Second House. The Dagan enjoyed a special working relationship with the Namtar. The Angels of Death broke matter down, and the Dagan reinvigorated it so that nothing ever went to waste.

When the rebellion came, the Dagan who joined with Lucifer were thrilled by the idea of being able to watch over the births of human children without masking their presence. Then God's curse upon the Asharu changed everything. Humans would grow old and die, no matter how much the Dagan guarded them from poison. That alone was enough to drive many of them to the more destructive side of their powers. Worse yet, their special kinship with the House of the Second World was shattered as the Halaku now had to reap the souls of the slain, leaving many to view the Dagan as working at cross purposes.

Dagan are beings of life and vitality. Monstrous Dagan are the antithesis of life, foul creatures of disease and decay. They are life left unchecked, health spun out of balance by neglect. While a Dagan's revelatory form is the picture of perfect health, the body begins to fall away as his Torment increases. A Dagan with extremely high Torment might resemble nothing more than a skeleton with a few clumps of flesh clinging to the bones.

- Ellil, the Visage of the Winds:** While the Dagan traveled throughout all of Creation doing their work, the Ellil were much more specialized. They provided the air that powered the breath of God and worked alongside the Adad creating weather patterns. Like the Kishar and Adad, they were very much angels of the elements, tied to the physical reality that humans could see (or feel, in the case of the Ellil). The Angels of the Winds were among those Celestials most interested in music. By sending their winds through certain structures — such as stones, trees or caves — the Ellil were able to produce natural sound and thereby communicate with the humans without violating God's ban. It

was a good idea, but true to form, humans ignored or misinterpreted it.

Ellil were responsible for creating everything from gentle breezes to hurricanes. When the rebellion came, many of the most destructive rebels joined simply to show humanity that they were merely doing their jobs in creating the gales that frightened humans so. The unfortunate result, however, is that the most destructive of the Ellil later fought against the Heavenly Host in the War of Wrath.

Ellil are angels of air, so their visages tend toward lithe and quick forms. Most Ellil have wings, and they use their power over winds to execute some truly dazzling aerial displays. And yet, for all that, they remember the days when they took the form of the air itself, rather than riding its currents. Ellil are restless demons at the best of times, but high levels of Torment madden them. The winds that constantly surround their apocalyptic forms begin to reek — the term "ill wind" best defines them. Some Ellil tend toward base physical modifications as Torment rises; quills and fangs are common. Some grow subtler but begin to poison the air around them.

- Ereshkigal, the Visage of the Realms:** The Halaku changed greatly in the wake of Heaven's curse, but none so much as the Ereshkigal. These demons bear the least resemblance to their once-angelic forms of any of the fallen, simply because they created a new purpose for themselves — as well as a new lore path — after the Fall. The Angels of the Second World were once charged with killing off species that had either failed in their purpose (many of the Zaltu's early experiments provided work for the Ereshkigal) or had simply outlived their role in the ecosystem. Only humans remained untouched, as they did not die. Then, with one horrible proclamation from Michael, everything changed. Reapers who sided with God found themselves collecting the souls of man, and the Ereshkigal, who had heretofore stalked dying beasts throughout Creation, tried to find ways to hide them. The Angels of the Realms were, in their way, responsible for preserving what little remained of the "layered reality" after the Fall and the War of Wrath, for they created the spirit worlds where dead souls could hide from their reaping angels. To this day, no one is sure if it was an act of God or angel that made denizens of one realm incompatible with another, but many of the creatures that the Halaku hid in the spirit worlds die in moments on Earth. The Ereshkigal had only so much time to focus on animals, however, as they were busy trying to show humans how to cross these boundaries. Together with some few of the rogue Antu, they

created gateways and paths that led to the newly constructed spirit realms.

The Lore of the Realms is one of many lore paths created out of necessity in the wake of the Fall. As the Ereshkigal built the lands of the dead, they assumed gab that would allow them pass unnoticed between the realms. Over time, humanity knew them as spirit guides, psychopomps and ferryman. They shed their wings and other angelic trappings, and their visages became quiet and dark, so as not to attract notice. The Ereshkigal of today still exhibit these traits, even when Torment begins to consume them. When the anguish overpowers their souls, however, they grow cold. In the darkness of the lands of the dead, there waits oblivion, and even the oldest Ereshkigal cannot remember why they allowed this spiritual void into the realm they built for their beloved humans — if indeed it was their choice to do so.

- **Ishhara, the Visage of Longing:** The Lammasu understand longing. They were created, after all, to lure humans on to greater and deeper thoughts, but never to reveal themselves directly. That ability to inspire, to entice, to create *desire* formed the essence of Angels of Longing. And yet, they too yearned to be closer to the humans they were made to love. When the rebellion came, many Ishhara jumped at the chance to show humanity the possibilities open to them, rather than simply tempt them. The problem, of course, was that this didn't satisfy the Ishhara, who were made from the start to be creatures of endless desire. In short, even when they had what they wanted, it wasn't enough.

This kind of eternal want isn't necessarily a bad thing, of course. Yes, it eventually spurred such impulses as greed and gluttony, but it also drove humans on to find better and more efficient methods of study and worship. The Angels of Longing acted as muses, working with their sisters the Mammetum to slowly manipulate humanity's wishes in ways that would improve the race's lot. But human desire, once unleashed, proved a dangerous beast, and the Ishhara themselves, the embodiments of desire, were humbled by how much humans could acquire and still want for more. In particular, the competitive nature of humanity horrified the Ishhara as the War of Wrath went on. Mortals seemed perfectly content to burn anything they couldn't have, rather than take the longer view and work slowly and methodically to achieve their goal. Ishhara, by nature, saw desire as a motivator to alter behavior. Humanity sees it as an excuse to alter the world.

Ishhara are always beautiful, no matter how much Torment they accrue. That beauty, however, changes from a pure, almost chaste beauty to a



siren's untouchable glamour as the Defiler allows the Torment of the Abyss to haunt her. A monstrous Ishhara might be the most beautiful thing a mortal has ever seen, so lovely to look upon that he cannot bear the strength of his own desires. Ironically, this is much the same way the Ishhara feel regarding the world around them.

- **Kishar, the Visage of the Earth:** At first blush, the Angels of the Earth might seem simplistic and brutal. When one considers the sheer amount of responsibility these angels had, however, their true complexity becomes apparent. The Kishar were responsible for the natural topography of the world, including mountains, fjords, volcanoes, sea beds, glaciers and any other earth or rock-based phenomenon. In the process, they pioneered such concepts as patience, diligence, and tenacity. They were entrusted with more power than any other "earth-based" angels, except perhaps the Aruru. They understood that the earth changed slowly, but in changing altered all life in Creation. While the humble Kishar never thought of themselves as doing the most important work, they did admit that only they had the patience and skill to work the literal clay of the world. When the rebellion came, few Kishar joined Lucifer, but those that did formed the juggernauts of his legions. Along with their brethren the Antu, the Kishar knew the Fundament better than any other angels. With their abilities of reshaping rock and earth, they could create tunnels and pathways for the legions, as well as cause tremendous earthquakes and other natural disasters. Each of the strongholds of the Host kept an Angel of the Earth on hand, simply to prevent a rebel Kishar from leveling the place with a nod of his head. The battles between these titans literally shook the earth, as modern-day fault lines and mountain ranges can attest.

The Angels of the Earth resemble golems, huge beings formed of rock. The temperament and function of a Kishar is obvious upon looking at the minerals that compose his apocalyptic form. An angel responsible for creating mountains might be formed of gray stone, whereas an angel who did most of his work beneath the earth might be made of coal or even a precious metal. The Kishar's capabilities lean overwhelmingly toward physical enhancements, even when the demon's Torment rises. Whereas a low-Torment Kishar tends toward empowering himself, however, a monstrous Angel of the Earth develops spikes and other natural weaponry, the better to rend and destroy the objects of his malice.

- **Mammetum, the Visage of Transfiguration:** The sea is ever-changing yet always the same. Like all angels before the Fall, the Mammetum could assume

whatever form best suited the needs of the moment. But at the same time, they were called upon to embody change and incongruity. Some Angels of Transfiguration worked with literal, physical change, allowing life to grow and develop. Some worked with the Ishhara to create attraction and then to change in order to meet approval. Some Mammetum even worked with the esoteric concepts of metaphor and irony, transforming meaning itself. Supposedly, the angel who pioneered humor was an Angel of Transfiguration.

Change is difficult and often painful, however. Once something changes, it leaves a part of itself behind forever. A man who grows older might gain experience, knowledge and happiness, but the changes distance him from the youth he once was. The Mammetum knew that this evolution was nothing to fear, and they longed to show humanity that change was simply part of God's plan. For the Mammetum, the rebellion was a way to reassure humanity that change did not lead inevitably to death. After the Fall, of course, that assertion was harder to make. While not many will admit it, almost all Mammetum had the thought cross their minds in the dark of the Abyss that maybe they should have left humanity well enough alone. This isn't in their nature, however. Transfiguration isn't simply changing oneself, it involves changing one's environment to suit one's ever-changing needs. Mammetum are never sedentary, and the sluggish nature of many modern-day humans annoys them to no end.

While it is said that the Angels of Transfiguration never assumed the same form twice before the Fall, the Lore of Transfiguration is all the fallen Defilers have left to remind themselves of their former diversity. Although Mammetum cannot achieve the same degree of fluidity as they could in the past, the Visage of Transfiguration is still a potent, mercurial power. Many Mammetum leave an after-image as they walk in revelatory form, their appearance constantly changing. Monstrous Mammetum lose that fluidity, and although their forms might still change, the change requires effort instead of being intrinsic to the Defiler. High levels of Torment confer the worst curse a Mammetum could conceive: permanence.

- **Mummu, the Visage of the Forge:** Creating tools for man would have violated God's ban on interacting with them, so the Lore of the Forge (and thus the Mummu) didn't exist as such until after the Fall. Some Annunaki, however, attempted to show humanity how the world around them could be turned to their advantage even before the rebellion. They created stones in certain shapes and worked with the Zaltu and the Mammetum to inspire beasts to build

homes and use twigs and other tools. It didn't seem to help. They tried to show humanity, secondhand, how their environment was constructed in a specific way so that it could be made more suitable to their needs. On the day that Adam fashioned a sling to kill a bird, the angels who would become the Mummum rejoiced. The fact that he forgot his accomplishment the next day and went back to chasing rabbits cemented the angels' decision to rebel.

Given leave to create and reshape the world as they saw fit during the War of Wrath, the Mummum became the artificers and weapon-smiths of the infernal host. They worked human faith into the tools of war and fashioned cursed treasures to seduce and corrupt the enemy. Since the Mummum were never part of the pre-rebellion hierarchy, they didn't share the same constraints as far as honorable battle and traditional tactics. Their presence in the War of Wrath led Lucifer's forces to a number of memorable victories. Yet for all their trouble, they were cast into the Pit for a million dark eternities with absolutely nothing to do.

Demons who manifest the Visage of the Forge are giants, titans who once reshaped the living rock into their heart's desires. Despite their size, they retain their skill and mechanical finesse... until Torment overtakes them. Their creative impulses spin out of control, sending everything around them into chaos. Still, to them, even this is preferable to the nothingness of the Abyss.

- **Namtar, the Visage of Death:** Once the Namtar used their mastery of death to determine what creatures needed to be excised from the Earth, then simply touched them gently and returned their bodies to the ground. The Angels of Death were created to recycle the material left by the passing of the spirit (whereas the disposition of the spirit itself was left to their brothers, the Nergal). Their powers were not designed to be used on humans, and the curse placed upon the Halaku was worse than any the gentle Namtar could have conceived. Their beloved humans would now fall victim to their proverbial scythes — small wonder, then, that some of the Halaku immediately began building realms where the loyalist Nergal couldn't find human souls. As agents of decay and physical death, the Namtar tried to conceive of ways to make death acceptable, if not palatable. From their work during the war came notions such as martyrdom, grieving, funerals and many forms of medicine. Suicide and despair also came about, however, as the Namtar tried to make every human's ultimate fate a little easier.

As the War of Wrath wore on, though, the Namtar slowly began to enjoy their work. Again, they had little

trick with the souls of the dead, so to them, humanity became mere matter, worked in the same manner as the Mummum worked the earth. When the rebel Namtar were cast into the Abyss, many had already changed, the cold glee in ending life paving the way for the Torment to come.

The Visage of Death terrifies any who see it, regardless of the demon's Torment score. A Namtar is an embodiment of mortality, but it offers none of the comfort that a Nergal might. As Torment rises, that cold silence of the grave gives way to the chilling howls of the dead. The Namtar himself, however, becomes oddly deaf to those screams, seeing only the crude matter before him.

- **Nedu, the Visage of Portals:** The Angels of Portals were created as a sort of auxiliary to the Ninsun, creating gates for them to travel back and forth across Creation instantly. The Nedu, however, were also responsible for the framework of magic that later became wards and summonings and the processes of thought that invented locks. The concepts of entrances and exits also stemmed from their efforts, as did concepts such as privacy and, unfortunately, theft. Their collaborations with the Annunaki during the war led to locks, doors and the portals between the physical and spirit realms. It was a loyalist Nedu, in fact, who supposedly designed the gates of the Abyss itself.

Few Nedu actually joined the rebellion, as their work kept them far removed from humans. Those who did side with Lucifer were often the ones responsible for creating gateways between the heavens and the earth, so that various angels with responsibilities that took them away from Paradise could visit their cherished humans occasionally. They also created portals for the Angels of the Fundament, transporting them from the surface of the earth to their fiery forges. As a result, the Nedu know earth better than any other angels except perhaps the Antu. Like the Antu and the Ereshkigal, the Nedu fashioned portals between worlds. Fiends who know the Lore of Portals are very likely to have several different versions of a summoning spell ready to be performed by their thralls just in case they are ever sent back to the Abyss.

The Nedu have an odd relationship with light. The Angels of Portals understood that shadows could be easily used as gateways, but the Shamash considered shadows (an ideological extension of light) to be their domain. After the Fall, however, the Nedu wove the shadows into an intricate web of gateways spanning the entire world. The secret of this network of portals was lost after the Nedu were cast into the Pit, though mortal sorcerers and even

certain vampires have occasionally stumbled upon it. The newly freed Fiends have had little luck in accessing this web again, for reasons unknown. Many Nedu still appear as shadowy apparitions in their apocalyptic form, harking back to their greatest creation during the war. Monstrous Nedu often appear shrouded entirely in darkness, as though receding into some unseen portal.

• **Nergal, the Visage of the Spirit:** Before the rebellion, the Nergal performed a function similar to their sisters, the Namtar, but instead of recycling matter, they worked in more esoteric circles. Nergal worked with the Dagan and the Ninsun to make sure that all who needed to be awakened could be, and then removed the spiritual detritus left in the wake of change. Their focus changed dramatically, however, when humans became mortal and their souls needed to be ferried on to their final destinations. Loyalist Nergal were given charge of removing the souls to another place, but the rebels, of course, were never told what that place might be. Unable to bear the thought of human souls passing beyond their grasp into an uncertain future, these angels created the Lore of the Spirit. The Nergal became the soul conveyers, comforting humans in their dying moments and allowing their spirits to return by fettering them to those things and people that they loved. No one can say if it was human tenacity that allowed this kind of treatment or if the Nergal's willingness to attach human souls fostered that tenacity. Whatever the case, spiritual death became the Nergal's purview, and therefore, so did curses and supernatural occurrences connected with death. The most common, of course, was vampirism. When the Halaku saw what Caine had brought upon himself, their punishment seemed light by comparison.

In the end, though, the Nergal were overwhelmed trying to cope with the staggering scope of souls lost each day across the Earth, eventually leading to the creation of the spirit realm. The fact that the Abyss was located close enough to these realms (metaphysically speaking) that the Angels of the Spirit could hear and interact with those souls was surely no accident. But the Nergal, wanting so desperately to reach out and comfort their charges, over time began to simply wish to silence them.

Now, back on Earth, the Nergal retain much of their power over the souls of dead humans. The Torment their time in the Abyss earned them has altered them, however. While a Nergal who staves off Torment retains his beatific Visage, a monstrous one is an infernal soul collector, come to snatch a human spirit to Hell. Such beings grow in size (if not mass)

and loom over their victims like the Grim Reaper of human legend.

• **Ninsun, the Visage of Patterns:** The universe is ordered, even if it took humans thousands of years to notice it (let alone begin to understand that order). The Angels of Patterns were responsible for building that order and making sure that it did not fall apart. They did their job well, in fact, and even during the rebellion, the Ninsun took pride in the fact that they could predict with certainty where the earth and the heavens were going and why. Laws of physics and even basic spiritual truths — the Golden Rule, the Threefold Law — rested in the hands of the Angels of Patterns. The Ninsun built much of the foundation upon which the world was based, not in terms of raw material (which fell to the more elemental angels such as the Kishar) but the rules by which even the basest materials abided.

And then God destroyed that order with a swipe of His hand, and all the work the Ninsun did was knocked askew. Some demons guess that God altered the order so that the rebel Ninsun (and there were quite a few, as many of them agreed with Ahrial and his dire predictions) could not tip the balance of the War of Wrath. As it happened, Angels of Patterns on both sides of the war retained their abilities to see the future, but not affect it on a broad scale (and certainly not to alter the fundamental order of the universe). The Ninsun were often deciding factors in the war, but they could no longer manipulate worldwide events to best advantage. The rebels never quite regained their equilibrium before being tossed into Hell.

After escaping, many Ninsun noticed with horror that the grand clockworks of the universe keep running, though no one has tended them in aeons. This means that the whole thing could spin out of control at any moment. The various factions, of course, respond to that sentiment in different ways, but the Ninsun, on the whole, aren't ready to see the rest of their work fall to pieces.

The Visage of Patterns is perfectly symmetrical and usually covered in marking and symbols older than language itself. Pattern angels were great proponents of language and writing, and they adopted such symbols onto their revelatory forms. Monstrous Ninsun, strangely, do not lose their symmetry. Instead, they grow cold, alien and distant, as though listening to a far-off invocation.

• **Ninurtu, the Visage of the Wild:** Like the Zaltu, the Angels of the Wild were given the task of creating as many different varieties of life as possible. As any modern botanist might attest, they outdid themselves. The Ninurtu created plants

that the animals used for food — and vice versa, as the bodies of the dead served to feed the world's flora. The Angels of the Wild also enjoyed a special relationship with the Shamash; the Angels of Light provided the energy for many of the creations of the Ninurta.

If not for God's command to love the humans, the Angels of the Wild might have been content to let them wallow in ignorance forever. But the Ninurta had grandiose dreams of the humans living carefree in their forests, running in their fields, without fear — not because the angels protected them, but because the humans would learn and remember what plants could be touched and eaten. When the rebellion came, the few Ninurta who joined with Lucifer were those who had protected the nascent humans from death resulting from eating a poisonous or indigestible plant. All through the war the forests were battlegrounds as Ninurta changed the flora into combatants and guardians. And then, the rebels found themselves exiled to dark place with no life, supposedly forever.

Upon returning to Earth, however, the Ninurta discovered exactly how the humans have treated the angels' creations, clear-cutting forests and poisoning the soil with chemicals. Despite this displeasure, though, not all (or even most) Ninurta are eco-terrorists. Just as many want to see the world torn down, burning the earth clean so they can grow new life from the ashes. Some Devourers don't wish to see the world destroyed so much as returned to the simple Paradise it once was. That would mean getting rid of most of the humans, of course, but many Ninurta feel that humanity had its chance.

In apocalyptic form, Ninurta usually take on the features of the plants they helped to create. Therefore, a Devourer who helped to create oak trees might be huge and sturdy, whereas an angel of ivy might be thin but extremely strong. As Torment builds, however, most Ninurta grow in size and take on the fury of the planet that their cherished humans are slowly destroying.

• **Nusku, the Visage of Flame:** The angels who were granted authority over fire did not have the same prestige as their cousins among the Bel did. Charged with the creation of sources of light (rather than uses for light itself, which was the province of the Shamash) the Nusku set about igniting the sun and the stars. Lightning was another invention of the Nusku, although authority over using it passed to the Adad. The Nusku, however, had dominion over fire as the embodiment of faith as well. Working with the Bel, they sought to teach humans how faith could nurture them in times of cold just as fire could. Until

the rebellion, of course, the humans weren't able to make that connection. The Angels of Flames took this in stride, and continued their duties of providing light and warmth.

Utterly devoted to his cause and his faith, a Nusku constantly runs the risk of burning too hot and dying out. During the War of Wrath, the Nusku joined with the Ellil to create devastating firestorms. The Angels of Flame were and remain uncompromising — a fire either burns or it doesn't. It can be contained, but never diminished without killing it entirely. As such, Nusku tend to be extremely, almost fanatically, devoted to their factions.

An Angel of Flame always burns hot in revelatory form, the flames surrounding her the only constant between different Nusku. As a Nusku's Torment rises, though, the fire begins to die. Strong emotion might cause it to flare up unexpectedly (and even out of the demon's control) but for the most part, monstrous Nusku look like dying embers, smoldering and sullen, but no less dangerous.

• **Qingu, the Visage of Radiance:** The Lore of Radiance didn't exist until after the rebellion, when the Devils who had once been the leaders among the Host refined their powers of authority into a set of evocations. They found the power to inspire those around them, to lead the mortals and the fallen alike, and speak with a voice that carried authority. The Qingu, in the process, were singled out for much of the hostility from the Host of Heaven. Michael, especially, despised the Angels of Radiance, decrying them as blasphemers for pretending to their former authority.

During the War of Wrath, the Qingu were tacticians and warlords. They were also keepers of records, as their power allowed them to mark and recall friends or foes. When fighting loyalist angels who could change their shapes, this ability proved invaluable.

Eternity in the Abyss humbled the Qingu, and upon returning to Earth, many of them lost much of the influence (and Eminence) they once held. Yet their visages are still majestic and, of course, radiant. Their inner light is blinding, especially to mortals, but the Qingu are impossible to ignore. Monstrous Qingu sometimes develop features such as tails or horns, but they do not become the same sorts of monsters as the Rabisu. Instead, they become cruel taskmasters, ready to strike down anyone with the temerity to so much as raise eyes to view them.

• **Shamash, the Visage of Light:** The Lore of Light emerged during the war, so the Shamash only appeared after the rebellion, but all angels had some form of relationship with light from the beginnings of the universe. God began the universe with light,

after all, and the essential energy is a part of all of His creations. This might be why angels (and fallen angels) are resistant to illusion; they see much more clearly, having learned to perceive light when it was still new. The pre-rebellion Angels of Light were not responsible for the creation of light — that was God's purview — but they developed different ways to use light. They created color and imparted properties like photosynthesis, often in conjunction with other angels.

As one of its most important events, the rebellion involved granting light to the humans. Whether it was literal light in the form of fire or metaphorical light in the form of knowledge, the Shamash were there rejoicing as the first mortals learned how much the angels loved them. Before the war, optical illusions were created as challenges to spur humans on to greater depth of thought and connection (something of which all angels, but most especially the Mammetum and the Anshar, heartily approved). That use of illusions was never a deliberate attempt to harm, but simply an angel's hint that there was a connection between two things or ideas. As the war was joined, however, the Shamash were forced to use their talents to deceive rather than illuminate, something they have regretted ever since.

In the lightless Abyss, the Shamash formed bodies for themselves for the first time. When the opportunity came to escape Hell, the Angels of Light found that they could no longer travel as light does, although their visages still shone brightly. Monstrous Shamash do not darken as their Torment increases, but instead become more apt to what the Angels of Light so loathe, deception. Such angels create whirling, hypnotic images, confusing and terrifying those who look on them.

- **Zaltu, the Visage of the Beast:** Like the Ninurto, these angels were charged with populating the world with as much variety as possible. From the tiniest insects to the greatest sea creatures, the Zaltu worked closely with the Anuru to create animals everywhere. The Zaltu prided themselves on their ingenuity; they created ways for life to endure and adapt regardless of the environment or the conditions of weather (some suspect a less-than-friendly competition between the Zaltu and more destructive Adad or Kishar). When called upon to create humans, they took their cues from the Creator and didn't use the most efficient methods possible for designing them. Later cultures would speak of beings who lavished natural gifts upon the animals, leaving none for man, but the Zaltu would gladly have made humans the fastest, strongest and most perceptive



creatures on Earth had they been permitted. But since the other beasts were forbidden from attacking humans, the Zaltu didn't much mind.

And then came the curse from Michael that humans would now be prey for the beasts of the Earth, and the Rabisu howled in anguish, for they had done their work too well. All through the war, the Zaltu protected humanity from the most dangerous of beasts, and when they were shut up in the Abyss, these angels worried and fretted that the beasts would rise up and eat the humans if the Zaltu weren't there to save them. But when the first Zaltu were released from Hell, they saw instead that humanity had wantonly slaughtered most of the predators of the world, destroying whole species that had taken the Zaltu incalculable time to create. This, more than any concern about Lucifer, turned many Zaltu to the Raveners. Aside from any concern about the humans ruining their handiwork, the Zaltu regret never being able to teach humanity that everything under Heaven has a purpose, no matter how horrid it might seem to human eyes. If only mankind could have learned that, the Devourers lament, perhaps the world would be in a better state! Now, however, the point is largely moot, as the Zaltu don't see any reason to attempt to educate humanity.

No two Zaltu look the same. Often, the Visage of the Beast depends on the area of expertise of the demon in question. Therefore, some Zaltu have fur, others scales, while some have shells or leathery hides. As a Zaltu's Torment rises, however, the hunt becomes so important that their bodies begin to decay. A monstrous Zaltu might appear diseased and bloodied but howl continuously for fresh blood.

DEVIL IN THE DETAILS

Look over the preceding ideas with regard to your character's visage. Those ideas and the descriptions given in Chapter Seven of *Demon* should give you a good idea of what your demon's revelatory form might look like. Taken together with the suggestions provided hereafter will allow you to describe and envision your character's apocalyptic form to a much greater degree.

- **Skin:** A demon's flesh doesn't always change in revelatory form. Sometimes a demon appears to be simply a human being with wings (or whatever other garish features the visage conjures up). Just as often however, the demon's outward appearance changes so dramatically that no one would mistake the demon for human at any distance. Does your demon's skin take on a different tone or color? What about texture? Some demons have scales or armor in apocalyptic forms. Sometimes a demon's skin doesn't even look solid

OVERDOING IT?

After reading *Demon: The Fallen* (which puts comparatively little emphasis on a demon's apocalyptic form), it might seem that dedicating a huge chapter to changing and building it in the *Players Guide* is a bit... unnecessary. After all, how often are demons truly going to assume their apocalyptic forms? Surely a demon's visage would have little effect on a jaded and faithless humanity.

Apocalyptic forms and visages weren't given such great detail in the core book simply because the space wasn't available, but they are an extremely important part of the game. In a world that ignores faith so vehemently, the apocalyptic form is a powerful tool. It forces an unbeliever to accept the possibility of God, even for a short while, and even if his only response is pass out or stand dumbfounded. For demons, the revelatory forms are expressions of who and what they are. In those few moments in which they don this form, they literally wear their souls.

A demon assuming revelatory form is a miracle on Earth, plain and simple, no matter how many times it happens. And that is worth a little extra coverage, wouldn't you say?

anymore. Defilers can appear to be made of water, whereas some Scourges and Fiends resemble walking pieces of the sky.

- **Voice:** Fallen angel though the character might be, she is still an angel. The character's voice should resonate, be it the booming, earthshaking bass of a Malefactor or the soft but pervasive growl of a Devourer. Does the character's voice become lyrical or melodious, or is it painful for any mortal to hear? Maybe the demon's voice sounds, to a given mortal, like the voice of someone he knows and cares for deeply (very appropriate for Defilers or Slayers). Truly impressive demons might have voices that sound like many people speaking in unison. This is especially appropriate for demons who make common use of the Lore of Humanity (even though it doesn't have its own visage). Does the character's Torment show in her revelatory form's voice, and if so, how? Does the demon get louder the more Torment she accrues, or does the voice simply become more menacing?

- **Eyes:** Supposedly eyes are the windows of the soul. When a demon in apocalyptic form makes eye contact with a mortal, the effects of Revelation might well increase. Many demons possess sensory powers that allow them to see great distances — do the demon's eyes reflect this, perhaps sharpening to razor

slits as she views something far beyond the vision of a mortal? Perhaps the demon's eyes change color as she grows angry or they begin to smoke as she calls on the Lore of Flame?

- **Monstrous Features:** While some demons lack wings, claws and any of the obviously inhuman features, many of them do exhibit such characteristics. Try to imagine what form these features might take with your character. Are her claws horrid, blackened, crooked things, or are they retractable and impeccably clean? Do her wings spread majestically out as she glides, or do they drip with caustic slime as she flies overhead? Wings might be eagle's wings or raven's wings, depending on the character's visage, but high levels of Torment often mean that wings become leathery and bat-like, often with holes worn through them and tiny vestigial claws at their points. Most of these features, however, are only available as the character grows more anguished. Consider how they reflect the pain that your character felt after so long in the Abyss.

- **Transformation:** The change from human vessel to revelatory form should be dramatic and memorable, no matter how many times it happens. Don't settle for a quick "Poof, I'm in demon-form." Picture your character as massive swan's wings rise from his shoulders, even as his hair darkens from blond to blood-red and his skin pales to white. Imagine the character's shadow lengthening as she gains two feet in height, or her image disappearing from a mirror as her apocalyptic form takes hold. Remember, too, that you can choose to have your character manifest only a few of her form capabilities at a time. A demon might begin by growing a few feet taller and causing all those in her presence to avert their eyes (Increased Size and Dread Gaze) but not unfurl her wings until she actually needs them. Likewise, if the character chooses to use a high-Torment power, remember that it is a representation of her Torment. A demon who exhibits the Relentless power as a normal power is simply driven and obstinate. A demon whose relentlessness comes from her Torment is an unstoppable hunter, her eyes inhumanly focused on her goal.

- **Lore:** A demon's use of lore in apocalyptic form might be reflected by small changes in that form. A Namtar who has also learned the Lore of Flame might have tiny licks of blue-white fire burning around his otherwise cold and dead eyes when activating the Holocaust power. If a Defiler with the Visage of Storms summons up fog, perhaps she exhales it, or perhaps it simply rolls off her body like mist off a moonlit sea.

EXAMPLE OF APOCALYPTIC FORM CREATION

Tina sits down to create a **Demon** character, and after considering the Houses, feels drawn to the Angels of the Fundament, those who were known as Malefactors after the Fall. Tina decides that this angel was a kind of manager in Paradise, putting finishing touches on the work that his fellows did to the physical geography of Earth. To wit, he used erosion like a sculptor's tool, carving a canyon here, a fjord there. The character joined the rebellion because he felt that the world's splendor and artistry had to be seen from the air to be truly appreciated, and humanity would never be able to reach such lofty heights (literally) without the help of the angels. Tina tentatively names her character Telviel (isn't from any angel book; Tina just likes the sound of it).

During the war, Telviel used his command over other former Angels of the Fundament to undercut enemy defenses, making use of the terrain and the Malefactors' command of the land. It all came to naught eventually, however, and he was cast into Hell.

Upon escaping, Telviel found himself possessing the body of a young would-be pilot, a man who had tried several times to enter various flight schools but was always unable to finish for one reason or another. The demon's frustration at being locked away from the soaring heights for an eternity resonated with the man's helplessness at knowing a dream and being unable to realize it. Tina pictures Telviel's human host as meek and unassuming, but she sees the Malefactor's revelatory form as having huge, luminous wings that reflect cloud formations and crackle with lightning. While this sort of imagery might seem more appropriate to the Defilers than the Malefactors, Tina decides that Telviel was largely charged with the interaction of two forms of matter — water and earth — as an angel of erosion. Therefore, the Malefactors seem a better choice than the Defilers, especially after reading the notes on the appropriate visages. Tina's Storyteller does ask, however, that Tina purchase a dot of the Lore of Storms for Telviel, which Tina agrees is reasonable.

With all of this in mind, Tina sits down to create Telviel's apocalyptic form. She knows that she wishes to choose the Lore of Paths as her primary lore. Looking at the special capabilities conferred by the Visage of Paths, however, Tina realizes that she had envisioned Telviel as being able to fly (or at least glide), looking down on creation and changing and eroding the landscape at will. Of course, the fallen character won't have anything near that level of power, but the player still sees that longing for the open skies and the literal "bird-eye view" as an

integral ability of the Malefactor's personality. (It also serves to set the character apart from most of his normally grounded House.) Since Antu aren't normally equipped with wings, however, Tina decides to build a revelatory form from scratch.

With 16 points to spend on Telviel's apocalyptic form, Tina looks over the lists of both common and Malefactor abilities. Since the character must have one of the eight capabilities listed under the Visage of Paths, she looks over those offered to the Antu and discovers that a few of them work fairly well for what she envisioned for Telviel. She chooses Conjunction, Dead Reckoning, Enhanced Senses and Wings for Telviel's non-Tormented form capabilities. She reasons that the increased Perception and constant sense of direction are perfect for Telviel, who likes to know where he's going and be aware of his surroundings. As mentioned, however, Tina wishes the character to be able to glide, so she decides that Telviel crackles with electricity (something that she decides will become more prominent as Telviel gains Torment). The non-Tormented abilities for Telviel's revelatory form, therefore, cost nine of Tina's 16 form points. This leaves her seven points to buy high-Torment abilities.

Taking the high-Torment abilities associated with the visage in the core book would cost Tina her remaining seven points. She decides, however, to tweak the selection of high-Torment abilities a bit. If she so desires, she can ignore the normal Antu high-Torment abilities entirely, since Telviel already has two of the abilities normally ascribed to the Visage of Paths. Tina decides that the Mirage and Relentless abilities suit Telviel, though, so she keeps those. The high-Torment versions of these abilities cost a point less than their normal applications (minimum of one point), so Tina has three points left. She purchases the high-torment version of Thunderous Voice (a further reflection of Telviel's association with storms and erosion), spending two more points. With the remaining point, Tina purchases Cast No Reflection. When he is Tormented, Telviel fades to near-invisibility and can be seen only by the lightning crackling around him (which doesn't show up on cameras for whatever reason).

TACTICS OF REVELATION

Demons are individuals, but they are nevertheless influenced by the perspectives and duties of their House. This is reflected in the way that each fallen manifests and uses his apocalyptic form and its unique combination of abilities. After all, the fallen are beings shaped by the Creator with certain jobs and habits essentially inculcated into their very

being. While the nature of each rebel angel necessarily changed during the war, certain patterns of behavior still remain ingrained within the fallen angels of each House. What follows are ideas that offer insight into how members of each House use their apocalyptic form, what situations might call for the use of their form and possible applications for their form's special abilities.

DEFILERS

The revelatory form is plumage to the Defilers. Like a peacock displaying its feathers, the Defilers most commonly use the form as a seduction or inspiration to unwitting mortals. After all, they now exist in a culture dominated by Western thought, where appearance is the essence of who one is. The look is everything, and to the Lammasu, the apocalyptic form is exemplary of their "look." They can get just about anything their hearts or souls desire through dressing-up in their demonic regalia.

The Defilers' revelatory form essentially helps them to be modern-day Muses. With it, a Defiler is capable of inspiring art, terror, lust, self-hatred, self-love or any other rung on the emotional ladder. With beautiful voices and sculpted features, they can gather Faith with the magnetic appeal of their unearthly beauty. On the other side of the coin, their black orb eyes and razor teeth allow them to arouse new levels of horror and enthrall mortals with inescapable dread.

Tactics: Defilers, like Devils, have no problem delivering deals to potential thralls and using their forms as a bargaining chip — so many people desire pleasure in so many forms that a Lammasu's form abilities seem only to further the theatrical nature of what they can deliver. They rarely invoke their full form — merely bits and pieces to aid them in their conquests. Casual use of Lyrical Voice, Enhanced Empathy and Enhanced Social Traits gives any Defiler the edge in a social situation, and they use their abilities with care and precision. It's when a Defiler *doesn't* get what she wants that the descent into high-Torment powers begins to become a very seductive notion. Someone not playing along with a Lammasu's little game? He might see the darker side of a Defiler's form, complete with invective, claws, teeth and terror.

DEVILS

Devils were once the arbiters of God's Will, and their fiery, radiant forms were meant to convey an image of power and divine leadership. They were the bearers of the Word, the living embodiment of the Creator's authority. It's true that things are drastically different in this modern World of Darkness, and

the Devils no longer wield the mandate of Heaven itself — but that's not to say that they don't act as though they do.

When a Devil reveals his apocalyptic form, it isn't just an expression of his ancient soul, it's an assertion of autonomy, influence and dominance. It all boils down to posturing. Most Devils won't waste their apocalyptic visage on trivial matters. Their revelatory forms are mantles of power, majestic demonstrations of divine right. Most Devils consider it demeaning to squander the power of their visage on meager uses like getting past the velvet rope into a club or reaping Faith from mortals unworthy of beings of their elevated station. When a Devil chooses to exert his power and direct it via the revelatory form, it's like a king or a bishop donning the regalia of his position — the robe, crown or scepter. The apocalyptic form, like the regalia of church and state, is indicative of royalty and celestial authority and not to be bandied about casually.

Tactics: Devils frequently use their revelatory forms as tangible extensions of their will, blazing with infernal glory when called upon to inspire, lead or intimidate. Harking back to the earliest days of Creation, and later when they blazed like defiant stars over the battlefield, the Namaru view their revelatory forms as physical manifestations of their right to lead the rest of the fallen. For this reason, many are reluctant to manifest the high-Torment abilities of their apocalyptic forms and thus reveal how tarnished their noble souls have become. In battle, Devils do not hesitate to don their revelatory forms as they did during the war, using the scaring light of their visage to overwhelm the weak-willed and end many fights without landing a single blow.

DEVOURERS

The Devourers are rarely two-faced. They are forthright and often brutally direct, getting right to the heart of a matter instead of wasting time on meaningless subtleties. That's not to say they don't understand manipulating minds and emotions, it just doesn't happen to be their specialty. They have formed a strict predator-and-prey mindset for the world at large, and they firmly choose to never be on the prey end of that equation. Therefore, their usage of the apocalyptic form tends to embody this directness of action and warlike nature. The form is just another weapon to many Rabisu. Like a sword, sometimes it's best used just by prominently displaying it in its sheath. Other times, it needs to be removed from its scabbard and brought to bear against an enemy.

To the Rabisu, the apocalyptic form is not a costume to bend mortal minds or a uniform to help

them build things or uncover information — it is a suit of armor, protecting them in this harsh and confusing age. It is truly a "battle form," a physical manifestation of their command of the wild and of their martial abilities. Their forms help them to act; not to wait, not to display plumage like a rutting bird. When a Devourer sees an obstacle, he destroys it. The form is an axe. A hammer. A shield. A breastplate. It protects them and, at the same time, cuts to the quick of a situation. They have no time for skullduggery or passive social displays.

Tactics: Rabisu tend to be all-or-nothing when it comes to their form, so if a situation requires revealing their infernal nature, they see little point in doing things halfway. Many Rabisu use their forms as purely physical creations, standing in the way of other fallen, or combating mortals in an effort to display their prowess. It is also a tactic of intimidation — grow to massive size, wield black claws and drink deep of the crowd's collective Faith. Unfortunately, this darker usage of form abilities only makes the progression to high-Torment powers seem more and more natural. If claws and teeth are okay, then why not develop a Gaping Maw or gristly Armor? The more horrible a Devourer in her form looks, the more certain one can be that she is already well on her way to becoming a highly Tormented creature.

FIENDS

Like the Scourges, the Fiends aren't altogether too likely to use their apocalyptic form as some of the other Houses are, though for altogether different reasons. To the Neberu, knowledge is power, and unless the apocalyptic form is a way to get the knowledge, it ultimately is just a side-benefit to other powers. It rarely comes to the fore as a necessity in any given situation, unless the use of the form in that situation will open the door to new knowledge.

Some Fiends shift to their revelatory form while working intently on solving some new conundrum, if only because it seems like the proper shape to take when deciphering the mysteries of the cosmos.

Tactics: The Fiends' apocalyptic forms are ideal for putting on shows to reap Faith — the Visage of Light alone can create wondrous illusions that can be tailored to a particular mortal's expectations. Combine that with a Fiend's potential ability to know the weave and weft of fate, and suddenly you have a fantastic tool with which to collect Faith. More than that, their forms are capable of helping them gather new information and knowledge as well. Their forms give them greater cognitive and perceptive abilities and allow them to be highly attuned to the flow of information. A Fiend's crawl

to the higher-Torment end of their form spectrum is slower than demons of other Houses. The high-Torment abilities do not lend themselves to the gathering of knowledge — that is, until later, when they grow to accept that the path to information is one riddled with lies, fear and violence.

MALEFACTORS

Pragmatism is in the blood of the Malefactors. Hiding there, deep within their souls, is a core of practicality that comes from their charge of crafting the foundations of earth, stone, metal. Building tools, weapons, structures. There is a gut-level sensibility that comes with that responsibility, and it often reflects in the way that many Annunaki choose to display their apocalyptic forms. This artisan nature leads them to use their apocalyptic form in something of a blue-collar manner — it's all about the work. If work needs doing, and the form can help, then so be it. If assuming the revelatory form will help to mold earth according to some blueprint or forge a weapon of destruction using the wonderful new materials that humans have cobbled together, then so be it. To these Malefactors, the apocalyptic form is less of a guise meant for grandeur as much as it is a functional uniform (like a haz-mat suit or a bullet-proof vest) meant to secure a means to an end.

Other Malefactors are less inclined to such pragmatism and simplicity — many Annunaki choose souls who are emotionally needy or damaged in some way. These souls use their forms to lash out or to bully others who have always stood in the way (specifically in the way of the human host). These alienated mortal minds help to direct the revelatory form as a tool in and of itself (fitting the Malefactor's ultimate mindset), but in this case the tool isn't meant to jimmy a door or sever a limb, but to display the rage and isolation that the human once felt.

Tactics: A Malefactor might use his form to build a destroyed shelter — or destroy a standing one — culling Faith from those who once lived there. Since they view their forms as a toolbox instead of a costume, they are likely to manifest only those abilities they need, and only assume their full visage rarely. Still, Malefactors sometimes are distant from the minds of the people they gain Faith from, for they are so roored in the world of earth, steel and stone that they don't cling to their humanity as dearly. As such, they experience a slow but steady slide into higher-Torment form abilities. There might come a time when an Annunaki grows frustrated at humanity's inability to appreciate the physical world and turns quite suddenly to her higher-Torment form abilities to help break the world into little bits instead of piecing it all back together again.

SCOURGES

The Scourges are possibly the least likely of the Houses to utilize their apocalyptic form. After all, they were the closest to humanity, and they now lie hidden beneath the skin and memories of an actual mortal being. Love for the human they have unconsciously paired with might give them pause before shifting to the egregious display of demonic power that the apocalyptic form affords. There might be much guilt associated with revealing herself to humans — the Scourge might feel that such manipulation toys with their former charges too much. Violating the sanctity of the mortal condition is not a comfortable thing for most newly escaped Asharu.

That's not to say that Scourges don't assume their revelatory form, but their reasons for doing so are often different than other demons'. Scourges rarely employ their apocalyptic form to ravage mortals for Faith — human belief is easy to come by for demons who can heal a mortal's injuries or spread disease with a thought. A Scourge's use of her revelatory form is often intrinsically tied to humans — it is most often employed in the act of defending mortals or attacking the demon's foes.

Tactics: Scourges of lower Torment almost always use their forms to benefit humanity instead of themselves. They might use their enhanced physical traits to stand in the way of harm in an effort to protect mortals, such as a bodyguard who gladly takes a beating while his charge escapes injury. Other abilities can also be used to keep mankind from harm — a Scourge in a hospital might use Aura of Vitality to aid in the healing process, or a detective Scourge might use Enhanced Senses and Enhanced Intuition to help solve crimes (especially crimes committed by other fallen). A Catch-22 of the Scourges is that their connection to humanity allows them to stave off Torment, but their martyr's need to defend humanity might cause them to slip into higher-Torment guises in an effort to get the most out of their defensive capabilities. This of course leads them quickly down the path to corruption, and as such Scourges always need to be wary of how far they will go for the sake of the mortals around them.

SLAYERS

To many Slayers, the apocalyptic form is a regretful symbol of their duty that many Halaku still feel obligated to answer. As such, their revelatory form is less of a tool and more of an emblem of their task. They don't use it to bully others like the Devourers might or use it to express their holy and righteous command as the Devils — they do it as an expression of obligation.



The form does have practical uses, however, one of which is its ability of to pass unseen through the physical world, observing the mortal world from the darkness. Their forms allow them to cast shadows about themselves, go unseen in mirrors or recordings and pass without leaving any clues of their existence behind.

Tactics: Rarely does a Halaku use his apocalyptic form to drive home a Faustian bargain or even to reap Faith from mortals. A Slayer might use Pass Without Trace or Cloak of Shadows to work unseen, either secretly healing humanity or covertly ushering humans to their demise. The Halaku vary on their slide to the high-Torment abilities. Many simply don't need the powers for much, and they don't push themselves to such darkness so quickly. Others, however, have no differentiation between low- and high-Torment abilities, and float between them with only a fleeting idea of what it means. Regardless, it is rare for a Slayer to manifest his full visage at any given time.

CHANGING FORMS

Demons can change their revelatory forms, given the right circumstances. As the fallen are newly

returned to Earth, many do not realize they have the power to do so. Certain ingenious demons have found ways to alter their apocalyptic form traits, however, remaking themselves in their own images. In so doing, of course, they grow even farther removed from the purpose God envisioned for them, but then, God seems curiously absent from the World of Darkness.

Before discussing game systems, it's worth considering what making changes to a demon's apocalyptic form means to the demon. As mentioned previously, the apocalyptic form is a reflection (albeit a tarnished one) of the purpose for which God originally crafted the character. The character's Torment has warped the once-divine form, stripping the demon of much of his power and tainting what remains. In many ways, the visage is all that remains of the angel the character once was. This means that demons who still wish to hold true to their original purposes (Reconcilers, some Luciferans, and the occasional Cryptic) probably won't seek to change themselves overmuch. More progressive (some would say "practical") demons seek to reshape themselves into whatever form will present the greatest advantage toward whatever goals they have set. This means that the Ravener

who has discovered that her form is more fluid than she thought will quickly change her apocalyptic form into an engine of destruction (and likely become consumed by Torment in very short order).

This isn't simply a matter for idle debate, either. What form a demon takes when the human mask is cast off says a great deal about how much the world (and the Abyss) has affected her and how functional she still is with respect to her true nature. A demon whose apocalyptic form looks like a beautiful, radiant angel is, on some level, that angel. Likewise, a Defiler whose revelatory form allows her to manipulate listeners is not being untrue to herself by doing so — she really is a manipulator. But a Devil who embodies the Nisku, and then, as Torment rises, grows a lashing, barbed tail is drifting steadily away from being a wielder of the Holy Flame. God imposed an order on the world, so a demon's attempts to change his form can be legitimately regarded as attempts to improve God's order (acts that have historically gone over extremely badly).

The counter-argument, of course, is that change is part of the divine order. People, animals, and in fact everything in Creation changes day by day. Even angels can and do change — God Himself changed each of the Houses of the Host when He levied His curses through Michael. And although Hell has occasionally been described by human pundits as a place where nothing ever changes, the fallen can confidently say that this is not so. Change is possible in the Abyss — not a single angel cast there has emerged without alteration. In the face of this logic, altering one's revelatory form doesn't seem so blasphemous. As support for this argument, the few demons who have changed their forms — using the slower method, of course — have reported no increase in the nagging anguish they feel constantly (at least not connected with changing the form).

Both arguments are academic, of course. Absorbing the abilities of a demon's revelatory form by consuming his soul carries its own risks, regardless of whether God intended for these forms to change. Doing so by practice (that is, spending experience points) is probably safer, but much slower as well. Changing one's form on the fly merits its own discussion (see page 126). The Storyteller, however, is free to make a ruling on whether or not altering one's apocalyptic form has any sort of long-ranging consequences stemming from changing what God created. Demons are, of course, so far from the angels of Creation that it's hard to imagine a slight change in revelatory form making much of a difference, but God *does* work in mysterious ways.

The three methods for changing a character's revelatory form traits are explained later. All of these methods are left to the Storyteller's discretion in the end; players should not assume that simply because these rules exist that the Storyteller will allow them unchanged. This is especially true for the rules on changing one's form during play.

DEVELOPMENT AND GROWTH

As players accumulate experience for their characters, they may choose to "buy" different abilities for the demons' apocalyptic forms. In truth, the process is more like trading than purchasing, as a demon character can never have more than eight apocalyptic form traits. As demons progress in power (and more specifically, as they grow in Faith and/or Lore), however, their revelatory forms might well change, too.

Before looking at systems, the player should consider exactly what is involved in changing these abilities. As stated previously, the revelatory form is literally an essential part of the character. For it to change, something about the character must change as well.

CHANGES IN LORE

It's not really possible (or at least not supported by the system) for demons to *lose* dots in lore, so the change is really in the area of *increase*. As a demon grows into his mystical power, his essence — and therefore his revelatory form — might change as well. Demons do not look upon their infernal evocations as toys. Using them is an act of Faith (even if the evocation in question doesn't actually require an expenditure) and that is never to be taken lightly. Learning (or remembering) lore is discussed in detail on pages 64-68. The player should consider with her character's lore and how the character learns it with regards to her apocalyptic form, however. After all, a Namtar was probably created with the (rather vague) purpose of bringing death. That concept can be further refined by what other lore the character knows. If, for example, the character also has dots in the Lore of Patterns, maybe that particular Slayer was responsible for infection or epidemics? Conversely, a Namtar character with ratings in the Lore of Flame and the Wild might have invented (or contributed to) forest fires. Plus, a starting character knows very little of the lore she once mastered. This means that the character might have vague notions of her purpose, and as the character develops, she is able to recall more of what she was once able to do.

This all ties in with the apocalyptic form because an angel's original purpose helps determine the vestiges of glory that remain as apocalyptic form abilities.

The forest fire Namtar might start with two dots in the Lore of Death and one in another of her House lore. Over time, she recalls the first dot of the Lore of Flame and something clicks. At that point, the player might consider changing out one of her form abilities for something more suitable to her original purpose. In this case, the character actually doesn't control what form ability she loses or gains. From her perspective, it just happens (although the player naturally makes the decision).

On the other hand, if a demon actively seeks to be taught a new lore, the apocalyptic form might remain the same or change in response to the new evocations, as the player wishes. The difference is that the character is willfully directing the change. At the Storyteller's option, attempting this sort of "improvement" might constitute a Conscience roll for demons with low Torment.

CHANGES IN OUTLOOK

If the character simply wishes to alter a form ability of her apocalyptic form independently of her lore (perhaps changing one House ability for another), the Storyteller should adjudicate whether or not the change is valid for story purposes. Simply swapping out abilities that the player doesn't find useful isn't a good enough justification for changing the demon's innermost essence. The player should describe what about the demon is truly changing and take the form change as simply a metaphor thereof. The Storyteller may require the purchase of other, ancillary traits to help solidify the choices. For example, Marash, a Devil who embodies the Nusku visage, has Radiant Aura as one of his form abilities. As play continues, Marash's player sees the character growing angrier with the state of world, his ideology shifting from his Luciferan beginnings to the stance of the Raveners. His form begins to change as well. He no longer embodies the resplendent Angel of

Holy Fire that he once was; instead he burns so hot that anything coming near him is singed. His player decides that this manifests as the light of the fire dimming (so opponents no longer receive a bonus to hit him) but burning hotter (so foes might actually take damage from doing so). This change involves taking a kind of natural weaponry for the character, and the Storyteller approves the choice, provided that the player also spends experience to raise Marash's Strength or Stamina (representing the shift from social to physical in his outlook).

SYSTEMS

If the player wishes to buy a form ability that is equal in "form point" value to the one she wishes to replace, the player must pay a number of experience points equal to twice the character's Faith rating. This means that the higher a demon's Faith rating is, the more firmly cemented her purpose and self-image is, and the more difficult changing her apocalyptic form becomes. There is no further experience point cost if the two powers are of equal value.

If the player is trading a form power for one with a higher "form point" cost, the process is a bit more costly. In addition to the listed cost (Faith rating x 2), the player must also pay *four times* the difference in form points between the two powers. The point modifiers for buying high-Torment powers and for buying powers outside of one's House still apply.

If the character is, for whatever reason, "trading down" and replacing a power with one of lower value, she must still pay the Faith rating x 2, but incurs no additional cost. There's no "price break" involved either, however. Changing the revelatory form is always an effort, and making extreme changes (that is, buying more expensive powers) is simply more of an effort.

WHY ONLY EIGHT?

The player might well ask, "Why do demons have only eight form abilities?" The answer is mostly about game balance and playability. It's much easier to say that each demon must have four Tormented and four non-Tormented abilities. This requirement allows the slide into Torment to be much more quantifiable from a game system perspective (which, in turn, is less of a headache for the Storyteller). It also prevents players from dumping all of their points into non-Tormented powers or taking 16 Enhanced Abilities.

There is no metaphysical reason that a demon can't have more than eight form abilities, however, and that means that *if your Storyteller allows it*, you may take more for your character. This includes during character creation and later, allowing you to buy new abilities with experience (we suggest a price of the form point cost x 5 in experience). This rule should be considered optional, however, usable only at the Storyteller's discretion, as it has the potential to make characters ridiculously potent in their revelatory forms. That said, there's a lot of possibility for games featuring demons that still command so much of their former might. Ultimately, this is left up to the needs of the individual troupe.

Example: *Tina has played Telviel, her Malefactor who once shaped canyons, for several stories now. During that time, Telviel has remembered much of the lore he once possessed, mostly in the Lore of Paths (his primary lore) and in the Lore of Storms. The player has also purchased dots in the Lore of the Earth for Telviel — an angel of erosion, naturally, needs to understand his medium. As Telviel remembers more of his past, the player decides that his form changes, becoming more solid. Instead of the clouded sky, Telviel's wings now reflect the earth and rock beneath him, and his entire body becomes like rain-polished stone in revelatory form. Tina asks the Storyteller permission to trade in Telviel's Conjunction power for the slightly more expensive Immune to Bashing Damage. The Storyteller requires a number of ancillary purchases first, including raising Telviel's Stamina, but agrees to the request.*

Telviel has a Faith rating of 4. Tina must pay eight experience points (Telviel's Faith rating x 2) to change any ability of his revelatory form. Plus, Conjunction normally costs two "form points" whereas Immune to Bashing Damage costs four. Because she is "trading up" to a higher-cost power, Tina must pay four times the difference (in this case, eight) in experience points. In total, changing Telviel's apocalyptic form costs Tina 16 experience points.

CONSUMING SOULS

A demon's revelatory form might change because of recalled lore or simple distance from God's original design. This might be desirable as far as redemption is concerned, but this method is far preferable to the other.

Chapter Nine of **Demon: The Fallen** details how one demon can consume the soul of another and absorb her memories, lore and Faith. A skilled enough demon can even absorb his victim's revelatory form, adding it to his own. While this is most certainly a path to great power, the risks that it carries give the few demons who know of the possibility pause.

Consuming a demon's soul absorbs not only the victim's Faith, but her Torment as well. Ordinarily, this is not an issue, as the demon usually takes in only knowledge, but if the attacker attempts to absorb the victim's very form, that Torment becomes a real and physical part of the attacker. Additionally, the attacker's original divine purpose (or whatever remains of it in the demon's current state) isn't altered by the absorption of another demon's soul. This means that the new form modification is added rather sloppily to the attacker's own revelatory form, and his control over it is imperfect for a time. Absorbing form characteristics

is also dangerous because it alters the demon's True Name. While this might foil any being who knows the attacker's True Name (at least for a time; the Name changes but slightly, and a being with the means to investigate the character can discover her "new" True Name by the means described on p. 256 of **Demon**) it also confuses the attacker greatly. His essence, his soul, his very persona has been altered, and that takes some time to get used to. The alteration presents a slight chance that the attacker's memories are altered or destroyed, or possibly even replaced by those of the demon he consumed.

SYSTEMS

The mechanics for absorbing a demon's apocalyptic form are similar to the normal rules for soul-consumption. The victim's host body must be destroyed and the attacker must inhale the victim's soul. The attacker's player then makes the Faith roll as usual, resisted by the victim's Faith or Torment. If the aggressor scores more successes, the victim is destroyed and the Storyteller rolls the victim's Faith rating (difficulty 6) to determine how much of the victim's soul the aggressor can consume.

HARSH CONSEQUENCES

It might seem that the ramifications and side effects of cannibalizing another demon's soul for purposes of taking on its revelatory form traits are overly harsh. Considering that there are no systemic consequences for consuming a demon's soul under normal circumstances, why should taking on a revelatory form ability make such a difference?

The reason is that all demons' apocalyptic forms are unique, while lore is not. While two demons might manifest the Lore of Flame differently, it's *still* the Lore of Flame, and it follows the predetermined pattern that God set down so many aeons ago. Likewise, absorbing secrets from Bashiel the Scourge doesn't necessarily absorb what made Bashiel *herself*, it just means that the attacker knows something that Bashiel once knew.

But apocalyptic forms vary from demon to demon, even within the same visage. As stated previously, the revelatory form *defines* the demon like no other part of her except her True Name. Therefore, consuming that uniqueness merges the attacker and victim, inextricably. That is why the risks — and the rewards — are greater.

(Of course, any Storyteller who wants to place similar ramifications on consuming souls at all has White Wolf's full support.)

At this point, the aggressor can attempt to absorb the victim's apocalyptic form as well, assuming the aggressor even knows that this is possible. The aggressor might "guess" that this can be done (allow the player an Intelligence + Occult roll [difficulty 8], and add any dots in the Legacy Background to the roll).

If the aggressor wishes to attempt to consume the victim's form, the Storyteller makes a second roll against the victim's Faith. If the victim's Torment was higher, however, roll that trait instead. In either case, the difficulty is 6. For each success, the aggressor absorbs one ability from the victim. The attacker may choose to absorb fewer form abilities than the number of the successes rolled should she so desire. Given the consequences for consuming a demon's apocalyptic form, this is often the case.

The following constraints and consequences apply when absorbing another demon's revelatory form:

- The aggressor gains a temporary point of Torment for each ability absorbed.
- All abilities absorbed are considered high-Torment. The character begins manifesting these abilities at five dots of permanent Torment, not seven.
- The new capabilities take some time to meld with the aggressor's apocalyptic form. For a number of weeks equal to the "form point" cost of the power, the difficulties involved in using the new power increase by one. This does not apply to such powers as Enhanced Abilities, where the stated purpose is reducing a difficulty, nor to "passive" powers like Radiant Aura.
- The aggressor's True Name changes slightly, which requires adjustment on the demon's part. For the next month, the difficulties of all evocations and any other roll involving supernatural prowess or Faith (including rolls to see through illusions) increase by the number of form abilities absorbed (maximum difficulty modifier of +3). Additionally, the demon is harder to contact by invocation using her True Name. She'll feel a tingle when someone uses her "old" True Name, but she cannot be invoked completely. Invoking the demon by her Celestial Name still works normally, however.

Example: *Telviel battles Marash and destroys him, consuming his soul. In the process of altering his own apocalyptic form, Telviel learned that it is possible to absorb other demons' abilities by consuming souls, so he attempts to do so to Marash. Separate from the memories, lore and other information gleaned from Marash's destruction, the Storyteller rolls Marash's Torment rating (as it happens to be higher than his Faith) — six dice. At difficulty 6, the Storyteller scores four successes. The Storyteller tells Tina (Telviel's*

player) that she can assimilate up to four of the Devil's abilities. After careful consideration, she chooses to absorb Improved Initiative, Fiery Blood and Sense the Hidden. All three of these abilities are considered high-Torment for Telviel, although only Fiery Blood was a high-Torment power for the late Marash. Telviel also gains three points of temporary Torment, but he has other concerns. His True Name changes, meaning that difficulties on all evocation and other supernatural rolls increase by three for the next month (because Telviel absorbed three abilities from Marash). Additionally, the difficulty to use Sense the Hidden is at +1 for one week (as the power normally costs one "form point"). Fiery Blood and Improved Initiative, however, are passive powers, so they do not suffer any difficulty modifiers.

In story terms, Telviel's apocalyptic form changes yet again. Where his wings took on the reflection of the earth after the last change, now that earth looks cracked and blasted, with lava seeping through. When Telviel assumes apocalyptic form, his eyes shine with a red, sickly light that seems to make solid barriers slightly transparent — this is a reflection of both the Sense the Hidden and Improved Initiative powers. Telviel begins to regret the choice to absorb Marash's power. His essence is changing in an alien direction, and he no longer feels like the driven, soaring Angel of Erosion that he once was.

OPTIONAL APOCALYPTIC FORMS

Once upon a time, demons were able to shift their forms with a thought — if they could conceive it, their bodies could become it. They could shapeshift into animals, become walking pillars of wind or fire, could even become bodiless abstractions like music, beauty or pain. Alas, the modern World of Darkness is no longer a place of widespread spiritual belief, and what little Faith is left is not enough to sustain such mutable forms. But for beings that have escaped a supposedly eternal prison, nothing is impossible. With a sufficient store of Faith and a heroic will, a demon might still learn the means to alter his form from moment to moment as the situation demands.

This section contains two optional systems for customizing a character's apocalyptic form on the fly, altering special abilities from turn to turn. The first method allows characters to choose from the apocalyptic form abilities associated with any lore path that they possess. The second, more freeform method allows characters to manifest literally any

form ability the player can imagine, limited only by general guidelines relative to each infernal House. As ever, these optional systems are for use at the Storyteller's discretion.

MIXING ABILITIES FROM DIFFERENT LORE PATHS

The lore paths presented in the *Demon* core rules each have specific apocalyptic forms associated with them, representing the physical manifestation of the knowledge and power the lore embodies. A character's primary lore — the evocations that the demon knows best and can recall most easily — determines the apocalyptic form that he can assume. Yet the character is able to manifest other lore paths as he becomes more accustomed to its mortal shell and can access greater levels of celestial power, so it stands to reason that he could access its other physical manifestations as well.

This system allows your character to manifest special abilities from the apocalyptic forms of any lore paths she possesses. When the character manifests her apocalyptic form, the player can choose from any special ability listed among the apocalyptic forms of the lore paths the character possesses. Manifesting a form ability that does not belong to the character's primary lore path requires a successful Faith roll (difficulty 7) or the expenditure of a Faith point to gain an automatic success. If the player chooses to manifest multiple non-primary abilities, the difficulty of the Faith roll increases by one for each additional ability to a maximum difficulty of 10. If the roll botches, the character loses one temporary Faith point, as normal. Intentionally manifesting high-Torment form abilities incurs one temporary Torment point per ability. Further, the following restrictions apply when choosing alternate abilities:

- The character cannot manifest more than eight abilities at any time — four low-Torment and four high-Torment abilities, as normal.
- The character cannot manifest more abilities from a particular lore path than the number of dots she possesses in the path. Therefore, a character with two dots in the Lore of Storms cannot manifest more than two abilities associated with that path.

The character can continue to alter the abilities of his form each turn if the player wishes, adding or substituting abilities with a successful Faith roll or by spending a Faith point.

Example: Jim's character, Hanviel, is caught in an alley by a couple of Earthbound thralls, so he manifests his apocalyptic form. A Fiend, Hanviel, possesses three dots



in the Lore of Portals as his primary lore path, plus two dots in the Lore of Light and the Lore of Longing. The Visage of Portals isn't a form especially built for combat, so Jim wants to draw on some of the abilities embodied by the Lore of Longing. First, Jim chooses Increased Awareness and Aura of Misfortune from the abilities associated with the character's normal apocalyptic form. Since his character possesses only two dots in the Lore of Longing, Jim can choose only two abilities associated with that lore path. After some consideration, he picks Claws and Venom. Having made his selections, Jim can either make a Faith roll with a difficulty of 8 (base difficulty 7 + 1 for the second non-primary form ability) or spend a Faith point for an automatic success. He chooses to spend the Faith point, and the transformation is automatic. Further, the character incurs no less than three temporary Torment points due to manifesting three high-Torment special abilities. Next turn, Jim can manifest an entirely different combination of abilities if the changing situation demands it, going through the same process.

When a character manifests abilities from a different lore path, his appearance reflects the mingling forms. In the preceding example, Hanviel's lithe, shadow-wrapped form might become more perfectly proportioned, his features refined into dark, chiseled beauty by the influence of the Lore of Longing. When combining abilities from different lore paths consider how these manifestations might alter your character's appearance, and describe it for the benefit of the Storyteller and your fellow players.

CREATING YOUR OWN APOCALYPTIC ABILITIES

If the previous option is still too restrictive for your style of play, the following method permits a character to manifest entirely new modifications to her apocalyptic form at will. These modifications do not exist as part of any other lore path — they are limited solely by your imagination and the overall nature of your character's House. Although your creativity is boundless and your character is counted among the architects of Creation, he is still limited by the perspectives and affinities embedded in his soul by the Creator Himself.

Using this method, your character begins play with the apocalyptic form described by his primary lore as presented in the **Demon** core rules, but at any time afterward, the character can replace one or more of his form's special abilities with one that better suits the needs of the moment. This new ability can be anything you want within the guidelines specified by each House, though the Storyteller is the final arbiter as to the overall effectiveness of any given ability.

Creating a new form ability requires a successful Faith roll. The difficulty of the roll and the number of successes required depends on a number of factors. The difficulty for creating a low-Torment ability is 8; creating a high-Torment ability is 7. One success is required for each Attribute increase, damage die or difficulty reduction that the ability provides. Abilities that provide special powers such as passing without a trace or being able to run without tiring require anywhere from one to three successes depending on the scope of the power. The Storyteller is the final arbiter on the number of successes required to create any form ability, and she can increase or decrease the amount beyond the listed guidelines at her discretion. If the roll botches, the character loses a temporary Faith point as normal, or Faith points can be spent to attain automatic successes at the rate of one Faith point per success.

Example: Jim wants to create two new form abilities for Hanviel: enhanced Wits and the ability to remember anything the demon sees or hears in his apocalyptic form. Jim must make a Faith roll for each new ability; since he wants both to be low-Torment abilities, the difficulty for both rolls is 8. In the case of the enhanced Wits ability, Jim wants Hanviel to gain +2 to his Wits Attribute, so he needs two successes on his Faith roll. The photographic memory ability doesn't directly affect any dice rolls, so it's up to the Storyteller to determine the number of successes required. A photographic memory is a powerful tool, but it is largely passive in nature, so the Storyteller decides that Jim will need two successes to create the new ability.

Once created, each new form ability becomes a permanent addition to the character's revelatory form, until it is replaced by a different modification. The character can never have more than eight apocalyptic form abilities (four low-Torment and four high-Torment) at any given time.

HOUSE RULES

Every demon is limited in her choice of form modifications by the nature of her House and the affinities assigned to it by the Creator. A Devourer would be no more inclined to lie like a Devil than the Devil would think to transform his radiant skin into the hide of a boar. The following are the Attributes and Abilities that each House can change, as well as general guidelines concerning the nature of their special abilities. (In the preceding example, Hanviel the Fiend could only enhance his Intelligence, Wits or Perception with any single form ability.)

DEFILERS

The Angels of the Deep were the muses that left men's souls yearning for the sea. They were spirits of longing, meant to teach people how to look inside themselves for answers to the mysteries of the earth. Unfortunately the power of longing cuts both ways, and as much as mankind yearned for the Lamasu, the Angels of the Deep yearned to join them. This loneliness spurred many to rebel against Heaven, and their passion for humankind gave the Defilers the power to inspire the infernal host to ever-greater acts of heroism in the face of incalculable odds. When stirred to wrath, the Lamasu could do more than merely spout slogans — they scoured the earth with titanic storms and battered the coastlines with fists of water hundreds of feet high. Mysterious, inscrutable, winsome and beautiful, the Defilers' artifice concealed souls with all the peril of the raging seas. These qualities drive the Lamasu to manifest abilities that provide them with the power to read the desires of mortals — and other fallen — and act upon them. Abilities to read another's emotions, stimulate feelings through pheromone release or create strong passions by manipulating a victim's hormone levels are typical Defiler form abilities.

Secondary to these abilities, Lamasu often manifest form characteristics that reflect their affinity for the sea and the creatures that exist in its depths. Cartilaginous flesh, poison stingers and crushing tentacles are all potential physical modifications that a Defiler might possess.

- **Attributes:** Appearance, Charisma, Manipulation
- **Abilities:** Empathy, Expression, Performance, Subterfuge
- **Aura of Want:** The Defiler can affect mortals with overpowering feelings of longing and despair within a radius in yards equal to the character's Torment. Unless a successful Willpower roll is made (difficulty 8), the victim forfeits his action each turn as long as he remains within the area of effect. Demons are immune to this ability.
- **Soul Glimpse:** If a Defiler meets the gaze of a mortal or demon, he can gain a sense of that person's basic nature. Roll Perception + Alertness (difficulty 7); if successful, the demon learns the victim's Nature and Demeanor.
- **Soporific Touch:** The Defiler's touch can cause a victim to fall into a deep sleep. If the demon touches the victim's bare skin, make a resisted Willpower roll — the difficulty for the Defiler's roll is 6, while the roll for the victim uses the Defiler's Torment as its difficulty. If the Defiler's player wins the contest, the

victim falls into a near-comatose state for a number of turns equal to the character's Faith.

- **Cartilaginous Flesh:** The demon's skin becomes thick and rubbery and is highly resistant to any form of blunt trauma. All bashing damage inflicted on the character is halved before the soak roll is made.

DEVOURERS

The Rabisu are the angels of the living earth, the spirit of the forests, fields and deserts and the architects of the hunt. It was they who created the immutable laws of the wild and laid down the foundations for the cycle of life that kept nature dynamic and abundant for thousands of years. Unlike their more senior kin, the Rabisu cared little for higher notions of politics or philosophy. Of all the angels, they lived for the moment, exulting in the heady rush of the chase or the burst of color in the first blooms of spring. They turned their backs on Heaven because they knew in their hearts that it was the right and honorable thing to do, and when they fought their former brethren in the War of Wrath, they did so without hesitation or regret. The Devourers are the most brutally direct of their kind, and this outlook is reflected in their form abilities. They manifest abilities that allow them to interact with the natural world they know so well. Chameleon skin, enhanced musculature and tireless stamina are common abilities, as well as the ubiquitous combinations of tooth, horn and claw.

Secondary to these abilities, Devourers often manifest characteristics that allow them to draw sustenance, repair injuries and interact with nature on levels that no human can equal. Photosynthetic skin, cell regeneration and mimicry skills are typical Devourer abilities.

- **Attributes:** Strength, Dexterity, Stamina
- **Abilities:** Animal Ken, Brawl, Intimidation, Survival
- **Eyes of the Predator:** The Devourer manifests the golden irises of a wolf or tiger; the difficulty of all Intimidation rolls decreases by two.
- **Repellant Musk:** The Devourer can exude a frightful stench that affects victims within a radius in yards equal to the character's Faith score. Unless a successful Stamina roll (difficulty 8) is made, each victim loses two dice from all her dice pools for the duration of the scene.
- **Mimic:** The Devourer can manipulate her vocal cords to almost perfectly mimic any natural sound. Upon hearing a sound or voice the character wants to mimic, the player rolls Perception + Performance. The initial difficulty is 8, but it decreases by one for each consecutive turn the character spends listening to the

sound she wants to imitate. If successful, the demon can mimic the sound at will as long as she is in her apocalyptic form.

- **Clinging Flesh:** The Demon's skin is covered with millions of molecule-sized hooks that allow her to cling to almost any surface. The demon can climb the sheerest of surfaces, even plate glass, with a successful Dexterity + Athletics roll (difficulty 6).

DEVILS

First among the fallen, the Namaru were counted among the Heralds of Heaven, bearing the word of the Creator to every part of the cosmos and directing the Heavenly Host in its labors. Later they were named the champions of humanity, bringing their divine authority and majesty to bear on the guardianship of mankind. The Devils are leaders and statesmen without peer; even the most venal angels of the House are capable of moments of powerful magnetism and haughty pride. As befits their station, the Namaru are focused on social and political power, cultivating abilities that grant them the ability to win hearts and minds through love or fear. Form abilities that allow the demon to capture the attention of those they address, to banish fear or command fealty from strangers are likely manifestations, as well as supernatural perceptions that allow the fallen to detect falsehood or hostile intentions. A Devil's entire being is devoted to dominating his surroundings, bending the will of demon and mortal alike through subtlety or pure, blinding radiance.

This is not to say that the Namaru must depend on others for their survival; they were the warlords of the infernal host, bearing the title of mankind's champion with deadly earnest. Devils are capable of manifesting a wide range of combat abilities, from lustrous, armored scales to wings edged with razor-sharp silver. As a rule, a Devil's combat manifestations tend to be more precise and elegant in execution than the brutal abilities manifested by the Rabisu.

- **Attributes:** Appearance, Charisma, Manipulation
- **Abilities:** Etiquette, Intimidation, Leadership, Subterfuge
- **Liar's Ear:** The Devil can automatically tell when someone lies to him.
- **Halo of Majesty:** A shifting golden halo surrounds the Devil's head and face. No mortal or demon can attack the Devil without a successful Willpower roll (difficulty 8).
- **Razor Wings:** The Devil sprouts a pair of white wings from his shoulders whose long pinions are sharp and flexible as razors. The Devil can attack opponents in close combat (or by swooping past a

target while in flight) with a successful Dexterity + Melee roll (difficulty 7 if standing, difficulty 6 while in flight). The razor wings inflict Strength + 4 aggravated damage.

- **Abyssal Eyes:** The Devil's eyes turn to liquid shadow, oozing down his face or occasionally reaching out like tendrils or fingers. Any mortal or demon who meets the Devil's gaze loses three dice from all her dice pools for the duration of the turn unless a successful Willpower roll (difficulty 7) is made.

FIENDS

The Neberu were charged with charting the stars in their courses, measuring the seasons and maintaining the great engine that is the universe itself. They were the engineers of fate, translating their understanding of the ordered processes of the cosmos into lore that allowed them to view the past and the future or travel across enormous distances with a single thought. The more the Fiends learned, however, the more they realized how little they really knew; the more information they gained, the more they were driven to inquire further. Upon their escape from the Abyss, the Fiends learned how millennia of neglect had spun Creation out of balance, like an engine so out of tune that it threatens to tear itself apart at any moment. Driven by the need to regain their lost knowledge and possibly repair the Grand Design, the Neberu manifest abilities that enhance their perceptions, their intuition and their cognitive abilities. To further their efforts, they also prefer manifestations that grant them speed, stealth and the ability to process and retain information. Extrasensory perceptions like the ability to sense danger, cognitive abilities that allow them to make rapid deductions or abilities that conceal or alter the demon's appearance are common.

Secondary to these abilities, the Fiends sometimes manifest abilities that allow them to dazzle or fool their enemies by creating illusory images that cloak their appearance. These chimerical auras can distract an attacker, blind them with bright pulses of light, or alter the character's features to make them appear as someone else.

- **Attributes:** Perception, Wits, Intelligence
- **Abilities:** Awareness, Intuition, Investigation, Occult
- **Danger Sense:** The Fiend is highly attuned to potential threats — if danger is imminent, the Storyteller roll Perception + Alertness (difficulty 6) on the character's behalf. The more successes rolled, the more detailed a picture the character receives of any impending danger.

• **Infinite Tome:** The difficulty for all Knowledge rolls decreases by two.

• **Invisibility:** The character can bend light around her body, becoming invisible. This effort requires constant concentration — make an Intelligence + Stealth roll (difficulty 6) each turn to maintain the character's invisibility. If the character attempts any other action that calls for a die roll, the invisibility fails. Demons can attempt to penetrate this as they would any illusion.

• **Mirage:** The character can create an illusory aura that transforms her appearance, allowing her to disguise her features from distant or careless observers. Roll Intelligence + Subterfuge (difficulty 6). An observer must gain more successes on a Perception + Alertness roll (difficulty 7) to see the character's true features. Demons can attempt to penetrate this as they would any illusion.

MALEFACTORS

The Annunaki were the shapers of the earth, the sculptors of mountain and steppe, the fathers of earthquakes and volcanoes. Their will set the continents in motion, forming and re-forming the surface of the world in an endless, glacial parade of wonders for mankind to observe and learn from. After the Fall, the Malefactors became the personal tutors of mankind, teaching them how to master fire and shape stone and bend metal to their will. The Annunaki prefer abilities that allow them to interact with the earth in all its power and glory, manifesting skin that can bear the hottest temperatures without blemish, muscles that can crush stone or mold steel like clay or eyes that can see in utter darkness. These manifestations also tend to provide potent combat abilities, but this is largely coincidental. Malefactors create abilities that allow them to focus on their work and leave the fighting to others.

Secondary to these abilities, the Annunaki cultivate powers that enhance their perceptions and allow them an affinity with mechanical objects. Eyes that can see in total darkness are common, as is the ability to detect the faintest vibrations through their skin. Intuitive abilities that assist the Malefactor in divining the function of an object is also valued, though newly returned Annunaki have great difficulty adapting to the more subtle operations of the modern world's high-tech devices.

- **Attributes:** Strength, Intelligence, Perception
- **Abilities:** Crafts, Science, Survival, Technology
- **Shattering Touch:** The Malefactor can read the harmonic vibration of an inorganic object by touch and shatter it with a precise application of pressure. The player makes a Faith roll; the target depends on

the relative density of the object: difficulty 6 for glass, difficulty 7 for wood, difficulty 8 for stone, difficulty 9 for metals. The character can shatter one square yard of matter per Torment point.

- **Creator's Mark:** If the player makes a successful Perception + Awareness roll, the Malefactor automatically knows who created an object, as well as when it was constructed and the manner of its construction. The character must be able to touch the object in question to gain the information.

- **Flesh of Magma:** The Malefactor's flesh glows orange like molten steel. Anyone who comes in contact with this demon's flesh suffers one level of lethal damage per turn of contact. Inflammable materials burst into flame upon contact with the demon's skin.

- **Absorption:** The Malefactor is capable of absorbing inorganic objects into his body, turning his appendages into living tool boxes or causing his body to bristle with an assortment of blades, spikes and cruel hooks. The Malefactor can absorb any inorganic object into his body with a successful Faith roll (difficulty 7) and suffer no discomfort or damage. Note that this only lasts as long as the demon is in its apocalyptic form — once the fallen reverts to his mortal form, the objects are expelled.

SCOURGES

The Asharu were once the bearers of the very breath of God, infusing mortal clay with the first stirrings of life and then watching as their charges grew into adulthood and beyond. These guardian angels rode the gentle thermals high above Paradise, ready to rush to the aid of those in need. After the Fall, their keen eyes and understanding of the powers of health — and pestilence — made them grim figures indeed, dispensing life or hideous death as they saw fit. Fallen Scourges manifest abilities that reflect their ancient ties to the winds and their mastery over the energies of life. Graceful wings or the power to avoid damage from a fall are favorite manifestations, as well as life-giving power manifested in their breath, their touch or their kiss. Vengeful or tormented Scourges are nightmarish figures that seethe with uncontrolled life in the form of cancerous tumors, talons dripping with viral slime or flesh that emits clouds of spores that allow the demon's perceptions to penetrate the most tightly sealed room.

In addition to these powerful abilities, Scourges hark back to their days as guardians by manifesting abilities that enhance their perceptions beyond human ken. Eyes that see farther than any hawk's, filaments that detect the slightest change in air

pressure or olfactory bulbs that can detect the faintest scent from miles away are possible Scourge enhancements.

- **Attributes:** Stamina, Wits, Perception
- **Abilities:** Alertness, Athletics, Empathy, Medicine
- **Martyr's Flesh:** The Scourge is able to ignore all wound penalties in her revelatory form.
- **Curative Saliva:** Once per scene, the Scourge can lick the wounds of a mortal or demon. This action heals all bashing damage or one level of lethal damage, or converts one level of aggravated damage to lethal damage.
- **Spore Cloud:** Once per day, the Scourge can emit a cloud of spores from his body that are light enough to remain suspended in air and drift with the wind. Living creatures that pass through this cloud of spores pick up scores of microbes on their skin and clothes but are otherwise unharmed. The Scourge can receive sensory information from this spore cloud for the duration of the scene, allowing the demon to see and hear everything occurring in the vicinity of the spores as though she were standing there herself.
- **Plague Touch:** With a single touch, the Scourge can inflict a deadly disease on a victim. If the demon touches her target, the victim suffers a number of levels of bashing damage equal to the Scourge's Torment score. Further, unless a successful Stamina roll is made (difficulty 7), the target suffers one level of lethal damage per day for a number of days equal to the Scourge's Torment score.

SLAYERS

All things must die, and the Halaku are the spirits who make it so. The Angels of Death were last of all the Celestial Houses created by God, and the Slayers were meant to follow like shadows in the other angels' wake, eliminating the old, the infirm and the obsolete. In this way, the cosmos remained dynamic, constantly re-inventing itself instead of slipping into stagnation, but the Slayers only saw the sadness and terror that their work spread among mankind. They loved humanity no less than any other angel, and the curse they suffered upon their Fall was perhaps the most cruel of all. No longer would they harvest the lives of plants and animals, but men and women as well. They were forced to end the lives of the beings they loved most of all, a foretaste of Hell that tortured them all through the War of Wrath and beyond. Regardless, the Slayers remain devoted to their grim task of killing, and their form abilities reflect this, manifesting powers that allow them to determine a being's health,



HELL'S CANVAS

Stumped on ideas for your character's apocalyptic form? Here are some suggestions for source material that might spur your creativity:

Art: Go to a museum or grab an art history book and flip through it. Paintings from the Middle Ages and later periods depict devils, demons and angels in a wide variety of shapes and sizes. Specifically check out the works of Hieronymous Bosch and Salvador Dali. Bosch's most famous works (*The Temptation of St. Anthony*, *The Garden of Earthly Delights*, *Paradise and Hell*, etc.) detail Eden, Heaven, Hell and Purgatory with a grim joie de vivre. Dali takes similar imagery and surreally distorts it. A lot of it might be too abstract for your character, but his depictions of the human form, however bizarre, can provide the fruit of inspiration. Also, check out the work of Gustav Dore (his work is often featured in translations of Dante's *Inferno*, and in many editions of Milton's *Paradise Lost*).

Film: Go rent *The Prophecy* (or its sequels) for a good look at the angelic form in battle. If you want a good glimpse at other demonic creatures, check out the film *Nightbreed*, which is essentially a film adaptation of Clive Barker's novella, *Cabal*. Speaking of Clive Barker, we would certainly be remiss to neglect the *Hellraiser* series as excellent sources for high-Torment inspiration. Also, some anim  films might provide you with a less traditional glimpse into demonic forms. Go rent *Ninja Scroll* or *Demon City Shinjuku* for good sources of infernal forms. (If you don't have a weak stomach and can handle some true demonic... ugliness, there's the *Urotsukidoji* series or the *Angel of Darkness* films).

Books: First, look to non-fiction for sources of inspiration. This author specifically recommends *The Ultimate Encyclopedia of Mythology* (by Cotterell and Storm) or the *Encyclopedia of Hell* (by Miriam Van Scott). If those don't work (or aren't available), there are always "dictionaries" or "encyclopedias" of angels and demons available at most bookstores — check out the occult or religion sections for possible sources. As far as fiction goes, there are a few options. Piers Anthony's *Incarnations of Immortality* series is worth looking at for their personification of abstract ideals (Death being one of them — good for potential Slayer characters). The horror novels of Douglas Clegg might be worth picking up — Abaddon, Lord of the Pit is featured in one novel,

and in the book *You Come When I Call You* he describes a being known as the "Desolation Angel"). Frank Peretti's religious-themed novels, specifically *This Present Darkness* and *Piercing the Darkness* work, too. And, while the book is more humorous than horrific, the angel/demon end of the world romp *Good Omens* by Terry Pratchett and Neil Gaiman might give you more than just a good laugh.

Comics: Yeah, comics are technically "art" and "books" combined, but that makes them a unique medium, one that can supply a great deal of inspiration for the apocalyptic forms you might want to create. There's a triumvirate of comic books you'll want to read if you need inspiration for a revelatory visage: *Hellboy*, *Lucifer* and anything out of the *Sandman* series. *Hellboy* (by Mike Mignola) is a classic series of an occult investigator who happens to be a big red demon with sawed-off horns and a massive stone hand. Not only does *Hellboy* himself provide ideas for form modifications, but every tale is filled with bizarre creatures of the supernatural that might give you yet more interesting ideas. *Lucifer* is an obvious choice as a comic book — it details the travails of the Lightbringer himself in the mortal world. He encounters other demons, gods, angels — all good fodder for inspiration. The comic is of course a spin-off from the *Sandman* series, which is also a good source of ideas because the beings and creatures detailed in that series are straight out of dreams and mythology, perfect for inspiring oneself to create new designs for your character's demonic appearance.

Mythology/Religion: Myth and religion are rife with descriptions of gods, demons, angels, djinns, faeries or other preternatural critters that supposedly walked this earth. Middle Eastern religions arguably created the blueprint for our modern concept of demons — Zoroastrianism started it, Judaism and Christianity carried it on, and Islam polished it off. You can even peek into the Bible for the weird descriptions of angels (they come with many limbs, multiple eyes and other weird physical accoutrements), or check out the Jewish Kabbalah for more of the same. Also, Asian myth (anything from Chinese, Japanese or Indian religion) is ideal. Demons are prevalent in their cosmologies, and there are hundreds of descriptions of different types of demons that can provide a wealth of inspiration.

easing pain with a touch or even assuming a death-like state themselves if necessary.

Secondary to these abilities, the Halaku manifest characteristics that allow them to move swiftly and stealthily in pursuit of their duties. The ability to move in absolute silence, to slip between the cracks of doors or windows or to envelop themselves in concealing darkness are all potential Slayer abilities.

- **Attributes:** Dexterity, Manipulation, Perception
- **Abilities:** Awareness, Intuition, Religion, Stealth
- **Death Sight:** In her revelatory form, the Slayer

can look at a person and determine his relative health. No roll is required. A single glance tells the Slayer how close the individual is to dying through natural causes or injury.

- **Silent Steps:** The Slayer makes no sound whatsoever as she moves, seeming to glide soundlessly over the ground.

- **Aura of Darkness:** The Slayer creates an area of darkness around itself out to a distance in yards equal to the character's Faith score. Light sources within this radius (natural or otherwise) simply go out and refuse to re-ignite as long as they are within the area of affect. Individuals caught within this radius (except the character) are subject to the Blind Fighting rules on page 240 of the *Demon* core rules.

- **Voice of the Banshee:** Once per scene, the Slayer can emit a hideous wail that fills her foes with feelings of imminent death. Any individual (friend or foe) within a number of yards equal to the character's Faith score will flee from the demon's presence unless a successful Willpower roll (difficulty 8) is made.

MATTERS OF SCALE

This section contains a number of optional systems for increasing or decreasing the overall power level of the apocalyptic forms in your *Demon* chronicle. Be advised that a number of these options significantly impact the overall feel and playability of the game. As ever, our Golden Rule applies: If it works for your chronicle, use it. If not, don't.

LEGACY AND THE FORM

Much of this chapter is devoted to powering up your character's apocalyptic form, but if you're playing a more mortal-centric game with characters who are a little less demonic, then you might actually look to power *down* your apocalyptic form. One way to do so is through the Legacy Background. Legacy is a benchmark to determine how much of the pre-historical past your character remembers. In this regard, you can use Legacy as a yardstick to measure how much of the apocalyptic form your character

remembers — and the less he remembers, the less he can use. The higher your character's Legacy Background is, the more of his apocalyptic form he can access and use. A character who does not have the Background cannot access his apocalyptic form at all. If your Storyteller allows the attainment of Backgrounds during play (see Chapter Two for details), each Legacy dot purchased allows the character to access one low-Torment ability from his apocalyptic form. The fifth Legacy dot then allows the character to access all four of his form's high-Torment abilities. With this optional rule, you can essentially regulate the character's apocalyptic form and reflect it more soundly in the Legacy Background for a low-powered game experience.

NO HIGHER LOW-TORMENT DISTINCTIONS

Should your Storyteller allow this option, your character can ignore the distinction between low- and high-Torment powers. Additionally, no Torment is gained from accessing any of your apocalyptic form's high-Torment abilities. Your character can manifest all eight form abilities, should she choose, and there would be no penalty for doing so. Obviously, this approach emphasizes a more action-oriented horror game, best suited to epic or cinematic chronicles. The tormented nature of the fallen is lessened and the "ass-kicking" knob is cranked much higher. If you're looking for a chronicle that's more *Blade II* than *The Prophecy*, this is an option you should discuss with your Storyteller.

MINIMIZING THE APOCALYPTIC FORM

It's possible that you and your Storyteller feel that the apocalyptic form makes the characters too powerful. After all, the game isn't about all that, right? You might want to limit your character's supernatural powers to make his struggle more desperate and fearful. As such, here are a few ideas to reduce the power of the apocalyptic form in your chronicle:

- Don't have a form at all. Your character has her lore and her inherent powers, and that's it.
- Only allow two low-Torment powers and two high-Torment powers. This limits the form without removing it entirely, and creates a slightly less "powered up" fallen character.
- Require the expenditure of a Faith point (or two, if you want to really be demanding) to achieve the revelatory form. Doing so makes the form a little less accessible and forces a little more strategic thinking on when and how to employ the form's abilities.
- Gain a temporary derangement every time your character assumes the apocalyptic form. Basically, every time the character assumes her form, she must open herself once more to the full memory of the

Abyss, with the attendant consequences. You or the Storyteller can choose this derangement, and it lasts for a number of hours equal to your character's permanent Torment score.

THRALLS AND THE APOCALYPTIC FORM

One of the prospective gifts a demon can give his thrall is one or more of the special abilities conferred by her own apocalyptic form. Typically, this applies only to the low-Torment end of the spectrum — imbuing the thrall with the high-Torment form abilities is dangerous for both the demon and the thrall. That's not to say it can't be done, but the price is often more than just the infernal bargain sealed between the two in the first place.

HIGH-TORMENT THRALLS

If a demon's Torment is 7 or less, it is dangerous, but not impossible, to give his thrall access to the four high-Torment form abilities associated with his apocalyptic form. Why is it dangerous? When a fallen confers one or more of his high-Torment form enhancements to a thrall, he is forced to open himself to his demonic nature and memories of the Abyss. The mental stress of remembering the knifing winds, the cold desolation, the tortuous parade of humanity's sorrows and failings all comes back to haunt the fallen as it pours from him into the thrall. Therefore, for every high-Torment power given to a thrall, the demon incurs a point of temporary Torment.

But that's not all. The thrall feels the Torment as well, but mortal minds are not meant to grasp an

eternity of pain. For each high-Torment power that a thrall is given, the mortal gains a single derangement. These derangements are often (though not always) related to the pact forged between the fallen and the thrall in the first place.

Example: *Baashar, master of the Lore of the Forge, decides to empower her thrall, Marcella, with one of her high-Torment form abilities. She chooses to grant Marcella the ability to turn her fingers into blades, inflicting Strength + 2 aggravated damage. There is a price, however. In doing so, not only does Baashar gain a temporary point of Torment while empowering her thrall, Marcella gains a single derangement in the process. Since the two made a bargain involving Marcella's success as a surgeon, she develops a derangement associated with health and sickness (namely a phobia of germs).*

THRALLS EVOKING THE APOCALYPTIC FORM

To activate any enhancements, the player of a mortal thrall rolls Willpower (difficulty 6). This is different from when a demon evokes the form, however. When a fallen accesses her revelatory form, it takes only one roll to bring forth any or all of the powers available to her. A mortal's player, however, must roll for each enhancement he chooses to use. If a mortal thrall has both Thunderous Voice and Immune to Fire, each one requires a Willpower roll to trigger. Failing this roll means the transformation simply doesn't occur. Botching the roll, however, causes the thrall to lose a point of temporary Willpower. A Willpower point can be spent in lieu of a roll to automatically access the ability.



CHAPTER FIVE

INTERNAL ENGINES

From the respect paid to property flow, as from a poisoned fountain, most of the evils and vices which render this world such a dreary scene to the contemplative mind.

—Mary Wollstonecroft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Women*

THE TOOLS OF DAMNATION

Flaming swords. Crowns of gold. Thrones of jagged obsidian. Mirrors that reflect far-off scenes. Such magical items — properly called *relics* — are important elements of **Demon: The Fallen**.

Before the Fall, angels had no need of tools — what items they *seemed* to use were simply reflections of their natures and their capacity to control the forces of Creation, physical manifestations of their own selves. After the Fall, the newly named Malefactors began to forge tools and relics for their mortal charges. These miraculous items were designed to open up Creation to human hands and allow mortals to live up to the glorious potential the rebel angels saw in them. Neither angels nor demons used relics at this stage — they were still satisfied with their own skills and abilities.

But then came Michael's ultimatum and the War of Wrath. Desperate for an advantage over the vast forces of Heaven, the demons invented the terrible notion of *weapons* — and for the first time, relics became a tool to be used by demons themselves. Inventors and artisans toiled mightily to create new and ever more powerful engines of destruction, as well as relics that could defend against attacks or gain intelligence about the activities of their enemies.

As well as fighting this celestial arms race, demonic artisans continued to create items for mortals to use. The human followers, allies and worshippers of the rebel demons gained relics that allowed them to better the lives of their tribes and fledgling societies, or to fight the forces of Heaven's followers. Demons also made relics for use by their mortal *enemies* — cursed items that would betray the user, making them less effective as allies for the angels if not killing them outright. Such items might be given as gifts or tribute



to mortals, or simply placed so that an unsuspecting human might stumble upon them. A few corrupted artisans made cursed items for the sheer joy of destruction — wanting nothing more than to see mortals destroyed by their poisoned gifts, no matter what side the humans served in the war.

When the demons lost the war and were exiled to Hell, none of their relics and creations went with them. Instead, most demonic relics were destroyed by the victorious armies of the Creator, so that such foul devices could no longer mar the face of Creation. A handful of relics were preserved and guarded in case they were ever needed again. Many others were lost, hidden in forgotten redoubts and caches or passing through countless mortal hands. Over the aeons, some few relics resurfaced from time to time, making great impact upon mortal society before being lost again, leaving behind only myths and stories. The Holy Grail that heals all wounds with God's grace, King Arthur's sword Excalibur, the magic mirror of Snow White's stepmother — the true relics behind these pale legends might still exist, lost in the vastness of Creation, waiting to be found again.

Now the Abyss has been shaken, and demons flood from their weakened prison to wreak new havoc on Earth. These demons have found a Creation sorely diminished from the glories of Paradise, a world with little faith or spirituality. One effect of this diminution is that the great relics of old — engines that could shake apart the world — can no longer be created. Relics are now far more limited in scope and effect. They are still useful tools, but no longer grand wonders that can change all reality.

In desperation, demons are urgently searching out the old redoubts and caches — tracking down lost relics in alchemist's laboratories and Vatican archives — only to find that the surviving wonders of the Age of Wrath have been diminished as well. There are a few remaining relics from that age, but their powers have weakened over the millennia, and their effects are but tattered shadows of the wonders they could once produce. Still, any power is an advantage in these days of chaos and reemergence, and tracking down lost relics — and building new weapons and artifacts — are top priorities of many demons.

The **Demon** rulebook touches briefly on the subject of relics, giving rules on how characters can create their own relics and devices. This chapter expands greatly on that information, with a more complex system for creating relics, as well as several examples of relics both new and ancient. These rules are optional, though. Your Storyteller might prefer to downplay the impact of relics on her chronicle, rather than focusing

strongly on invention and discovery of mystical artifacts. If your Storyteller does decide to allow these rules, you can use them to design relics that characters can build and use in the chronicle.

THE NATURE OF RELICS

Relics come in all shapes, sizes and appearances. Some are obvious — swords of blackened steel that burst into flame or crystal scepters that glow with a blinding radiance. Others look like no more than assemblages of scrap metal, wooden carvings or simply twists of folded paper. Relics can be as small as a needle or the size of a bulldozer. Regardless of appearance, components or size of a relic, though, all such artifacts operate on the same principles.

Creation comprises a vast, incomprehensibly complex set of forces and principles. The laws of physics, the laws of aesthetics, the shape of the soul, the color of the sky — all these things exist because the Creator willed it so. Creation is a vast network of threads, where each thread is a natural law, an emotion, an object and so on. The lore of demons allows them to manipulate these threads and principles. Demons understand the principles of their lore on a perfect, spiritual level, so they can control Creation with just a thought. When a Devil conjures fire using the Lore of Flame, she doesn't create the fire herself, she manipulates the very principles and meaning of fire and inflammability, so that it would be impossible for a fire not to exist in the area she targets.

The way a relic works is similar, but different in important ways. When a demon sets out to create a relic, she decides on the effect she wants the relic to produce. She then manipulates Creation to produce that effect — but *stops just short* of completing her evocation. Instead, she stabilizes that particular configuration of threads and will and shapes it into a spiritual pattern. Once the pattern is stable, she can then embed it into her chosen object — one that she builds around the pattern of evocation or an existing item that can contain the energies.

The stable pattern of energies within the relic is like a key resting in a lock — a lock in the door of Creation itself. By focusing his will and energy into the relic, a character can activate the stable pattern of energy inside it, allowing the original effect to finally come into being. The key is turned in the lock, the door opens, and Creation comes rushing through. When the evocation or effect ceases, the stable pattern still remains in the relic. Therefore, it can be used again and again until the relic finally falls apart, unable to continue channeling the forces of Creation.

Some relics, such as enhanced items, maintain a continual effect or improvement, rather than having

to be activated — like a key that stays in the lock and keeps the door open. Such items, though, are always minor relics that produce less powerful effects. It's just impossible for a modern relic to continually produce a truly powerful effect.

Relics are useful, but they are also intrinsically limited. A relic normally contains only one effect, one configuration of energies. Some rare relics can be used to evoke two or more effects, but no matter how many effects a relic can channel, it's always a set number. The relic can create only those specific effects that have been built into it. A demon with the Lore of Flame can conjure and control fire in many ways, choosing new configurations and evocations each time, selecting new threads of Creation to touch and pull and knot. A relic *cannot* do so, any more than a car can suddenly decide to fly. A relic containing the Heal evocation of the Lore of Awakening does not also give the wielder the power to perform the Find the Faithful or Cleanse evocations, even though a demon with three dots in the Lore of Awakening could perform all three evocations. Similarly, the creator of the relic must decide whether the relic performs the normal or high-Torment effects of an evocation. If it can perform both, he must imbue the relic with both effects.

The other major limitation of relics is the need for *sacrifice*. The time has long passed since when relics could evoke their effects at any time, powered only by the desire of the user and the energies of Creation. Modern relics — and even those surviving from ancient times — require the user to sacrifice her own spiritual energy to activate the effects. This energy is the hand that turns the key in the lock of Creation; it's the final pulse of power that knots together the threads of the evocation and triggers the relic's power. Just what *kind* of sacrifice is required to power a specific relic depends on many things, including the power of the effect and the desires of the relic's creator. Most relics require a Faith or Willpower roll to activate, representing the sacrifice of a small measure of spiritual energy. Other relics require the user to spend Faith points or Willpower points, or suffer bashing or even lethal damage. Others have subtler, less quantifiable effects, and they might require the user to give up the thing he loves most or cause pain to those he cares about.

If this seems unclear, think of it in terms of a more modern metaphor. Creation could be compared to a massive, complex computer network. Demons are gifted programmers, able to put together code on the fly and instantly reprogram the system (within certain parameters) whenever they wish. Relics are macros — small, dedicated programs that operate

with a single icon. A relic is easy to use — almost anyone can click on the icon and run the program — but it does only one thing. You can plug in different variables or run it in different applications, but it'll still just do one thing. You can assemble several macros into a multi-purpose program, but it'll still be limited to a particular set of uses.

Within these limitations, relics can create amazing effects, and many **Demon** characters can create useful relics within the chronicle. The key to creating relics of power is mastery over the Lore of the Forge — the spiritual knowledge of how to build, change and infuse physical objects with power. Malefactors, especially those of the Mummy visage, are the pre-eminent artificers among the fallen, but they are not alone. Any character with an appropriate rating in the Lore of the Forge can create relics of various kinds. Lacking such knowledge, characters can seek out relics, tracking down those few artifacts that survived Heaven's purges and still exist in lost caches and collections.

TYPES OF RELICS

Every relic is unique, but it's still possible to group relics into three major groups, depending on the relic's effects and the process of building the artifact. These groups are *exclusive*, though. An item can be enhanced, enchanted or demonic, but it cannot be both enhanced and enchanted, or enhanced and demonic.

ENHANCED RELICS

Enhanced relics — also known as consecrated, blessed, exemplary or hieratic items — are the simplest kind of relics. With a trivial evocation of the Lore of the Forge, a demon can greatly enhance the mundane properties of any normal item or device. An enhanced car is faster and more maneuverable than normal; an enhanced pistol is more accurate and lethal; an enhanced computer has greater processing power, speed and memory. These minor relics are not significant enough to be worth searching for, and they will rarely play a major role in a chronicle, but they provide useful aid for mundane actions and are excellent gifts to give to thralls and mortal followers.

Creating an enhanced relic is comparatively easy. The demon uses his lore to understand the principles of the object and how those properties are reflected in the laws of Creation. Reaching out with his will, the demon touches those threads that represent the object and the principles that affect it. In the case of a car, for instance, those principles might include velocity, size, maneuverability, durability and many other factors. Using the Enhance Object evocation of the Lore of the Forge, the demon intertwines those threads, strengthening the relationship between the object and the desired properties. If he is enhancing a car, the demon

could improve the relationship between the car and the principles of velocity and acceleration. The most common effect of this enhancement is a reduction in the difficulty associated with dice rolls using the object, but the enhancement could have other effects, depending on the object being improved.

Like other relics, an enhanced item requires the sacrifice of spiritual energy to power it, but it requires far less than other, more powerful relics. The improvements to the object can last for a short period (a scene) without any notable sacrifice at all, other than the initial attention of the demon evoking the Lore of the Forge. After that time, the enhancement fades and the item ceases to function, often falling to pieces. To make the enhancement permanent, the evoking demon expends a point of temporary Willpower — a fairly minor expenditure to make for a permanently useful relic.

In some cases, an enhanced relic might require some other sacrifice, if the evoker wishes. Such an item will become enhanced for only short periods, even though the *potential* for enhancement exists permanently inside the relic. Only after a sacrifice is made does the item improve itself for a short period of time. For example, an enhanced sword might become lighter and more lethal for only a scene after tasting the wielder's blood; an enhanced car might need to be fed the flesh of innocents before becoming faster and more maneuverable for a scene. What's more, this sacrifice on the part of the wielder adds a greater degree of permanence to the item, allowing it to be used multiple times before consuming itself. Enhanced items fueled by sacrifice may be used for a number of times equal to the Malefactor's Faith score at the time of its creation. These enhancements can also be made permanent with the expenditure of a Willpower point, in which case the sacrifice needed to activate the weapon becomes less of a preservative function and more of a security measure designed to prohibit casual use.

It's important to note that enhancing an item can never do more than improve its normal properties. An enhanced car cannot fly; an enhanced sword cannot glow in the dark or damage immaterial spirits. Such magical effects require a more powerful relic and a more complex process of evocation and creation.

ENCHANTED RELICS

Enchanted items (sometimes called talismans, charms or artifacts) are true relics — items that evoke supernatural, miraculous effects. If an item can do something impossible, then it's an enchanted item. A wide variety of such relics exists — everything from flaming swords and scrying orbs to candles made from the hands of murderers and books of blasphemous



knowledge that steal the reader's sanity and soul away. An enchanted relic might have fairly minor powers, or it might be a world-shaking treasure that demons across Creation are desperate to own.

Creating an enchanted relic is a far more complex and time-consuming act than simply enhancing a mundane object. The demon creating the relic must begin evoking the effect she desires, using her available lore. Before the evocation is complete, though, she has to arrest the process — holding the unstable threads of Creation together with no more than willpower and spiritual energy. This configuration of energy must then be embodied in the object — a slow, difficult process, only possible for those who have nearly mastered the Lore of the Forge. The process becomes a little easier if the demon purposely builds an appropriate object to house the effect — such an object will be tailor-made to contain and direct the evocation — but doing so adds even more time to the process. Many other factors also affect the process, including the quality and durability of the materials used, the power of the evocation and the time taken to complete the enchantment.

In order to enchant relics, the demon needs more than just the capability to evoke the Lore of the Forge — she must have a degree of knowledge of other lore as well. A relic cannot evoke an effect that the creator cannot understand — but it can evoke an effect that the creator could not evoke herself. Even the most basic familiarity with a body of lore gives the demon expert knowledge of the principles of that lore, even if she doesn't have the power, skill or control to evoke more complex effects. By using her knowledge of the Lore of the Forge to fill in the gaps, the demon uses the relic to power and complete the evocation, overcoming her own limitations by using the item's power as a crutch.

As long as the character has even a *single dot* in an appropriate body of lore, she can create relics that evoke *all* the effects of that lore. Just what lore is needed to create a given item depends on the effect and the interpretation of the Storyteller. Some relics are straightforward, creating an effect identical to a standard evocation. Others are more complex and might require less obvious lore knowledge or even multiple bodies of lore. A staff that causes a volcano to erupt when the user strikes the earth might require knowledge of both the Lore of the Earth and the Lore of Flame. A relic that allows the user to astrally project might require knowledge of the Lore of the Firmament (which governs perception and communication), the Lore of the Spirit (to allow separating the spirit from the body), or both, depending on the decision of the Storyteller.

While enchanted relics can be powerful, they have definite limitations. The evocation of a relic has to be fairly specific — the relic can do only what it is "programmed" to do. Only a single effect can be embedded in a relic — only a demonic item can manifest multiple powers or evocations. The Storyteller can also rule that a relic is simply incapable of evoking an effect that is too powerful or complex. The glory days of artifice are long gone, and some effects that could have been created in the Age of Wrath are now impossible.

DEMONIC RELICS

The third class of relics is that of demonic items, also known as possessed or imbued items. These objects are incredibly useful, because they overcome one of the greatest limitations of other relics — they can be used for variable effects. How is this possible? It's because demonic items are intelligent — because they contain a *living soul*. The item's creator binds an incorporeal soul — mortal or demonic — into the item. He can then command the trapped soul to do his bidding, drawing on its knowledge or powers. The soul is bound into the relic, and it can be freed only if the object is destroyed. A demonic relic might be a sword that can fight better than its wielder, a car that drives itself and breathes fire at pedestrians or a computer that writes your book for you — but writes a morbid, depraved novel that drives readers to suicide.

There are two kinds of demonic relic. The most common kind — and the easiest kind to create — is a mundane item that houses a disembodied spirit. Demons create these items using the Anchor the Soul evocation of the Lore of the Spirit. With this evocation, the demon binds a disincorporate soul — be it the ghost of a mortal or the apocalyptic spirit of a demon without a host — into a normal object. This item can be almost anything, from a pen-knife to a motorcycle, and the item's composition does not affect the evocation. What matters is the *existing relationship* between the trapped soul and the item. The item acquires similar properties to Hell itself — an empty, barren space that emits a terrible spiritual gravity. This awful attraction pulls the spirit into the vessel and traps it there forever. As well as welding the soul into the vessel, the evocation also binds the trapped soul into obeying the user of the item and allows the wielder to communicate with the soul. If the relic traps a demon's soul, that demon can be forced to use its evocations and powers in limited ways to greatly enhance the item. For instance, a demon with knowledge of the Lore of Flame who was bound to a sword could evoke its lore to set the sword alight.

The second, less common kind of demonic item is one that is *also* an enchanted item. To make such an item, the demon must have near-mastery of both the Lore of the Forge and the Lore of the Spirit, being able to perform both the Enchant Object and Anchor the Soul evocations. The demon can't enchant an item that already houses a soul, nor can she trap a soul in an already enchanted item. Instead, she must build the relic as normal, but use a trapped soul as one of the original components of the item. Spiritually binding the soul into the evocation, she then binds it into the item. This process takes even longer than the normal enchantment process does, and it is significantly more difficult — and, of course, the demon must have a way of imprisoning the enslaved soul for the duration of the process. The effort is worth it, though, because the ensuing artifact is immensely useful. With a sentient mind controlling every facet of the relic's power, the artifact becomes considerably more flexible. A normal magic mirror might only be able to create one kind of illusionary reflection, but with a soul controlling the effect, the mirror could create almost any illusion or reflection. And if the trapped soul is a demon, it can again lend its powers to those that the relic already possesses.

BUILDING MIRACLES: RELIC CREATION SYSTEMS

The following systems enhance and replace the basic rules for evoking the Lore of the Forge. It's worth repeating that these are optional systems that add a significant degree of complexity to the original rules, so players can use these rules only with the Storyteller's permission. Furthermore, these rules are not meant to work in a vacuum. Players can't simply plug in the numbers and tell the Storyteller what their new relic does. Not only do these rules require dice rolls, they also rely on judgment calls on the part of the Storyteller. A player should come up with the idea for the relic she wants to create, then sit down with her Storyteller and work out the details and result together.

PERFECT ENGINES: BUILDING ENHANCED RELICS

Making an enhanced relic (or rather, enhancing an existing item) is a fairly simple process, both for your character and as a mechanical system. To enhance an item, all the character must know is the Enhance Item evocation of the Lore of the Forge. A

SUMMARY OF ENHANCED ITEM CREATION

- 1: Determine difficulty of enhancing item.
- 2: Work out modifiers on evocation dice pool and to difficulty.
- 3: Perform Enhance Item evocation — base dice pool is Perception + Crafts.
- 4: Assign successes to various properties of item.
- 5: Make enhancement permanent if desired.

few factors are involved in the enhancement process, but once the different factors have been pinned down, it just takes a simple roll to determine the success of the evocation.

THE ITEM TO BE ENHANCED

Many items can be enhanced, some in quite subtle or unusual ways, but not *everything* can be improved with an evocation. Only manufactured items — things that have been *forged* — can be enhanced. You can't enhance a batch of chemicals, a living creature or a rock that you just picked up from the ground, but you *could* enhance a device that mixes chemicals or a rock that's been tied to a haft to make a stone axe. As a rule of thumb, only those items that can be made or repaired with a Crafts or Technology roll can be enhanced.

Furthermore, only items that have a concrete in-game effect — ones that require dice rolls, or that influence other dice rolls — can be enhanced. You can't enhance a book, a photograph or a CD, because these items aren't used in a way that can be made better with the evocation.

When your character has decided on the item she wants to enhance, the major factor is the object's complexity. The larger and more complex the item is — the more principles of Creation it embodies, the more components and subsystems it possesses — the harder it is to enhance, and the higher the difficulty of the roll needed to perform the evocation is.

- **Difficulty 5:** Small items with little or no moving parts. These items generally do only one thing — cut, chop, lever or bind — but they do it well. Examples are hammers, crowbars, baseball bats, clothing, lockpicks, swords, tools and longbows. Items like CDs and computer disks don't count — they might be simple, but they're designed to be used as *part* of a complex system. Particularly small items — bullets, playing cards, tools in a kit and the like — can be enhanced as a group at the Storyteller's discretion. The Storyteller may allow a number of items equal to the character's Faith to be enhanced in a single evocation. He might rule that a tight group of small items — such as a pack of cards — counts as a single

item, or he might decide that each item must be enhanced separately.

- **Difficulty 6:** Large, simple items. Large means anything man-sized or larger. Some items of this sort have interacting parts, but not moving parts — a rowboat has distinct parts, but it doesn't rely on complex mechanical interactions. Good examples include sailboats, surfboards, parachutes, ladders, wagons, hot air balloons and battering rams. Many items of this type don't benefit much from enhancement. There's not a lot you can do to a sofa, for instance, to make it better.

- **Difficulty 7:** Small, mechanically complex items, where small means smaller than a man. These items can have some electronic components — it's rare to find items that *don't*, these days — but the item's primary use must come from the interplay of its mechanical moving parts. Examples include pistols, rifles, scooters, outboard motors, bombs, jackhammers, air conditioners, binoculars, locks and lawnmowers.

- **Difficulty 8:** Large, mechanically complex items. Many items of this type are more electronic than mechanical, or they rely heavily on their electronic components. These items don't come under this category. A car falls into this category, but not an airplane — that counts as a large electronic device. Aside from cars, good examples include motorcycles, cannons, speedboats, cranes, refrigerators, lathes and bulldozers.

- **Difficulty 9:** Small electronic devices or items that combine complex electrical systems with mechanical systems. A computers is an obvious example, but other possibilities include security cameras, DVD players, mixing desks, cell phones and GPS locators. If several items are connected — such as a LAN or a security system — the Storyteller may count the system as a large item or require each item in the system to be enhanced separately.

- **Difficulty 10:** The most difficult items to enhance are large, electronically complex devices. An airplane (large or small) would come under this category, as would a cruise missile, a surveillance satellite, a computerized manufacturing line, a speaker stack or a radio broadcast system. The Storyteller may determine that some very large or very complex items are impossible to enhance, even at this high difficulty. A battleship or a space shuttle, for instance, would be too much to handle.

THE EVOCATION

Once you and the Storyteller have decided on the details of the object to be enhanced, the process of improving the item is very simple. You roll your character's Perception + Crafts against a difficulty

determined by the object's complexity. If you roll one or more successes, your character evokes her lore and enhances the item.

That's the base system, anyway. You can do several things to improve your chances at the evocation, either by adding extra dice to your pool or by reducing the difficulty. Here are several ways in which you can better the odds. Your Storyteller might also come up with other modifiers.

- **Ravaging:** By ravaging the souls of your character's thralls, you can add a number of dice up to her Faith rating to the dice pool for the evocation. This is a good way to get several bonus dice for the evocation, but your character's thralls pay a heavy price.

- **Faith:** Spending a point of temporary Faith adds an automatic success to the evocation roll.

- **Extra Time:** Like all evocations, Enhance Item takes just a single turn to evoke. If your character takes more time — slowly coming to grips with all aspects of the object, both physical and spiritual — you can gain extra dice on the evocation attempt. If your character takes several minutes performing the evocation — at least five, if not more — add one die to your pool. If your character takes a full scene evoking her lore, add two dice to your pool. You can't gain any more than two extra dice this way, no matter how much more time you take.

- **Resonance:** As mentioned in Chapter Two, each lore has a body of symbols and motifs that resonate with it. If your character uses the resonances of the Lore of the Forge in her evocation, the difficulty of the evocation attempt decreases by one. Suitable resonances probably include tools, a forge, circuit diagrams, an anvil or other symbols of mechanical engineering. Getting your hands dirty with good hard work is also resonant with the Lore of the Forge. You can enhance an item with a word and an act of will, but it's easier if you pull the engine apart and put it back together.

- **Visage:** If your character benefits from reduced difficulty to her Crafts rolls in her apocalyptic form (as the Mummu do), that benefit is applied to the evocation roll if she is in her apocalyptic form while performing the evocation. If she takes extra time, she must maintain her visage for the entire duration of the evocation. Characters who benefit from reduced difficulty on Perception rolls in apocalyptic form do not apply this benefit to the evocation. Sharp physical senses are no help when sensing an object's spiritual shape. If the character's Perception increases in his apocalyptic form, however, that benefit does affect the evocation dice pool.

• **Unfamiliarity:** If the demon has no idea how the object works, the Storyteller may raise the difficulty of the evocation by one or two. This penalty will rarely be an issue, though. After all, a demon can gain full understanding of an object's properties with a single, separate evocation of Enhance Item. Sometimes, though, a character is pressed for time and might not be able to spare the few seconds needed to study an object before desperately trying to enhance it.

• **Existing Relic Status:** If the item is already an enchanted or demonic item, it cannot be enhanced. Similarly, an item that is already enhanced cannot be enhanced again. The item's spiritual shape is already altered in an unnatural fashion, so it cannot be deformed further.

Once all the factors are pinned down, it's time to make the roll. Remember that even if the roll succeeds, your character might still end up evoking the high-Torment effect of the lore. Alternatively, you might want to evoke the high-Torment effect, creating an

item that is likely to turn on its user. Perhaps this is a gift for someone who needs to be taught a lesson, or perhaps it's a poisoned chalice that you hope will cause the user nothing but pain.

If the roll botches, the item could be damaged or even destroyed, and the demon could lose temporary Faith points. If it fails, it simply fails, and the character can make another evocation attempt straight away — though the Storyteller may increase the difficulty of the evocation by one. If the roll succeeds, the item is enhanced. The next step is working out just how the object has been improved.

SPENDING THE SUCCESSSES

The player can spend each success on the evocation to improve a particular aspect of the enhanced item. If the object has multiple properties that can be improved — and almost all items do — each aspect must be improved separately. A success spent on making a car more durable will do nothing to make it faster or more maneuverable. Any unspent successes are lost.

TORMENT AND CURSED RELICS

Like all evocations, attempts to create enhanced, enchanted or demonic relics might fall afoul of the demon's tormented nature. Despite the demon's good intentions and desire to control herself, her dark side might overwhelm her, causing her to lose focus and taint the relic she builds with twisted power.

Evocations are normally performed with a simple roll, and the player can tell if he succeeded in evoking the low-Torment effect, or accidentally evoked the high-Torment effect. Because relic creation rolls are extended rather than simple, however, the situation is somewhat different. It might be possible for a demon to *unknowingly* create a high-Torment item, one whose taint lies unnoticed until a critical moment. Alternatively, a demon might *know* that her creation is flawed but use it anyway, or pass it off to a thrall or innocent mortal.

It's up to the Storyteller to decide whether he wants players to roll the dice for the extended evocation attempt or if he will roll it in secret for them. He should then decide whether the character will know if her relic is tainted.

If you roll the evocation attempt for your character, the demon is aware of the relic's Torment status throughout the evocation process. If you roll too many high-Torment successes early in the creation process — guaranteeing that the relic will be cursed — your character will be aware of the flaw and able to choose to scrap her work and start again from scratch. If she does produce a cursed relic, she knows of the item's taint and can decide for herself whether or not to use it. She might prefer to give it away to an ally or thrall, but doing so is on a level with giving away blankets that are infected with typhoid. This counts as a premeditated violation of others on the hierarchy of sins (see page 159 of the *Demon* core rules for details). Any character with a permanent Torment of 7 or less must make an appropriate Virtue roll to avoid gaining a point of temporary Torment for the act.

If the Storyteller rolls for a player, the player's character will not know if her relic is cursed or not. Cursed relics aren't always obvious — some just fail more often, and more drastically, than normal — and the character might use it unaware until it finally lets her down. If she gives away a secretly cursed item, the character isn't violating her principles or virtues since she doesn't *know* she's endangering the recipient of her gift. If, however, she later realizes what she has done — possibly after the relic fails disastrously — she might be wracked with guilt and anger over her own foolishness. This kind of accidental violation of another person requires an appropriate Virtue roll from any demon with a permanent Torment of 4 or less.

(NB: Creating a high-Torment relic isn't the same as creating a relic that produces the high-Torment version of another evocation. Such an item still works normally but produces a dark or dangerous effect. You can't accidentally produce such a relic. You must deliberately decide to create the high-Torment effect of that evocation and suffer a point of temporary Torment to produce it.)

The following are the most common aspects that can be improved through enhancement. If you want to improve a property that doesn't appear on this list in some form, talk it over with your Storyteller.

- **Reducing Difficulty Numbers.** Many items are used in conjunction with an Ability. You make a Drive roll when your character uses a car, a Firearms roll when she shoots a gun, a Technology roll when she uses her tools to repair a motorcycle. The most common use of enhancement is to reduce the difficulty of using that Ability with the item — making the gun more accurate, the computer more easy to use, the car more maneuverable. Each success spent in this way reduces the difficulty of using the item by one. You can't reduce the difficulty of using the item below 3 — any additional successes spent on reducing difficulty have no effect.

Some items have more than one Ability associated with their use. For instance, using a computer normally requires the Computer Ability, but if the user is accessing computerized records, he would be using his Research Ability. If he is writing a novel on his computer, he'd be using his Expression Ability. If the object is associated with multiple Abilities, you must choose which Ability is affected by the successes you spend. If you want to enhance multiple Abilities, you have to spend successes on each Ability that is affected. For a computer, you could spend a success to reduce the difficulty of Computer rolls by one, then spend a second success to reduce the difficulty of Expression rolls by one.

- **Increasing Difficulty Numbers.** In some cases, you might want to increase the difficulty of interacting with an object. This is usually only the case with objects that perform a defensive or preventative function — a lock or a security system, for instance. In such cases, each success spent increases the difficulty of bypassing or circumventing the item's functions by one, up to a maximum difficulty of 10.

- **Increasing Effects.** Some items have a quantifiable effect on the world, measured in terms of dice. Guns and weapons are the most obvious example, as a pistol or sword has a base number of damage dice. Similarly, armor provides a set number of soak dice to the wearer, while objects such as cars and doors have their own soak dice. Each success spent on improving these aspects increases the object's dice pool by one, up to a maximum of double the original dice pool. If the object has two or more different effects — for instance, a rifle with an attached grenade launcher — each effect must be raised separately by spending successes.

- **Increasing Durability.** All physical objects have health levels, just like characters do. Each success spent on increasing an object's durability gives it an extra health level, up to double the object's original number of levels.

- **Improving Other Quantifiable Factors.** Many items have factors that can be measured or defined but don't break down into dice pools. Examples include a car's top speed, a pistol's range or a computer's memory and processing speed. Each success spent on improving one of these aspects increases the value of the aspect by 20%, to a maximum of double the original value. In the case of a light pistol with a range of 20 yards, each success spent on improving the range increases that by four yards, up to a maximum of 40 yards. If the object has multiple quantifiable aspects, each must be improved separately.

Once you assign and spend all the successes from your roll, the evocation is complete, and the enhancement of the object takes effect.

CEMENTING THE ENHANCEMENT

The evocation is now complete, and the item now benefits from the effects of the enhancement. The final question that needs to be answered is how long will the enhancement last?

If nothing is done to extend the effects of the evocation, the item will retain its enhancement for the rest of the scene. After that point, the evocation will dissipate, and the object will cease to function. The stresses of the evocation leave the item cracked and broken, and it falls apart from the strain. Simple items such as swords might simply snap in half or crumble into dust. More complex items such as cars might break into their component parts, or even explode (at the Storyteller's discretion).

Depending on circumstances, you might need an item to be only temporarily enhanced — especially if you want to use it only once and then discard it. In many cases, though, it's more useful to make the enhancement permanent so that the item will always perform better than normal and be useful to your character or her allies and thralls.

The usual method of making the enhancement permanent is simply to spend a point of temporary Willpower. Your character flexes her will and fixes the evocation into a completely stable configuration that permanently modifies the nature of the object. This isn't the only way to make the enhancement permanent, however — not if the item is destined to be used by one of the demon's thralls.

During the enhancement process, the demon can fix the evocation into place with the faith of one of her thralls — using the thrall's Willpower

instead of her own. To do so, the demon must dedicate the item to the thrall during the evocation process. Doing so might entail simply keeping the intended recipient of the item in mind while enhancing it or something as complex as engraving a symbol representing the thrall on each component of the item, depending on the style of the demon and the taste of the player. When the evocation is almost complete, the demon must present the item to her thrall and ask him to accept her gift. If he accepts it, the thrall then loses a point of *permanent* Willpower, which seals the evocation into place and enhances the item. If he refuses the item, the evocation fails.

Enhanced items made in this way have an additional drawback of sorts — an activation condition that must be met each time the thrall wants to gain the bonuses of the item. This drawback results from the fact that the faith and determination of mortals is less certain than that of demons, and it lacks the focus and direction needed to fully empower the item. For the same reason, a thrall's player must make a Willpower roll to activate the limited evocations his master might bestow on him (see page 252 of the *Demon* core rules for details). Until the item is activated, it's merely a normal object of its type, and it can't be detected with supernatural awareness (see page 172 of the *Demon*

core rules for details). Only once the thrall meets the requirement will the item become enhanced as normal for the rest of the scene.

The demon decides on the activation condition of the item when she creates it. Common conditions include making a Willpower roll (difficulty 8), spending a point of temporary Willpower or suffering a level of unsoakable bashing damage. The demon can be more creative if she likes, requiring more unusual or difficult conditions to be met. For instance, a magic sword might not become enhanced until it tastes the blood of an opponent (or perhaps tastes the blood of the wielder). What matters is that the activation condition demands at least some small degree of sacrifice from the user. Saying a magic word isn't enough, because it doesn't draw on the will of the user.

Only thralls can help cement the evocation in this way, because the demon can gain access to the wills of only those mortals who have faith in her and have agreed to a pact with her. The demon can offer an enhanced item to someone who isn't yet her thrall, as part of her pact, but the evocation can be finished and the item enhanced only if the mortal agrees to the pact and offers up his faith to the demon. If the mortal dies, the demon returns to Hell, or the pact is broken by either party, the relic instantly loses its enhancement and breaks apart.



using each by one. The last success goes onto improving the computer's memory by 20%, taking it from 15 gigabytes to 18 gigabytes. Not wanting the computer to fall apart a scene later, Enerbanske's player spends a point of Will-power to make the enhancement permanent.

DAMNED WONDERS: BUILDING ENCHANTED RELICS

Enchanted relics — items that create a limited evocation or supernatural effect when the user or creator wishes — are among the most powerful and desirable relics in demonic society. They're also among the most difficult and costly to create — not just for the character, but for the player as well. Compared to the systems for creating enhanced relics, the system for creating enchanted items is significantly more complex — because these relics can do so many things.

Having said that, this system isn't too complex. In practical terms, you and the Storyteller need to pin down the effects created by the relic and how easily those effects can be used. From these details, you can work out just how many successes are required on an extended evocation roll, and what modifiers will affect that roll. Roll some dice, accumulate enough successes, and the relic is complete.

ENVISIONING THE ITEM

The first step in enchanting an item is deciding what kind of relic it's going to be — what the object will be and what supernatural effects the object generates. These decisions determine how difficult the evocation will be, how powerful an effect the relic can generate and what bodies of lore the creator needs to know.

So what are you trying to create? A mirror that always shows a beautiful reflection? A book that lets you communicate with dead souls? A wand that shoots fireballs? A trench coat that lets you teleport? Almost

anything is possible. The item you enchant can be simple or complex, big or small, natural or artificial, appropriate or bizarre. For the most part, the item's nature doesn't matter, because the evocation doesn't involve that nature — it simply embeds and anchors another evocation into the object. You could enchant a brick or a newspaper if you felt so inclined. What *does* matter is how well you know the item and the quality of the item. An object you made yourself is easier to enchant than one you didn't. A finely crafted item is necessary to contain the power of a strong evocation.

Technological items cannot be enchanted, however. Science and technology are alien things to demons, who were locked oblivious in the Abyss while mortals developed amazing new devices. Demons find the spiritual nature of things such as cars and video cameras very difficult to understand, and while they can enhance such items (with great effort), they cannot yet perceive the shifting, confusing nature of technology enough to manipulate that nature to form an enchanted relic. Demons can enchant mechanical items — clockwork toys, car engines, even firearms — but electronic items such as computers or cell phones are out of the question. You *could* enchant a broken high-tech item — a broken camcorder is just a lump of plastic and metal wires — but the enchantment would dissipate if the item were repaired, because its nature would change and force out the embedded evocation. It's up to the Storyteller to decide if a character can enchant any specific item.

At this point, you also need to describe the specific effect the relic evokes. Unlike the evocations of demons, which are flexible and modifiable, the powers of relics are clearly delineated. You can't make a relic that both dampens and strengthens fires. Or rather, you can, but you'd need to enchant the item *twice*. Similarly, your magic mirror can show only one kind of illusory reflection — making the viewer look more beautiful, for example.

A relic's effects can combine the power of two bodies of lore in some cases, but that effect still needs to be defined. A mirror that can detect what the viewer wishes he looked like, then shows him that reflection, would need a combined evocation of the Lore of Light (illusions) and the Lore of Longing (desire) — but still, that's *all* it does.

Just to make it perfectly clear — an enchanted relic can evoke only one, limited, predefined effect or evocation. It can't produce a complex, flexible evocation, and it can't be enchanted twice to produce two different effects. It was possible to create relics with multiple enchantments back in the Time of Babel and before, but Creation is too thin now to allow such power, and only rare surviving artifacts from that time

SUMMARY OF ENCHANTED ITEM CREATION

- 1: Decide on effect needed, what item is to be enchanted and what lore is needed to generate the effect.
- 2: Determine difficulty of enchanting an item.
- 3: Determine quality of item, and in turn the maximum effectiveness of the relic.
- 4: Design relic's effects and determine total successes needed.
- 5: Work out modifiers on evocation dice pool and to difficulty.
- 6: Perform extended Enchant Item evocation — base dice pool is Perception + Crafts — and spend temporary Faith.

THE MIRROR OF LIES

Relic creation is complex enough that a step-by-step example is a useful guide to the process. Rather than leave all the examples at the end of the section, here's one you can refer to as you read through the process.

David is playing Benignus, a Malefactor, in Kyla's chronicle. Politics and influence-mongering are major elements of the chronicle, and David would like to give Benignus a relic that could be a useful bribe for a wide variety of mortal characters. The idea of a mirror that shows the viewer a reflection of what he wants to look like seems fun — manipulating mortal vanity could be very useful — so he decides that Benignus will create one.

can overcome these restrictions. If you want to make a more flexible item, or one that can produce multiple effects, then you need to create a demonic item.

Talk your idea over with your Storyteller first — just in case she doesn't feel the item is appropriate for her chronicle — then move on to outlining the details of the item.

NECESSARY LORE

Before your character can build the relic, he needs to know how to evoke the effect that the item will mimic. He needs at least basic knowledge in the bodies of lore relevant to that effect, meaning he must have at least one dot in every body of lore required for the effect. It isn't necessary for the character to be able to evoke the effect himself — you don't need to have four dots in the Lore of the Winds to make a relic that can evoke a Wall of Air. But without basic knowledge of the appropriate lore, you won't be able to understand how to contain those energies within an object or how to direct them using the Lore of the Forge. If the relic's effects combine the powers of two or more bodies of lore, your character needs to have at least one dot in each of those lore paths. If the effect is the high-Torment version of an evocation, then the character will have to gain a point of temporary Torment when enchanting the item.

If your proposed relic is simply evoking a standard effect, the system is pretty straightforward. One of the strengths of enchanted items, though, is that they can create a wide variety of effects, not all of which are standard evocations. It's up to the Storyteller to decide what lore is relevant to a particular effect. The following list is a guideline, but the Storyteller may decide that a different lore — or combination of lore — is needed.

- **Lore of Awakening** — Relics that heal or directly harm a person or creature, or ones that involve medicines or poisons.
- **Lore of the Beast** — Relics that control or influence animals.
- **Lore of the Celestials** — Relics that affect a demon's Faith, powers or evocations.
- **Lore of Death** — Relics that directly end mortal lives or affect undead creatures.
- **Lore of the Earth** — Relics that control the earth, metals and stone.
- **Lore of the Firmament** — Relics that involve communication over a distance.
- **Lore of Flame** — Relics that create or affect fire and heat.
- **Lore of the Flesh** — Relics that directly affect a character's body, including relics that modify a character's Attributes.
- **Lore of the Forge** — Relics that affect other relics or control objects.
- **Lore of the Fundament** — Relics that change or override physical laws, including most relics that fly or act as a form of transport.
- **Lore of Humanity** — Relics that control or influence mortal minds directly.
- **Lore of Light** — Relics that create illusions of any kind or create or affect light.
- **Lore of Longing** — Relics that control mortal minds indirectly or detect or modify emotions.
- **Lore of Paths** — Relics that involve movement or direction.
- **Lore of Patterns** — Relics that provide information or predict the future.
- **Lore of Portals** — Relics that teleport the user or control doors and barriers.
- **Lore of Radiance** — Relics that overawe or influence groups of mortals.
- **Lore of the Realms** — Relics that allow travel or interaction between worlds.
- **Lore of the Spirit** — Relics that allow communication or control over spirits.
- **Lore of Storms** — Relics that control or influence water or storms.
- **Lore of Transfiguration** — Relics that change shape or allow others to change shape.
- **Lore of the Wild** — Relics that control or influence plants or wilderness areas.
- **Lore of the Winds** — Relics that create or influence air and winds (including some relics that allow flight).

As well as evocation effects, the Storyteller might allow relics that mimic features of a demon's revelatory



THE MIRROR OF LIES

The effect David wants to create is reasonably straightforward. The mirror has to detect the emotions of the viewer, pick out her ideal image of herself and create that image in the glass. While this effect strictly has two parts, they don't work independently, so it's still just a single (if slightly complicated) effect.

There's no standard evocation that produces this effect, but Kyla agrees with David that it's basically a combination of the Empathetic Response evocation of the Lore of Longing (to detect the viewer's desired reflection) and the Phantasm evocation of the Lore of Light (to produce the image). Kyla rules that Benignus needs one dot in the Lore of the Light and in the Lore of Longing to create the relic. Since Benignus has at least one dot in both those lore paths, he has all the necessary lore for enchanting the mirror.

form, such as wings or increased size. The creator of the relic must have one dot in the primary lore of a specific visage in order to mimic that feature. For instance, the creator of a relic that gives the user the Perfect Balance feature of the Ellil visage must have at least one dot in the Lore of the Winds. If the feature is one shared by several different visages (many demons have wings in their revelatory form, for instance), the demon needs to know only one lore that provides that feature. If the feature is a high-Torment feature of the visage, the character gains a point of temporary Torment for embedding the feature in the relic.

The Storyteller may allow a character who doesn't know the necessary lore to work in collaboration with another character who does. Such a collaborator must have at least one dot in the Lore of the Forge, and working with a collaborator is much more difficult than creating a relic on one's own. Modifiers for working with a partner (or partners) are shown later in this section.

SELECTING THE RIGHT MATERIALS

Two facets of the chosen item are relevant in the enchantment process. The first is how *familiar* the demon is with the item — whether he made it himself or obtained it through other means (bought it, stole it, found it lying in the street, etc.). If the demon made the item himself, it's much easier for him to enchant it. He knows the nature of the item well and can easily perceive the places where an evocation can be anchored. If he didn't make the item, the process becomes harder.

The other factor is the *suitability* of the item and its components. An evocation is a nexus of raw power and energy, and securing it to a physical object is no easy

task. If the item is flimsy or of poor quality, it can't anchor a powerful evocation effectively. The evocation won't take hold, and the object might even be destroyed in the process. Suitability is more than just physical robustness, though — it's also a measure of how rare and hard to obtain the material is. The best materials aren't available in supermarkets or factory showrooms. A character might want meteoric iron, an antique sword made in the 12th century, or the hand of a hanged murderer to form the nexus of his relic, all of which takes time and effort to acquire.

In mechanical terms, the demon's familiarity with the device determines the basic difficulty of the evocation. The character must roll against a difficulty of 6 to enchant an item his character made, or against a difficulty of 8 to enchant an item made by another. The item's suitability determines the maximum number of successes that the character can accumulate in the extended evocation roll — which, in turn, will dictate the effects of the evocation.

The minimum amount of successes needed to enchant an item is equal to twice the dots in the lore required to produce the effect. So if you want to make an item that mimics the *Command the Dead* evocation of the *Lore of the Spirit*, which requires three dots, you need a minimum of six successes to make the item. If the relic requires multiple lore paths to produce its effect, only the highest level of lore is doubled. If the device requires one dot in two lore paths and four dots in another, you need eight successes to create the item. If you add further successes to the required total, you can make the relic more powerful — more effective, better range and so on. If the number of successes required is more than the maximum allowed for your materials, you probably won't be able to create the relic. You'll need more suitable materials, or perhaps you can tinker with the effect to make it cheaper.

The suitability of an item is reflected primarily in how difficult it is to obtain, as shown by this chart.

Item/Material Suitability	Minimum Background	Examples	Maximum Successes
Shoddy	1	Driftwood, rocks, broken toys, low-grade steel, quartz, skateboard, pocket knife	3
Adequate	2	Quality wood, semi-precious stones, strong steel, car, motorcycle, priest's vestments	6
Good	3	Small amounts of precious metal, small precious stones, Armani suit, Toledo sword, alchemical equipment	9
Exceptional	4	Gold ingot, large rubies and sapphires, rare antique, meteoric iron, hand of a hanged murderer	12
Superb	5	One-of-a-kind antique, diamond the size of your fist, chest full of gold, supply of <i>syrr</i> metal from the Time of Atrocities	15

OBTAINING AN ITEM

The easiest — and probably quickest — item to obtain for enchantment is one that's already available — one your character already owns or can buy. Most characters have access to a variety of weapons, tools, vehicles and knick-knacks that can be usefully enchanted. Such items, though, are generally of fairly ordinary quality, and won't hold a strong evocation. If your character doesn't want to go to the time and effort of making a suitable item from good materials, he has to buy or bargain to get the right object.

The preceding table lists the minimum rating in a given Background to obtain a suitable item or suitable materials. Just what Background is required is determined by the Storyteller based on the kind of item and the needs of the chronicle. Many items can simply be bought, requiring a minimum Resources rating. Other items might only be obtained by use of Contacts or Influence, given up only to a demon of a given Eminence or tracked down through the memories supplied by Legacy. If your character doesn't have enough dots in an appropriate Background, then it's time to call in some favors or go looking for aid from other characters. Tracking down highly suitable materials to make a powerful relic can be a story in itself.

MAKING AN ITEM

Creating an appropriate item from raw materials takes longer — possibly a *lot* longer — than just buying one, but the resultant item is a lot easier to enchant. The most important factor here is the quality of the materials you use to make your item. Sure, you can make a relic out of scrap iron and driftwood, but the resulting piece of crap won't do much. A truly powerful relic needs to be made from the best materials possible — tempered steel, perfect diamonds, arcane treasures. It's no cheaper or easier to obtain good-quality materials than it is to buy an item already made from those materials, but the payoff kicks in when it comes time to perform the evocation.

Once your character has obtained the raw materials for making the relic, it's time to set to work. The creation process occurs with a Dexterity + Crafts roll (for simple creations) or Dexterity + Technology (for mechanical items). The Storyteller might also decide that you need to use Wits or Intelligence rather than Dexterity, depending on the item being made.

Creating the item is an extended action, with a roll being made for each *day* your character works on the item. The Storyteller may rule that the process takes even longer and allow only one roll every in-game week. This is usually the case for large items or creations that require special tools or procedures (such as building a car engine from parts). The difficulty for making most items is 6, but the Storyteller may rule that a given item is harder to make. Anything requiring fine work or special tools, such as making an intricate clockwork device or engraving a gold ring, is probably difficulty 7 or 8. If you botch the roll, the item and materials are ruined, and you have to start all over again.

The more successes you accumulate on this roll, the higher the quality of the item is, and the more powerful the evocation you can store in it is. You can't just keep accumulating successes forever, though. The maximum number of successes you can gather is equal to the maximum successes allowed for your materials. If your character is building an opal ring from "good" quality stones and materials, you can accumulate a maximum of nine successes on the extended roll. That's as good as it's ever going to get. You can stop before that point, with a ring that has only seven or five or one success, but the amount of successes you end up with is also the maximum number of successes you can gather on the extended evocation roll for enchanting the item. You might have great materials, but if you just slap them together, the resulting item isn't going to be good enough to house a powerful evocation.

Remember that you get to design the relic fully before you start rolling dice. Once you've worked out how many successes you'll need for the chosen evocation, come back to this point and rethink the item requirements if necessary. Maybe you'll need a more expensive item to house your evocation, or maybe the relic is so simple that you can anchor it to a much less costly object.

DETERMINING THE SUCCESSSES NEEDED

This is the main part of the relic design system, and the one where the player and Storyteller need to do the most work.

Performing the Enchant Object evocation is an extended action, where the player needs to accumulate a certain number of successes. The *power* of the relic — the effect it generates, how strong that effect is and how often it can be used — determines the number of successes you need to accumulate with the

THE MIRROR OF LIES

Kyla has ruled that the effect David wants the mirror to produce is a combination of Empathetic Response (two dots in Lore of Longing) and Phantasm (three dots in Lore of Light). Since Phantasm requires the higher Lore, the relic will require a minimum of six successes. Therefore, Benignus must use at least "adequate" materials to make the relic.

David would like to use an antique mirror for the relic, not just a plain wall mirror. A costly antique will serve to further inflame the greed of mortals, after all — and anyway, it'd be much cooler. Kyla says that a rare antique mirror would be an "exceptional" item, requiring Resources 4 to obtain. That sounds a bit too costly to David, who decides that Benignus will search out a mirror that's classy but doesn't cost so much — a "good" item, that will allow up to nine successes to be accumulated on the Enchant Item roll. Because Benignus didn't make it himself, the difficulty of enchanting the mirror will be 8.

Buying such a mirror outright would require Resources 3 — which, unfortunately, Benignus doesn't possess. He does have three dots in Eminence, however, which will allow him to pull some strings in the infernal court. Over a few days, Benignus lets it be known that he would appreciate the gift of a fine mirror from any supplicants to the court. Sure enough, a demon hungry for prestige and recognition gives him one. Of course, now Benignus has to reciprocate the favor — and Kyla makes note of the debt to use in future stories.

Out of curiosity, David looks at the rules for creating an item — Benignus *could* try to build a mirror from scratch, after all. Kyla rules that he'd need to make an extended Dexterity + Crafts roll, with a difficulty of 7, accumulating successes once each in-game week (glazing is a complicated process, after all). Since Benignus's dice pool for the action would be only seven dice, that'd be a long process. David figures it'd take weeks for Benignus to finish making the mirror, assuming no disasters happened in the meantime. Instead, David decides to live with the higher difficulty.

evocation roll. The suitability of the item determines the maximum number of successes you can gain with the evocation.

The player and the Storyteller should progress through the following steps in order, determining at each step how many successes are needed. When all the steps are completed, you should have a total number of successes needed to create the item you've designed. If that total is higher than your chosen item



can contain, you need to go back and redesign the effect to make it less powerful or choose a new item that can contain the power of the evocation. If it's equal to the item's maximum, you can go ahead and make the item. If it's lower than the maximum, you might want to beef up the evocation's power, use a lower quality (and easier to obtain) item, or simply go ahead with the Enchant Item evocation.

STEP ONE: THE BASIC EVOCATION

The power of the evocation — the number of dots in lore you would need to evoke that effect — is the base from which you start. The relic requires an absolute minimum number of successes equal to twice the number of dots in lore required. If your relic evokes an effect equivalent to a three-dot evocation, you need six successes at this step.

If the relic creates a conjunctive effect that would require knowledge of multiple bodies of lore, then you need a minimum level of successes equal to double the highest level of lore involved. If the relic is a scepter that inspires loyalty in a mortal (Aura of Legend, three dots in Lore of Radiance) while expanding his consciousness (Inspire, four dots in Lore of Longing), then the item requires eight successes at this stage.

If the relic's effect is not a standard evocation, then the Storyteller should set a minimum based on how powerful the effect is. If it's comparable to a minor, one-dot evocation, then the player needs two successes; if it's a powerful effect comparable to a five-dot evocation, then the player needs 10 successes here.

STEP TWO: THE POWER OF THE EFFECT

Evocations have a dice pool associated with the effect, which determines how powerful the evocation is — all the standard evocations include an associated dice pool. The relic has its own dice pool for the effect, rather than using that of the wielder or the creator. This dice pool can be made larger by increasing the number of successes required to make the relic.

The basic dice pool for a relic's effect is the same as the creator's relevant dice pool. If your character is making a relic that mimics the Create Ward evocation, which involves a Charisma + Intuition pool, then the relic's dice pool is equal to your character's Charisma + Intuition. Relics that mimic the features of a particular visage have a base dice pool equal to the creator's permanent Faith rating. If the effect is based on two or more different evocations, then the base dice pool is equal to the highest of the creator's relevant pools. For these items, the player normally rolls the relic's pool once and applies the successes to all the facets of the effect, but the Storyteller might decide that it's more appropriate to roll the pool separately for each part of the effect. If multiple characters are

collaborating on the item, the dice pool of the character evoking Enchant Object is the one used for the relic.

You can increase this pool by adding more successes to the required total, though, since one of the most common reasons for making enchanted relics is to transcend the creator's limits. Every success added to the required total adds two dice to the relic's dice pool, with the only limit being the maximum successes permitted by the relic's suitability. If you add another three successes to the required total, the relic's dice pool is six dice larger than your character's relevant pool.

The difficulty of the relic's effect roll is the same as the normal difficulty of the appropriate evocation. If the effect isn't a standard evocation, the Storyteller should decide on a difficulty (6 is usually good). You can't lower this difficulty by requiring more successes. You can't accidentally evoke the high-Torment of an evocation when using a relic (another advantage of these items), because the relic produces only the "pre-programmed" effect. (If the relic is designed to heal others, it can't suddenly harm them instead.) If you want the relic to produce the high-Torment version of an evocation, you have to decide this when you make the relic. Should you do so, the character suffers a point of temporary Torment to embed that effect in the relic.

STEP THREE: FREQUENCY OF USE

Once you've determined how powerful the relic's effect is, the next step is determining how often the relic can be used. Relics can be used over and over again, but usually only a few times in each scene. Some relics can be used at whim, but they are much harder to produce, and they require far more successes.

The relic starts at a base of one use per scene. You can increase this limit by adding more successes to the required total. Adding up to four successes to the required total increases the uses-per-scene by the same amount—so if you add three successes to the required total, you can use the relic three more times per scene (for a total of four times). Alternatively, if you add five successes to the required total, the item can be used as many times per scene as you like. Only the finest materials will be able to contain such a powerful effect, however.

STEP FOUR: OTHER MODIFIERS

The first three steps are enough to cover almost all enchanted items. Still, there are always other complications and possibilities, other ways to make the relic more complex and time-consuming to produce. The following possibilities cover some ground, but aren't exhaustive. Players and Storytellers may come up with other factors that increase or decrease the number of successes needed.

- **Working With a Collaborator.** It's possible for a character to work with another demon in order

to produce a relic that he could not make alone due to shortcomings in his knowledge of lore. It's a lot more difficult to create a relic while depending on another's knowledge, though. As well as increasing the difficulty of the evocation roll (covered later), the successes required to make the item increase by two for every other demon working on it with the character. If a demon had to work with two partners to create a relic—perhaps because each knew part of the lore needed to create the effect—then the player would need another four successes to create the relic.

- **Additional Sacrifice.** All enchanted relics require the sacrifice of spiritual energy and the strength of belief to power them, which is normally based on a Willpower or Faith roll. You can make the item easier to create—reducing the number of required successes—by demanding an *additional* price be paid for each activation of the relic. The roll must still be made, but there are other demands made of the user as well.

If the item requires an onerous sacrifice, reduce the number of successes needed by one. An onerous sacrifice is inconvenient and painful, but it doesn't threaten the life or sanity of the user or others. An appropriate mechanical sacrifice might be the loss of a lethal health level or having to suffer a penalty to all dice rolls for the rest of the scene. An onerous sacrifice can also be something emotionally meaningful to the user, such as having to hurt someone he loves or give up caring about one important thing in his life every time he uses the relic.

If the item requires a severe sacrifice, reduce the number of required successes by two. A severe sacrifice requires great pain on the part of the user—or on the part of others. Possible examples include having to kill an innocent person each time the item is used, losing a permanent health level, having to cut off a finger or sacrificing one of your memories to the relic.

- **Miscellaneous Limitations.** If the evocation produced by the relic is significantly limited, the Storyteller may reduce the required successes by one or even two. It's important to distinguish, though, between a limited evocation—one that is notably less useful than usual—and a specific effect, which is what the relic is meant to produce. An item that evokes the Lore of Longing but affects only one particular emotion isn't limited—that's the appropriate scope of the relic. A relic that affects only that emotion, and in addition works only on women, is limited. It's up to the Storyteller's discretion to decide whether an evocation is limited, and what reduction in the required successes is warranted. As a rule of thumb, significant limitations reduce the successes by one, while drastic limitations reduce the required successes by two.

• **Miscellaneous Bonuses.** Just as the Storyteller can reduce the required successes for an evocation that seems limited, she can increase the required successes if the evocation seems unusually useful. If the evocation manages to overcome some of the normal limitations of the lore, such as having a longer range, the Storyteller should feel free to increase the requirements by one or even two successes.

THE MIRROR OF LIES

David and Kyla begin adding up the successes needed to create the mirror.

Step One: As noted earlier, the mirror's effect mimics the two-dot evocation Empathetic Response and the three-dot evocation Phantasm. The basic number of successes required is equal to double the level of the more powerful evocation, so that's six successes.

Step Two: Empathetic Response normally requires a Manipulation + Empathy roll, while Phantasm is based on Intelligence + Performance. Benignus's Manipulation + Empathy pool is only five dice, but his Intelligence + Performance pool is seven dice. The relic's dice pool starts at seven dice, because that's the higher of the two pools. David wants the relic to be very reliable, so he adds another two success to his required total to add four dice to the relic's pool, bringing it to 11 dice. Kyla rules that the relic's pool is rolled just once, and those successes determine both how well the mirror detects the viewer's emotions and how well it portrays the idealized reflection.

Step Three: David wants the mirror to work multiple times per scene since Benignus might want to let several mortals use it in a short period. The relic starts out at just one use per day, which is too low for David's liking. David decides he wants to be able to use the mirror three times a scene, which adds another two successes to the required total.

Step Four: Benignus isn't working with collaborators or modifying the relic's properties any further, so David needs add no more successes here.

Step Five: The total successes required are 6 (Step One) + 2 (Step Two) + 2 (Step Three) = 10 successes. That's one too many — the mirror can contain a maximum of nine successes because it's of "good" suitability. David goes back and looks over the numbers. He can't lower the lore minimum in Step One, and he doesn't want to make the relic more onerous to activate or more limited in function, so he either has to reduce the relic's dice pool or number of uses. He decides he wants to definitely keep the three uses per scene, so he reduces the dice pool from 11 to nine dice. Doing so drops the required successes by one, down to a manageable nine.

STEP FIVE: ADD IT ALL UP

Now that you've worked through all the preceding steps, you should know how many successes you'll need on the Enchant Item evocation roll. If it's more than the item can hold — or more than you think you can accumulate in the time you have — go back to Step One and tinker with the numbers to reduce the total.

THE EVOCATION

Once you've worked out how many successes you require on the extended evocation roll, the next step is to make that roll, which means determining the difficulty number and the dice pool.

The base difficulty number depends on the item being used — 6 if your character created it himself, 8 if someone else made it. The base dice pool is equal to the character's Dexterity + Crafts. You make a roll for every day your character spends enchanting the relic. When you accumulate the required number of successes, the relic is finished.

If you botch the roll at any point, the potential relic is ruined, and you lose the Faith the item would have required to create. If, over the course of the extended roll, more successful dice are rolled below your character's Torment than above, the item is cursed, and it demands a higher price from the user.

A number of different modifiers can change both the dice pool and the difficulty of the evocation. Several are listed here. The Storyteller may impose or grant others if she feels it warranted.

- **Ravaging.** If your character ravages the souls of her thralls, you can add a number of dice up to her Faith rating to the dice pool for *one* evocation roll. If you want to increase the pool for the next roll, your character has to ravage her thralls again.

- **Faith.** Spending a point of temporary Faith adds an automatic success to *one* evocation roll. If you want another success on the next roll, you need to spend another point of Faith.

- **Resonance (1).** If your character uses appropriate resonances of the Lore of the Forge throughout the extended evocation, the difficulty of the evocation attempt decreases by one. You can also reduce the difficulty by one if the relic resonates with the lore of the evocation. For instance, a gravestone would help an evocation of the Lore of Death; a book of poetry resonates with the Lore of Longing. You can reduce the difficulty by only one for using resonance, even if you use resonances of the Lore of the Forge *and* enchant an item that resonates with the evocation.

- **Resonance (2).** As well as using resonance, you can get a bonus to the evocation if the relic causes resonance as a side effect. You can add an extra die to all the evocation rolls if minor manifestations of the

relic's lore appear in the vicinity when the relic is used. As an example, a relic that evokes the Lore of the Wild might cause plants to grow faster in the area for a day after being used. A relic that evokes the Lore of Death might cause shadows to become permanent in the place where it was used. These manifestations are always too minor to give any real in-game benefit or penalty, but they can make the item slightly easier to track down. (They also make the relic a little more interesting, and that's worth rewarding.)

- **Visage.** If your character benefits from reduced difficulty to his Crafts rolls in his apocalyptic form, or if he gains a bonus to his Dexterity, those benefits can be applied to the evocation roll as long as he remains in apocalyptic form while performing the evocation. Doing so for an extended roll is at best impractical, and at worst impossible, though. Characters are going to find it very difficult to remain in revelatory form for days on end. Forgiving Storytellers might allow the character to benefit from his visage if he stays in apocalyptic form for one or two scenes per day, or they

might allow the benefit to count for only those rolls made while the character is manifesting his visage.

- **Existing Relic Status.** Remember, if the object is already a relic of any kind, it can't be further enchanted.
- **Collaboration.** If other characters are helping you create the item by providing the necessary lore, increase the difficulty of the evocation by one. Multiple collaborators still increase the difficulty by only one.

With all the details pinned down, it's time to roll dice, count successes and determine how well things went for your character!

THE FINISHING TOUCHES

With the extended evocation roll complete, only a few more things need to be wrapped up before using your relic.

- **Cementing the Evocation.** The evocation has been designed and embedded in the relic, but it won't stay there unless the knot of energies is stabilized. Doing so requires your character to spend a number of temporary Faith points equal to the maximum lore needed for the evocation. So if the relic mimics the two-dot evocation of the Lore of Flame, you need to spend two points of temporary Faith. In the case of evocations that draw on multiple bodies of lore, you don't need to pay Faith equal to all of those lore ratings — just the highest lore rating of all those required.

The Storyteller can increase or decrease this required amount by one point of Faith if she feels it's appropriate. A relic that is particularly useful or flexible might cost an extra point of Faith to finish. A relic with a significantly limited application might have its Faith cost reduced by one (down to a minimum of one point).

- **Activation and Use.** To use a relic, the operator must sacrifice a measure of her own energy and belief to the item — the amount of energy is usually quite small. Whenever a mortal uses the item, she must make a Willpower roll (difficulty 8) or spend a Willpower point in order to activate the relic's power. Players of demons must make a Faith roll (difficulty 6) or spend a Faith point to activate the relic. This roll must be made every time the relic is used, but the user needs a only single success each time. If the roll is botched, the user loses a point of the relevant trait. Relics that suffer more onerous use conditions (see Step Four) still require this roll in addition to the other sacrifices that the user must make.

If the characters evokes the high-Torment version of Enchant Object — deliberately or accidentally — the relic demands a higher price of the user, but is more reliable. There's no need for a dice roll when activating a high-Torment relic. Instead, mortal users must spend a point of Willpower to activate the relic, while demons gain a point of temporary Torment each time

THE MIRROR OF LIES

David needs to accumulate nine successes to create the mirror relic. He and Kyla calculate the dice pool and difficulty of the roll.

Benignus didn't make the mirror himself, so the base difficulty of the roll is 8. He's not making the relic in his revelatory form, so there are no benefits there. Kyla feels that mirrors resonate with both bodies of lore, so she reduces the difficulty by one for using an appropriate item for the relic. Benignus isn't using an existing relic or working with collaborators, so he doesn't suffer any penalties. The final difficulty for the Enchant Item roll is 7.

The base dice pool is Benignus's Dexterity + Craft, which equals nine dice. Benignus isn't prepared to ravage his followers for power, and David doesn't want to blow any temporary Faith on automatic successes. David does decide, though, to have the relic cause minor resonant side effects. He talks it over with Kyla and decides that using the relic causes roses to grow in the nearby area — roses that are twisted with the ugliness that the mirror hides. Since roses resonate with the Lore of Longing — and because it's a cool effect — Kyla decides that that's enough to warrant an extra die to his pool, for a total of 10 dice.

Therefore, David needs to roll 10 dice against a difficulty of 7, once for each in-game day Benignus spends creating the relic, until he accumulates nine successes. After four in-game days, David finally gets his ninth success, and Benignus finishes enchanting his mirror.

they use the device. Eventually the curse of the twisted relic breaks the will of any mortal user and slowly corrupts any demon who draws on its power. As before, any enchanted item that requires a more onerous activation condition retains this price, which must be paid in addition to the normal cost of using the item. High-Torment relics also botch more often — on a roll of 1 or 2 — and those mishaps almost always have tragic consequences.

- **Attunement.** Rather than have to make a roll each time your character uses an item — whether he created it or not — the character can attune to the relic. Attuning is an intuitive process that doesn't require any kind of ritual or knowledge — the user simply needs to gain a feel for the demands and nature of the item. This process is pretty minor for demons, but attunement is more significant for mortals. It's often a sign of deep obsession and psychological problems, as the mortal begins to fixate on the relic to the extent that he sees it as part of himself. Before a user can attune to an item, he must have it in his possession and have successfully used it at least once.

To attune to a relic, demons must spend one point of permanent Faith, while mortals must spend a point of permanent Willpower (demons can't choose to spend Willpower instead of Faith). Once the character is attuned to the relic, he can use it with ease, and no dice roll is required to activate the item's power. If the relic demands a more onerous activation cost, that cost still exists — attunement makes the item more reliable, but doesn't make it any less demanding. The relic still has an increased botch chance if it is cursed due to a high-Torment evocation, but the attuned user doesn't need to keep spending Willpower or gaining Torment to use it.

THE MIRROR OF LIES

With the mirror finished, Benignus needs to cement the enchantment. Kyla rules that the evocation is not so limited or powerful to require a change in cost, so David spends three Faith points (because Phantasm is the three-dot evocation of the Lore of Light) to finish off the enchantment.

The mirror is now ready to use. Because David didn't add any onerous conditions to its use and didn't evoke the high-Torment version of Enchant Item, the relic is pretty straightforward. When someone looks in the mirror, David must make a Faith roll (difficulty 6). If that roll succeeds, he can then roll the relic's pool of nine dice to use the evocation. David certainly plans to have Benignus attune to the relic eventually, but that won't be possible until it's been used in the chronicle.

Any number of characters can be attuned to an item at one time. That doesn't mean that the owner will like it when a newcomer attunes herself to his precious, precious relic. The original user can't stop the new user from attuning to the relic — unless he steals it away from her before she can do so — but a jealous user might attack or kill anyone who dares to try to use his prized possession.

EXAMPLES

As you can see, enchanting items is a fairly complex procedure, but you will become proficient with the system with a bit of practice. The following examples should help illustrate just how straightforward the system can be in use.

- **Example 1:** *The Malefactor Orobas wants to create a key that will open any lock. Orobas already knows the appropriate evocation — Open/Close Portals from the Lore of Portals — but his dice pool for this evocation is a measly four dice, and his player wants a relic to compensate for her character's weakness.*

Open/Close Portals is a one-dot evocation, so the relic has a base requirement of two successes. Orobas will be making the relic out of an old-fashioned key, which the Storyteller rules is of "shoddy" suitability. (It's just a piece of metal, after all.)

Orobas's player's main aim is to get the relic's dice pool for the evocation as high as it will go — it starts at just four dice, the same as Orobas's dice pool. Adding one success to the required total brings that to six dice, but that's still too low, so she increases the required success total to four in order to improve the pool to eight dice.

A "shoddy" item allows a maximum of three successes, so the total has to come down. Adding an onerous activation condition to the relic would work, so the player decides that the user must suffer a lethal health level of damage in order to activate the relic. In fact, that condition suggests a cool image to her. The key is sharpened along its edge, and the user must stab himself with the key and coat it with his blood before it works its magic. The Storyteller agrees that it's a cool image and allows the activation condition, bringing the required successes down to three.

Orobas's dice pool for Enchant Object is seven dice. The difficulty of the evocation starts at 8 — since Orobas didn't make the key himself — but the Storyteller reduces that to 7 because keys resonate with the Lore of Portals (and because he likes the grim requirement). The Storyteller allows the player to roll the evocation herself, rather than the Storyteller rolling it himself and checking for tormented successes. Rolling once for each in-game day, it takes just two days to make the key, and it isn't cursed. Finally, Orobas spends a point of Faith (because Open/Close Portal is a one-dot evocation) to finish the relic.

For Orobas to use the key, the player must succeed in a Faith roll (difficulty 6). If that works, she then rolls eight

dice to overcome the lock. The key can be used only once a scene, which is fine since the player doesn't really want to keep bleeding off her character's health levels unless absolutely necessary.

- **Example 2:** Phil likes the idea of making a "relic grenade" — a single-use item that can be used as a last-ditch weapon by his character, Lachama. Looking through the rulebook, he sees the high-Torment version of the Command the Wind evocation, which summons a foul miasma of choking gas. He decides to make that the effect of the relic.

Command the Wind is a three-dot evocation, so the relic would require a minimum of six successes. Lachama doesn't have any dots in the Lore of the Winds, however, so she needs a collaborator to build this relic. That increases the successes required by two, up to a total of eight. Counteracting this, though, is the one-shot nature of the relic. The Storyteller considers that a severe limitation, so she reduces the required successes by two, back down to six. Phil isn't going to bother increasing the dice pool of the relic's effect or adding any other improvements to the item, so six successes is the final total.

Once Lachama persuades her ally Braxamun (who knows the Lore of the Winds) to help her build the relic, she needs to gather the materials. Six successes will require materials of "adequate" suitability, and Phil wants Lachama to make the item herself. He comes up with the idea of making the relic from glass — a sort of glass egg, filled with mercury, filigreed with copper and steel, and hanging from a steel necklace. It looks like an unusual piece of jewelry — but when the user pulls the relic from the necklace and throws it to the ground, it breaks open and spews forth the noxious gas. The Storyteller rules that those materials are of "adequate" suitability, and Lachama spends a few days buying mercury and ground glass.

Crafting the relic requires an extended Dexterity + Crafts action, rolling once each in-game day until Phil accumulates six successes (the amount he needs to support the evocation). The difficulty for this roll is usually 6, but the Storyteller feels that because the item is small and intricate, and because of the danger of handling mercury, the difficulty should increase to 7. Lachama's Dexterity + Crafts pool is eight dice; rolling for each in-game day, Phil determines that it takes her five days to make the necklace.

Now it's time to enchant the necklace, and Lachama gets together with her collaborator to perform the Enchant Object evocation. The difficulty of the evocation starts at 6, since Lachama made the necklace herself. Because she's working with a collaborator, the difficulty increases to a total of 7. Lachama's Dexterity + Crafts pool is eight, and she isn't doing anything to gain extra dice. Because Lachama is crafting a high-Torment effect, she must gain a point of temporary Torment for crafting the relic.

The Storyteller decides to roll the evocation attempt, rather than allowing Phil to roll it himself. She determines



that it takes five days to create the item—and that Lachama has inadvertently evoked the high-Torment version of Enchant Object so that the necklace is cursed. It still works, and will perform as normal, but will botch on a roll of 1 or 2 when used. Furthermore, Lachama will gain a point of temporary Torment when she uses the item (but she doesn't have to make a Faith roll to activate it).

With the evocation complete, Phil spends three points of Faith to finish the enchantment, and he hangs the relic around Lachama's neck.

• **Example 3:** Mike comes up with a cool idea for a relic for his character Namastar—an unbreakable silver chain that can imprison anyone it binds and prevent demons from using their evocations to break free. His Storyteller, Janet, agrees that it's a cool idea, but it'll be a tricky idea to implement. No standard evocation in the **Demon** rulebook binds a target in this way, so the two of them need to come up with an appropriate lore and evocation level.

Looking over the various bodies of lore, a few seem at least somewhat appropriate. The Lore of the Celestials affects the evocations of other demons, so that'll have to be involved. The imprisoning effect could come from the Lore of Paths (which affects movement), the Lore of the Fundament (which also affects movement and physical laws) or even the Lore of the Flesh (which affects the body). Thinking it over, Janet feels that this effect is a combination of Flesh and Fundament. The chain will capture the energy of the subject's muscles and redirect it into the relic, making it grow tighter. That seems to coincide well with the Manipulate Inertia evocation of the Lore of the Fundament, which is a three-dot evocation. Similarly, the Pillar of Faith evocation of the Lore of the Celestials, which can negate a demon's evocations, is a three-dot effect. Janet rules that the relic will require knowledge of the Lore of the Flesh, the Lore of the Fundament and the Lore of the Celestials to create, and it will start from a basic requirement of six successes. Fortunately, Namastar has some knowledge of all these bodies of lore (as well as four dots in the Lore of the Forge), so he can make the relic without outside aid.

The relic will use a single dice pool for both effects—negating the target's evocations and binding him (which will work similarly to a grappling attempt). Pillar of Faith works from Namastar's Manipulation + Leadership pool, which is nine; Manipulate Inertia works from his Dexterity + Athletics pool, which is only five. The relic's pool will start at nine dice, but Mike would like it higher. He adds another two successes to the required total (bringing it to eight) to increase it to 13 dice. He doesn't think the device will need to be used more than once per scene, so he doesn't add any further successes to the total.

This relic is quite unusual, and it has advantages and drawbacks that differ from the evocations it's based on. Pillar of Faith normally requires knowledge of the target's True or Celestial Name, but this relic doesn't. On the other

hand, the chain only affects a single character that it's attached to, and Janet rules that a conscious and mobile character couldn't be chained. Similarly, Manipulate Inertia normally lasts for only one turn, whereas the chain's effect lasts for as long as the target is bound. Then again, the effect is very limited in its scope, compared to the feats that can normally be performed with Manipulate Inertia. All of these advantages and drawbacks cancel each other out, as far as Janet's concerned, so they don't increase or decrease the required number of successes. Mike wants one additional feature, however—the relic not only negates evocations but also prevents demons from assuming their apocalyptic form. That's a fairly major advantage over the usual Pillar of Faith effect, so Janet increases the required successes to nine.

Nine successes mean Namastar must make the relic from good quality materials, which is fine, since the plan was to make it from silver anyway. Mike needs to roll Namastar's Dexterity + Crafts pool to make the chain, against a difficulty of 7. Janet also feels that fine-detail silversmithing should take a while, so she allows only one roll to be made for every three in-game days. It takes Namastar several weeks to get the chain just right, accumulating nine successes on the Crafts roll.

With the chain ready, Namastar can begin enchanting it. The base difficulty of the evocation will be 6, since he made the chain himself. Mike adds an interesting touch here. During the evocation, Namastar painstakingly engraves a word meaning "binding" on each link of the chain, with each link using a word from a different language. Janet thinks that's cool and feels that it resonates well with the purpose of the item and the lore being used, so she reduces the difficulty to just 5. Namastar's Dexterity + Crafts pool is seven dice. With Janet rolling for the evocation, it takes Namastar just four days to enchant the relic. He then spends three Faith to finish the evocation.

Once the chain is activated (with a Faith or Willpower roll), wrapped around someone's wrist, then attached to a solid anchor (like a steel beam or bar), the chain performs the Hold maneuver on its prisoner (see page 242 of the **Demon** core rules for details) using a pool of 13 dice. It also rolls this pool to resist any attempt by the prisoner to perform evocations or assume his visage. The chain can only be broken by the prisoner if he escapes from the hold (not likely, with that massive dice pool), but another character could easily snap it.

SOULS IN A BOTTLE: BUILDING DEMONIC RELICS

Demonic relics are difficult relics to create, requiring near mastery of the Lore of the Spirit. The mechanical system for creating a demonic relic is pretty simple, however, only slightly more complex

SUMMARY OF DEMONIC ITEM CREATION

- 1: Choose appropriate object and record details.
- 2: Work out modifiers to evocation dice pool and difficulty.
- 3: Perform Anchor the Soul evocation — base dice pool is Stamina + Awareness.
- 4: Interpret successes of evocation roll and determine relic's capabilities.

than that for creating an enchanted item. Forcing a disincorporate soul into a vessel is a fast, straightforward process. You just make a simple roll for the evocation, with few modifiers.

There are two kinds of demonic relics. A simple item is simply a soul — mortal or demon — that has been bound into a mundane object. This object becomes the soul's body, and it can be manipulated in appropriate ways. Complex demonic items use a captured soul as part of an enchanted relic, allowing the soul to control and alter the relic's powers.

CHOOSING THE VESSEL

Almost any item can be used as a vessel for a disembodied soul, even such high-tech items as computers. It's easier, however, for a demon to evoke the lore on an object that has a close personal connection to the soul being captured, or on items made from simple materials, so many characters will want to choose the vessel carefully.

If the item being used had a close personal connection to the soul, the difficulty of the evocation is only 6. What counts as a close personal connection? It's not enough for the person to have simply used the item in life — no one feels a close personal connection to the bus she catches or the spatula she keeps in her kitchen. The item must mean something to the person. It doesn't have to have an intense emotional meaning for her, but it should be something that she found useful and would miss if it were taken away. Computers, cars, favorite shirts, pianos, jewelry — many items in a person's life could make suitable vessels. Picking an appropriate item usually requires the demon to do some research into her subject (unless she knows him well) and then obtain the item. If you're capturing the soul of your best friend or next-door neighbor who died last week, this is fairly easy. If you want to ensnare the spirit of a long-dead nobleman, or capture a demon newly summoned from Hell, it gets a lot harder.

If you can't obtain a suitably meaningful item, that's not a huge setback — almost any item can be a suitable vessel. In fact, you might want to capture the spirit in a different vessel — especially if you want the spirit in a specific vessel for a reason. Sure, it might be easier to

capture that ghost in his favorite rug, but that's hardly as useful as binding him to your car so he can drive you around.

When you use meaningless items to capture a soul, different objects make the evocation easier or harder to perform. Crystals, gems and precious metals are the easiest materials to use, since their nature resonates particularly well with the Lore of the Spirit and the power of the evocation. Objects made from other materials — stone, wood, glass, steel and so on — are harder to use. The most difficult items to make into vessels are those made from artificial materials or that incorporate high technology — such things as computers, cars, plastic mannequins and the like. Of course, these items are often the most useful ones to make into vessels, since the captured soul can use them in more ways if you succeed in binding it in the first place.

THE EVOCATION

If your character has four dots in the Lore of the Spirit, has a suitable item to hand, and is in the presence of a spirit — a ghost, a nature spirit or a demon outside of its mortal vessel — she can attempt to perform the Anchor the Soul evocation and trap the spirit inside the vessel. Your character doesn't have to be able to sense the spirit, but if she can't, she might not know it's in range for the evocation (or even that it's there at all).

When your character performs the evocation, the object's spiritual nature changes momentarily, gaining many of the characteristics of Hell — a spiritual void that emits a terrible gravity. This attraction affects only the targeted spirit — the evocation targets both the object and the chosen spirit, tying those two entities together into a specific configuration that ignores any other spirits in the vicinity. If the spirit resists the pull of the item, the power of the evocation fades and the item's nature is unchanged. The demon could attempt to use it again with this evocation, but she might suffer increased difficulties (at the Storyteller's discretion) if she uses it to try to capture the same spirit.

If they are armed with appropriate relics or limited evocations, mortal thralls can also capture spirits in this way and even enslave incorporeal demons. For this reason, demons rarely bestow such power on even their most trusted thralls. If a mortal did gain such power, most demons that learned of it would make that mortal an immediate target. Still, it's not impossible. Mortals hungry for demon slaves might be hunting your character even now.

Evoking Anchor the Soul is a simple roll. The player spends a point of temporary Faith and makes a Stamina + Awareness roll, where the difficulty depends on the nature of the chosen vessel. If the vessel has personal meaning to the targeted spirit, the difficulty is

just 6. If the vessel is made of crystal, gems or precious metals, the difficulty is 7. For an item made of non-precious natural materials, the difficulty is 8, and the difficulty of using an artificial, non-meaningful item is 9.

The target must be within a number of yards equal to the demon's Faith. If it's outside this radius, it is untouched by the reliquary's gravity. The character must be holding the chosen item (or at least touching it if it's a large item like a motorcycle or statue). If the spirit is affected, it resists the power of the evocation with a Willpower roll (difficulty 8). If the player using the reliquary gains more successes, the evocation takes effect, and the spirit is drawn into the vessel. If the player botches, the character loses *another* point of temporary Faith, and that item can never be used as a vessel for any soul — the botched evocation has permanently distorted the object's spiritual nature. If the spirit botches its Willpower roll, it is not only bound into the item, but it also loses a point of permanent Willpower.

Only a few additional factors can modify the evocation roll. Taking extra time is ineffective — this is an instantaneous evocation, and there are no benefits for extending the performance over a longer time. In fact, stalling just gives the targeted spirit a chance to escape.

- **Ravaging.** By ravaging the souls of your character's thralls, you can add a number of dice up to her Faith rating to the dice pool for the evocation.
- **Faith.** Spending a point of temporary Faith adds an automatic success to the evocation roll.
- **Resonance.** Anchor the Soul benefits from the resonances of the Lore of the Spirit. If the character incorporates symbols such as religious trappings, shadows or magic circles into the evocation, the difficulty of the roll decreases by one. Furthermore, resonances can still come into effect if the spirit being targeted is a demon. If the vessel is made primarily of materials that resonate with the primary lore of the target or is an object associated with that lore, then the Storyteller may reduce the difficulty of the evocation by one. For instance, a scepter would resonate with a character of the Qingu visage (Lore of Radiance), while an item made of bone would resonate with a demon of the Namtar visage (Lore of Death). No matter how many levels of resonance are involved, the difficulty of the evocation decreases by only one in this way.

• **Visage.** If your character is performing this evocation in her revelatory form, your dice pool benefits from any increase in Stamina, or difficulty reduction for Awareness-related rolls, that are associated with that form.

• **Existing Relic Status.** An item that is already a relic, or that already contains a soul, cannot be used as

a vessel. Souls can be incorporated into enchanted relics, but only when the relic is being enchanted. There was a time when a vessel could contain two, three or a legion of souls, but no longer. Now an object can barely contain a single soul, mortal or demonic.

The Storyteller might also assign further modifiers if he feels that other relevant factors apply.

Once the evocation is complete, the relic acts as a prison for the spirit for a number of days equal to your character's permanent Faith rating. After this time, the relic falls apart, breaks down or crumbles into dust, and the spirit is freed and unbound — and possibly very angry at the demon that dared to enslave it. To bind the spirit into the item permanently, you need to spend a point of temporary Willpower. Doing so stabilizes the evocation and stops the relic from falling apart under the strain of containing the spirit. If the relic is damaged, it will still act as a vessel for the imprisoned spirit. Only if the item loses all its health levels is the trapped spirit freed.

INTERPRETING THE SUCCESSSES

Even a single success on the evocation roll means that the spirit is trapped in the vessel. Such a marginal evocation, though, leaves the spirit lost inside the object, unable to sense the outside world more than feebly, unable to communicate with others and unbound by the will of the evoker. More successes leave the spirit with a greater capability to interact with the world, or they allow the evoker to bind the spirit to her will.

Divide your total successes between *binding* the spirit and *empowering* the spirit, then determine the results in the following sections.

BINDING THE SOUL

Unless the evoker works to bind the trapped spirit to her will, it is under no compulsion to obey her commands or work toward her goals. Strongly binding the spirit forces it to obey the evoker. While demons are immune to mind-control, they can be bound just as tightly as mortal spirits. The binding process is similar to that used in summoning and binding rituals, though the mechanics are different.

• **Zero successes.** The spirit is trapped within the item but is completely free from the evoker's control. It can do whatever it likes — assuming it has the power to do *anything* in this state. Anyone who can communicate with the spirit can ask it to do her bidding, but it's up to the spirit to decide whether to accede to the request. A wise character should learn the spirit's True Name if possible and use that to *force* obedience from the spirit. The trapped spirit can work against the wielder in various ways. A rebellious spirit trapped in a sword could make it much more difficult to attack

effectively with that weapon, and possibly even turn the blade on the user.

- **One success.** The spirit is sometimes compelled to accede to the demands of the evoker, but it can fight back. If the creator of the relic can communicate with the spirit, she can demand that it perform a certain duty. The character and the trapped spirit make opposed Willpower rolls; if the character wins the contest, the trapped spirit must obey that specific order. If the character botches the contest, the trapped spirit gains strength, recovers a point of temporary Willpower, and can refuse to follow the user's wishes. For example, the spirit inside a sword might refuse to improve the user's dice pool or channel a useful evocation through the blade.

- **Two successes.** The spirit is bound so strongly into the vessel that it is constantly compelled to accede to the wishes of the item's creator. Unless a request goes directly against the trapped spirit's Nature, the spirit must obey any orders the relic's creator makes. Demands that violate its Nature call for a resisted Willpower roll, however. It's quite possible that if a spirit is trapped for a long time, its Nature might change, becoming more attuned to the wishes and personality of its master and slowly falling into line with all requests.

- **Three successes.** The spirit can no longer refuse the requests and demands of the evoker, so it automatically aids the character in whatever ways it can.

It's important to note that the trapped spirit is bound only to the demon that imprisoned it, not to anyone who uses the relic. If someone else picks up the item, the spirit is free to do whatever it wants (if it can do anything at all). If the creator of the item is sent back to Hell or permanently destroyed, the spirit is completely free. Of course, the creator of the item can also order the spirit to obey another character, and if the creator then dies, the spirit is stuck obeying the wishes of its new master.

EMPOWERMENT

The more empowered the trapped spirit is, the more able it is to perceive the outside world, communicate with others and exercise its will over the vessel. Demon spirits have more options than mortal spirits, since they can continue to use their lore and abilities in limited ways even while trapped, but greater empowerment will give the demonic spirit a better capability to use that lore. Demonic spirits continue to collect Faith from any existing pacts, and they retain demonic powers such as resistance to mind-control.

(Note that even though trapped demonic spirits don't have Physical Attributes any more, they still include their pre-imprisonment Attributes in the dice pools for evocations as normal.)

As a default state, the trapped spirit has only a very vague sense of the outside world. It cannot see or hear, but it can sense nearby objects and tell when the vessel is moving or being held by another. The spirit cannot communicate with the outside, unless someone contacts it with evocations, invocations or special abilities. The spirit has no control over its vessel's movements, and the item is no more robust than normal.

The more successes you devote to empowering the spirit inside the relic, the more that spirit can do in your service. For each success you spend on empowering the spirit, you can choose one package of abilities from the following list. (Each package can be chosen only once.)

- **Keen Senses.** While the spirit has no sensory organs, it nonetheless possesses the full range of human sensory abilities. It can see in the dark, hear any audible sound and even detect smells and changes in temperature. The spirit can also detect other nearby spirits—even those that are invisible or hidden inside objects—with a Perception + Awareness roll (difficulty 8).

- **Communication.** The spirit can communicate with any being who is holding or interacting with its vessel. This communication is usually silent and telepathic, but it might be audible if the vessel's properties would allow it. For instance, a radio could broadcast audible speech, while a mannequin could speak through its mouth.

- **Vessel Control.** The spirit can move and animate its vessel as if the item were its normal body. The vessel can only move in ways that make sense, however. A spirit inside a ventriloquist's dummy could walk and pick up small items but not talk, unless the relic has the Communication ability. A possessed car or motorcycle could drive itself (assuming it can sense where it's going). A possessed sword couldn't move under its own power, because it has no way of getting around, but it could still influence its movement when being swung in combat. The player and Storyteller should work together to determine any relevant details like speed and capabilities of the vessel.

Spirits that animate their vessels use their normal dice pools for any relevant tasks (such as Dexterity + Drive for a possessed car or Dexterity + Athletics for a possessed doll). The spirit can use its dice pool in place of that of the item's user if it is higher. A possessed sword could use its own Dexterity + Melee pool instead of its wielder's, making the user seem more skilled in combat. A poorly bound spirit can work against the user with its own dice pools, making the roll to use the item a resisted roll. The car could turn against the direction the driver wants to go, while the sword could swing away from the target.

• **Enhanced Durability.** The possessed item is far more robust and durable than a normal item of its type. Add the spirit's Stamina rating to the item's normal Soak pool, and add a number of health levels equal to the spirit's permanent Willpower to the item's normal total. The spirit does not suffer any wound penalties if the item is damaged. The spirit can spend one temporary Willpower point each week of game time to repair one level of damage.

• **Spiritual Infusion.** Only vessels containing demonic spirits can have this quality. The demon's soul infuses the structure of the relic fully, altering the item's spiritual shape to better fit. The demon is still trapped within the item, but it can channel its powers and lore through the relic — to a limited extent. The relic is a prison, after all, and it will not allow the demon full reign over its lore.

All demons bound into relics retain their immunity to possession and mind-control, as well as their capability to see through illusions. Spiritual infusion gives the demon two other important benefits.

First, the demon can use a limited number of its evocations — just one possible evocation from each body of lore the demon knows. A demon with knowledge of three bodies of lore can perform only one evocation that it knows from each path, for a total of three available evocations. This is a mere trickle of power compared to the freedom the demon would have in a living host, but it's all the vessel will allow. The player and Storyteller should work together to pick the evocations the spirit can perform, and to modify the evocations to better fit the demon's new form. The evocations can be minor or major, one-dot or five-dots, as long as the spirit knows how to perform them. The spirit uses its normal dice pool to perform the evocation, and it can accidentally (or deliberately) perform the high-Torment version instead of the low-Torment version of any evocation it performs. The demon must possess at least one point of temporary Faith to use its evocations.

Second, the item becomes charged with the nature and purpose of the demon, making it a superior tool if it is used in ways appropriate to that nature. The difficulty of certain dice rolls — those aligned with the demon's Nature — made with the relic decreases by two. The actions modified in this way are usually those associated with the demon's House, and its role both before and after the Fall. Only those actions made directly using the relic are modified; if the relic can't be used in an appropriate fashion, the user doesn't get the benefit. If the demon has control over its vessel and can make its own actions, those actions can benefit as well. It's easier to use a body that's tailor-made for a certain kind of task.

• **Defilers:** Reduce the difficulty of Social tasks that enthrall others or any tasks involving travel through water (such as swimming or boating).

• **Devils:** Reduce the difficulty of Social rolls for lying or deceiving others, as well as attempts to inspire or command others.

• **Devourers:** Reduce the difficulty of attack rolls in combat.

• **Fiends:** Reduce the difficulty of Research, Knowledge or Investigation rolls, or any Occult rolls involving divination.

• **Malefactors:** Reduce the difficulty of Crafts and Technology rolls, or any attempt to build or tear down inanimate objects.

• **Scourges:** Reduce the difficulty of parry attempts in combat, of Medicine rolls and of tasks made to directly protect another person.

• **Slayers:** Reduce the difficulty of damage rolls in combat.

EXAMPLES

Making a possessed item requires less dice-rolling and number-crunching than enchanting a relic, but it's still fairly complicated. These examples should make things completely clear.

• **Example 1:** *The specter of a local coke dealer who was killed by his former partners a few months ago has been sighted in Magdiel's neighborhood. Magdiel decides to capture the spirit, in case he is a threat to the mortals of the area — and because he might be a useful tool. Doing some research, she finds that the dealer owned a sports car, which is being sold cheaply by his family. Moving out her credit card, Magdiel buys the car and drives it around the neighborhood as she hunts the ghost.*

When Magdiel finally tracks down the ghost after several nights of searching, the spirit attempts to attack her. Sitting inside the spirit's car, Magdiel waits for the ghost to approach. When he gets close enough, she evokes Anchor the Soul to trap him inside his own car!

Magdiel's Stamina + Awareness pool is nine dice, and the base difficulty is 6. The car is a complex artificial device, but it has a strong personal link to the spirit. Magdiel's player also chooses to spend a point of Faith to gain an automatic success. Finally, the ghost can resist the evocation, but it has a Willpower of only 4. Magdiel's player rolls nine dice, gets four successes and adds the automatic success for a total of five. The Storyteller rolls four dice for the ghost but gets only two successes. Magdiel wins the contest with three successes, and the ghost is trapped inside the car.

The player divides the successes — two into empowerment, and one into binding the spirit. The binding success means that the ghost still has some capability to resist Magdiel's commands and can make Willpower rolls to defy her, but with a low Willpower, he's unlikely to defy her for



long. With the two empowerment successes, Magdiel's player selects the Keen Senses and Vessel Control abilities. The spirit can control the car as if it were his body—driving and maneuvering at will—and it can clearly see the world around him and where he's going. He can't communicate easily with others, even with Magdiel, but she can use her Speak with the Dead evocation to communicate with him when necessary.

Magdiel spends a point of Willpower to make the evocation permanent, and now has a (reasonably) obedient servant—a car that can chauffeur her around whenever she wants and will come when she calls it. Now she just has to explain to her host's husband why she bought a second-hand sports car.

• **Example 2:** The Fell Knight Ravana plans to murder Kanfarol, a minor upstart in Los Angeles' Infernal Court who has been foolish enough to question the knight's plans. But simply killing her enemy is not enough. Ravana plans to capture the Devil's soul and form it into a useful tool.

Ravana doesn't know of any items near to Kanfarol's heart, but she doesn't care—she wants a weapon. She has in her possession an ornamental dagger, with a sharp steel blade and a hilt decorated with gold and gems. That sounds like a suitable vessel for her plans.

Ravana invites Kanfarol to a private meeting, and when the foolish Devil enters the knight's chambers, Ravana's fallen vassals incapacitate Kanfarol. Then the fell knight

cuts his throat with the dagger. When the Devil's spirit breaks free of the dead mortal shell, Ravana evokes her lore and attempts to capture the spirit in the dagger.

Ravana's Stamina + Awareness pool starts at a base of nine dice, and she spends a point of Faith for an automatic success. The merciless Ravana will also ravage her thralls—the mortals' Faith equals 7, so she adds another seven dice to her pool, for a total of 16 dice. The base difficulty of the roll is 7, since the dagger is crafted primarily from precious metals and gems. Such materials also resonate with the Lore of Radiance (the late Kanfarol's primary lore), as do daggers and swords, so the Storyteller sees fit to reduce the difficulty by one to just 6.

Rolling 16 dice against a difficulty of 6, the Storyteller gets seven successes, adding the automatic success for a total of eight. Kanfarol gets three successes on the Willpower to resist, leaving a total of five successes. The Storyteller dedicates two successes into binding the demon and three into empowering the relic. Two binding successes mean that the Devil is bound tightly to Ravana's will and can only attempt to defy those demands that directly contradict his nature. With the three empowerment successes, the Storyteller selects the Communication, Enhanced Durability and Spiritual Infusion abilities. Ravana can communicate at will with the spirit of Kanfarol, giving him instructions and tormenting him when the urge takes her. The dagger becomes more robust

and damage-resistant than normal. It gains three extra dice of soak (Kanfaryl's Stamina) and six extra health levels (Kanfaryl's permanent Willpower).

Kanfaryl knew evocations from the Lore of Radiance, the Lore of the Celestials, and the Lore of the Fundament. The Storyteller can select one evocation known to the Devil from each of these lore paths, and Kanfaryl can perform that evocation while locked inside the dagger. The Storyteller chooses Exalt from the Lore of Radiance (bestowing bonus dice to chosen targets that see the dagger); The Fire of Heaven from the Lore of the Celestials (allowing the dagger to blast white fire at distant targets); and Manipulate Gravity from the Lore of the Fundament (allowing the dagger to hover motionless in mid-air and fly great distances when thrown). The Devil's essence could also make it easier for Ravana to lie or command others, but she's not likely to do that in a way that directly involves the blade. Not that she cares, since she didn't want a relic that aided diplomacy — she wanted a weapon, and to make a demonstration of her power. An example has been made. Let none dare to defy Ravana's will from this day forward.

DEMONIC ITEMS AND FAITH

The nature of spirits — both mortal and demon — changes as a result of their imprisonment within a relic. The spiritual space within the relic is very much like that of Hell, and Hell is not a place that permits Faith.

Demonic spirits within a relic no longer gain Faith from any pacts they made before being imprisoned. The pacts remain in place, and the demon can start gaining Faith from them again if it escapes its prison — but while inside the relic, the demon cannot gain that Faith. This is a problem for both the demon and the relic's creator — without Faith, the spirit cannot use its evocations or special abilities. Demons who possess relics soon become desperate and greedy for Faith, and will do almost anything to get more.

A trapped demon can gain Faith in only two ways while it is inside a relic. The first is for the creator or user of the relic to use the item in an appropriate way while reaping Faith from a mortal — using a demonic knife to torture a mortal, or healing a man with a touch from a possessed scepter. If the reaping attempt is successful, the demon using the item can decide whether to keep the Faith for himself or allow the demon in the relic to take it.

The second way the demon can gain Faith is if it makes a new pact with a mortal while it is still imprisoned in the relic. If the trapped demon can communicate with a mortal who's come into possession of the relic, it can make promises and bargains as normal, empowering a mortal thrall and gaining Faith from him. Because this pact was made through the binding walls of the relic, the Faith from this new thrall is able to slip past the barriers and feed the hungry demon. Of course, for this to

continue, the demon must hold up its end of the pact, and there are severe limits to what it can do while trapped inside the relic. Pacts made by trapped demons tend to revolve around allowing the mortal free access to the relic, and using the demon's powers in his service — a position that most demons find galling in the extreme. If it is freed from the relic, the demon retains any pacts it made with thralls while it was imprisoned, but some demons might prefer to get rid of the mortals that once had power over them. Unfortunately, the exigencies of maintaining the pact through the barrier of the relic make it impossible for the demon to maintain more than one pact at any given time. Therefore, these relics tend to find their way from one mortal wielder to another, leaving a trail of broken minds and ruined bodies in their wake.

Mortal spirits trapped inside relics continue to produce Faith, but at a slower rate. More precisely, less of their Faith is able to escape the relic; the rest simply dissipates into the ether. A mortal subject of an existing pact who is trapped in a relic — such as a demon's thrall who was murdered then bound as a ghost — provides Faith to the demon once per week, rather than every day. If the demon is foolish enough to ravage the trapped thrall for more Faith and he exceeds the spirit's Willpower, the spirit is utterly consumed and the relic becomes useless.

A mortal spirit that isn't a demon's thrall can enter into a pact while trapped in a relic, as long as the demon can communicate with the spirit. Such pacts tend to be short-lived, as most mortal spirits want little more than to be released from their prison. Once free, the ghost can return to the afterlife.

MAKING COMPLEX DEMONIC ITEMS

Relics are powerful, but they have drawbacks — they can be hard to control, and they can produce only the effects they're programmed for. These limitations can be overcome (or at least reduced in severity), however, if a demon creates a relic around the captured soul of a mortal or demon. These complex demonic items are rare, but very powerful. They have an intelligent mind guiding and controlling their functions, and that mind can push through the limits of the relic's nature and evocations.

To create a complex demonic item, a character must know both the Anchor the Soul and Enchant Object evocations. The demon cannot just force a spirit into an already-existing relic. She must use the spirit as a component in the enchantment process, forming the relic's spiritual shape around the captured soul. Doing so gives the spirit access to the powers of the relic, allowing it to control the item in more flexible ways, while simultaneously making the relic a cage for the spirit.

The demon creating the relic must have access to the captured spirit while enchanting the item — usually the spirit is already present in another object, held in place by the Anchor the Soul or Imbue Object evocations. During the enchantment process, the demon must free the spirit by breaking its current prison, then perform Anchor the Soul to infuse the spirit into the half-finished relic under construction. It doesn't matter how tightly or loosely bound the spirit was in its former resting place. The demon must rebind the spirit into the new relic with Anchor the Soul, and divide the successes of the evocation between binding and empowerment all over again.

For the player, the process is quite simple — a merging of the systems for creating enchanted and demonic items, requiring a few more dice rolls and a little more planning. Just follow this list to design and create the relic.

- Perform the Anchor the Soul evocation as normal, using the new relic as the focus object. The difficulty of the evocation is the same as for making a demonic item — 6 if the item has a personal connection to the spirit, 7 if it's made primarily from precious materials, 8 if made from natural materials, and 9 if made from artificial materials. Remember that high-tech items cannot be enchanted, so this new vessel cannot be an electronic device or complex machine.

- If the evocation is successful, divide the successes between binding and empowerment as normal. You need to give the spirit the Vessel Control ability, as it will allow the spirit to control and influence the evocation embedded in the enchanted relic. Other abilities have their normal effects.

- With the spirit bound into the relic, you can then determine the successes needed to enchant the item. The relic's effects are based on either your character's dice pools or those of the trapped spirit, whichever are higher. If you want to increase the relic's effects, you again base those improvements on the higher pools or traits of your character and the trapped spirit.

- When finally performing the Enchant Object evocation, the difficulty of the evocation increases by one, due to the added problems of modifying the evocation to include the trapped soul.

USING COMPLEX DEMONIC ITEMS

With an intelligent spirit in the driver's seat of the enchanted item, the relic gains a significant improvement in flexibility and ease of use. The relic gains the following benefits:

- **Paying the Costs.** The trapped spirit can provide the sacrifices needed for the relic's operation. For normal items, this means the spirit's traits cover

the Willpower roll (if mortal) or the Faith roll (if a demon). Only if this roll *fails* does the player need to make a roll with the character's trait. Similarly, a spirit in a high-Torment item can pay the Willpower point or gain the point of Torment needed to activate the item. An item with a more onerous requirement will probably demand that payment from the user, not the spirit, but that depends on the nature of the sacrifice. The spirit can't give up health levels, but it could gain derangements or give up memories if that was the requirement.

- **Flexibility.** Relics normally produce a specific version of a given evocation, such as a particular illusion or a particular emotion. With a spirit controlling the evocation, this effect can become more variable. The spirit can vary the effects of the relic in any appropriate way, producing, for example, any kind of illusion or any kind of emotion. When using the relic to produce an effect it was not designed to create — any variation on the normal effect — the difficulty for the spirit to perform the evocation increases by one. If the spirit is a demon, it can also evoke the high-Torment version of the evocation — or evoke the normal version of the evocation if the relic only produces the high-Torment version — by gaining a point of Torment. The spirit can still activate only the evocation embedded in the relic, not the other evocations of the lore. If a spirit occupies a relic that can evoke only the Heal effect of the Lore of Awakening, it still can't evoke the Cleanse effect of that lore.

- **Synergy.** If the caged spirit is that of a demon, it can still evoke its lore, and it can supplement the evocations of the relic with its own power.

Demons who give a trapped spirit control of a relic should be confident that they can control the spirit within the item. If the spirit is not under the demon's complete control, it can use the relic's power any way it likes. If that spirit becomes angry with the relic's wielder, it's quite capable of turning the relic's power upon the user.

THE ARSENAL OF THE ABYSS

Every relic is unique, crafted with care by a demon and based upon her powers and skills. Still, some relics are so universally useful that many demons create their own versions of the old favorites. All of the sample relics in this section can be created by the players' characters, as long as they know the necessary lore and can gain access to appropriate materials and items. The details differ — different characters will produce relics with different strengths and weaknesses — but the purposes remain the same.

DETECTING RELICS

Demons possess a supernatural awareness that lets them detect distortions in reality and ripples in the fabric of reality. Since relics are the products of evocations or embodiments of the power of evocations, demons can feel the vibrations a relic leaves on the surface of reality. Relics are fairly difficult to detect, though. It's easier to pin down another demon working an evocation than the persistent, low-level reverberations of an enhanced car or relic amulet.

Detecting the *creation* of a relic is a standard supernatural awareness roll, as per the **Demon** core rules. After all, relics are created with straightforward evocations. And yes, that means that when your character enchants a relic, the power of her evocation is detectable for the *entire* time she's creating the item. If she's spending days or weeks making the device, she might want to erect safeguards from her enemies first.

Once the device is made, it becomes more difficult to detect. While a demon's evocation is a shout, an inactive relic is more like a quiet hum — the subliminal sound of an engine ticking over, waiting to roar to life. Detecting supernatural energies is a Perception + Awareness roll (see page 172 of the **Demon** core rules for details). The difficulty for detecting other demons at work is normally 7, but different relics have different detection difficulties.

- **Enhanced items.** Difficulty 9, whether or not the item is being used.
- **Enchanted items.** When the relic is inactive and not producing supernatural effects, the difficulty to detect it is 8. When the relic is being used, the difficulty is 7, just as with a normal evocation.
- **Demonic items.** Difficulty 8 if the spirit is not currently active. If the spirit is evoking its own lore or controlling an evocation embedded in the relic, the difficulty is 7.

Rather than give dice pools and mechanical bonuses for each of these relics, these items have notes on how to make them in the game. The materials, lore and difficulty numbers you'll need to know to make your own version of the relic, as well as any relevant strengths and weaknesses. Talk it over with your Storyteller, decide on the fine details you want, make the evocation rolls, and the relic is ready to use in play!

ENHANCED ITEMS

Subtle and unglamorous, enhanced items are nonetheless the most common of items, and among some of

the most useful. A consecrated item hasn't got the panache or miraculous abilities of an enchanted item, but it makes up for this plainness with flexibility and immense utility. A wise relic-maker builds numerous hieratic items and adds these plain-seeming devices to her own arsenal, as well as distributing them among her thralls and allies.

PULSANT BLADE

This 19th-century dueling sword is a historical curiosity to most people, who no longer see swords as real weapons. More fool them. Enhanced by demonic power, this perfectly balanced sword is a killing machine, capable of slicing through armor and slaying a man in a single blow. The difficulty to attack with this sword is just 4, and it inflicts Strength + 4 lethal damage.

Difficulty to enhance: 5. Successes increase the weapon's base damage or reduce the difficulty of attack or parry rolls.

CONSECRATED ARMOR

Chainmail is an anachronism in this modern age, but it can still be found in antique stores or made by medieval enthusiasts. It can also provide protection from the knives and guns of enemies. This fine chain shirt is impossibly light, thin enough to wear under a coat or jacket and tough enough to turn aside the most powerful attack. The shirt provides an Armor rating of 6 and gives no penalty to Dexterity-related rolls.

Difficulty to enhance: 5. Successes increase the soak bonus or decrease the mobility penalty.

LENSES OF CLEAR SIGHT

This pair of black steel binoculars looks decent, but it doesn't seem in any way special. It's only once you look through the eyepieces that you realize that these are more powerful than even the most expensive and well-crafted Swiss binoculars. Details leap up to your eyes, and the glasses peer through even shadows and smoke — not to mention the fact that they bring even distant events incredibly close. The binoculars reduce the difficulty of Alertness rolls by two, and make far-off sights seem 15 times closer.

Difficulty to enhance: 7. Successes reduce the difficulty of Alertness rolls, or increase the magnification/amplification factors of the item.

UNIFORM OF AUTHORITY

This is the uniform of a decorated US Navy captain; medals are pinned like Christmas tree ornaments to the front of the jacket. Sailors and naval personnel are quick to snap to attention when they see you wearing this uniform, and they will obey almost any command. Even non-naval personnel and civilians become more likely to listen and follow orders, convinced by your aura of

authority. While wearing the uniform, the difficulty of all Leadership rolls decreases by three.

Difficulty to enhance: 5. Successes reduce the difficulty of Leadership rolls.

PRECISION TOOLS

This set of spanners, wrenches, pliers and other tools looks completely normal except that they're kept in a toolbox made of reinforced steel with a combination lock. Tools like these are too valuable and useful to risk their loss or theft, for with these tools, even an amateur can repair a car engine, shut down an air-conditioning system or reverse a house's plumbing system in moments. All appropriate Technology actions made using these tools have their difficulty reduced by three.

Difficulty to enhance: 5. Successes reduce the difficulty of appropriate Crafts or Technology rolls.

HELLFIRE EXPLOSIVES

From the outside, this item looks like a normal metal briefcase. That all changes when it explodes into fire and shrapnel, destroying lives and property within a wide radius. Open it up and you see the wires and devices, but which is the one to cut? The wires seem to change color and connections when you're not looking, and the bomb's failsafes can defeat even the most experienced expert. This bomb inflicts nine dice of lethal damage within a 10-yard radius, and all rolls made to defuse it suffer a +2 difficulty penalty.

Difficulty to enhance: 7. Successes increase the damage pool, increase the blast radius or increase the difficulty of Demolitions rolls to defuse the explosives.

MUSIC OF THE SPHERES

This classic Fender electric guitar has been painted and decorated to become a heavy metal fan's wet dream — flames, skulls, barbed wire, corpses and demons all dance on a jet-black backdrop. The guitar can make more than brooding riffs and growling chords, though. In the hands of a more softhearted musician, it can produce music so sweet and beautiful that it could make angels weep. All Performance rolls made using the guitar enjoy a -3 difficulty bonus.

Difficulty to enhance: 5 for simple instruments (bugles, drums), 7 for mechanical instruments (guitars, pianos), 9 for electronic instruments (electric guitars, turntables). Successes reduce the difficulty of appropriate Performance rolls.

IRONCLAD SECURITY

Throughout this small but prestigious office building are cameras, motion-sensors, heat detectors and other security systems. The system looks competent but not impregnable. Why, then are there so many failsafe systems? Why do the cameras

seem to *know* where to look? And why do alarms ring despite every trick you pull to avoid detection? Enhanced by demonic skill, the difficulty of all Stealth and Security rolls to bypass this system increases by two.

Difficulty to enhance: 9 for a single small system, 10 for a complete security network. Successes increase the difficulty of Stealth or Security rolls made to bypass the system.

STEALTH SUIT

Made from slightly padded black cloth, with a hood to cover the face, this traditional ninja *obi* looks useful for stealthy work, but not exceptional. Put it on, though, and you melt into the shadows to become nearly invisible. You can pass right by sentries like a ghost and creep through a crowded room without being detected. The suit reduces the difficulty of Stealth rolls by three and provides an Armor rating of 2.

Difficulty to enhance: 5. Successes decrease the difficulty of Stealth rolls or increase the clothing's Armor rating.

ENCHANTED ITEMS

These wondrous and miraculous tools are invaluable to all demons, regardless of their House or faction. Mortal thralls are less likely to be gifted with such tools, though. Not only do they find these items more difficult or demanding to use, but each relic is such a major investment of resources and time that it's almost wasteful to give it to a mortal. Still, some demons build these devices for mortals. In fact, some corrupt demons build them *exclusively* for mortals, taking care to curse the relics beforehand.

THE WARLOCK'S ABACUS

A potent tool for mortal summoners and magicians, this simple abacus can be used as a specialized computational device. Attuned to the vibrations of Hell, the abacus can be used to calculate whether a summoning ritual will be enacted in the user's city in the next few days. It takes a little time to make the calculations, and it's best to keep pen and paper to hand for taking notes, but a skilled user can even determine where and when the ritual will occur.

Evocation: Sense Congruence (Lore of Patterns •).

COMPASS ROSE

This hand-carved compass rests in a fine glass and wood casing. When the bearer whispers the name of another person into the glass, allowing her own breath to fog the surface, the compass begins to rotate in its housing. If the person named is within a few miles, the compass will point him out as the spire marked North comes to rest pointing in his direction. If the bearer does not reach her quarry by the end of

the scene, the compass loses its lock on the target and must be reactivated.

Evocation: Find the Faithful (Lore of Awakening •).

VERMIN FLUTE

These plain wooden pipes allow the performer to play a tune that sounds normal to human ears but is indescribably enticing to the ears of rats and rodents. Any rat within several miles can hear the wonderful song of the pipes and will be compelled to scurry toward the source as fast as its legs allow. The rats swarm to within one yard of the player, but no closer. If he moves away while continuing to play, they will follow him. Only once he finishes playing will they disperse—possibly to wreak havoc in the place where they find themselves.

Evocation: Summon Animals (Lore of the Beast •). The player cannot roll more dice for the relic's effect than the character's Charisma + Performance pool, even if the effect pool of the pipes is higher.

EMPATHIC GLASSES

Simple but effective, these normal-looking glasses allow the wearer to read the emotions of anyone she looks at. Through the glasses, people appear to have an aura of various colors, the makeup of which varies based on their emotions. With practice, the user learns that red means anger, purple is sexual desire, blue is contentment and so on, and she can adjust her own behavior to take advantage of her knowledge.

Evocation: Read Emotion (Lore of Longing •).

BOOK OF THE DEAD

This heavy, leather-bound antique book appears to contain only blank pages at first. To activate the relic, the user must write the name of a deceased mortal or demon on a left-hand-page. After a moment, writing begins to appear on the next page, detailing the events that led to that person's death. When the book is closed, the writing vanishes.

Evocation: Read Fate (Lore of Death •). The difficulty to use the relic is higher if the user doesn't write the target's True Name or Celestial Name.

FLARE GUN

Unlike a traditional flare gun, this relic is a real firearm, usually a large pistol. Thanks to the power of its enchantment, though, this gun can fire more than normal bullets. The user can choose to fire a bullet of light—a packet of dense energy that blinds any target that it hits. This energy doesn't come from thin air, though. The gun uses one real bullet to make one light bullet, converting the mass into brilliant energy.

Evocation: Light (Lore of Light •). Each activation of the relic requires expenditure of one of the pistol's mundane bullets.

EYE PATCH OF ANGEA MAINGU

A subtle but useful item, this leather eye-patch trimmed with steel allows the wearer to escape almost any prison or bypass any obstacle. As long as there is any gap in a wall or obstacle—even a hole so small that only a mouse could pass through—the relic allows the user to pass through it. To use the patch, the user must close her uncovered eye; she'll see a dully glimmering pathway through the patch, which she can walk along to escape her cell. To an outside observer, she appears to walk *through* a wall or barrier, but from her perspective, she simply follows a normal path.

Evocation: Lay Path (Lore of Paths ••). The path created by the item lasts only a turn and cannot be made permanent.

THE TITAN'S NET

This roughly woven net is made not from strong or cord but thin metal wires, and a small stone sits inside each knot. An odd weapon, this relic focuses on immobilizing an opponent and removing her from the fray, rather than hurting her. If the user manages to entangle his enemy with the net—which can be used in melee or thrown a few yards—the ground beneath the victim's feet becomes like water, and she is dragged down into the earth itself. The net melds with the soil and ceases to impede her, but she's still buried. She must dig herself out before she can engage her enemy again.

Evocation: Roil the Earth, high-Torment version (Lore of the Earth ••). The user must successfully hit the target with the net (Dexterity + Athletics roll) before the relic takes effect.

ORB OF THE SEER

This beautiful orb is made not from mere glass, but a single perfect crystal the size of a child's head, cut and polished to an fine brilliance. A demon who stares into the orb's depths can see, in his mind's eye, the world around a chosen subject, and he can glean what information he might from his silent vision. The user must possess a personal item or effect belonging to his target, or at least be able to breathe the subject's name onto the crystal's surface.

Evocation: Sery (Lore of the Firmament ••). The vision provided by the relic is always silent, no matter how many successes are rolled.

BANNER OF INSPIRATION

Carried into battle by leaders, this flag or banner bears a symbol that inspires the hearts of those who follow it. When the banner is raised or waved, those

allies of the bearer who see it are filled with courage and hope, surging forward to better battle their foes. In the modern world, this relic is sometimes used for less martial purposes, raised to inspire a room full of brokers or programmers to turn the company around.

Evocation: Exalt (Lore of Radiance ••).

PORCELAIN MASK

This blank white mask is made of perfect porcelain, and it fits neatly over any user's face. The mask allows the user to subtly alter her own facial features, but no other part of her body. It's a perfect disguise, but only from the neck up. Before it can be used, the wearer must roughly sketch the desired features onto the mask with a pen or paintbrush, then press it to her face. When activated, the mask merges with her face and alters her features. To use the mask again, the markings must be erased and done again from scratch.

Evocation: Alter Appearance (Lore of Transfiguration ••).

MIRROR OF SOULS

This antique mirror seems to be nothing but normal, until a wise user touches it and forces her will upon it. Then the reflection changes to an image of a bleak, lifeless world — the realm of the dead. For the brief moment that the reflection remains thus, the user (and only the user) can step into it, walking into the land of death. The mirror reverts to normal behind her. A version of the mirror remains in the realm of death, and the user must work her will on this shadow mirror to return to the land of the living.

Evocation: Step Beyond the Veil (Lore of the Realms ••).

DAGGER OF VENOM

This steel dagger appears to be nothing more than a normal hunting knife, but appearances are deceiving. The very essence of venom and impurity has been instilled into the substance of the blade, and it weeps out to poison and contaminate anything it cuts. Those unlucky enough to be injured by the dagger are struck down by an incredibly virulent poison, one unknown to medical science. Indeed, no evidence of poison or contagion is left in the wound — the poison is in the metal, not on it. A doctor must be lucky or very wise to even recognize that her patient has been poisoned.

Evocation: Heal, high-Torment version (Lore of Awakening •••).

CAT'S EYE COLLARS

This relic takes the form of two leather collars, studded with clear crystals reminiscent of the eyes of a cat. To use the relic, the user binds one collar around his own neck and fastens the other around the neck of

an animal — the collar always has just enough length to fit the creature. While both beings wear the collars, the demon can concentrate and project his senses into the animal. His body is insensate, while he sees and hears all that the animal sees and hears. He can return his senses to his body at any time, but at the end of the scene, or if the animal is injured, he is rudely yanked back to his body and disoriented for a time.

Evocation: Possess Animals (Lore of the Beast •••). The wearer can only share the animal's senses, rather than control it. If the animal takes damage, the evocation ends and the user must make a Willpower roll (difficulty 7) or suffer a +1 difficulty penalty to all rolls for the rest of the scene.

FLAMING SWORD

Nothing evokes images of demons, angels and the Age of Wrath more than a sword encased in flame. These weapons are but poor shadows of the weapon Michael raised against Lucifer, but they are powerful enough to wreak untold havoc in the modern world. The flames that surround the sword's blade at the wielder's command will not harm the user, but they rake the hapless target of an attack with horrific burns.

Evocation: Command the Flame, high-Torment version (Lore of Flame •••). Apply the effect pool as a separate source of damage to anyone hit by the sword.

BRACER OF BLACK DEFENSE

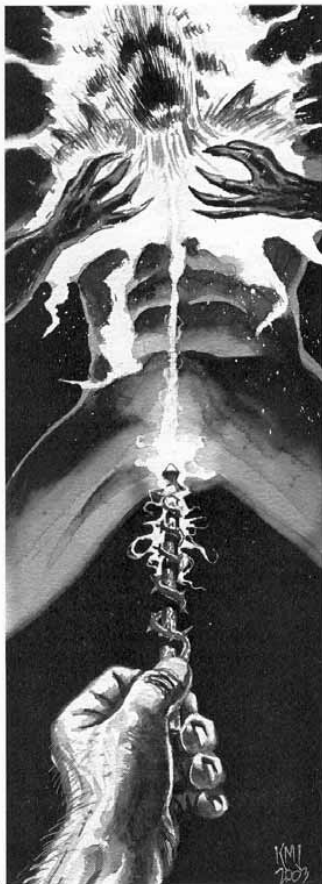
Made of blackened steel and cold iron, this antique bracer is engraved with images of warfare and archery. When worn by the user, it can animate her arm with a strange life of its own — moving independently of her will to block ranged attacks such as bullets and arrows! The bracer cannot block esoteric attacks caused by evocations, but it's proof against normal attacks and it can deflect a .50 caliber bullet without taking any damage.

Evocation: Manipulate Inertia (Lore of the Fundament •••). Bullets can be deflected, but at +1 difficulty.

SPIRIT-CUTTING SWORD

Because spirits and ghosts can be harnessed and commanded by your enemies, it's a good idea to have a defense against them. This enchanted silver-and-steel sword lets you sense nearby spirits — you see them as a hazy outline or smear of darkness. You can also physically attack spirits and wound them with the sword, even though their bodies are incorporeal!

Evocation: Combination of the Ghost Sight feature of the Nergal visage and Command the Dead (Lore of the Spirit •••). The sword does the normal amount of lethal damage for its type.



MOURNING COAT

This elegant black coat would look out of place anywhere but a funeral procession, but its wearer will find it useful in many other situations. When the relic is activated, it allows the wearer to stand in the worlds of both the living and the dead at the same time. To both the living and the dead she becomes a vague, shadowy figure that can move through walls and solid objects. With a moment of concentration she can become more solid for a short time in one plane or the other, but will not become fully solid until the relic's evocation ceases.

Evocation: Ghostwalk (Lore of the Realms •••)

WAND OF HOLY FIRE

This archaic looking relic is a two-foot-long, intricately carved wand of black stone and burnished copper, with highlights of silver and crystal. When the wand is leveled at a nearby adversary and a word of power is spoken, blazing white fire leaps from the tip to consume the target, reducing mortal and demon alike to piles of ash. These wands were potent weapons in the Age of Wrath, and some demons use them still. Wise relic makers attempt to house such power in a less-obvious shell, however.

Evocation: The Fire of Heaven (Lore of the Celestials ••••).

SPRINTER'S SHOES

This expensive pair of sports shoes boasts more than just a logo and a trendy design. The soles are shot through with copper, steel and platinum wires that contain the power of their enchantment. When the user activates them, he can run at amazing speeds — even running up the side of walls for a short period! This power requires a great deal of exertion on the part of the wearer, though. After such a burst of speed, he risks muscle damage.

Evocation: Combination of Manipulate Adhesion (Lore of the Fundament ••) and Manipulate Acceleration (Lore of the Fundament ••••). The user must make a Stamina roll (difficulty 7) after use or suffer a level of lethal damage.

BRAZIER OF DISTANT SENDINGS

This ornate copper brazier sits upon a tripod of blackened steel, and it must be fueled with hot coals and fragrant incense. When the coals are burning brightly and smoke pours forth, the user can throw a lock of hair, a fingernail clipping or some other personal effect of his target onto the coals. As the item is consumed, the user can then perform an evocation of his choice onto the smoke that issues forth. Wherever his target is in the world, he is suddenly surrounded by wisps of fragrant smoke — wisps that convey the full power of the evocation cast on the brazier.

Evocation: Touch From Afar (Lore of the Firmament •••••).

SLAYER'S SCYTHE

This scythe looks too fragile for any serious reaping work — but this scythe cuts down souls, not wheat. A blade of thin, almost translucent black metal sits at the end of a length of blackened wood, worn by aeons of use. With a touch of the blade, the user can sever a mortal's soul from her body. A lucky human might be able to resist this, merely being suffused with a paralyzing cold pain, with no wound to show the scythe's touch.

Evocation: Extinguish Life (Lore of Death ●●●●).

TOKEN OF APPRECIATION

Made from gold and precious metals, this token can take several forms — from an ornate medal to an elegantly simple tie-pin. Given to another (usually a thrall) as a reward, the user must inscribe the back of the token with the bearer's name as well as her own. While the bearer wears the token, all mortals he meets will be inclined to treat him with great respect and admiration and will welcome him into their homes and lives without hesitation.

Evocation: The Mark of the Celestials (Lore of Radiance ●●●●).

DRUMS OF CATASTROPHISM

This large kettle drum, made from blessed copper and volcanic stone, is hardly an instrument of sweet music — more an engine of mass destruction. If the user pounds out a cacophony on the drum with the provided beater, the earth itself responds — dancing to the din in an earthquake! As long as the user plays the drum, the earth tremors will continue, reverberating for a few seconds before dying down. It's a terrible strain to play the drums loudly and powerfully enough to provoke the earth's attention — users of the relic stagger away with aching muscles and ringing ears.

Evocation: Earthquake (Lore of the Earth ●●●●●). The user must suffer a level of bashing damage (which cannot be soaked) before activating the relic.

SOUL TRAP

There's a brisk trade in souls among demons, whether they want to interrogate those souls for information or simply devour them for spiritual energy. These souls are often contained in a soul trap (also called a spirit cage), which usually takes the form of crystal and gold amulets. When activated in the presence of a spirit, such as a ghost or an incorporeal demon, the trap sucks the spirit in. Once inside the soul trap, demonic spirits find it nearly impossible to evoke their lore, preventing them from acting against their captor.

Evocation: Combination of Imbue Object (Lore of the Forge ●●●●●) and Pillar of Faith, high-Torment version (Lore of the Celestials ●●●).

THE BLACK SHROUD

This unsettling relic takes the form of a simple ragged shroud. Closer inspection, though, shows that the shroud has been woven from the finest materials and is impossibly old. When placed over a freshly deceased body — someone who died less than one day ago — the shroud reanimates the corpse as a mindless zombie, loyal to the relic's user. Stories exist of a White Shroud that can truly return the dead to life, no matter how long they were dead — but if it ever existed, such a relic was surely destroyed after the Shattering.

Evocation: Unlife (Lore of Death ●●●●●).

ARROW OF CHRONOS

Most of these rare relics are survivors from the Age of Wrath, though a few are still made today. Their rarity is less due to their power (although they are potent), and more due to archery being an uncommon skill in the modern world. These arrows are made from the finest woods and metals, and they carry a powerful enchantment. While they do no more damage than normal, a target struck by one is propelled forward in time. (No more than a few moments, usually, but that can be long enough to negate him as a threat.) When the enemy pops back into existence, he might find his opponent gone or backed up by reinforcements.

Evocation: Twist Time, high-Torment version (Lore of Patterns ●●●●●). The target must be hit by the arrow before the evocation takes effect, but he does not need to take damage from the attack.

PICKPOCKET'S RING

Made of white gold and black obsidian, this ring is the perfect tool for thieves who fear that they will be caught, for it allows the user to hide her loot far from prying eyes — far from any eyes. If the user holds an item in the hand bearing the ring — and it must be small enough for her to hold in one hand alone — she can make it vanish completely, hiding it in a pocket of twisted space. The item reappears only when she wills it, popping back into existence in her hand.

Evocation: Doorway into Darkness (Lore of Portals ●●●●●).

STAFF OF THE SKY'S FURY

Carved from the wood of a lightning-struck tree and finished with copper, platinum and crystals, this six-foot-long staff is both striking and extremely obvious. Most users don't care about that, since the staff is not something that is meant for subtlety anyway. When the user invokes its power, a glaring stream of lighting bolts courses from the relic and strikes anyone the user targets. These bolts are powerful enough to set

wood alight, melt stone or metal and reduce human beings to no more than greasy smoke.

Evocation: Invoke the Storm (Lore of Storms ♦♦♦♦).

FORGOTTEN WONDERS

Creation today is a weak and brittle thing, faded and gray around the edges, no longer the work of impossible wonder it was at the dawn of time. One effect of this fading is that demons can no longer make the incredibly powerful and versatile relics they could create during the Age of Wrath and the Time of Babel. There was almost no limit to the wonders that could be crafted at that time, no limit except the imagination and willpower of the relicsmith.

After the defeat of Lucifer's forces, almost all the relics created by Hell's prisoners were destroyed by the Heavenly Host, lest they wreak further havoc upon Creation. A rare few survived, though, hidden away from angelic sight. In this new age, many demons search for these powerful relics, hoping that the powers of a bygone age can give them an overwhelming advantage against their foes.

Those ancient relics that have been recovered are certainly powerful — but still they are less than they were. The toll of years and the crumbling of Creation have sapped the power of even these wonders, making them shadows of their former selves — and in some cases, corrupting and perverting their original purpose and powers. Their might is still greater than any demon could now recreate, though, which still makes them artifacts to be coveted and feared.

Storytellers can introduce ancient relics into their chronicle as they see fit — perhaps as a weapon used by the enemies of the fallen, perhaps as a tool the players' characters must race to find. Only the Storyteller can design ancient relics, and she does so without paying any attention to the design rules in this chapter. Relics this powerful and rare follow their own rules. Ancient relics can be enchanted, enhanced several times and be possessed by multiple souls, or they can be something else entirely. The only limit is the Storyteller's imagination and the need for sacrifice. Ancient relics almost always need massive sacrifices of some sort before they can be used — whether on the part of the user or his victims — because of their need to be powered by enormous amounts of Faith. In the Time of Babel, that Faith was easy to come by — now it requires effort on an epic scale.

The following are examples of the kinds of ancient relics that might still exist in the current day, as well as what powers they might command. Storytellers should

feel free to use these as inspiration to make up their own incredible, terrible artifacts.

SOULTAKER

This massive broadsword is made of a dull, pitted black metal — *siyr*, the first metal forged by demon and mortal hands after the Fall. Apart from its enormous size, the sword is not that impressive, as the years have not been kind. Its blade is chipped and cracked, its metal pommel rusted and worn. Holes in the blade show where metal rings once hung, but those rings are long gone, as are the gemstones that would once have rested in indentations on the haft. Overall, the sword looks like a piece of oversized junk — until you touch it, and the voices begin to whisper madly in your mind.

Forged at the bloody height of the war, Souldaker is an obscene and terrible weapon. The willing soul of a demon — his name long since forgotten — was bound into the black metal, where he could use this power upon anyone touched by the blade. The sword's touch drained the energy and life from anyone it wounded — and if it killed a victim, his soul would be pulled from his corpse and imprisoned within the blade, there to be tortured and devoured by the original demon. Mortals and angels alike fell before Souldaker, their Faith torn apart for his sustenance.

Then the sword's bearer used it to slay another demon, and the sword *changed*. The two demonic souls fought for dominance within the blade, neither able to gain an advantage. Over time, their souls began to bleed into each other, creating a single fractured personality. As demonic infighting grew more serious in the war, more demons fell to Souldaker, and their souls became absorbed into a single insane entity — a being that called itself Legion. Souldaker was lost during the final days of the war, hidden deep in a forgotten weapons cache, and without new victims to devour for Faith, Legion grew weak and thin. Now it can think of nothing but food — Faith — and it will do *anything* to devour fresh souls once more.

Legion is unable to do anything at first except whisper weakly, in multiple voices, to anyone who touches Souldaker — promising blood and power and the destruction of one's enemies. Should a user ignore the voices, the sword is almost impossible to use — massive and unwieldy, the difficulty to hit or parry with the sword is 9. Should someone agree to aid the sword, though, the sword moves like silk and gossamer; all Melee rolls, whether to attack or parry, have a difficulty of just 4. In either case, the sword is impossibly powerful, with a lethal damage pool of

the user's Strength + 6 dice. If the sword is cooperating with the wielder, the difficulty of damage rolls is 4 instead of the usual 6!

When first found, Legion has no temporary or permanent Faith, but that will soon change. If the sword kills a mortal victim, that person's soul is dragged into the blade, there to be torn apart by Legion for food. It gains a number of temporary Faith points equal to half the victim's Faith potential. There's no limit to the amount of temporary Faith Legion can retain at one time. These points can be spent in the usual way, and they allow Legion to perform evocations. The demon creature knows every one-dot evocation from every lore, but no others (it did once, but has forgotten everything but the basics of lore during the eons of starvation and madness). It has a pool of 10 dice for all evocations. Legion can also spend temporary Faith to gain permanent Faith. Every 10 points of Faith that Legion spends gains it one point of permanent Faith, up to a maximum of 10.

Once it has a permanent Faith rating, Legion can begin stealing the Faith of any demon it wounds or kills. Whenever a demon is wounded by Soultaker, roll Legion's permanent Faith rating against the demon's (difficulty 6). Each success Legion gains allows it to steal a point of temporary Faith from the target's supply! Half of this amount (round down) is added to Legion's pool. The rest is channeled to the sword's wielder (if she's a demon) or simply lost. If a demon is slain by the sword, roll Legion's Faith rating against the demon's. If Legion wins, the demon's soul is absorbed into Legion forever. If the demon wins, she is sent back to Hell as normal.

As its supply of Faith increases and more demonic minds are added to its substance, Legion becomes more powerful and more insane. Legion wants little more than to kill, destroy and devour but that could change, if a strong enough mind is pulled into the sword and imprints its own agenda onto the insane hive-mind of the creature. Legion is not bound in any way to the user of the sword. It co-operates only because it wants sustenance, and it will betray the wielder any time it feels the need. If freed from the sword, Legion would be a terrifying monster that might cause the Earthbound to tremble. If an Earthbound monstrosity was slain by the blade and absorbed into the blade, the whole world should fear the outcome.

THE BLACK THRONE OF GENHINNOM

Created by Lucifer, this throne of black obsidian and slyr sat at the center of the Black Cathedral, the rebel city of Genhinnom, in the time of the war. From this throne, Lucifer commanded his legions, consulted with his generals and wept for the fate of humanity and

the fall of the Elohim. Genhinnom was destroyed by the angels after the rebels were sent to Hell, but a city of this power, this beauty, can never be completely destroyed. Parts of the Black Cathedral still exist in different levels of reality, and the black throne, the 20-foot-tall chair of commanders, can still be found.

The throne is a massive chair, made of stone and metal. It's incredibly uncomfortable to sit in, but that's the price you have to pay for power — and the throne is powerful. It allows the demon sitting in the chair to command legions of followers — hundreds or thousands of loyal mortals that will do almost anything in your service.

To use this throne, the demon must first feed it Faith — a total of 50 points of temporary Faith, either all at once or slowly over time. One can do so simply by touching the throne and willing Faith to flow into it. Once the Throne has been activated in this way, it resonates with the spirit of the demon, and he can use it whenever he sits upon it.

If a mortal looks upon the demon sitting on the throne, the Storyteller makes a Willpower roll on the mortal's behalf (difficulty 9). If the roll fails, the mortal becomes the willing, almost fanatical, follower of the demon. He will obey any order, even suicidal ones — but only if the order is given while the demon is sitting upon the throne. When the demon is out of the chair, the mortal gives him respect but not obedience, only following orders if the demon returns to the throne.

There's no limit to the number of mortals that can be enthralled by the throne, and to co-ordinate these followers, the throne gives the occupant several powers. The demon can perform all the evocations of the Lore of the Firmament when seated in the chair. These evocations affect only those mortals in service to the throne, and they use the occupant's dice pools, but carry no risk of Torment. (The demon cannot evoke the high-Torment versions of these evocations, either accidentally or deliberately.) The demon can also use the Exalt evocation of the Lore of Radiance upon his followers at will; again, there's no possibility of casting the high-Torment version. These evocations can be performed only while the demon is sitting on the throne.

Balancing these great powers comes with several drawbacks. Mortals in service to the throne cannot become thralls of any demon, and they cannot agree to any pacts. Any mortal already under a pact that becomes enthralled by the Throne instantly breaks that pact. The mortals serving the throne unconsciously channel all their Faith to the throne, allowing the relic to continue empowering its occupant. It also extracts a price from the user, drawing one point of temporary Faith from him every time he sits in it.

Furthermore, the user becomes accustomed to the chair and starts to become uncomfortable when he's not seated there. Once 10 points of temporary Faith have been drained from the user by the chair, he suffers a +1 difficulty penalty to all actions taken when he is not seated on the throne. This penalty fades once the demon spends an entire story separated from the throne, but will return if he begins using it again. While the user is away from the throne, another demon can attempt to use it. Doing so takes another 50 points of Faith being channeled into the chair, and it swaps the loyalty of any followers to their new leader. The former occupant of the throne will know his place has been usurped, and he might want to take revenge.

Finally, the throne is a massive, unwieldy piece of stone and metal that weighs many tons. Before a demon can get much use from it, he must somehow move it to a place where mortals can see it. Then he must protect it against all other demons who want to steal its power.

THE SOULFORGE

This terrible device was crafted by Schattenkoji the Ghostsmith, master of death and invention, one of the great relic-makers of the Ebon Legion during the Age of Wrath. It allows for the slaughter of hundreds of mortals at the user's whim. The souls of those dead can then be collected and enslaved in demonic relics.

The Soulforge is a large, ornately angular cage of copper and other metals, engraved on every surface with runes and sigils that can no longer be translated. Hooks and spikes line the inner part of the cage, while four wide, coiled flanges radiate from the top.

To use the Soulforge, a demon in a mortal host must enter the cage and be locked in. He must then be killed, perhaps by being impaled on the spikes in the cage (but being shot through the bars works as well). As the host's lifeblood seeps away, the demon's apocalyptic form emerges from the host and is seized by the Soulforge as the relic springs into life. The cage rips the demon's energy apart. Treat this as a soul-devouring attempt (see page 260 of the **Demon** core rules for details), with the Storyteller rolling 15 dice for the relic. If the demon wins the contest, it escapes the cage (which then requires a new sacrifice). If the relic

devours the demon's spirit, it converts the energy into Faith and then activates the second part of its power.

A wave of black energy, invisible to humans but detectable with a demon's supernatural awareness, washes forth from the Soulforge. This wave covers a radius of one mile for each Faith point absorbed from the sacrificed demon. Within this radius, every mortal is affected by the Extinguish Life evocation of the Lore of Death (see page 210 of the **Demon** core rules for details), using the Strength + Awareness pool of the sacrificed demon. Only mortals are affected by this killing energy; demons are completely untouched by it. The death toll is likely to be staggering, especially if someone uses the device in an urban area.

Any mortal killed outright by the wave of energy has his soul ripped from his body; it appears instantly within the Soulforge, impaled on a spike or hook. The Soulforge can collect hundreds or even thousands of souls. No matter how many, the cage always has enough room to hold them all. These souls are helplessly trapped in the Soulforge, as if they were bound into a demonic item; they can do nothing but writhe in agony. The user of the Soulforge can remove a soul whenever she desires, extracting it with a long hook. She can then bind that soul into a demonic relic if she wishes.

Evil this strong takes a great deal of power, and the Soulforge requires a constant stream of sacrifices. Each day that the Soulforge imprisons mortal souls — whether one or 100,000 — it spends a point of Faith from the energy it devoured from the initial sacrifice. If it runs out of energy, all the soul trapped within are released at once, fleeing into the afterlife. To stop this escape, the user of the Soulforge must continue to sacrifice demons to the relic as before — each being ripped apart by the Soulforge to maintain the enchantment.

The Soulforge is a device of purest evil, and it will corrupt any demon that uses it. Each activation of the Soulforge — whether to gather mortal souls or sacrifice a demon's soul — inflicts one point of temporary Torment upon the user. The user will also have to make Virtue rolls to avoid gaining more Torment from the guilt resulting from the mass murder of innocent mortals.



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CHAPTER SIX: RITUALS

You are fond of spectacles, except the greatest of all spectacles, the last and eternal judgement of the universe. How shall I admire, how laugh, how rejoice, how exult, when I behold so many proud monarchs, and fancied gods, groaning in the lowest abyss of darkness...

—Tertullian

Every aspect of the universe, from concrete matter to such abstract concepts as truth and beauty, is a composite of numerous elemental forces — the design of multitudes of angels in a weave dictated by the Creator's design. Though the Heavenly Host was ordered into separate Houses, each given dominion over a specific set of forces that formed the cosmos, many of the Creator's greatest constructions required the cooperation of multiple Elohim, each providing knowledge and lore. These symphonies of angelic power, known as choruses, were formed and directed by the angels of the First House, with the Heralds using their broader knowledge of the Creator's plan to combine the efforts of the Elohim into ever-greater acts of creation. As mighty as the Elohim were individually, their power was mightier still when they contributed their energies to a higher purpose. It was an insight that Lucifer would make great use of in the dark times to come.

From the moment Michael levied God's curse against the fallen, the infernal host faced an enemy that vastly outnumbered and outmatched it in terms of raw power. The Morningstar knew this and believed that the only way to counter Heaven's brute force was to fight with greater wit and agility. This meant creating newer, more flexible tactics that eventually led to the creation of Lucifer's legions and a system of rank that cut across the boundaries of House seniority and specialization. Cooperation and innovation were the order of the day, and the infernal host adopted tactical variations on the grand choruses of the Elohim — combinations of House lore that could be performed quickly and to devastating effect on the battlefield. These rituals were highly effective in countering the advantages of the Heavenly Host, particularly during the early stages of the war, and the concept was adopted to a wide variety of functions, from information-gathering to the cre-



ation of mighty bastions hidden from the eyes of mortal and angel alike. Although much of this ritual knowledge has since been lost to the effects of time and Torment, newly returned fallen can attempt to re-learn these powerful cooperative evocations for use against their enemies.

This chapter is divided into four sections: the first describes the history and theory of ritual design. The second section contains systems information for learning and creating rituals and performing them. The third section describes those rituals that are most commonly remembered among fallen today. The concluding section describes how rituals were used to construct the fortresses of the rebellion and provides systems for characters to create their own.

HISTORY

According to legend, the first rituals created during the early centuries of the War of Wrath were largely passive in nature, allowing the fallen to project their awareness across the globe and confront the enemy far from the fragile lands of mortals. Many of these rituals were said to have been developed by the Archduke Asmodeus and his subordinates in the Silver Legion, and their efforts were instrumental in allowing the fallen to stalemate Michael's forces during the centuries of the Silent War. Many Devils dispute this, claiming instead that Lucifer himself and the Namaru as a whole were the architects of these cooperative tactics. What cannot be denied is that the Devils were responsible for the first destructive applications of the craft, wielded during the first siege of Genhinnom at the dawn of the Time of Atrocities.

Not long after the fall of Sagun, the Heavenly Host mustered its battle-formations and descended on Lucifer's cathedral city with a huge army of Elohim and mortal forces, intent on capturing the Morningstar and ending the rebellion while the infernal legions were scattered. The Crimson Legion held the walls for seven days and seven nights, while the earth shook to the tread of titanic angels and the skies split with heavenly bolts of fire. The mortals within the city despaired, for it was clear that the forces of the enemy were numberless and their strength undiminished, while Genhinnom's defenders grew steadily weaker. Finally, just before the dawn of the seventh day, Lucifer called his lieutenants to attend him in the Palace of Shadows, and rumors ran through the streets that surrender was imminent.

Instead, the dawn saw Lucifer and his chosen angels rising like angry stars above the black needle of

the palace, Devils and Scourges circling one another in intricate patterns as they began to chant words of power. No sooner had the Heavenly Host sounded the call to arms when the watch-fires of their mortal allies erupted in huge towers of flame, whipped higher and hotter by a sudden wind that howled from out of the east. The fire spread, and the wind raged like a beast, and a terrible storm raged through the ranks of Heaven in moments, scouring skin from bone and leaving nothing but ash in its wake. The Heavenly Host was hurled back in terror and dismay, retreating to its prison cities with the knowledge that, far from being beaten, the rebels had turned the tide in their favor once more.

What followed was the construction of great, living battle engines; the bastions of Lucifer and his generals and the eugenics experiments within the Palace of Sighs. Many others rituals were designed as well to spy upon, to harass, to delude and to hide from the enemy. Others were used to muster and enhance the human troops fighting under the rebels, to create new troops or beasts of war or to counter lore against which there had previously been no defense. Using rituals was one of the most potent and economical ways for the rebels to channel their resources as long as there was enough Faith to sustain them.

The earliest rituals were conceived of as combinations of dance and song, wherein each participant wove her lore with the rest and created new conceptual effects. The number and rank of the ritual's participants depended upon the desired effect, but there was always a single individual known as the Ankida who directed its power. Those angels who contributed additional lore to the ritual were known as the Mudu. The Ankida would gather the necessary resources and provide the tempo of the song and the pattern of the dance. As with the Firestorm, some rituals were enacted by the highest ranks of the Houses, with hundreds of attendants (or Khauiki) providing support and stores of extra Faith.

Although it was subsequently discovered that rituals could be created within the jurisdiction of a single House, the prevailing strategy was to create rituals that made use of dissimilar lore. Each ritual had a dominant or primary lore, and only a demon with the proper mastery of the necessary evocations could act as Ankida. Therefore, all rituals became associated with Houses, even when others were called in to participate. As only the Ankida needed to know and comprehend the entire ritual, it was easy to restrict the flow of knowledge. Over time, many rituals came to be considered the property of one House or another.

During the war the infernal host created and employed hundreds of different rituals, both on and

off the battlefield. Since that time, much of this knowledge has been lost. Few records remain in the physical world, and the agonies of the Abyss has eroded the memories of the fallen. What is more, the limitations of possession and the relative faithlessness of the World of Darkness has added a host of new difficulties in recalling and properly enacting rituals that demons once performed with ease. Where it once took only one or two demons to muster the relevant knowledge and power to fuel the ritual dance, now the fallen must cast far and wide for demons with the necessary lore. They must look still farther for mortals and fallen with the Faith to spare to ensure a ritual's success. Special sigils must be designed and inscribed to properly amplify and focus the meager store of collected Faith and even so, many rituals can now be performed only at specific times and places that resonate with the effect the demon is attempting to achieve. Nonetheless, many fallen are actively researching the lost art of ritual lore, eagerly seeking any advantage that they can bring to bear against their enemies and further their own agendas.

LEARNING RITUALS

The fallen gain access to rituals in three ways. The first, but by no means the easiest, is to retrieve the memories from within themselves. The second is to learn them from other fallen or through the rare transcriptions that have been made throughout history. The third way is to create whole new ones. Doing so is a time-consuming and sometimes frustrating pursuit, but it can yield rituals that take advantage of many of the modern world's innovations.

Knowledge of a ritual is a valuable resource. If your character possesses something that no other fallen yet on Earth has access to, then all kinds of people are going to be interested once the word gets

EXPERIENCE POINT COSTS FOR RITUALS

Each ritual has a base cost associated with it. That cost is the amount of experience points it takes to learn the ritual, and it influences the time and effort needed to research it. The base cost is equal to the total number of lore dots the ritual requires multiplied by the total number of lore paths indeed. Each ritual listed in this chapter has the base cost already calculated.

For example, Firestorm (see page 191) requires Flame ●●● and Winds ●●●. The base cost is 16 experience points: 8 (the total number of dots) x 2 (the number of lore).

out. Knowledge of particularly famous or infamous rituals might have further consequences as well. In all cases, the Storyteller is the final arbiter as to whether your character may have access to a particular ritual in her chronicle.

RECALLING RITUALS

The fallen have not lost the knowledge of everything they once were, but much of their memory and knowledge is merely buried deep in the subconscious of their mortal host. Therefore, it is possible, with time and effort, for a character to search her memories for the secrets of rituals she once performed with ease.

NEW BACKGROUND: RITUAL KNOWLEDGE

"Oh yes," said Zornas, "I used to do this all the time."

Alejandro stared worriedly at the sky above. Moments before, it had been clear and blue. Now there was an electrical charge to the air, and ugly, black clouds were rolling in from the west with startling speed.

"Well, we're about to find out if your bullshit floats. Start chanting."

Although many demons participated in rituals to one degree or another during the war, few routinely performed the role of Ankida, directing all the constituent elements of the ritual to reach the desired effect. Those who performed a ritual time and time again learned its intricacies so well that they could conduct it almost reflexively, like any of their own evocations. When these former Ankida return to the mortal world, the old memories return with the same ease as their native lore.

Each dot your character has in the Ritual Knowledge Background provides your character with the equivalent of six experience points to spend purchasing a ritual or rituals during the character-creation process. The point cost of rituals is detailed under their individual descriptions. Your character may purchase a ritual from only her own House, and she must possess the requisite number of dots in the ritual's primary lore.

- ✱ You remember nothing that will help you perform a ritual. Nothing stops you from participating in one or learning them anew, however.
- You can purchase up to six points worth of rituals
- You can purchase up to 12 points worth of rituals
- You can purchase up to 18 points worth of rituals
- You can purchase up to 24 points worth of rituals
- You can purchase up to 30 points worth of rituals

RECALLING RITUALS DURING THE CHRONICLE

A character might also recall rituals during the course of the chronicle by devoting time and effort to piecing together scattered memories and collecting

knowledge from other practitioners or ancient sources of information. As a practical matter, all you have to do is ensure that the character has the requisite dots in the ritual's primary lore then accumulate enough experience points to purchase the ritual. Your Storyteller should also require your character to devote the necessary time and effort to researching and meditating on the problem before recalling its secrets. As a rule of thumb, each ritual requires a number of days (at least 10 hours of effort per day with no interruptions) of intense study and research equal to its base cost before the character is able to fully recall and perform the desired ritual. Only rituals belonging to the character's House can be recalled in this fashion.

LEARNING RITUALS FROM ANOTHER FALLEN

All fallen have the potential to perform rituals. If your character has a willing and knowledgeable tutor, she can learn what rituals the tutor has to offer, although it is neither a short nor a straightforward process. Of course, finding someone who is willing to not only share her knowledge with your character, but to spend weeks and even months doing so is another problem entirely.

Your character must have sufficient dots in the ritual's primary lore before the learning process can even begin. For each full day (at least 10 hours study with no interruptions) the characters spend together, make an Intelligence + Occult roll (difficulty 7). For your character to succeed in learning the ritual, you must accrue successes equal to the experience point cost of that ritual. There is no time limit, but each full week spent without training reduces the accumulated total by three successes. If the roll botches, all accumulated successes are lost, and the character must start from the beginning. As you can see, mastering the most powerful rituals might take years!

The experience cost of a ritual is the same whether you remember it or whether you are taught it. You only need to spend the experience points once you have achieved the required number of successes. Failing doesn't cost any experience points, only time.

Demons and thralls can be taught rituals belonging to Houses other than their own if they can find a tutor willing to share the knowledge (and provided the character possesses the requisite lore).

TEACHING RITUALS TO THRALLS

Even humans can learn rituals, though they must also possess the requisite dots in the ritual's primary lore to do so. The learning process uses the same

system, though the difficulty for the Intelligence + Occult rolls increases to 9.

Once a human knows a ritual, she can act as its Ankida, although the risks of performing the ritual are high. See page 187 for more details.

LEARNING RITUALS FROM WRITTEN RECORDS

It is possible that just as certain infernal relics might have survived the war in secret bastions hidden across the earth, written records and tomes of knowledge detailing certain rituals might have survived to the present day. Such ancient knowledge could take on numerous arcane forms — words inscribed upon veils of solid light, burned into the preserved husks of angels or whispered in breezes set to run eternally through intricately carved vaults deep within the fortress. Unfortunately, the slow collapse of the multi-faceted aspects of Creation means the majority of such "books" are not transportable as they once were.

Additionally, it is possible that extant human records contain fragments of lost ritual knowledge, collected from summoned demons across the ages or derived from the experimentation of sorcerers. Such transcriptions might have occurred as recently as 400 years ago, and some can be found within actual leather-bound tomes, scattered in occult repositories across the globe. Of course, the unadulterated writings of the great sorcerers of the past are among the most prized possessions of the sorcerers of the present, so they are not much easier to find than extant infernal fortresses.

Learning rituals from written works follows the same procedure as learning them from a tutor, but the process itself is much more difficult. You may make an Intelligence + Occult roll for your character for each day the fallen spends studying one of the ancient infernal texts. Attempting to learn a ritual from a human source holds additional dangers. Any ritual transcribed by a human sorcerer will be in debased Enochian at best, and the difficulty for the roll rises to 9. Further, it must be remembered that these texts were often collected from tormented demons who intentionally infused their secrets with malice and the seeds of insanity. Each day spent in study requires a Conviction roll (difficulty 8). If the roll fails, the demon gains a temporary point of Torment.

CREATING RITUALS

All fallen have the potential to create rituals from the lore they know or create variations to the rituals they currently possess. It takes time and



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effort, however, and is not something that can be done spontaneously. A character can research ways of combining her own lore paths into demonic rituals, but she does not have to undergo the laborious task alone. The best part about the otherwise grueling process is that as many fallen can contribute their knowledge and experience as there are paths of lore involved.

The first step in the creation process is to determine the intended effect of the ritual. The character or group of characters must work out a clear description of what they want the ritual to do and then the Storyteller determines the necessary primary and secondary lore paths required to achieve the desired effect. The character or characters involved in the creation process must possess all of the requisite dots in the required lore paths, or the ritual cannot be created. If the characters possess the necessary lore, the Storyteller then determines the ritual's experience point cost, the relevant Attribute + Ability required to determine its effects and might impose further restrictions on performance of the ritual for the purposes of her chronicle. The more complicated the ritual is — the more requisite lore, and the more dramatic or dangerous you want it to be — the higher the cost rises. The scope of rituals is not unlimited,

especially in the modern world, but means of expanding a ritual's effects are discussed in Performing Rituals (see page 182). They are very flexible, and if particular care is paid to choosing the relevant lore paths, then a great multitude of effects can be achieved. The Storyteller is the final arbiter as to what lore paths are required to achieve a given effect, and if she decides that a given ritual requires lore that the characters do not possess, the ritual can't be created until the required knowledge is attained. Refer to the sample rituals provided at the end of this chapter for guidelines on lore requirements, restrictions and point costs when determining the necessary components of your own rituals.

Creating a ritual is a complex process, requiring both deep intellectual discipline and a meditative contemplation of the fractured universe. Make an Intelligence + Occult roll (difficulty 8) for each character who performs 10 hours of research on the ritual design per day. If a roll results in a botch at any point, the ritual design has become flawed. The characters can either cast aside their research up to that point and begin again or accept the flaws and carry on. Flaws in the design can cause unpredictable and potentially dangerous risks, depending on how many total botches are accrued during the creation

process. One botch might impose very stringent restrictions on the ritual — such as saying that one can perform the ritual only during certain times of the day or during certain seasons. Two botches might cause the enactors of the ritual to gain temporary Torment equal to the dots in lore they are contributing each time the ritual is performed. Three dots might cause the ritual to go out of control unless the Ankida spends Willpower points to contain it. Four or more botches might require the *death* of one of the ritual members in order to unleash its energies. The Storyteller is the final arbiter as to what risks are entailed with a flawed ritual. Characters who create a flawed ritual can attempt to discern the risk inherent in their creation with a successful Perception + Awareness roll (difficulty 8).

Once the required number of successes has been accumulated, the ritual is complete. The designers have determined the precise combination of evocations, envisioned a proper sigil and crafted the ritual song. At this point, each character who wishes to learn the ritual and who contributed to the design must pay the base cost of the ritual. Characters who contribute to the design of a ritual are not required to learn it, though. They can provide valuable insights and perform important research without mastering the full scope of the design.

Human thralls can contribute to the ritual design process, though the difficulty for Intelligence + Occult rolls made on their behalf increases to 9. They can also learn the completed ritual if they also possess the required primary lore needed to perform it and sufficient experience points.

PERFORMING RITUALS

Like everything else about rituals, performing them takes time and effort. Some can be performed in a few minutes with minimal or trivial restrictions; some take hours and can be attempted only at a precise astrological conjunction. All, however, require the same basic components.

PARTICIPANTS

While it is possible for a single demon to perform a ritual, most modern-day fallen do not have access to the wide range of lore paths that most rituals require. Typically, rituals are conducted by a leader (the Ankida) and one or more Mudu providing whatever supplementary lore the ritual requires.

- **The Ankida.** The Ankida is the leader of the ritual, and she determines its ultimate effects. Only the Ankida needs to know the ritual and possess its primary lore, and she has sole control over what the

ritual will affect and how. The other ritual members contribute any required supplementary lore, but they don't necessarily have to know the bigger picture. They are the choir the Ankida conducts. At the time the ritual is performed, the Ankida must possess at least one Faith point. A thrall can act as the Ankida in a ritual if he possesses the requisite dots of the ritual's primary lore.

- **The Mudu.** The Mudu provide any supplementary lore the ritual requires, offering their power at the direction of the Ankida. The Mudu sing as the Ankida directs, voicing a chorus of Enochian words of power. Each Mudu must have at least one Faith point available to participate in a ritual.

It is possible to have ritual participants providing knowledge of more than one lore path. This reduces the number of participants required but increases the overall difficulty of the effort. The Mudu must spend one point of temporary Willpower per dot of lore for each additional path that she is attempting to provide, and she must have a minimum of one Faith per lore path. For example, a Mudu providing two dots of Celestial lore and two dots of Wind lore must spend two temporary Willpower points and have at least two Faith points available to provide the extra lore. Thralls can perform the role of the Mudu in a ritual if they possess the requisite dots of lore.

- **Khauiki.** Sometimes required, more often optional, these fallen lend Faith to the ritual in support of the more active participants. Each Faith point offered adds one die to the Ankida's Faith pool for casting purposes. Each of these fallen must also have a least one dot in any of the lore paths required for the ritual, and at least one Faith point available. The Khauiki choose for themselves how much Faith they will individually offer at any stage of the ritual. If the process is not going well and the Khauiki is running low on Faith, she can refuse to share any more. Thralls can perform the role of Khauiki in a ritual.

OTHER RITUAL REQUIREMENTS

In addition to assembling the requisite number of participants and necessary lore paths (no mean feat in and of itself), the following ritual requirements must also be met:

- **Restrictions.** Certain rituals need to be cast at particular times or under particular circumstances — during a storm, for example, or under the light of a full moon. Such restrictions provide resonances that help the members of the ritual focus their concentration and channel their energies synergistically. The more

powerful and complex the ritual is, the more restrictions must be satisfied in order to enact it.

- **The Sigil:** Where the earth was once awash in spiritual power, requiring only a conscious mind to channel it, the modern World of Darkness requires physical symbols that help amplify and direct the meager stores of energy that the fallen can tap. In some ways, a sigil functions like a circuit board. It channels the energies of the Ankida and her participants into a specific configuration.

The sigil is inscribed at the location where the ritual is to be cast, and its size depends upon the needs of the ritual. Its perimeter must be large enough to accommodate every individual performing the ritual, plus the intended recipients of the ritual's effect, if applicable. In all cases, the Ankida and the Mudu stand equally spaced around the edge, whilst the Khauiki stand in a concentric ring directly behind them.

Creating the sigil is the first actual step in any ritual, although it takes place outside of the ritual's minimum casting time. It should be traced in materials appropriate to the House, which might be sand, ice, cobweb or crushed glass. (Some rituals have even more exacting requirements — see the sample rituals for details.) It can also be made permanent as a carving, mosaic or incised symbol (perhaps into which inflammable liquid or fresh blood is poured), which makes it more difficult to disrupt. Weaving the sigil from an appropriate material into a large cloth is one way to make it easily portable, but doing so creates difficulties in that the cloth must be kept very flat throughout the casting so as not to distort the pattern.

Whatever materials are used, creating the sigil requires an extended series of Dexterity + Occult rolls (difficulty 6), accumulating a number of successes equal to the ritual's base cost. More than once person can contribute to creating the sigil. Even mortals or demons who are unfamiliar with the ritual can transcribe the pattern if they have a diagram to work from, though the difficulty of the roll increases to 8. The amount of time required to create the sigil depends largely on the materials used and the method of inscription. (An intricate mosaic of inlaid coral might take weeks to create, at the Storyteller's discretion.) As a rule of thumb, one roll can be made per person involved in creating the sigil every five minutes of game time. A roll that results in a botch means that the sigil is flawed. Depending on the materials involved, this could mean that the inscriber must erase the last segment and start again (in the case of a circle of salt, for example), or he might have to start from scratch in another location. Since the creation

of the sigil has no bearing on the ritual's casting time, it is possible to create one hours, days or even weeks ahead of the actual event, ready for use when the restrictions are right.

- **Casting Time:** The time the ritual will take to perform depends upon its complexity and its power. It can range from 10 minutes to over 24 hours. This period consists of the Ankida calling forth her lore and combining it with the Mudu, weaving them together into the proper configuration to achieve the desired effect.

You calculate the minimum time in minutes it takes to cast a ritual by squaring the total number of dots of lore that comprise the ritual. For example, Age Landscape (see page 201), has a total of eight dots within its three lore paths, so it takes 64 minutes to cast.

CASTING THE RITUAL

Once all the participants have been organized, the sigil has been drawn and the restrictions have been met, the ritual begins. The Ankida begins the song, the Mudu join in as she directs, and the Khauiki concentrate upon the scene before them, chanting a simple, rhythmic mantra. The performance of a ritual is a significant supernatural event. Nearby demons may attempt to detect the ritual with a reflexive supernatural awareness roll (see page 172 of the *Demon* core rules for details).

Once the minimum casting time for the ritual has been achieved, the collected energies are ready to be unleashed. Make an extended Faith roll (difficulty 6) for the Ankida, adding one die per Faith point offered by each Khauiki participating in the ritual. The Ankida can also ravage her thralls for additional dice (see page 251 of the *Demon* core rules for details), and/or the player can spend Faith points on automatic successes. You must accumulate a number of successes equal to the total number of dots in lore required by the ritual in order to cast it successfully. Each turn that you continue to roll the difficulty increases by one. If you haven't accumulated the requisite successes within five turns, or if any of the rolls results in a botch, the ritual fails and the collected energies violently expend itself. If the danger of a catastrophic failure seems unavoidable, the Ankida can voluntarily abort the ritual before five turns have elapsed, dispersing the energies safely.

If the ritual succeeds, it is time to determine the ritual's effect. This involves rolling a particular combination of Attribute + Ability determined by the ritual. (Trait bonuses for a demon's revelatory form are applicable for the Ankida if the player wishes to manifest

the character's apocalyptic form.) The Khauike can provide additional Faith here as well, adding to the dice pool, the Ankida can ravage her thralls for yet more Faith, or the player can spend Faith points for automatic successes.

Example: John's character Aziuran leads the ritual *Rain of Frogs*, with a *Scourge* and a *Devourer* providing the ritual's secondary lore paths (see page 203). Only fallen with knowledge of the *Lore of the Winds*, *Lore of the Beast* or the *Lore of Awakening* can join as Khauike, and another four demons are found who agree to participate in this capacity.

The ritual comprises a total of eight dots of lore, so the ritual's minimum casting time is 64 minutes. Aziuran's current Faith is 6; the Khauike each donate one point of Faith, and John decides that Aziuran will ravage one of his thralls for another two points. Once the minimum casting time is met, John rolls 12 dice and gets four successes. The following turn, John rolls again, this time at difficulty 7. Each of the Khauike come through with another point of Faith each, and John spends one of Aziuran's Faith points for an automatic success. He gets another three successes this

MAINTAINING THE RITUAL

For each half hour that a ritual lasts, a roll must be made for each of the active participants to determine if they can maintain their concentration in the face of mounting fatigue and discomfort.

Roll *Stamina + Occult* for the Ankida. The difficulty starts at 6, then increases by one for each additional half-hour to a maximum of 10. If the roll fails, the ritual ends and the energies bleed away safely. If the roll botches, the contained energies expend themselves violently. A *Willpower* point may be spent to gain an automatic success on this roll.

Further, a *Stamina + Performance* roll (difficulty 6) must be made for each *Mudu* participating in the ritual, with the same increasing difficulty. A *Willpower* point may be spent to gain an automatic success on this roll. If any of the rolls fail, the ritual ends and the energies bleed away safely. If any of the rolls results in a botch, then make a roll equal to the Ankida's *Wits + Occult* (difficulty 6) to see if she can maintain control of the disrupted energy. Otherwise, it expends itself violently. Each botch rolled on the *Mudu's* behalf increases the difficulty of the *Wits + Occult* roll by two.

No *Stamina* rolls are required for the Khauike, as they are providing only a basic rhythm rather than manipulating the complex patterns of lore.

time, bringing his total to seven. On the third turn, John decides not to tap the Khauike for any more Faith (wishing to save them for the ritual's final effect), so he rolls *Aziuran's* current Faith score of 5 against a difficulty of 8. He gets the one success he needs, and the ritual is successfully cast.

The next step is determining the effect of the ritual. John rolls *Aziuran's* *Stamina* (4) + *Animal Ken* (2). This time, only two of the Khauike are willing to contribute their Faith, each one providing a single point. John rolls eight dice and gets five successes, generating five cubic yards of frogs over his intended target.

LOSING CONTROL

If the Ankida loses control of a ritual and cannot harness the energy safely, it explodes in a blast of unfocused power. Anyone within the sigil itself is safe, but the Ankida, the *Mudu* and the Khauike, as well as any onlookers, face the full wrath of the ritual's uncontrolled energies.

Roll one die for every 10 minutes the ritual was performed prior to failure. Each success inflicts one health level of lethal damage to everyone within a distance in yards equal to the sum of the ritual's lore. For example, had Aziuran's *Rain of Frogs* gone out of control, it would have affected everyone within eight yards of the ritual's sigil. Additionally, the active participants of the ritual (Ankida and *Mudu*) each lose one point of Faith. If a participant has no Faith remaining, he loses a point of *Willpower* instead.

COMPLICATIONS

Rituals are complex and demanding efforts even for the likes of the fallen. It is possible for them to fail due to nothing more than an Ankida's lack of ability or the participants running out of endurance. Other factors, particularly outside interference by the Ankida's enemies, can also affect a ritual's success or failure.

DISRUPTING A RITUAL

External forces can disrupt the casting of a ritual if they can succeed in disrupting the ritual's chant, breaking its sigil or affecting its casting restrictions. The simplest way of doing so is through a physical attack. Therefore, the Khauike serve another valuable purpose. Until the point they are called on to provide their Faith, they can double as defenders of the ritual's active participants.

If the Ankida suffers injury as the result of an attack, make a *Wits + Occult* roll (difficulty 6), applying any appropriate wound penalties. If a *Mudu* is injured, roll *Wits + Performance*. If the roll fails, the ritual ends. If it botches, the energies are released explosively.

Disrupting the ritual sigil depends largely on the manner in which it is constructed and the methods used to disrupt it. The Storyteller is the final arbiter on how much effort is required to disrupt a sigil and the means necessary to achieve it. Breaking a circle laid with salt might require nothing more than a strong gust of wind, while breaking one carved into solid granite might take a careful application of dynamite. If the sigil is successfully disrupted, the collected energy is released explosively.

Finally, while many rituals require careful chronological or geographical restrictions that no amount of interference can affect, others require environmental or material restrictions that can be influenced by outside forces. A ritual that cannot be performed in rain or fog, for example, could be disrupted by setting off the building's sprinkler system. One that requires direct sunlight could be broken by throwing a tarp over the ritual's sigil. If the ritual's restrictions are violated, the ritual ends and the energies bleed off safely. Of course, the attackers must know the ritual's restrictions in order to take advantage of them. A successful Intelligence + Occult roll is required to identify and analyze the ritual being performed. If the attacker knows the ritual in question the difficulty of the roll is 6; if not, the difficulty increases to 9.

SUBVERTING RITUALS

The participants can try to subvert a ritual from within in a number of ways. It is impossible to do so without the other members realizing what is happening, though it might be too late by the time they do.

If the Ankida wishes to use the Tormented version of a ritual, she may do so as detailed in the next section. Even if she does not tell the other participants that she is doing so, they can all gain Torment in the process.

Any participant in the ritual who could qualify as Ankida — that is, who knows the ritual and possesses sufficient primary lore — can attempt to seize control of it, effectively becoming the Ankida and redirecting its effects. The attempted takeover of the ritual can occur at any point in the casting process, though the best time to do so is after the ritual is successfully completed (but before its effect can be determined). Make a resisted Willpower roll (difficulty 6) for the two characters. In the event of a tie, the original Ankida wins the contest and can continue to channel the effects of the ritual. If the would-be Ankida wins, control of the ritual passes to her, but the ritual energies might run out of control in the crucial moment of changeover. Make a Faith roll (difficulty 6) for the new Ankida. If the

roll fails, the ritual becomes uncontrolled, releasing its energies explosively.

An Ankida or Mudu can also attempt to leach off the Faith that is being donated by the Khaiki into her own Faith pool. Roll Wits + Awareness (difficulty 8): Each success allows the character to add one point of offered Faith to her own Faith pool, up to her maximum Faith rating. (Willpower points may be spent for automatic successes on this roll.) The character skimming this Faith from the ritual doesn't have to take the entire amount reflected by the successes rolled. For one thing, sucking up all the Khaiki's offered Faith is almost certain to be noticed by the other ritual participants. If a ritual member is leaching offered Faith, the other members of the ritual can attempt to detect this as a reflexive action with a successful Perception + Awareness roll (see page 172 of the **Demon** core rules for details). The difficulty of the roll starts at 9, but it decreases by one for each additional point of Faith that the character leaches from the ritual.

Example: *Dave's character Vrishu is a Mudu participating in a ritual that is being supported by five Khaika. Vrishu's current Faith score is a meager 2 out of a maximum rating of 7, so Dave is strongly tempted to hijack some of the Khaiki's offered Faith to replenish his own diminished stock of power. When the time comes to determine if the ritual is successfully cast, the Khaiki each offer one point of Faith to the Ankida, for a total of five Faith points. Dave rolls Vrishu's Wits (4) + Awareness (2) and gets three successes. Dave can claim up to three of the Khaiki's offered Faith for his character, but each point of Faith claimed will make it that much easier for the other ritual members to notice the theft. After a moment's consideration, he decides to leach away two of the three points allowed by the roll, increasing Vrishu's Faith score to 4. This leaves only three Faith points for the Ankida, and each active member of the ritual (the Ankida and the other Mudu) can attempt to detect the theft with a successful Perception + Awareness roll. The difficulty of the roll is 8 (9 minus one additional point of leached Faith). Had Dave chosen to take all three Faith points he was allowed, the difficulty would have been reduced to 7. Should the other participants detect the theft, Vrishu is going to have some explaining to do.*

TORMENT

Just as with evocations, Torment can taint the outcome of infernal rituals, causing damaging and uncontrolled effects. Ritual high-Torment effects are determined in the same fashion as normal evocations. Roll the relevant Attribute + Ability to determine the ritual's effect and compare the successes rolled to the Ankida's permanent Torment score. If a majority of

the successes rolled show numbers less than or equal to the Ankida's Torment, the high-Torment effect of the ritual is used. If a majority of the successes rolled show numbers greater than the Ankida's Torment, then use the ritual's normal effect. In the event of a tie, the low-Torment effect of the ritual is used.

The Ankida can deliberately unleash the corrupted version of a ritual, but she and the Mudu (not the Khauiiki) all gain a point of temporary Torment. Note that some rituals, particularly those that date from the Time of Atrocities, are cruel enough to accumulate temporary Torment even in their original form.

EFFECTS OF DISBELIEF

The disbelief of human witnesses can make rituals more difficult, just as it does for evocations. Apply the modifier for disbelieving witnesses (see page 253 of the **Demon** core rules for details) to each of the Faith rolls made to successfully enact the ritual. The roll to determine the effect of the ritual is not effected. Once the energy of the ritual is unleashed, little can be done to stop it.

Example: *Two police officers enter a supposedly deserted warehouse to investigate a report of a loud disturbance, and they stumble onto a group of demons performing a ritual. The Storyteller makes a Willpower roll (difficulty 6) for the two cops, assuming an average rating of 8, and gets four successes. This means that when the time comes to determine if the ritual is successfully cast, the difficulty of the Faith roll increases to 10 if the ritual members can't find some way to get rid of the cops.*

USING DEMONICALLY POSSESSED RELICS

Infernal relics imbued with a demonic spirit (see Chapter Five for details) can act as a Mudu in an infernal ritual if the bound spirit possesses the requisite lore. The Ankida must hold the relic during the ritual in order to mesh its energies with the other participants, but otherwise the procedure is exactly the same as described thus far. Bound spirits are equally capable of leaching offered Faith from a ritual or even seizing control of one like any other ritual participant if the restrictions of their binding allow them sufficient freedom.

A demon bound into a relic can even act as the Ankida for a ritual if it has sufficient freedom, the ability to communicate and the requisite primary lore (see Chapter Five for details). To participate as the Ankida the relic must be borne by either a Mudu or a thrall throughout the ritual.

MORTAL PARTICIPATION

It is possible for a mortal to participate in an infernal ritual, whether as a source of Faith, a supplier



of supplementary lore or even acting as the ritual's Ankida. Human participants face much greater risks than the fallen do, as their minds and bodies are not equipped to channel the energies, and the demands presented by the task make a successful casting that much more difficult.

- **Mortals as Khauiki.** Enthralled or not, mortals can participate as Khauiki in an infernal ritual, with the following restrictions. Mortal thralls contribute Willpower points instead of Faith but do not suffer the pain and trauma of being ravaged. Non-enthralled mortals (willing allies of the fallen, followers, adoring worshippers, etc.) can contribute a number of Faith points equal to their Faith potential (see page 252 of the *Demon* core rules for details). Once they have exhausted their Faith potential, non-enthralled mortals may continue to contribute Willpower points in lieu of Faith.

- **Mortals as Mudu.** A thrall gifted with an evocation of the proper lore at the required level can act as a Mudu in an infernal ritual. A mortal acting as a Mudu must spend one Willpower point to access her infernal gift and participate in the ritual, and the player must make Stamina + Performance rolls for the character to maintain focus every half hour as normal. Additionally, the difficulty of the Faith rolls to determine the ritual's success increases by one. Mortal Mudu cannot leach Faith from a ritual, but they can attempt to seize control of one if they wish.

- **Mortals as Ankida.** A thrall gifted with an evocation of the proper lore at the required level can act as the Ankida of an infernal ritual. The mortal Ankida must spend one Willpower point to access her infernal gift and direct the ritual, and she must make Stamina + Occult rolls to maintain their focus every half hour as normal. Roll the mortal's Willpower to determine if the ritual is cast successfully, though the difficulty of the roll increases to 8 to reflect the daunting complexity of the task. Mortal Ankida cannot leach Faith from a ritual.

Mortal participants of an uncontrolled ritual suffer lethal damage the same as their fallen counterparts, but they lose one Willpower point instead of a Faith point. Additionally, a Willpower roll (difficulty 7) must be made for each mortal participant. If the roll fails, they gain a temporary derangement determined by the Storyteller. If the roll botches, the derangement is permanent.

INFERNAL RITUALS

The following section contains a number of sample rituals grouped by House that can be used in your

EXPLANATION OF TERMS

Each ritual listed comprises eight components:

- **Primary Lore:** The pertinent lore required by the Ankida to perform the ritual.
- **Secondary Lore:** One or more supplementary lore paths required to perform the ritual.
- **Base Cost:** The base cost in experience points required for a character to learn a given ritual. The base cost is equal to the total number of lore dots the ritual requires multiplied by the total number of lore paths.
- **Restrictions:** Restrictions that influence how, where and when the ritual may be cast. If an object is listed as a restriction, it is the focus of the ritual and must be laid at the center of the sigil. (If it is an animal or person, it must not leave the sigil during the casting.)
- **Minimum Casting Time:** The number of minutes required to properly cast the ritual. The minimum casting time is equal to the square of the total number of lore dots that the ritual requires.
- **System:** Each ritual uses an Attribute + Ability roll to determine its ultimate effect.
- **Torment:** The high-Torment effect of the ritual.
- **Variations:** The creation and use of rituals constantly evolved over the course of the war, and the fallen frequently experimented with different variations of a ritual to gain different effects. The listed variations are intended as a springboard for creating your own rituals and to provide additional variety. The Storyteller is free to determine the full components of any ritual variation she wishes to include in her chronicle.

Demon chronicle. Note that the Storyteller is the final arbiter as to which rituals are appropriate for her chronicle, so she may disallow or modify the components of any ritual to better suit her needs.

This list is by no means an exhaustive collection of every ritual created by the fallen during the War of Wrath. You are encouraged to add rituals of your own using the guidelines presented.

DEFILERS

HADRISEL'S LIBATION

This ritual was one of the first cooperative attempts by Defilers and Scourges to create a portable healing draught that could be applied to warriors of the infernal host during battle.

Primary Lore: Lore of Storms ••
Secondary Lore: Lore of Awakening •
Base Cost: 6

Restrictions: This ritual requires up to half a liter of pure water, can be performed only under the light of the full moon and requires a silver vessel to contain the libation.

Minimum Casting Time: 9 minutes

System: Roll Intelligence + Medicine. Each drink of the libation heals one health level of bashing damage per success. In addition, the libation cleanses the recipient's body of all toxins (e.g., fatigue toxins, the effects of alcohol, etc.) and cures any minor illnesses (e.g., cold, flu, sore throat, etc.). The libation can be used a number of times equal to the Ankida's Faith score at the point the ritual was successfully cast. The libation's potency lasts only until the following full moon, at which point any unused amount reverts back to water.

Torment: The high-Torment version of this libation creates a viscous, oily liquid that burns to the touch and spreads disease and infection. The number of successes rolled becomes a damage pool that inflicts bashing damage on any target struck by the water. In addition, if the victim has open wounds on his skin or he swallows any of the substance, he will contract a virulent disease at the Storyteller's discretion.

Variations: None

SIREN'S SONG

This ritual was developed as a battlefield tactic by the Crimson Legion as a means of luring enemy mortals away from their place on the battlefield and creating an opening that the fallen might then exploit. The song was so alluring and powerful that it resonates in humanity's collective memory to this day.

Primary Lore: Lore of Longing •••

Secondary Lore: Lore of Radiance ••; Lore of Humanity •

Base Cost: 18

Restrictions: This ritual must be performed at the edge of a large body of water.

Minimum Casting Time: 36 minutes

System: Roll Manipulation + Performance. The number of successes determines the radius of the ritual's effect in 100-yard increments, measured from the center of the sigil. If the Ankida's player rolls five successes, the ritual affects every living being within a 500-yard radius. Any mortals caught within this radius will stop what they are doing and make their way toward the ritual sigil unless a successful Willpower roll (difficulty 8) is made. Affected individuals will walk in the most direct path toward the sigil regardless

of potential danger. Victims have been known to walk over cliffs, drown themselves in lakes and stagger onto the blades of their enemies. While affected by the ritual, victims can take no other action, even to defend themselves. Once successfully cast, the ritual continues as long as the ritual members continue to sing. Make Stamina + Performance rolls (difficulty 6) for every ritual participant each turn to see if they can continue to maintain the song.

Torment: The high-Torment version of this song fills the mind of a listener with visions of madness and anguish. Make a Willpower roll (difficulty 8) for any mortal or demon caught within the area of effect. If the roll fails, the victim is overcome with visions of the Abyss and falls to the ground, writhing in pain and fear. Affected individuals can take no actions of any kind as long as the song continues. If the Willpower roll botches, a mortal victim gains a temporary derangement as well. A demon gains one point of temporary Torment.

Variations: Legend speaks of a version of this ritual that could be centered on distant locations far removed from the casting sigil. Add Firmament •• to the ritual's secondary lore.

FIERY VISION

This ritual was one of the Defilers' signature battlefield effects, creating a blazing image high above the battlefield that exhorted the warriors of the fallen to greater acts of valor and filled the hearts of their enemies with dread. The ritual creates the image of a fiery figure high above the center of the sigil, speaking in thunderous tones that can be understood by all who witness it regardless of their native language.

Primary Lore: Lore of Longing •••

Secondary Lore: Lore of Light ••; Lore of Radiance ••; Lore of Humanity •

Base Cost: 32

Restrictions: This ritual can be performed only on a clear, cloudless day or night, and a fire must be kept alight in the center of the sigil.

Minimum Casting Time: 64 minutes

System: Roll Charisma + Performance. Any of the Ankida's allies or followers that can see the vision receive a number of temporary Willpower points equal to the number of successes rolled. These extra points can exceed their maximum Willpower rating. These bonus Willpower points can be expended for automatic successes as normal or add to a character's dice pool for making Willpower rolls. The ritual affects individuals within a radius of 100 yards times the Ankida's Faith score at the time the ritual is successfully cast. The effects of this vision last for the duration of a single scene, at

which point the individuals' Willpower scores return to normal.

Torment: The high-Torment effect of this ritual blasts the souls of the Ankida's enemies, filling their hearts and minds with visions of despair. Enemies of the Ankida who witness the vision lose a number of temporary Willpower points equal to the Ankida's successes. A victim whose Willpower is reduced to 0 is overcome with fear and falls into a catatonic state for the remainder of the scene. Mortals whose Willpower is temporarily reduced to 0 suffer a temporary derangement as well. A demon gains one point of temporary Torment.

Variations: A variation on this ritual is said to exist that causes the vision to manifest itself over a geographical location far from the ritual's sigil. Add Firmament •• to the ritual's secondary lore.

CREATE ELEMENTAL

This powerful ritual allowed the Defilers to create living servants from the very sea, serving the Angels of the Deep in a variety of minor roles.

Primary Lore: Lore of Storms •••

Secondary Lore: Lore of Awakening ••; Lore of the Celestials ••; Lore of the Fundament ••

Base Cost: 36

Restrictions: This ritual must be performed under the light of a full moon, on the shores of an ocean or sea. A small amount of mercury must be placed in the center of the sigil.

Minimum Casting Time: 81 minutes

System: Roll Manipulation + Occult. The ritual creates a living entity formed entirely of water, with effectively one dot in the following traits: Strength, Dexterity, Stamina, Intelligence, Perception, Wits and Willpower. Each success rolled becomes a dot that the Ankida can allocate to any of these traits or devote to an Ability that she wants the elemental to possess. The elemental can not possess an Ability that the Ankida or any of the Mudu do not possess themselves. The elemental can alter its shape and appearance at will, and it can travel anywhere air can reach. The entity is bound to the Ankida's will, and it will follow her instructions to the best of its ability. The elemental will exist for the duration of a single scene. If a point of the Ankida's temporary Willpower is spent, the elemental will continue to exist until it is destroyed or released by the Ankida. A water elemental effectively has four health levels for the purposes of withstanding damage, but because of its fluid nature, the difficulty of all attempts to hit it increases by two.

Torment: The high-Torment version of this ritual creates an amorphous, flesh-eating monster

that exists only to hunt and kill the living. Only the creature's Physical Attributes might be increased by the Ankida's successes, and only combat-related Abilities (e.g., Alertness, Brawl and Dodge) may be purchased. The touch of the monster burns like acid, inflicting lethal damage in combat. Finally, the Ankida only nominally controls the creature. A Willpower roll (difficulty 8) must be made on the Ankida's behalf each time she attempts to direct the monster's actions. If the roll fails, the creature acts under the Storyteller's control.

Variations: None

STORM'S FURY

This ritual allowed the Angels of the Deep to pummel their foes with the full fury of a raging storm, directing it as an extension of their will and leaving their allies unscathed.

Primary Lore: Lore of Storms ••••

Secondary Lore: Lore of the Firmament •••; Lore of the Winds ••; Lore of Humanity ••

Base Cost: 44

Restrictions: This ritual must be performed at the edge of an ocean or sea under an overcast sky. A silver bowl containing salt water must be placed in the center of the sigil.

Minimum Casting Time: 121 minutes

System: Roll Intelligence + Survival. The successes rolled are subtracted from the dice pools of every mortal or demon within the storm's area of effect except the Ankida's friends or allies. The storm extends to a radius of a half-mile times the Ankida's Faith score at the time the ritual is successfully cast. This ritual manifests itself as a raging thunderstorm regardless of the climate and season in which the ritual is performed. The effect of this ritual lasts for the duration of a single scene.

Torment: The effects of the high-Torment version of this ritual are terrible indeed, creating a raging tempest of hellish lightning and acid rain. The successes rolled when determining the effect of the ritual become a lethal damage pool that is rolled every turn for each mortal or demon caught within the storm — friend and foe alike.

Variations: Toward the end of the war, the Silver Legion developed a version of this ritual that could be centered on a specific individual, provided the Ankida knew the individual's name. Increase Winds and Humanity to ••• each.

PART THE WATERS

This ritual allows the demons to create a path through a lake, river or, with enough Faith, a sea. The water rolls back on either side of the designated route,

revealing the lake- or riverbed, which is dried sufficiently to support traffic (although it might be uneven and hard to maneuver upon).

Primary Lore: Lore of Storms ••••

Secondary Lore: Lore of the Fundament •••;
Lore of Paths ••

Base Cost: 27

Restrictions: If the ritual is not cast at high tide, the difficulty to successfully cast it increases by one.

Minimum Casting Time: 81 minutes

System: Roll Stamina + Survival. Each success increases the length of the path by 100 yards. The width of the passage is 10 yards, and it lasts for up to six hours per Faith point. The Ankida can restore the course of the waters whenever she wishes.

Torment: The footing of the path is treacherous, and it might contain areas of quicksand and other hazards (the location of which is determined at the Storyteller's discretion). Also, the Ankida does not have control over the duration of the ritual. She cannot end it prematurely, nor know when it is going to expire. The Storyteller secretly rolls dice equal to the character's Torment score. The duration is equal to the maximum duration (six hours per Faith point) divided by the number of successes rolled. If no successes are rolled, the ritual lasts one day per Faith point.

Variations: There is said to be a version that creates a path that is a mere 200 yards long, but always centered on the Ankida, so when she moves forward, the waves part before her and close behind her. The maximum depth is twice that of the normal ritual. Increase Fundament to ••••.

RIVER OF BLOOD

All the anguish, resentment and frustrated love of the Angels of the Deep is manifest in this unholy catastrophe. It replaces the life-giving flow of water with a turgid, sticky mass of flowing blood that scars the land and sends an inescapable message to those living upon the Earth.

As well as being fit for little else than attracting carrion beasts, the blood spreads through ground water and even infiltrates the rain, meaning no-one can escape its touch. In addition, the veil into the spirit realm is significantly thinned in the area of the river, leading to hauntings and strange spatial effects.

Primary Lore: Lore of Storms ••••

Secondary Lore: Lore of the Flesh ••••; Lore of Portals ••••; Lore of Transfiguration ••

Base Cost: 48

Restrictions: The ritual needs to be performed on the bank of a river, and an urn containing five

pints of human blood must be placed in the center of the sigil.

Minimum Casting Time: 144 minutes

System: Roll Charisma + Empathy. Each success adds a mile of river that is affected from the source point. Beyond the limits of that distance, the blood then flows downstream, under the normal effects of fluid dynamics.

For each point of the Ankida's Faith, the transformation into blood lasts a day. After that time, water starts flowing again, but the mass of blood from the ritual still remains, fouling the water until it rots away naturally over the course of several months.

All participants, including Khaulki, can donate temporary Willpower. If 20 Willpower is accumulated in this way, the effect becomes permanent.

Torment: Such is the power of this ritual that it transforms the pain of the Abyss into material form, creating a powerful and monstrous blood golem that roams the land, killing anyone it can find. The construct is 15 feet tall and its Physical and Mental Attributes, plus its Brawl and Dodge, are each half the Torment score for the ritual (round down). In addition, the profane and liquid form of its body means its touch inflicts lethal damage, and its soak is twice its Stamina (it can soak aggravated damage). It does not receive wound penalties, and whenever it takes 10 levels of damage its body dissolves and reforms back in the river, as long as the blood still flows there. It can also do so at will. Its first targets are the participants of the ritual.

Variations: None

DEVILS

BAPTISM OF FAITH

While the thrall relationship is one of the closest between demon and human, others can be forged. Nobody is sure who developed the rite of baptism first, but it was used by both sides during the war to engender loyalties among the various mortal factions. A human bestowed with this ritual can call upon a particular demon for aid, and likewise, the demon can use his baptized followers to gain more information in some circumstances.

Primary Lore: Lore of the Celestials ••

Secondary Lore: Lore of Longing ••

Base Cost: 8

Restrictions: The recipient must be a willing participant in the baptism. She can be any human other than the thrall of a different demon. The sigil is carved into a plaque of clay that is hung around the recipient's neck.

Minimum Casting Time: 16 minutes

System: Roll Charisma + Empathy. The effects of the ritual last for as long as five years per success. When the recipient calls on the Celestial Name of the Ankida, the connection between the two is automatic. In addition, the demon is made aware of the situation of the recipient if the human is baptized or enthralled by a different demon or angel, or on the recipient's death but not if the ritual simply lapses.

A demon can have only as many baptized followers as she has permanent Faith points. She may voluntarily break the bond only if the mortal gives his approval (or she kills him). If the recipient later recants, the only way to break the relationship without permission is with another baptism.

There is no requirement for the demon to answer any call for help that is made of her by a baptized follower, although the human is often led to believe otherwise. In addition, any rolls made by the human to resist the demon in any way (other than physical combat) incur a +1 difficulty penalty.

Torment: The high-Torment version of this ritual infuses the human recipient with the demon's Torment as well, creating a deranged individual with violent tendencies. A Willpower roll (difficulty 7) must be made for the baptized individual whenever he suffers a bout of extreme stress. If the roll fails, the individual will attempt to relieve the stress by killing another person.

Variations: None

DEFEAT SCRY

This ritual creates an area that is protected from scrying attempts.

Primary Lore: Lore of the Celestials •••

Secondary Lore: Lore of the Firmament •

Base Cost: 8

Restrictions: The protected area is defined by the size of the sigil.

Minimum Casting Time: 16 minutes

System: Roll Perception + Alertness. The number of successes rolled is subtracted from any attempt to cast the Scry evocation (Firmament ••) on any object or person within the specified area. If the Scry attempt still succeeds, the target of the evocation glows a pale blue. If an object or a person that is already the focus of a Scry attempt enters the protected area, the subject glows blue as well. The protection lasts 12 hours per point of Faith.

Torment: The high-Torment effect of this ritual inflicts one health level of bashing damage each turn against individuals attempting to scry

into the affected area (this damage can not be soaked). They can still view what is going on, but it's like getting an eyeful of tear gas when they do.

Variations: Rumors abound that a ritual could be cast that interferes with scrying attempts, making it appear that the area was empty or that a specifically programmed action was happening within it. Add Light ••••.

RESIST FIRE

This ritual gives the subjects the ability to shrug off fire damage. It was designed to help human support troops in battle against loyalist members of the First House.

Primary Lore: Lore of Flame ••

Secondary Lore: Lore of the Flesh ••

Base Cost: 8

Restrictions: The ritual must be cast in direct sunlight. Each subject to be affected must be within the sigil.

Minimum Casting Time: 16 minutes

System: Roll Stamina + Dodge. The number of successes rolled determines how many individuals receive the ritual's protection. Each can use their Stamina to soak fire damage for up to five turns per Faith point.

Torment: The subject does not take damage from fire, but he feels the pain of being burned nonetheless. Each time a character soaks damage inflicted by fire, a Willpower roll must be made with the difficulty equal to 5 + the number of damage levels soaked. If the roll fails, the character loses her actions for the next turn.

Variations: A powerful version of this ritual allows flame to actually heal the recipient. Each point of fire damage successfully soaked heals one level of bashing damage. Add Awakening •••.

FIRESTORM

This short-lived but powerful ritual creates a much-feared conflagration from which there is little hope of escape.

Primary Lore: Lore of Flame ••••

Secondary Lore: Lore of the Winds ••••

Base Cost: 16

Restrictions: This ritual cannot be performed in rain or fog.

Minimum Casting Time: 64 minutes

System: Roll Stamina + Survival. Each success inflicts one level of lethal damage on every mortal or demon within the area of effect, which is a roughly hemispherical volume centered anywhere within 300



yards of the ritual. The radius of the firestorm is three yards for each point of the Ankida's Faith at the time the ritual is cast.

Torment: The center of the firestorm can only be the sigil itself. Those on the perimeter and within it are not affected unless there are nearby walls (within half the radius of the effect) which reflect the firestorm back onto the casters.

Variations: The version known to be performed by Lucifer and his cohorts granted the Ankida sufficient control to exclude targets within the area of effect. As well as determining damage, each success of the Stamina + Survival roll means one demon (or demon-/human-sized object) of the Ankida's choice will not be affected by the blast. Add Patterns ••.

FAITH OF STEEL

This ritual inspires human troops under the Ankida's command, filling them with hope and determination, and allowing them to fight on despite any injuries they receive.

Primary Lore: Lore of Radiance ••

Secondary Lore: Lore of Awakening ••; Lore of Longing ••

Base Cost: 18

Restrictions: The focus of the ritual is a human under the Ankida's command who has been wounded in anger within the last hour.

Minimum Casting Time: 36 minutes

System: Roll Manipulation + Leadership. The effect lasts for 10 minutes per success. One human per point of the Ankida's Faith is affected, as long as the Ankida can see him, and each can deduct his own Faith potential from any wound penalties he receives. In addition, they can keep attacking for an extra number of turns equal to their Faith potential if they are incapacitated (not dead), at -5 to their relevant dice pools.

Assume a default potential of 2 unless circumstances dictate otherwise. Even at that level, they are unaffected by injuries that would normally cripple a mortal, making for a fearsome force.

Note that the effects of this ritual can be combined with the effects of the Exalt evocation (see page 179 of the *Demon* core rules for details).

Torment: The high-Torment version of this ritual infuses the recipients with an unquenchable bloodlust, driving them into a murderous frenzy. Unless a successful Willpower roll is made (difficulty 7), they will attack the nearest individual, friend or foe, each turn.

Variations: None

CREATE ELEMENTAL

This powerful ritual allowed the Devils to create servants of living fire that performed the role of guardians, bodyguards or assassins during the war.

Primary Lore: Lore of Flame •••

Secondary Lore: Lore of Awakening ••, Lore of the Celestials ••; Lore of the Fundament ••

Base Cost: 36

Restrictions: This ritual must be performed beneath the noonday sun near a source of intense natural heat such as a geothermal spring or a volcano. A small quantity of obsidian must be placed in the center of the sigil.

Minimum Casting Time: 81 minutes

System: Roll Manipulation + Occult. The ritual creates a living entity formed entirely of fire, with effectively one dot in the following traits: Strength, Dexterity, Stamina, Intelligence, Perception, Wits and Willpower. Each success rolled becomes a dot that the Ankida can allocate to any of these traits or devote to an Ability that she wants the elemental to possess. The elemental can not possess an Ability that the Ankida or any of the Mudu do not possess themselves. The elemental assumes a lithe, humanoid shape that can wear armor or bear weapons specially crafted to withstand intense heat. The entity is bound to the Ankida's will and will follow her instructions to the best of its ability. The elemental will exist for the duration of a single scene. If a point of the Ankida's temporary Willpower is spent the elemental will continue to exist until it is destroyed or released by the Ankida. A fire elemental has six health levels for the purposes of withstanding damage. Its touch will ignite inflammable objects after one turn of contact and inflict lethal damage in combat.

Torment: The high-Torment version creates a serpentine creature charged by the Ankida's hatred and driven to torture and kill the living. Only the creature's Physical Attributes can be increased by the Ankida's successes, and only combat-related Abilities (e.g., Alertness, Brawl and Dodge) can be purchased. The creature's body is sheathed in hard scales that provide five dice of armor protection, and its touch inflicts aggravated damage instead of lethal. Finally, the Ankida only nominally controls the creature; a Willpower roll (difficulty 8) must be made on the Ankida's behalf each time she attempts to direct the monster's actions. If the roll fails, the creature acts under the Storyteller's control.

Variations: None

HOPE'S TRUE FLAME

This ritual creates a tongue of brilliant white flame that blazes above a house or other structure and protects those within it from harm.

Primary Lore: Lore of the Celestials ••

Secondary Lore: Lore of Flame ••; Lore of Longing ••; Lore of Radiance ••

Base Cost: 32

Restrictions: The participants of the ritual must not have performed any acts of violence in the previous week.

Minimum Casting Time: 64 minutes

System: Roll Manipulation + Empathy (difficulty 8). The number of successes determines how powerful the effect is on those who witness the flame. All those who can see the flame, and who plan violence on the occupants of the building upon which the ritual was cast lose a number of dice from their dice pools equal to the successes rolled. The effect of this ritual lasts for a number of days equal to the Ankida's Faith score at the time the ritual was cast.

Variations: None

DEVOURERS

FRUIT OF PERFECTION

This ritual creates a fruit that can be used to impart courage and insight. It was developed in an attempt to inspire humanity before the rebellion.

Primary Lore: Lore of the Wild ••

Secondary Lore: Lore of Radiance ••

Base Cost: 8

Restrictions: The sigil must be drawn around a mature fruit tree and a smaller version inscribed into its bark.

Minimum Casting Time: 16 minutes

System: Roll Charisma + Empathy. One success means that fruit eaten from the ritual tree makes the recipient immune to fear and supernatural forms of mind-control. Two successes mean that the recipient adds one dot to her Intelligence. Three successes means that the recipient adds one dot to each of her Mental Attributes. Four successes mean that the recipient can add one bonus die to all of her dice pools for the duration of the scene.

As many pieces of fruit are grown as the Ankida has Faith, each of which can affect one person. The fruit loses its effectiveness within one hour of being picked. If someone eats two pieces of the fruit, the effects do not stack.

Torment: The high-Torment effect of this ritual subtracts dice from the relevant traits or dice pools.

Variations: There is said to be a version of Fruit of Perfection that was developed during the war. It has the same effect, but it also makes the recipient of the effect more sensitive to the spirit realms as well as the natural one. Add Realms •.

BOUNTIFUL HARVEST

This ritual was designed to create lush gardens in place of barren wastelands, providing sustenance for the host's mortal flocks in times of need.

Primary Lore: Lore of the Wild ••

Secondary Lore: Lore of the Earth •; Lore of Storms •

Base Cost: 12

Restrictions: A small quantity of loam must be placed in the center of the sigil.

Minimum Casting Time: 16 minutes

System: Roll Stamina + Survival. The ritual affects an area with a radius in 100-yard increments equal to the number of successes rolled and centered on the sigil. A lush garden blooms into life within the affected area, with thick grass, small streams and tall, fruit-bearing trees. This garden can sprout in an area where one couldn't normally exist—in deserts, snow fields, parking lots or toxic waste dumps. The water, vegetables and fruit created by the ritual are normal and nutritious in every way. The garden exists for a single scene. At the end of that time the water dries up and the plants wither into dust. If the Ankida wishes, however, the garden can be made permanent by spending a temporary Willpower point. It must be tended like any other garden afterward if it is to survive, though.

Torment: The high-Torment version of this ritual does not create gardens, but lifeless wastelands. All water and vegetation within the affected area dries up and withers away, not to return again until the next blooming season. By spending a temporary Willpower point the effects of this ritual become permanent, creating a blighted area where nothing will ever grow.

Variations: None

HEART OF STONE

This ritual was used to harden the defenses of humans fighting for the rebel cause. The targets gain increased resistance to damage in combat.

Primary Lore: Lore of Flesh •••

Secondary Lore: Lore of the Earth ••

Base Cost: 10

Restrictions: The sigil must be inscribed in powdered granite.

Minimum Casting Time: 25 minutes

System: Roll Stamina + Leadership. The ritual affects as many humans as the number of successes rolled. Each affected individual adds the Ankida's Faith to his soak rolls up to a maximum of twice his Stamina. The effect lasts for one scene.

Torment: All recipients gain the protective advantages of the ritual but also lose one die from all their combat dice pools as the effect literally hardens muscles and skin.

Variations: A subsequent version of this ritual was said to specifically affect metal weapons used to strike the recipient, making the weapon harder and harder to wield effectively due to strange fluctuations in inertia. Every health level of damage soaked by the ritual's effect increases the difficulty of wielding the weapon that inflicted the damage to a maximum difficulty of 10. Add Fundament •••.

DEFEND PATH

This ritual creates an area where the Lore of Paths is much harder to use, making it much easier to defend against enemy angels—and other fallen.

Primary Lore: Lore of the Wild ••••

Secondary Lore: Lore of the Celestials •••

Base Cost: 14

Restrictions: The sigil must encompass the area to be affected, although all participants must still be able to see each other clearly.

Minimum Casting Time: 49 minutes

System: Roll Perception + Survival. Each success is subtracted from the number of successes of any Paths evocation (or ritual based around the Lore of Paths) that crosses the area of effect.

Note that opponents cannot create paths that specifically avoid the area of effect of the Defeat Path ritual. If they know the perimeter of the effect, however, that can create a path that does not cross the perimeter (but it might not get them where they want to go).

The effect lasts one month per point of the Ankida's Faith. The donation of five temporary Willpower from any of the participants makes the effect permanent.

Torment: The addition of Torment provides a disorientating effect that gives people headaches and potentially gets them lost. Individuals traveling through the region (whether using Paths lore or not) become disoriented and lost unless a successful Willpower roll (difficulty 6) is made each turn. Once lost, a Willpower roll may be made each successive turn to regain one's bearings. If a roll results in a botch, the character cannot regain her bearings until she wanders out of the area.

Variations: It is said that there is a version that confuses the senses so that it appears that a path has been created successfully, but after it is traveled, the Malefactor finds herself in the same spot where she began. Add Longing •••.

FOREST WARD

This ritual was created as a defensive measure by Devourers of the Iron Legion, infusing a wilderness area with a protective life of its own. Enemies pursuing a retreating group of fallen find that the paths through the forest seem to shift before their very eyes, leading them away from their quarry.

Primary Lore: Lore of the Wild •••

Secondary Lore: Lore of Awakening ••, Lore of Paths ••

Base Cost: 21

Restrictions: This ritual must be performed within a forest or other area of dense vegetation.

Minimum Casting Time: 49 minutes

System: Roll Wits + Survival. The ritual affects an area with a radius in 100-yard increments equal to the number of successes rolled and centered on the sigil. Within the affected area, the forest's paths shift from moment to moment, appearing or disappearing in a manner designed to lure the Ankida's enemies back in the direction they came. Players of enemies of the Ankida who move through the affected area must roll Intelligence + Survival (difficulty 9) to move in the intended direction. If the roll fails, the characters are led in a roundabout fashion back the way they came. A roll can be made for the pursuers each turn to see if they can return to their intended course. If any roll botches, the pursuers have become hopelessly lost. They will be led back in the direction they came, and no further rolls

may be made. The effects of this ritual last for the duration of a single scene.

Torment: The high-Torment effect of this ritual infuses the vegetation with malevolent life, causing it to lash out at the Ankida's enemies with branch, thorn and vine. The number of successes rolled becomes a bashing damage pool that is rolled for each of the Ankida's enemies each turn they remain in the affected area.

Variations: None

BEAST OF BABEL

This powerful ritual was developed originally as a form of cruel sport by Devourers of the Ebon Legion, transforming prisoners into animals that the demons could hunt with their hounds. It wasn't long, however, before the battlefield applications of the ritual became obvious.

Primary Lore: Lore of the Beast •••

Secondary Lore: Lore of the Flesh ••, Lore of the Firmament ••, Lore of Humanity ••

Base Cost: 36

Restrictions: The ritual can be performed only under the light of the full moon. Further, the freshly skinned hide of the animal the Ankida wishes to use for the ritual must be placed in the center of the sigil. Further, the animal chosen must be approximately the same size and mass of a typical human being. Insects and small animals such as rodents are not allowed.

Minimum Casting Time: 81 minutes

System: Roll Stamina + Survival in a resisted roll against each victim's Willpower. The ritual affects an area with a radius in 10-yard increments equal to the Ankida's Faith score at the time the ritual is successfully cast. Each mortal or demon within the affected area that succumbs to the ritual is transformed into the



Ankida's chosen animal, taking on its Physical and Mental Attributes, instincts and behavior for the duration of the scene. By expending a temporary Willpower point per victim, the Ankida can make the effects of this ritual permanent.

Torment: The high-Torment version of this ritual infuses its victims with an appetite for human flesh and an insatiable bloodlust. The transformed animals attack the nearest mortal, friend or foe, in an attempt to kill and eat them. If Willpower points are spent to make this effect permanent, the mortal reverts back to his normal form at the end of the scene but transforms beneath the light of each succeeding full moon and remains in animal form until it kills and eats human flesh.

Variations: None

WIND OF TEARS

This terrible ritual, crafted by Devourers of the Ebon Legion, inflicts the effects of age and infirmity on their foes, weakening them until they were easy prey for the legion's soldiers. Originally the ritual only affected the mortal followers of the Heavenly Host; now the host bodies of the fallen are vulnerable as well.

Primary Lore: Lore of the Flesh ••••

Secondary Lore: Lore of the Wind •••; Lore of Death ••; Lore of the Fundament ••

Base Cost: 44

Restrictions: This ritual must be performed during fall or winter, during the waning phases of the moon.

Minimum Casting Time: 121 minutes

System: Roll Stamina + Medicine. The ritual affects an area with a radius in 10-yard increments equal to the Ankida's Faith score at the time the ritual is successfully cast. Every individual except the Ankida's friends or allies within the affected area lose a number of Physical and/or Mental Attribute dots equal to the successes rolled as their bodies become decades older. If a player controls an affected character, she chooses which traits are affected; otherwise the trait loss is at the Storyteller's discretion. If any trait drops to 0, the character falls unconscious. The effects of this ritual last for the duration of a single scene, after which the victims return to their normal age and their trait levels are restored.

Torment: The high-Torment version of this ritual directly affects a victim's life force instead of her physical body. Instead of reducing traits, each success rolled removes one health level from a victim, beginning with Bruised and working down through the available levels. Note that this isn't inflicting damage per se—it is reducing the amount

of health levels the character has available to withstand damage. If the victim already has suffered damage prior to being affected by the ritual, shift the damage downward to the health levels still available.

Variations: Legend has it that a variation of this ritual was designed to affect specific individuals, no matter how far away they are from the ritual sigil. Add Firmament ••• and Humanity •• to the ritual's secondary lore. In addition the Ankida must know the name of the individual to be affected.

FIENDS

PROPHETIC DREAM

The Fiends developed this ritual during the war as an aid to the commanders of Lucifer's legions, allowing them a glimpse of their own future as a tool to refining their battle plans. In practice the infernal leaders had to apply a great deal of insight to interpret their visions, often requiring the advice of the Neberu once the vision had passed.

Primary Lore: Lore of Patterns ••••

Secondary Lore: Lore of the Firmament ••, Lore of the Spirit •

Base Cost: 21

Restrictions: The subject of the ritual must sit or lie in the center of the sigil.

Minimum Casting Time: 49 minutes

System: Roll Perception + Intuition. The ritual grants the recipient the effects of the Causal Influence evocation presented in the **Demon** core rules, but using the ritual effect roll to determine the extent of the information gained. The ritual can be focused on a specific person (difficulty 6), place (difficulty 7) or upcoming event (difficulty 9). Spend one Faith point and roll Perception + Intuition. The number of successes rolled determines how many days into the future the recipient can view regarding her subject. It also determines how many questions the player can ask the Storyteller about what the character sees.

The evocation fills the recipient's mind with a torrent of images, showing the most likely fate of a specific person, place or event, barring any outside interference. The Storyteller describes the course of events as though the recipient were an outside observer. She isn't privy to the thoughts of the individuals involved, and she must decide the context and meaning of relationships and actions herself.

Torment: The high-Torment version of this ritual shows the recipient where the subject (be it a person, place or event) is at risk of suffering an accident or

other misfortune, and it shows the best way to cause the tragic circumstances to occur.

Variations: None

CENTARNEI'S PORTAL

The necessity of having an identical kind of portal at either end of a journey (such as doorway to doorway, window to window) is irksome to many Fiends who are masters of the Lore of Portals. It was the demon Centarnei who developed the solution, devising a ritual that created a miniature portal that could be carried easily and enlarged to permit the fiend to travel from any locale she desires.

Primary Lore: Lore of Portals •••

Secondary Lore: Lore of the Forge •••

Base Cost: 12

Restrictions: A portal for use as the entrance must be chosen, and a small replica of it constructed by the Mudu contributing the Lore of the Forge to the ritual.

Minimum Casting Time: 36 minutes

System: Roll Intelligence + Crafts. The number of successes determines the number of times the pocket portal can be used (that is, the number of evocations that can be cast upon it). Once the ritual has been performed, the Ankida can use the portal (which expands to a suitable size on command) whenever she needs a portal to perform an evocation. If someone other than the Ankida tries to move the portal, they find it too heavy to move.

Torment: The transit between portals exposes the traveler to the Torment of the demon who created it. Unless a successful Willpower roll is made (difficulty 7), demons who use the pocket portal receive one point of temporary Torment. Mortals using the portal lose one point of temporary Willpower.

Variations: None

SHOOTING STAR

This ritual was created to reproduce an effect that the Elohim could perform effortlessly before the Fall, when the moons and other celestial objects were kept in their courses. This ritual was traditionally used for signaling troops and producing omens for the faithful. Most fallen actually have yet to realize that it can also wreak havoc on international communications these days.

Primary Lore: Lore of Patterns ••••

Secondary Lore: Lore of the Fundament •••

Base Cost: 14

Restrictions: If no suitable orbital object is overhead, there's nothing to affect. The Storyteller is the final arbiter on this point, although if she wants to make it random (and the ritual participants haven't

done their research to say one way or another), there is a 1 in 10 chance. It works best at night, but a large object will be visible during the day.

Minimum Casting Time: 49 minutes

System: Roll Perception + Crafts. Each success past the first allows for a further course change for the meteor, such as a curve or bounce. Four or five successes allows something as complex as a letter or sigil to be traced. As long as the sky is clear of cloud, the meteor is clearly visible over a wide area.

The orbital object can be natural, such as a stone or ball of frozen gas, or unnatural, such as a small satellite. Nothing heavier than 1,000 pounds can be manipulated.

Torment: The high-Torment effect of this evocation instills a feeling of terror and despair in any mortal who witnesses the falling star. Unless a successful Willpower roll is made (difficulty 7), each mortal witness loses one point of temporary Willpower.

VARIATIONS: NONE

TAPESTRY OF LIGHT

This ritual creates a strong material out of light itself, allowing the demon who casts it to create an object that can be of any color desired, including completely invisible. It can also be fashioned as an inexhaustible light source.

Some property of the material precludes a sharp edge on any surface (let alone an infinitely thin edge), so effective slashing weapons cannot be created. It was originally developed for decorative purposes, such as to create intricate fountains in which only the water was visible, though a number of practical applications were subsequently discovered. Among its useful properties is that the material is unaffected by heat and all known acids.

Primary Lore: Lore of Light ••••

Secondary Lore: Lore of the Forge •••; Lore of the Fundament •

Base Cost: 24

Restrictions: The ritual must be conducted within an area defined by reflected light. From mirror to mirror suffices, but laser beams are an attractive and controllable option.

Minimum Casting Time: 64 minutes

System: Roll Intelligence + Crafts. The more successes the player rolls, the more resilient the weave is (granting it an effective Armor value equal to the successes).

The size of the object is not determined by the volume of material created but by the volume in which it fits, so an empty cube requires as much Faith as a solid one. The object must fit within a

spherical diameter equal to the Ankida's Faith score in yards.

Torment: Whatever color is desired, the object seems to emit a subtle strobing effect that causes headaches and dizziness. Mortals who witness the weave's disorienting effects lose one die from their Mental dice pools unless a successful Willpower roll (difficulty 7) is made. This penalty lasts as long as the mortal looks at (or in the general direction of) the material.

Variations: It is said a version exists that is only material with respect to one substance. For example, the resulting object can contain water, but any other material passes through it as if it was no more than a hologram. Even human flesh can be specified (or, separately, the substance of angelic form), leading to interesting possibilities for weapons that ignore armor, and wards that human cannot pass through but fallen in apocalyptic form can. Add Patterns ••.

TIME WATCH

This cruelly demanding ritual was conceived as a means of obtaining a warning of an enemy's actions. What better watchdog than one that reacts to events a full minute before they occur? Of course, for maximum benefit the "watchdog" should be intelligent and articulate. Human beings subject to this rite accompanied dangerous sorties and were kept at sensitive positions such as fortresses and legion headquarters. For the humans themselves it was exhausting and ultimately maddening, but there was still no lack of willing volunteers.

Primary Lore: Lore of Patterns ••••

Secondary Lore: Lore of Humanity •••

Base Cost: 14

Restrictions: The ritual requires a willing participant. The process must be explained to her and she must agree, though subtle forms of misdirection as to the long-term costs of the ritual are allowed. After agreeing once, the subject can be used again without her consent.

Minimum Casting Time: 49 minutes

System: Roll Manipulation + Intuition. The subject remains under the influence of the ritual for an hour per success. The subject is physically present among the casters and can be led, fed, even injured but is unaware of any outside stimulus. She perceives her surroundings and companions as they will be one minute into the future and reacts accordingly. This perception includes all five senses, but does not include her own movements in the near future. Her actions are carefully observed by her "handler" and interpreted for signs of danger.

For the subject, this ritual is disorientating in the extreme. Although she is technically aware of her situation, if she is moved, fed or restrained in real time, she is utterly unable to comprehend it. At most, she is aware that something prevents her from moving. She is equally unable to interact with future time. Her companions do not respond to her, she cannot move things or eat, and although things such as explosions or gunshots do not harm her, they seem completely real. Her reactions, of course, are what her keepers are looking for.

At the expiration of the ritual, the subject is extremely disoriented for a period of time equivalent to the duration of the ritual effect. Make a Wits + Alertness roll (difficulty 7) for the subject; each success reduces the period of disorientation by a half-hour. If the roll botches, she not only remains disoriented, but gains a temporary derangement determined by the Storyteller. Each time she undergoes the ritual, the recovery roll is made at a cumulative +1 difficulty. If the subject ever experiences her own death, she slips into a catatonic state for the duration of the ritual, and at the end, a Willpower roll must be made to see if the character recovers. If the roll fails, the subject dies over a period of two days without regaining consciousness.

Torment: After the ritual has concluded, the recipient is subject to random fluctuations of time — sometimes normal, but up to a minute forward or backward. This side effect lasts for a number of days equal to the Ankida's Torment score.

Variations: It is possible for the Ankida to link her mind to that of the subject (add Firmament ••). The Ankida remains aware of her real time surroundings and can communicate what she sees, but she is otherwise unable to move or act for the duration.

REPLICANT

Replicate is a war ritual used to allow a retreat without the enemy realizing it. The designated combatants are teleported from the midst of the battle to a predetermined site, leaving in their place an illusion of themselves that performs a set of rote actions to keep the enemy distracted long enough to evacuate the entire force.

Primary Lore: Lore of Portals ••••

Secondary Lore: Lore of Light •••; Lore of the Firmament •

Base Cost: 24

Restrictions: The casting of the ritual must be unobserved by those not participating in the ritual. The Ankida must possess a personal token from each person to be evacuated and a name (mortal, Celestial or True Name) for each fallen to be affected.

Minimum Casting Time: 64 minutes

System: Roll Dexterity + Melee. Each success evacuates four individuals from their current location, regardless of range, either into the center of the sigil or to a specified doorway at a remote location. The illusions left in their place resemble them exactly and continue to perform defensive actions for a number of turns equal to the Ankida's Faith score. They cannot injure their opponents, and they disappear if anyone touches them. Otherwise, they remain in place for the duration of the scene.

Torment: The high-Torment effect of this ritual exposes the evacuees to the Ankida's Torment. Each fallen evacuated by the ritual gains one point of temporary Torment unless a successful Willpower roll (difficulty 7) is made. Each mortal evacuated loses one point of temporary Willpower.

Variations: A variation supposedly exists that only permits a retreat within range of sight, but enables the illusions a degree of solidity plus all the statistics of the original combatants. The originals of each illusion must maintain line of sight, and they cannot use lore or engage in combat themselves without losing control of the illusion. Otherwise, the proxy combatants continue to fight until "killed" or for a maximum of one scene. Only one proxy combatant can be created per success by the augmented ritual. Increase Light to ●●●● and add Firmament ●●.

DARKNESS ETERNAL

Where this ritual is performed, no light shines and most other kinds of physical energy transference are disrupted. This ritual counters the flame of the Celestials and the Neberu's own luminescence — it appeared in the closing epochs of the war and was viewed by many as a bitter acknowledgement by its rebel creators of their alienation from their own radiant natures. It nonetheless has tactical advantages and can be made permanent. Bastions were built in accursed realms where all must find their way by touch. Forests of mineral-eating trees were planted and chimera made to stalk there or swim in still, black waters.

Although the forces of Heaven later destroyed most such areas, fragments might still remain in the remote places of the world, waiting to ensnare unfortunate souls who stumble across them.

Primary Lore: Lore of Light ●●●●

Secondary Lore: Lore of the Fundament ●●●●;
Lore of Death ●●

Base Cost: 33

Restrictions: The ritual must be performed on the night of the new moon, in a cave where even starlight cannot reach.

Minimum Casting Time: 121 minutes

System: Roll Stamina + Science. The area affected by the ritual has a radius of 100 yards per success and lasts for a number of days equal to the Ankida's Faith score. From the outside, even a few feet away, the effect is like a solid, black wall.

Light is nonexistent within the area of effect. Sound is dampened within only a few feet of its origin. Heat does not transfer readily, so the region is permeated with an aching cold. The air is still and heavy. If any water found within is too deep or vast to freeze, it moves slowly, like syrup. Electromagnetic radiation is similarly diminished, and no electronics or combustion engines will operate. Any living creature that isn't supernaturally altered to live in such an environment (using the Lore of the Flesh or Lore of the Beast, for example) suffers one health level of lethal damage every day it is exposed to the darkness. Individuals caught within the ritual's area of effect will become disoriented and lost unless a successful Perception + Survival roll (difficulty 8) is made. If the roll fails, the individual will wander aimlessly within the region at the Storyteller's discretion. A new Perception + Survival roll can be made each day thereafter to determine if the individual manages to stumble out of the affected area.

Torment: This ritual came out of the darkest days of the Time of Atrocities. Nonetheless, the agonies of the Abyss can make it worse. The area induces thoughts of madness and terror, wearing away at a victim's sanity. Mortals caught in the area of effect lose one permanent point of Willpower each day they are exposed to the darkness, while demons gain one point of temporary Torment instead.

Variations: None

MALEFACTORS

DISARM

This ritual is of uncertain origin. Some legends say that it was adapted from a chorus performed by heavenly angels to disarm a group of mortals loyal to the fallen. Other sources claim that a Malefactor of the Iron Legion, sick with the slaughter of the Time of Atrocities, developed the ritual as a means of ending conflicts before they could begin.

Primary Lore: Lore of the Forge ●●●

Secondary Lore: Lore of the Fundament ●●

Base Cost: 10

Restrictions: A piece of magnetized iron must be placed in the center of the sigil.

used within the area of effect will botch on a roll of 1, 2 or 3, injuring the operator or nearby individuals. The Storyteller determines the exact nature and effect of the accident caused.

Variations: A variation of this ritual was developed to affect a specific individual instead of an entire area. The Malefactor must know the individual's name and she must be within the ritual's area of effect. Add Humanity ••• to the ritual's secondary role.

RAIN OF BRIMSTONE

This terrible ritual calls down a rain of burning sulfur onto the Ankida's foes.

Primary Lore: Lore of the Earth ••••

Secondary Lore: Lore of Flame ••; Lore of the Winds •

Base Cost: 21

Restrictions: A lump of sulfur, a lump of phosphorous and a lump of iron must be placed in the center of the sigil.

Minimum Casting Time: 49 minutes

System: Roll Stamina + Survival. The total number of successes becomes a bashing damage dice pool that is applied to every person and structure within the affected area of the ritual. The Ankida can pick out any spot she can see within a distance of 100 yards times her Faith score to be the target point of the ritual. Individuals or objects within a radius of 10 yards times the Ankida's Faith score from that target point are affected each turn that the ritual continues. Make a Stamina + Performance roll (difficulty 6) for each of the ritual's participants each successive turn if they wish to continue the ritual.

Torment: The high-Torment effect of this ritual mixes fragments of blazing rock along with the rain of sulfur, setting flammable objects alight and inflicting lethal instead of bashing damage.

Variations: None

AGE LANDSCAPE

The ritual can potentially affect a huge area, changing the geographical characteristics of it in a short period of time. Tens of thousands of years of erosion can be simulated in mere hours. The ritual was used by the fallen to reshape the lands that God had directed to be built and subsequently damaged in His anger.

Primary Lore: Lore of the Earth •••

Secondary Lore: Lore of the Wild ••••; Lore of Death ••

Base Cost: 24

Restrictions: This ritual can be performed only at sunrise or sunset. A lump of sandstone must be placed in the center of the sigil.

Minimum Casting Time: 64 minutes

System: Roll Stamina + Science. The area of effect covers a diameter of 200 yards per success centered around the sigil. The edge of the effect is not sharp, it tapers off for another 100 yards beyond that circle. Each success ages the landscape by approximately 1,000 years. Changes are often not immediately apparent, but any observer can watch the slow shifting of ground and vegetation.

The exact effects depend upon the composition of the bedrock. Caves form, cliffs become steeper, or the ground level simply drop away a few feet. Any vegetation adapts itself to the new landscape, so that it looks like it was always there (although the individual plants do not change, which might cause some of them to be in unsuitable locations for long-term survival).

Torment: The ground is blighted, by weeds and poisonous plants, by crumbling rock and scree, and, if it's wet enough, fetid swamp and quicksand.

Variations: Apparently some rebels developed a variation of this ritual which also undermined structures built on the surface, so as to attack enemy fortifications. Add Fundament •••.

CREATE ELEMENTAL

This powerful ritual allowed the Malefactors to create servants of living stone that acted as servants and sentient siege engines during the war.

Primary Lore: Lore of the Earth •••

Secondary Lore: Lore of Awakening ••, Lore of the Celestials ••; Lore of the Fundament ••

Base Cost: 36

Restrictions: This ritual must be performed in a cavern where sunlight cannot reach. A lump of marble must be placed in the center of the sigil.

Minimum Casting Time: 81 minutes

System: Roll Manipulation + Occult. The ritual creates a living entity formed entirely of fire, with effectively one dot in the following traits: Strength, Dexterity, Stamina, Intelligence, Perception, Wits and Willpower. Each success rolled becomes a dot that the Ankida can allocate to any of these traits or devote to an Ability that she wants the elemental to possess. The elemental can not possess an Ability that the Ankida or any of the Mudo do not possess themselves. The elemental assumes a huge, rocky humanoid shape that can wear armor or carry weapons specially crafted for its massive size. The entity is bound to the Ankida's will, and it will

follow her instructions to the best of its ability. The elemental will exist for the duration of a single scene; if a point of the Ankida's temporary Willpower is spent the elemental will continue to exist until destroyed or released by the Ankida. A fire elemental has 10 health levels for the purposes of withstanding damage, and its huge hands inflict lethal damage in combat.

Torment: The high-Torment version creates a living war machine charged by the Ankida's hatred and driven to torture and kill the living. Only the creature's Physical Attributes can be increased by the Ankida's successes, and only combat-related Abilities (e.g., Alertness, Brawl and Dodge) can be purchased. The creature's body is sheathed in stone-hard skin that provide eight dice of armor protection and its fists inflict aggravated damage instead of lethal. Finally, the Ankida only nominally controls the creature. A Willpower roll (difficulty 8) must be made on the Ankida's behalf each time she attempts to direct the monster's actions. If the roll fails, the creature acts under the Storyteller's control.

Variations: None

SEAL AREA

This potent ritual is one of the foundations of many infernal bastions, sealing all the paths into a region save one or two known only to its owners, thus effectively isolating a stronghold or haven from the rest of the physical world. No one knows how many such hidden fortresses wait to be discovered by enterprising demons across the World of Darkness, or what ancient wonders they still contain.

Primary Lore: Lore of Paths ••••

Secondary Lore: Lore of the Fundament •••, Lore of Portals •••, Lore of the Wild ••

Base Cost: 48

Restrictions: The casting of the ritual must be timed to coincide with the setting of the sun. Additionally, a complete, intact spider web must be laid across the center of the sigil and scattered with droplets of mercury.

Minimum Casting Time: 144 minutes

System: Roll Perception + Survival. The Ankida can seal an area of up to 1,000 square yards per success rolled. A minimum of one path must exist connecting the isolated region to the physical realm, up to a maximum number of paths equal to the Ankida's Faith score. Each of the ritual participants is aware of the location of each remaining path, though the paths may be concealed later using the Conceal Path evocation. The affected area remains isolated for a number of days

equal to the Ankida's Faith score, or can be made permanent by expending a temporary Willpower point per 1,000 square yards of isolated area. These Willpower points can be drawn from any of the ritual participants, Khauikei included.

Torment: The high-Torment version infects the region's remaining pathways with the Ankida's malice. Mortals traveling the paths lose one point of temporary Willpower unless a successful Willpower roll (difficulty 8) is made. Fallen who travel the path gain a point of temporary Torment instead.

Variations: None

SCOURGES

MICHAEL'S SIGHT

This ritual was part of an effort to teach the craft of rituals to humans during the Time of Babel. Although that effort was not successful, the ritual's effect — making solid matter perfectly transparent to the Ankida who performed it — was later studied for its military applications against the Heavenly Host.

Primary Lore: Lore of the Firmament ••

Secondary Lore: Lore of the Realms ••

Base Cost: 8

Restrictions: The ritual must be performed in an area lit well enough to read by.

Minimum Casting Time: 16 minutes

System: Roll Perception + Crafts. The Ankida can see through solid, non-living matter as though it were clear glass. Each success applies the effect to a cubic foot of matter whose perceived volume can be distributed as needed (for example, a six inch x two foot x one foot pane in a brick wall that is six inches thick), anywhere within the Ankida's sight. The effect lasts for a number of turns equal to the Ankida's Faith score.

Torment: The high-Torment effect of this ritual causes the Ankida to see hallucinations that feed the character's paranoia. The demon might see a group of Earthbound thralls laying an ambush for her, or she might see one of her thralls meeting secretly with her worst rival. The Storyteller should choose a hallucination appropriate to the character's personality and the situation, and present the vision as though the character were really seeing it.

Variations: With the addition of Longing ••, this ritual works as a warning, extending to an area 50 feet beyond the perimeter of the sigil. Whenever anyone who wishes the Ankida harm comes into this area, any solid matter between them becomes transparent to her sight, the window moving as required. As many as one enemy can be viewed per success rolled, and the effect lasts half an hour per Faith point.

DUST SWARM

The ritual creates a swirling storm of dust motes and gives it a strange semblance of life. As well as obscuring vision, the individual motes swarm like insects, attempting to drain living beings of their blood.

Primary Lore: Lore of Awakening ●●●

Secondary Lore: Lore of the Earth ●●

Base Cost: 10

Restrictions: The ritual area must be dry enough for dust to rise.

Minimum Casting Time: 25 minutes

System: Roll Stamina + Animal Ken. Enough dust is created to fill a hemisphere with a radius in yards equal to the number of successes rolled. These successes also affect how much blood the swarm can consume. The center of the hemisphere can be anywhere within the Ankida's line of sight. Anyone caught within the cloud is immediately beset by the swarming motes, and suffers one health level of bashing damage per turn of exposure. Clothing might provide a certain degree of protection depending upon the amount of skin exposed and its looseness, since the dust will attempt to fly inside sleeves and collars. Ordinary trousers and a long-sleeved shirt would be worth an equivalent of one die of armor, while heavier clothing with narrow access inside the neck and along the limbs would be worth two dice.

Because of the amount of dust initially created, vision is restricted to no more than a few yards, and any sight checks made by those caught within it have a difficulty modifier of -3.

There is no time constraint on the duration of the swarm. It will keep attacking until it is scattered by an external force (such as a strong wind), or until it has sated itself on blood. If it has no one to attack, it will drift with the wind (the swarm has a perception range of 20 yards, and a Dexterity of 3 if attempting to give chase to anyone). Once the swarm has inflicted a number of unsoaked health levels of damage equal to five times the number of successes rolled for the ritual effect, the swarm dissipates.

The swarm is vulnerable to area effect attacks. It has a Stamina of 1 for soak purposes, and only three health levels. How much is affected by the attack depends upon the area. If anyone manages to capture or "kill" it, she will discover that it is indeed ordinary dust. It will not attack the active participants of the ritual that created it.

Torment: The Ankida's Torment causes the swarm to inflict lethal instead of bashing damage, and it will

attack any living thing, including the participants in the ritual.

Variations: None

VACUUM

With an understanding of the movement and decay of particles, it is possible for a small sphere to be created that is as close to void as physically possible. This sphere can be moved and manipulated by the Ankida until it is released, at which point it has all the physical effects of a vacuum on its surroundings. It was used to create extremely strong joints in structures, locks even an angel could not break and a form of booby trap.

Primary Lore: Lore of the Winds ●●●

Secondary Lore: Lore of Death ●●

Base Cost: 10

Restrictions: The ritual area must be as clean as possible, down to removing pollutants and dust particles from the air. Some Scourges use an electrostatic filter system for this purpose.

Minimum Casting Time: 25 minutes

System: Roll Dexterity + Survival. The diameter of the sphere is up to one foot across per success rolled.

The sphere remains inert until the Ankida releases it. In the interim she can walk and talk but perform no evocations or engage in any demanding activity such as combat. When the Ankida is manipulating the sphere, treat it as a solid object. It cannot pass through solid matter or be crushed or distorted. If it is being used to create a joint or lock, heavy glass or metal hemispheres must be prepared so the sphere can be placed inside and then released. If it is being used as a weapon, the sphere can be set to release when struck. Upon release, the vacuum causes an implosion that inflicts a number of health levels of bashing damage equal to the successes rolled.

Torment: The sphere collapses immediately and has a random radius of effect. Roll a number of dice equal to the Ankida's Torment score. The radius of the sphere (and the damage inflicted) specified by the demon is multiplied by the number of successes. If no successes are rolled, the sphere keeps the dimensions determined by the Ankida.

Variations: There was a variation that remained inert until a preset condition was met (add Patterns ●●●). Such spheres could be huge, and they might have survived to this day in hidden bastions.

RAIN OF FROGS

The origins of this ritual are lost, but its persistence in human legend suggests its purpose was to bewilder and distract those who witness it. It is

possibly derived from a creation ritual that populated an area with animal life in the manner of a farmer scattering seed.

Primary Lore: Lore of the Winds •••

Secondary Lore: Lore of the Beast •••; Lore of Awakening ••

Base Cost: 24

Restrictions: At least two frogs of complementary sexes are required to perform the ritual. The humidity of the air within the sigil must be at least 70%, although this can be achieved artificially.

System: Roll Stamina + Animal Ken. Each success creates a cubic yard of frogs for aerial distribution. The frogs are actually brewed in the air, a combination of living creatures and the pure idea of multiplying frogs. The number of successes also determines the distance they can be transported, each one equaling a mile. The Ankida controls the area of the rain of frogs — for greatest impact a restricted area is advised. The velocity of the falling frogs is automatically such that they can survive the fall, and they cause no damage upon impact. The duration of the rain is only a matter of minutes, but the consequences will be hopping around indefinitely.

Minimum Casting Time: 64 minutes

Torment: The frogs secrete a toxin that can harm or even kill people who come into contact with them. The usual symptoms include spreading paralysis and difficult breathing. Victims who handle the frogs suffer one level of bashing damage unless a successful Stamina roll (difficulty 8) is made each hour after exposure. The effects of the toxin last for a number of hours equal to the Ankida's Torment score.

Variations: The variety of creatures that this ritual can be adapted for is limited only by size. A frog is pretty much the maximum weight. Rats of worms, spiders and even fish have all been rumored at one time or another.

CREATE ELEMENTAL

This powerful ritual allowed the Scourges to create living servants from the very air itself, serving the Angels of the Firmament in a variety of minor roles.

Primary Lore: Lore of the Winds •••

Secondary Lore: Lore of Awakening ••, Lore of the Celestials ••; Lore of the Fundament ••

Base Cost: 36

Restrictions: This ritual must be performed under the light of a full moon, on a cloudy, windy night. A handful of feathers must be placed in the center of the sigil.

Minimum Casting Time: 81 minutes

System: Roll Manipulation + Occult. The ritual creates a living entity formed entirely of air, with effectively one dot in the following traits: Strength, Dexterity, Stamina, Intelligence, Perception, Wits and Willpower. Each success rolled becomes a dot that the Ankida can allocate to any of these traits, or devote to an Ability that she wants the elemental to possess. The elemental can not possess an Ability that the Ankida or any of the Mudu do not possess themselves. The elemental can alter its shape and appearance at will, able to travel anywhere air can reach. The entity is bound to the Ankida's will, and will follow her instructions to the best of its ability. The elemental will exist for the duration of a single scene; if a point of the Ankida's temporary Willpower is spent the elemental will continue to exist until destroyed or released by the Ankida. An air elemental effectively has four health levels for the purposes of withstanding damage, but because of its fluid nature the difficulty of all attempts to hit it increases by two.

Torment: The high-Torment version of this ritual creates a monster that exists only to hunt and kill the living. Only the creature's Physical Attributes can be increased by the Ankida's successes, and only combat-related Abilities (e.g., Alertness, Brawl and Dodge) can be purchased. The touch of the monster cuts like a blade, inflicting lethal damage in combat. Finally, the Ankida only nominally controls the creature. A Willpower roll (difficulty 8) must be made on the Ankida's behalf each time she attempts to direct the monster's actions. If the roll fails, the creature acts under the Storyteller's control.

Variations: None

PLAGUE OF BOILS

This ritual was devised by Scourges of the Ebon Legion to punish mortal villages who supported the Heavenly Host, smiting them with an agonizing plague of boils until they recanted their allegiance and returned to the fallen.

Primary Lore: Lore of the Flesh ••••

Secondary Lore: Lore of Radiance •••; Lore of Patterns •••; Lore of Awakening •

Base Cost: 44

Restrictions: At least one example of the target group must be within line of sight of the ritual.

System: Roll Perception + Medicine. The plague can affect a number of people up to 10 times the number of successes rolled. The target group can be defined as anything from worshippers of a particular Earthbound up to every living human being. Initially, only those within sight are stricken, and the plague

must be transmitted from them to subsequent victims like any other illness.

The difficulty to resist the disease is 10 (see page 262 of the **Demon** core rules), and the onset of symptoms is usually delayed by two to three days, although it is contagious immediately. Successfully making the Stamina roll to resist the disease means that the individual is immune to further infections.

The Stamina and Dexterity of victims inflicted by the condition each decrease by two, and all dice pools decrease by one because of the painful boils. Normal medical protocols will not offer any respite to the symptoms, and attempts at supernatural healing are performed at +2 difficulty. Each person is affected for a number of days equal to the Ankida's Faith score, after which point a new Stamina roll (difficulty 10) can be made to see if they recover from the illness. The difficulty of the roll decreases by one with each subsequent roll. Even when they do recover, the scars from the boils remain (possibly affecting their Appearance), unless healed by supernatural means. The disease is spread to other victims through physical contact with an infected person. An hour of interaction with an infected individual is enough to spread the contagion.

The participants in the ritual are not immune, if they belong to the category that is vulnerable to the infection.

Torment: The high-Torment form of this disease inflicts one health level of bashing damage each day that cannot be soaked in addition to the dice pool listed penalties.

Variations: It is said that a version exists that causes spiders to burst from the boils. Add Beasts ●●●.

SLAINERS

SHADOW DARK

This ritual creates an area of darkness that is more akin to a shadowy reflection of the spirit realm than a simple lack of light. It is not perfect darkness — light sources remain but lack the strength to illuminate other objects. Strange shapes seem to glide by on the darkness. Distances seem distorted, and there is a faint moaning that somehow seems to overshadow most other sound. Even people who are normally used to working blind are affected.

Primary Lore: Lore of the Realms ●●

Secondary Lore: Lore of Light ●●

Base Cost: 8

Restrictions: If the ritual is not cast at dawn or twilight, the difficulty increases by one.

Minimum Casting Time: 16 minutes

System: Roll Perception + Awareness. The ritual affects an area with a radius of three yards times the Ankida's Faith score, centered around a point within the Ankida's line of sight. The effect lasts three minutes per point of the Ankida's Faith score.

Anyone within the area suffers a modifier of +3 to the difficulty of all actions that interact with physical objects. A successful Willpower roll (difficulty 8) means the person has resisted the distractions of the environment (assuming they think to do so) for up to three turns, and the penalty decreases to +2. Conversely, a blind person or a person trained in Blind Fighting (see page 240 of the **Demon** core rules for details), can further reduce this penalty by one (+1 normally, no penalty if a subsequent Willpower roll succeeds), when trying to perform a familiar task.

If participants in the ritual donate three points of temporary Willpower, the effect becomes permanent.

Variations: By adding Transfiguration ●●, it is said that the ritual can make people within it lose awareness of their own bodily form, which seems to shift and distort with everything else. This adds another +2 to the difficulty of actions (the same Willpower role halves this modifier).

SPIRIT GARDEN

This ritual was one of the first ones designed to protect human spirits from the pull of oblivion, designed even before the higher evocations of the Lore of the Spirit had been formulated. It was not particularly successful, as loyalist Angels of Death could easily sense the garden thus created, and the soul was bound to a fragile bloom that was easily crushed.

Primary Lore: Lore of the Spirit ●●

Secondary Lore: Lore of the Wild ●●

Base Cost: 8

Restrictions: A recently dead body, a garden in which the flower can grow, and nightfall.

Minimum Casting Time: 16 minutes

System: Roll Charisma + Survival. If the number of successes is greater than the target's Willpower, her spirit is caught within the garden, blooming as a flower. The effect remains as long as the flower is in bloom, but if it is plucked or it wilts, then the soul is lost. Each Faith point gives the flower an extra day of life, but after that, nature takes its course (so it is more effective cast in spring than winter). Note that the effect cannot be made permanent (like Spirit ●●●●), but it can defer matters until a better solution is found.

The exact type of flower depends upon the individual (at Storyteller's discretion).

Torment: The flower is black and poisonous, leaching all sustenance from the soil around it and slowly wilting plant-life within a radius of one yard per Faith point.

Variations: A rather different use of this ritual can be made with the addition of Death •. If the flower is eaten by a demon, then the last hours of the human's life can be viewed (one hour per Faith point), and the spirit is lost. The resistance of the spirit to this process adds one to the difficulty of the Charisma + Survival roll.

VISIT SOUL PRISON

This ritual allows the Ankida to visit and converse with a soul trapped within a physical object, usually as a result of Anchor the Soul (Spirit ••••) or the Soul Prison ritual. Once inside, the demon can remain as long as she wants and leave at will, either into the material world or the spirit world.

Primary Lore: Lore of the Realms ••

Secondary Lore: Lore of Paths ••; Lore of Portals ••

Base Cost: 18

Restrictions: The Ankida must possess a favorite or often-worn token of the trapped soul — a wedding ring, a wristwatch or a pipe, for example.

Minimum Casting Time: 36 minutes

System: Roll Perception + Awareness. If the spirit does not wish the demon to enter the prison a contested Willpower roll to counter the effect (difficulty 7) can be made. The ritual creates a virtual "room" that both demon and mortal can interact in and that engages all five of the senses. The two spirits can see, hear, speak, smell and touch, and the "room" can be altered in any way the Ankida wishes, becoming a garden one moment or a fiery furnace the next.

Torment: The presence of the demon ruptures the object in which the spirit is kept, and it might break it. Roll as many dice as the Ankida's Torment score. Each success inflicts one health level of damage to the object, unless it is a powerful item (Storyteller discretion). In addition, the spirit itself suffers great pain and tries to resist the visitation as much as it can.

Variations: A variation of this ritual preys on the trapped spirit's memories to craft the environment of the ritual's "meeting room." This taste of the familiar is useful for putting the spirit more at ease and making it more willing to communicate, as well as providing a powerful incentive to persuade

the spirit to cooperate with any future endeavors. Add Longing ••.

PRISON OF FLESH

This ritual holds the soul of a human body within her own body, in much the same way as the Anchor the Soul evocation (Spirit •••••) can trap a spirit within an object. It can return a newly deceased spirit to its original home or even be cast on someone who is still alive.

Once held, the soul cannot interact with the outside world — it is effectively trapped in a prison of flesh. Whether or not the body was alive or dead, it enters a state where it has no bodily functions, yet the body does not decay.

This ritual was used to protect the souls of the dying or recent dead and allow them to return to their body at a later time. The evocation Restore the Dead (Spirit •••••) was originally used on people affected by this ritual (in which case its effect is automatically permanent).

Primary Lore: Lore of the Spirit •••

Secondary Lore: Lore of the Flesh •••; Lore of Death ••

Base Cost: 24

Restrictions: The blood of the recipient must be mixed in with the pigment or material creating the sigil.

Minimum Casting Time: 64 minutes

System: Roll Stamina + Awareness. The target can resist the effects of the ritual with a resisted Willpower roll (difficulty 7). The effect lasts a number of months equal to the successes rolled. Three Willpower points can be donated by participants of the ritual to make the ritual effect permanent.

Torment: The ritual works, but the body starts decaying three times faster than its natural rate, and it resists attempts to preserve it (through freezing, mummification, etc.).

Variations: A more fearsome version of this ritual was created later, which holds the soul but sets the body on fire without consuming it. The only sensation the soul can feel is the pain of burning alive. Keeping the body in water, or similar measures, will douse the flames temporarily and provide a measure of relief. Add Flame •••.

INCARNATE SPIRIT

This ritual was devised by the Slayers to permit grieving mortals to briefly visit with the spirits of the departed.

Primary Lore: Lore of the Spirit •••

Secondary Lore: Lore of the Flesh ••, Lore of the Realms ••

**Base Cost:** 21

Restrictions: This ritual can be performed only on the night of the new moon.

Minimum Casting Time: 49 minutes

System: Roll Intelligence + Occult. The number of successes required depends on the thickness of the barrier between the realms in the ritual area. A relatively weak area, such as a graveyard or a church, might require only one success, while a relatively strong area such as a science lab might require as many as four successes. If the roll succeeds the Ankida can incarnate as many spirits as her Faith score. These spirits can be seen and communicated with, and they can even interact with the physical world as though they were flesh and blood, though they are physically weak and frail. Each incarnate spirit has effectively one dot in each of her Physical Attributes, though her Mental and Social Attributes are the same as they were when she was alive (as determined by the Storyteller). If the incarnate spirit suffers a single health level of damage, be it bashing, lethal or aggravated, the body discorporates. In this quasi-physical form, the spirit cannot use any supernatural powers it possesses (see page 55 of the *Demon Storytellers Companion* for details).

Torment: The high-Torment version of this ritual infuses the incarnate spirit with some of the Ankida's hate and malevolence, causing it to behave maliciously toward mortals in its presence. If communicated with, it is intentionally hurtful and deceitful, and will try to find ways to injure or kill living beings in its proximity.

Variations: None

CREATE SPECTER

This ritual creates a deadly form of undead creature that is invulnerable to most weapons and can decay flesh with a touch. These creatures were occasionally used by the Alabaster Legion as shock troops in rare assaults against angelic prison cities during the Age of Atrocities.

Primary Lore: Lore of Death ●●●●●

Secondary Lore: Lore of the Flesh ●●●; Lore of the Spirit ●●; Lore of the Winds ●●

Base Cost: 48

Restrictions: The ritual requires the heart of a man who died by violence.

Minimum Casting Time: 144 minutes

System: Roll Stamina + Medicine. A walking-dead creature has only one point in each of its Physical Attributes upon creation, but each success

can be used to add additional points in any Physical Attributes, at your discretion. These creatures do not suffer wound penalties in combat, using their full dice pools at all times. They must suffer no less than 10 health levels of damage before being destroyed. Undead minions are mindless automatons, acting solely according to your demon's will. Each time the Ankida wishes the specter to perform an action, make a Willpower roll (difficulty 7). A failed roll causes the specter to continue the last action it was commanded to perform.

Alternatively, the Ankida can program a specter to perform a rote set of instructions; one action per dot of Wits that the Ankida possesses, all by spending a temporary Willpower point. Since these instructions are transmitted mentally, it's possible to create a detailed set of commands, including complicated travel routes and detailed physical descriptions. Once programmed, however, a minion cannot be given further commands. If the Ankida uses her Willpower to command the minion to perform an action outside the realm of its instructions, its programming is lost.

The specter is immune to attack by mundane physical weapons (bullets, knives, etc.), although fire, silver, enchanted or blessed weapons inflict half damage against it. Any damage the specter inflicts removes health levels permanently, unless powerful supernatural healing is used (such as Awakening ●●●).

Torment: If not programmed with a rote set of instructions, these creatures go into a violent frenzy unless their creator makes a successful Willpower roll (difficulty 8) each turn. This Willpower roll is in addition to any rolls to impose commandments from action to action.

Variations: Reports from the war suggest that some versions of this creature were created imbued with an aura of flame. This not only increased the damage they inflicted but made them immune to fire as well. Add Flame ●●●.

FATE OF THE FIRSTBORN

One of the most potent rituals conceived, Fate of the Firstborn was first used as a punishment on the human city of Dumishal, when it was discovered that the city representatives were trying to negotiate with both the rebel and the loyalist Host. Although designed by Archduke Abaddon of the Ebon Legion, it was Azrael, the Alabaster Legion's highest-ranked Slayer, who led the ritual. Azrael claimed that the members of his House had loved the citizens of Dumishal as much as any of the humans, and so it was love that would admonish the straying child.

The first born children of Dumishal died, and Azrael wept even as he looked upon what he had wrought and declared that it was good.

Primary Lore: Lore of Death ●●●

Secondary Lore: Lore of the Celestials ●●●; Lore of Patterns ●●●; Lore of Radiance ●●

Base Cost: 48

Minimum Casting Time: 144 minutes

Restrictions: An urn containing lamb's blood must be placed in the center of the sigil. If not cast during a solar or lunar eclipse, the difficulty increases by two.

System: Roll Stamina + Awareness. Each success kills up to 10 mortal children across the targeted town or city. Each victim must be in the city at the time, be the first born son of his parents and have at least one parent currently within the city as well. Other than that, the selection is random (as determined by the Storyteller).

Torment: The ritual kills the same amount of people, but selects the nearest living beings rather than those matching any particular criteria. For example, if nine successes are rolled, then the 90 closest people to the ritual — including the participants themselves — automatically die. Only fallen with a greater Faith and a greater or equal Torment than the successes rolled are immune to the effect. Demons affected by this ritual are still able to find new bodies, but they cannot choose from those affected by the ritual.

Variations: None

BASTIONS OF FAITH

Of all angelic rituals, those that created and enhanced the mighty fortresses of the rebels are among the most enduring examples of fallen power, creativity and control. In the time before the war, some angels built glass castles on the moon, and other palaces beyond human sight, such as in the depths of the oceans. These were constructions coaxed by lore from the natural materials and circumstances of terrain. They were meeting points for the angels and places of solace where they could enjoy the beauty of creation in the exercise of their own whims. The bastions that rose after the creation of the legions, however, were built with very different priorities.

What demon does not at some level recall their names? Dread Dūāḏēl, fortress of the Ebon Legion; the smoking chimneys of Tab'ar'er' and above all Genhinom of the nine circles, city of cities, shrine of shrines. These fortress-palaces openly proclaimed

the rebel's power and inspired the worship of humanity. The foundations of these and many others were laid without rituals, but were physical structures, no more than the Heavenly Host achieved with the stone maze of Sagun or the walls of Machonon, even though these were enhanced with the Lore of Flame.

With the development of infernal rituals walls could be made of flame. They could be fashioned of solid light, or they might rise from the earth as forged steel within a single day. Their inner sanctums could be placed out of the world entirely and tended by servitors of air. Although the construction of bastions was the Malefactors' especial pride, all Houses contributed. Each new creation was unique in its beauties, its defensive properties and the terrors it contained.

THE PALACE OF SIGHS

"Wherever it is forbidden to tread, you shall walk. Whatever is prohibited to utter, you will speak. Whatever is taboo, you will revel in." So Lucifer charged the Silver Legion; so Belphegor the Defiler acted. She designed her palace to house her flock and assist her experiments upon them.

The palace was constructed from the crater of a volcano, sealed off for her convenience. The rock walls were hardened and sharpened to razor points at their height. Between them shimmered a continual storm of fire, lightning and poison vapor, creating a veil of deadly rainbows. Within was a hundred square miles of fertile land and a sparkling lake which the wings and colonnades of flesh-colored stone embraced in graceful curves. Down through the earth they went and up into the walls, until the entire demesne was truly her palace. It would seem beautiful, until the observer smelled the rank scent on the wind, heard the cries rising from the fields and pavilions, and noticed the strange devices and the real composition of the building at the crater's center.

Belphegor tested the ability of humans to pass traits on to their offspring. She designed rituals to expedite and influence the process. Her flock included prodigies of beauty and strength, the dreadfully deformed and half-bestial chimeras, all retaining the human capacity for faith. Although the storm and the strength of its walls were the palace's main defense, she also bred humans for battle and housed these forces in the lower reaches of the walls.

Below the surface of the crater were levels that were not for humans, in which no human could survive. These were for the extreme edges of the

Defiler's pleasure, and also formed an inner defensive ring of tracts of fire, acid and freezing cold. Beyond these were her own chambers where only her most trusted allies were entertained, and who reported marvels of sculpture and arrangements of light and shade and color into living paintings in which the guest participated.

Such was the Palace of Sighs, destroyed so thoroughly by the Heavenly Host that the volcano itself was rubble scattering a plain of ash.

ERRESH

Not all bastions were built in plain sight. It is certain that every visible sign of the rebellion was razed after the demons were consigned to Hell. But even of Dûdâël and Kâsdejâ, the subterranean heart of the Alabaster Legion, it is possible that a concealed chamber survives even to this day. The rebels were inventive to the end and the Host had proved fallible many times. It is not hard to imagine a baron of the Ebon Legion creating a sanctuary for her favorite weapon, in the stubborn belief that she would escape the Creator's judgment and return to reclaim it. And who even of its masters knew the full extent of the crypts of Kâsdejâ?

To survive the aeons, such a sanctuary would have to have been constructed in stable ground — although immune to temperature change and the rise and fall of sea levels, even demon work would eventually succumb to volcanic or tectonic forces. Perhaps the most likely place to find a hidden bastion surviving is deep within the moon. But a sanctuary constructed outside the physical world in the borders of the shadow lands would be immune to such dangers. The difficulty lies in finding the door.

Erresh was a tiny fief that the Devourer Ekishnugal nonetheless tended with love and care, preserving her human flock and the carnivorous plants that were her delight. It was set amidst vast plains existing to the south of the globe. At one time a celestial outpost had stood here, an attempt to keep a human tribe safe and untainted, but city and tribe had for the most part been destroyed. Ekishnugal used her plants to clear the bodies and feed the survivors in the now blasted land, for the waste of the battlefield wounded her spirit. Her new devotees built underground, and she and her allies among the Malefactors and Scourges reinforced the rooms and passages so they would not decay and would pass unnoticed. Ekishnugal deliberately left Erresh as the war drew toward its end and met her fate far away. Her flock abandoned it after a few generations in superstitious fear. But as the continents and climate shifted, and what was above

became first the fertile plains and then the barren deserts of Africa, Erresh survived. The rooms are always pleasantly cool, supplied with fresh air and water. In chambers that cycle through day and night bizarre plants grow, and sometimes shuffle through the passages in search of pollinating partners. In some chambers, dancing clouds of dust continually generate live flies, and fountains swarms of tiny frogs. No human has even a legendary recollection of this place, but directly above lies an oasis that never fails and is home to unique species of bladderwort, sundew and pitcher plant.

CONSTRUCTING BASTIONS

Infernal bastions were normally created by a cascading series of rituals, the first of which would be a template of the design, around which potent defenses and increasingly disturbing adornments were wrought. It took some time for the common characteristics to be worked into a ritual form that could be cast (comparatively) quickly upon a new location.

Presented here are some of the rituals that were most commonly used to create strongholds for the fallen. Some are within reach of the fallen today, and perhaps even the great bastions might rise again in time, casting their shadows over the modern cities of the world.

BASIC BASTION TEMPLATE

This ritual brings into being a bastion that can be of any size (depending upon the contributed Faith). It has areas within it not properly bound by physical dimensions, and the doors open only for those sworn to follow its commander. The walls are pulled up from the bedrock, and the ritual renders them inviolable to all but by the mightiest of attacks. The great doors are counterbalanced steel, many tons in weight, which can be swung open or shut at the commander's thought.

The primary considerations as to where this ritual is performed are usually geographical and tactical (although the ritual does tend to create its own mountain side).

Primary Lore: Lore of the Forge ●●●●

Secondary Lore: Lore of the Earth ●●●; Lore of the Realms ●●●; Lore of Portals ●●

Base Cost: 48

Restrictions: The fallen can enact this ritual only during a large earthquake.

Minimum Casting Time: 144 minutes

System: Roll Strength + Crafts. The ritual can hollow out as much as 1,000 cubic yards of stone or earth per point of the Ankida's Faith

score. Each success on the roll adds two points to the Armor value of the walls or 100 cubic yards to the volume. In addition, the interior volume is twice that possible given its external dimensions. The Ankida can shape the internal layout as she sees fit, even creating furnishings from the walls, ceiling and floors.

Torment: Every surface of the bastion, both interior and exterior, is given a surface rough enough to cause damage, even if one just brushes against it. Any contact can inflict one level of lethal damage.

CITADEL

This is a much less impressive version of the previous ritual, as it creates a small citadel within an existing cliff-face or hilltop. The rock walls are somewhat tougher than might be expected. It does have the ability for the commander to shut the external door—or all doors—with a thought, as per the Create Ward evocation (Portals ●●).

Note that furnishings are not provided.

Primary Lore: Lore of the Forge ●●●

Secondary Lore: Lore of the Earth ●●; Lore of Portals ●●

Base Cost: 21

Restrictions: The area of the fortress is determined by the extent of the sigil, which must be inscribed in the rock around the base of the citadel (even if it is deep underground).

Minimum Casting Time: 49 minutes

System: Roll Strength + Crafts. The ritual can hollow out as much as 500 cubic yards per point of the Ankida's Faith. Each success on the roll adds to the Armor value of the walls or adds 100 cubic yards to the volume. Again, the Ankida determines the layout of the structure.

Torment: Every surface of the bastion, both interior and exterior, is given a surface rough enough to cause damage, even if just brushed against. Any contact can inflict one point of bashing damage.

REFUGE

This is a yet more subtle version of the bastion ritual, in that the interior space is held within a dimension separate from physical reality. The space created is small, and the door can be any pre-existing portal. A word or gesture can be defined as the key that allows passage through the portal and into the refuge. At the Ankida's option, a second portal within 300 yards can be specified which acts solely as an exit.

Primary Lore: Lore of the Forge ●●●

Secondary Lore: Lore of Portals ●●●; Lore of the Realms ●●

Base Cost: 24

Restrictions: An area must be found where the Veil between the Realms is already weak (see page 52 of the *Demon Storytellers Companion* for details).

Minimum Casting Time: 64 minutes

System: Roll Wits + Awareness. Each success gives the Ankida more control over the space. At one success, it is simply a spherical void; three successes provide visible walls and allow the space to be shaped with right angles. Five successes allows internal walls of varying substances, and ornamentation. Still more detail is provided at higher levels.

The volume of the space is 50 cubic yards per point of the Ankida's Faith, although successes from the roll can be used to add an extra 10 cubic yards rather than better definition.

The duration of the bastion is one week per point of Faith. The donation of 10 temporary Willpower points from the ritual participants makes it permanent.

Torment: The extra-dimensional space becomes a beacon for negative emotions and harmful spirits, who haunt the inhabitants and those in the real world nearby.



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DEMON *the fallen*

Name:
Player:
Chronicle:

Nature:
Demeanor:
Concept:

House:
Faction:
Visage:

ATTRIBUTES

PHYSICAL

Strength _____ ●○○○○
Dexterity _____ ●○○○○
Stamina _____ ●○○○○

SOCIAL

Charisma _____ ●○○○○
Manipulation _____ ●○○○○
Appearance _____ ●○○○○

MENTAL

Perception _____ ●○○○○
Intelligence _____ ●○○○○
Wits _____ ●○○○○

ABILITIES

TALENTS

Alertness _____ ○○○○○
Athletics _____ ○○○○○
Awareness _____ ○○○○○
Brawl _____ ○○○○○
Dodge _____ ○○○○○
Empathy _____ ○○○○○
Expression _____ ○○○○○
Intimidation _____ ○○○○○
Intuition _____ ○○○○○
Leadership _____ ○○○○○
Streetwise _____ ○○○○○
Subterfuge _____ ○○○○○

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Animal Ken _____ ○○○○○
Crafts _____ ○○○○○
Demolitions _____ ○○○○○
Drive _____ ○○○○○
Etiquette _____ ○○○○○
Firearms _____ ○○○○○
Melee _____ ○○○○○
Performance _____ ○○○○○
Security _____ ○○○○○
Stealth _____ ○○○○○
Survival _____ ○○○○○
Technology _____ ○○○○○

KNOWLEDGES

Academics _____ ○○○○○
Computer _____ ○○○○○
Finance _____ ○○○○○
Investigation _____ ○○○○○
Law _____ ○○○○○
Linguistics _____ ○○○○○
Medicine _____ ○○○○○
Occult _____ ○○○○○
Politics _____ ○○○○○
Religion _____ ○○○○○
Research _____ ○○○○○
Science _____ ○○○○○

ADVANTAGES

BACKGROUNDS

_____ ○○○○○
_____ ○○○○○
_____ ○○○○○
_____ ○○○○○
_____ ○○○○○

LORE

_____ ○○○○○
_____ ○○○○○
_____ ○○○○○
_____ ○○○○○
_____ ○○○○○

VIRTUES

Conscience _____ ●○○○○
Conviction _____ ●○○○○
Courage _____ ●○○○○

MERITS AND FLAWS

FAITH

○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

TORMENT

Permanent
○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
Temporary
○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

WILLPOWER

○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

HEALTH

Bruised
Hurt
Injured -1
Wounded -2
Mauled -2
Crippled -5
Incapacitated

EXPERIENCE



Apocalyptic Form

Appearance

Low-Torment Abilities

High-Torment Abilities

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Additional Lore Paths

Rituals

_____	OOOOO	_____
_____	OOOOO	_____
_____	OOOOO	_____
_____	OOOOO	_____
_____	OOOOO	_____
_____	OOOOO	_____
_____	OOOOO	_____
_____	OOOOO	_____
_____	OOOOO	_____
_____	OOOOO	_____

Petics

Name

Type

Activation Cost

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Pacts

Name

Gifts

Offered Faith

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____



Expanded Background

Allies

Contacts

Eminence

Fame

Followers

Influence

Legacy

Mentor

Pacts

Paragon

Resources

Other

Possessions

Gear (Carried)

Equipment (Owned)

Vehicles

Bastions

Location

Description

Combat

Weapon	Damage	Range	Rate	Clip	Concent

Armor





Faction Notes

Court Notes

History
The War

Prelude

Mortal Appearance

Age _____

Place of Birth _____

Hair _____

Eyes _____

Height _____

Weight _____

Sex _____

Race _____

Nationality _____

Distinguishing Characteristics (scars, tattoos, etc.) _____



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the fallen



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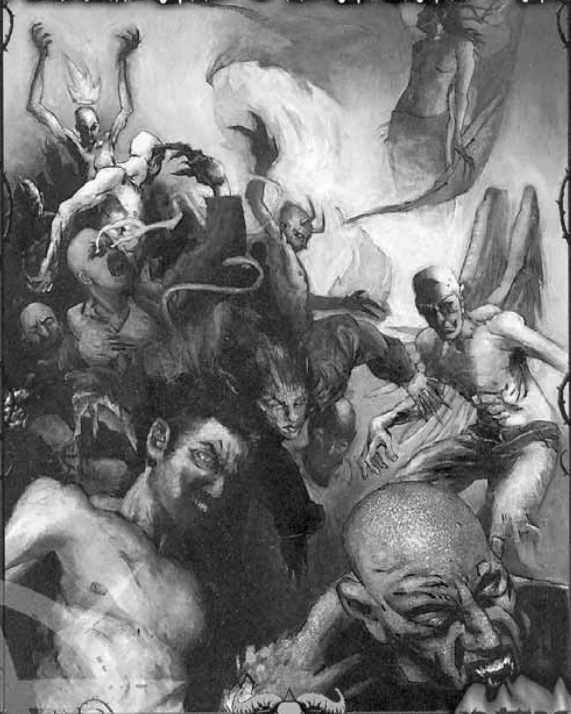
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COMING NEXT...

DAMNED GENIE DECEIVED



DEMON
the fallen

NO PULSE.
NO RESPIRATION.

NO PEARLY GATES.
NO TUNNEL OF LIGHT.

THIS IS NOT DEATH,
THIS IS NOT LIFE,

THIS IS...

ORPHEUS

Don't look back.

THIS SUMMER.

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