



INFERNUM

BOOK OF THE CONQUEROR

VOLUME III

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BOOK OF THE CONQUEROR

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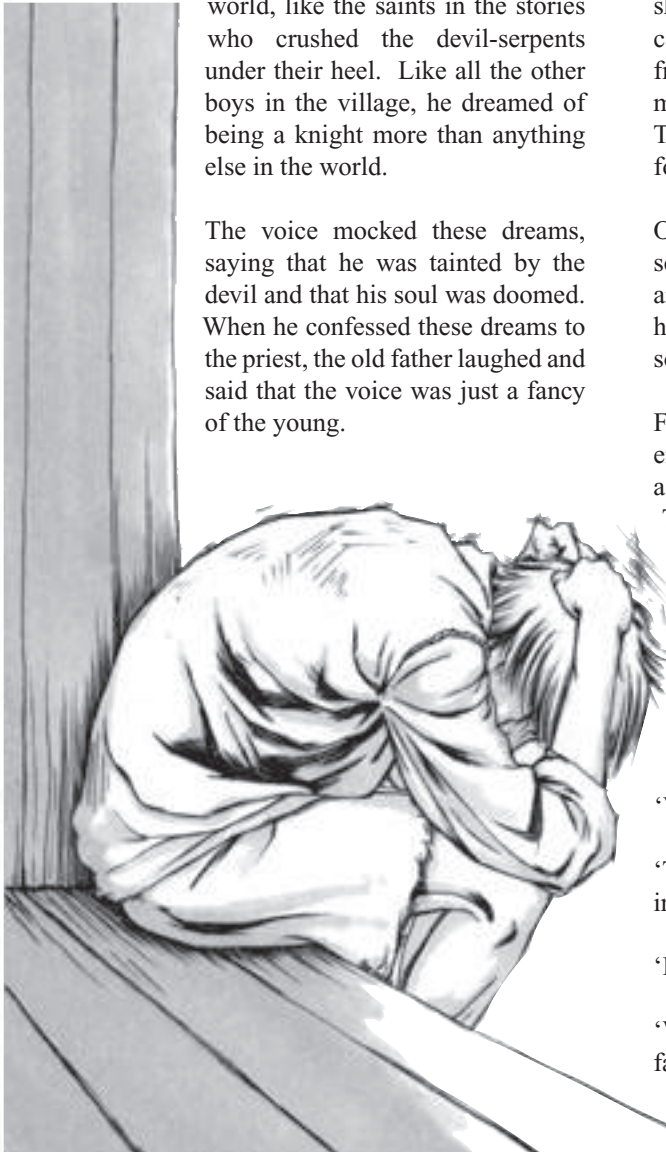
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THE CONQUEROR

Cale had a voice in his head. The priest said that everyone had a voice, that of their guardian angel, and that it would tell them right from wrong. Cale's voice spoke of power, conquest and enslaving others. Once he told the other children in the village of his voice, and they had bullied him for it.

Once the village children had gathered wood for the fire and fed the animals and done all the other things that there were to do in the village, they would fight with sticks and play at being knights. Cale had seen a knight once, in the town at feast-day. He wore shining armour and rode a great charger and seemed the proudest and greatest hero in all the world, like the saints in the stories who crushed the devil-serpents under their heel. Like all the other boys in the village, he dreamed of being a knight more than anything else in the world.

The voice mocked these dreams, saying that he was tainted by the devil and that his soul was doomed. When he confessed these dreams to the priest, the old father laughed and said that the voice was just a fancy of the young.



Cale told the voice that it was just a fancy and that it would go away. The voice whispered that he was the descendant of a demon, that it was the echo of that demon in his blood and that it was Cale who would go away, not the voice.



The sorceress had eyes that were yellow and slitted like a cat, but bore no other physical sign of her taint. She threw herself against the bars of the cage in fury once more and screamed at Theo. He understood fragments of her speech, a bastard mix of French and Arabic, but it was the nonsensical rambling and invocation of a demon. The only thing she invoked, however, were the other sorcerers in the cages. Madmen, visionaries and diabolists gathered from Constantinople to Jerusalem and Malta began muttering and shouting. The din was a cacophony; Theo steeled himself to listen and endure the noise, for he knew he would soon face far worse.

One of them dared to actually begin a magical rite, scraping symbols onto a wall with a scrap of bone and muttering a formula. Theo reacted quickly, as he had been trained, by smashing his mailed fist into the sorcerer's face. The old man collapsed to the floor.

Far above him, the church bell sounded, marking the end of his watch. The door opened as the bell struck a final time and Brother Charles entered the dungeon. The monk held a small monstrance in his hands, containing a holy relic. Reverently, the monk held the monstrance out and exposed its contents to the air. For a moment, there was a smell like jasmine, then the room filled with an ungodly stench that made the monk gag. Theo carefully removed the monstrance from Charles' hands and closed it. The smell vanished instantly.

'What does that prove, brother?'

'The taint of these damned sorcerers is far more intense when they are all gathered in one place.'

'Is it enough to trick the Enemy?'

'We shall see, but the reaction of the relic is a... favourable omen. The maw of Hell will see only the evil we have cloaked ourselves with, and not the true steel concealed within.'

The realised the sorcerers had stopped moaning and shouting. They were listening and they were *scared*. Brother Charles noticed it too. 'They discern our true purpose and fear the terrible wound we shall inflict on Hell.'

That, thought Theo, or they're just as scared of damnation as we are.



Five years later, the priest led the village in trying to stone Cale to death. That was after the signs of the taint had become clearer, when his hands had become claws and the first signs of the tail had begun to show. He fled into the mountains, running faster and for longer than any true man could have. The deeper he drew upon the taint in his blood, he realised, the more the taint became part of him. The voice could speak clearly to him now.

The hellgout will begin soon. You're too close to the demonic to stay in the mortal realm.

'Who are you?' asked Cale.

I told you. I'm the demon in you. Your ancestor was a demoness, a succubus. The demon blood runs strong within you, strong enough to manifest. You're going to Hell, Cale, and I'm your only chance of survival.

'You are trying to frighten me and to tempt me,' he replied, momentarily remembering his dreams of being a knight in shining armour.

I do not need to tempt you – you were lost from the moment you were born. As for frightening you, child, I have no need to do that. There are things far worse than me, waiting for you.

There were shouts from lower down the mountain slopes. He saw the bobbing lights of torches down in the valley below. One of the village trackers found his trail. Something inside his mind – or his blood – twitched and he suddenly wanted to tear them apart. He could see them in the dark now, as clear as if it was noon.

He still had enough self-control left to turn away and start scrambling up the slope.

The hellgout claimed him that night. Hell rose up and swallowed half the mountainside, a devil's bite that would be remembered in local legend for centuries.



It was the night before the departure. The monks had learned much over the months since Tobias de Lyons had conceived of the grand plan. The castle had been fortified and stocked to withstand a hundred sieges. Theo could only guess what they were thinking back in Christendom with the strange requests for supplies and tools. The order had kept their purpose a secret from all but a few; the project involved consorting with sorcerers and demons and others feared that such a direct attack would bring about the Apocalypse.

Theo sat on a hillside and watched the sun go down. As it slipped below the horizon, he fancied that it glittered off the sea. Somewhere in the west, there was the Mediterranean, where the ships could carry him home. 'Oh Lord,' he muttered, 'let this cup pass from my lips', but there was little apprehension in his soul. A terrible sense of purpose filled him.

A hot, sulphurous wind blew into his face. It was starting.



'Skeee, a twisting,' gibbered Yrich. The stalker's mouth was a cone of cockroaches that whispered in unison. It pointed with its lesser left arm towards the storm on the horizon. It was the five hundred and twelfth year of the Infernum and the Houses were once again at war. Yrich and its broodmates were former soldiers of House Zethu, who had fled the army of the Unveilers as it crumbled before the might of the Sturrach onslaught.

'Sweetmeats,' rumbled a hulk. Wires and cables hung from its misshapen body, the legacy of failed Zethu attempts to augment its already prodigious strength. A wide grin spread across its massive jaw, then vanished abruptly. 'Unless it's a demonjack. Cursed demonjacks. No more cages.'

The other dozen demons grunted and roared in agreement. The war had driven the final wedge between House Zethu and their erstwhile faustian allies in House Malthus and now they all bore a burning hatred for the arrogant mortal sorcerers. Many of them remembered bindings and warding circles. Yrich leapt into the air to attract the attention of its companions.

'A hunt, a hunt. If 'tis a demonjack, then we swarm him and peel him and show him his true place here. If 'tis a sweetmeat, then we feast and then squeeze and

then feast some more. Are you covenanted to this, my broodmates?’

The demons loped off across the dusty plains of the First Circle towards the opening hellgout.



‘Close the whoreson window!’ Tendrils of blazing red energy clawed their way in through an arrow-slit in the south wall of Outremer. Theo forced the wooden cover back into place over the slit; the tendrils left a rash like nettle stings on his bare arm.

The whole castle groaned again like an animal in pain. Dust fell from the ceiling and Theo felt the whole mountain shake and revolve once more. A chorus of damned voices echoed through the halls. It was like being aboard a sinking ship, only the ship was a mountain of stone. Time had lost all meaning; there had never been anything but the constant threat of flooding from *outside* the keep, from whatever halfway realm they had ended up in.

He had been ready for Hell. That Limbo might consume them all first had not crossed his mind.

The window cover exploded into burning fragments that fell with incredible slowness. The alien energies surged in again.

Outremer would continue to fall through the space between worlds until manifesting on the Fifth Circle in the year 668 of the Infernum.



Wake up, you fool.

Cale opened his eyes. Above him was a swirl of purple clouds. Panic seized him as he found he could recall almost nothing of who he was; a few tattered memories of names and faces, but no true sense of self apart from the image of a knight, proud and true.

They can sense hellgouts. Every new arrival in Hell gets its welcoming committee.

He pulled himself upright and glanced around. The mountain he lay on was already beginning to subside into the surrounding dust. There, in the distance, he could see a dust cloud rising as something moved swiftly across the plain.

He was in Hell, he was becoming a demon, a monster, but he pushed all that to the back of his mind. The

desire to survive rose up in him, overcoming all thoughts of despair or suicide or throwing himself at the mercy of the cosmos.

Good. Now move, you sluggard.

The chase was on. Cale fled down the weirdly-angled collapsing mountain and ran. The demons chased him across the desert, their untiring limbs remorselessly pursuing their quarry. Stalkers sniffed the air as they ran, tasting the queer mix of mortal and demon in Cale’s sweat.

‘Where am I running to?’ he asked himself and the voice answered *somewhere where you can take them on one at a time*. A shadow passed over him and the voice cursed and said *damnation, too slow. Not again*.

Two winged demons hovered above him with a net held between them. They looked like birds, insects, bats and partially decomposed corpses. *Fiends* said the voice, but Cale was already dodging the falling net. His tail lashed out and batted the leading edge of the net away, then he leapt up and caught onto



the leg of one of the two fiends. The flying demon squawked and tried to shake Cale off, but he climbed up the demon's body and drove his left claw into its throat. The demon crumpled and fell to the ground. The other flapped up and flew back to the approaching host in terror.

Now run! screamed the voice, but Cale stood his ground (like he had stood his ground against the other children, as a memory rose in his mind and burst like a bubble). He bent down and drank from the gaping wound in the fiend's throat. Power rushed through him. *The taste of iliaster...* echoed the voice.

'You're not a voice in my head at all,' realised Cale, 'you're something *else* in me'. He wondered how he could hide his thoughts from the other thing in his mind for a moment, then the demon host was upon him.



Yrich glared at the tableau before it. They had chased this quarry for miles and it was nothing but a single half-blood who did not even have a soul to be squeezed – and the half-blood had killed Screech. The half-blood was, admittedly, an impressive specimen, the child of some potent demon lord no doubt, but it was no match for the whole –

The mortal said something in a mortal language, then paused for a moment and spoke in Infernal.

'Which of you things is in charge?' it said. Yrich heard the other demons take a step back, leaving the stalker isolated at the head of the pack. The half-blood turned to it and Yrich saw the coldness in its eyes. This was not a lost half-blood bastard dragged through a gout; this was a conqueror.

The demon sought for its courage and found nothing. It had fled the war out of fear and now it faced a foe beyond the terrified souls and sickly branded of the First Circle. Yrich's nerve wavered, then broke. It knelt before the mighty half-blood. One by one, the other demons in the pack did likewise.



'Y'ken that this is where Haimon got its bloody throne from, don't you?' whispered Yrich. Its muzzle was caked in ice, so it had only a single cockroach to speak through. The insect's quiet voice was hardly audible over the howling wind.

Cale shook his head; he had no energy left with which to speak. His demonic form had continued to mutate the deeper he went in Hell, but he lacked the heedless endurance of the hellkin. They could march through blizzards and firestorms, but his still-mortal flesh froze and burnt.

'There's this host of demons, *skree* and...' the cockroach died abruptly and Yrich removed another from the warm shelter of its mouth so it could continue speaking, '...and they're starving to death, so Haimon turns up with a gang of souls and saves the demons, only now their its vassals, right?' The demon appeared to find nothing wrong with threatening something with starvation in exchange for enslavement.

'Although if Haimon turned up now with a nice juicy soul and a warm fire, *skree*, I'd turn on you in a heartbeat, boss.'

The demons now followed Cale, but there was a discernable undercurrent of resentment and hatred towards him. He was a mortal interloper, a stranger who had to rely on Yrich for his knowledge of the Pit. While the stalker Yrich seemed happy with its subservient role, several of the other demons, such as the hulk, were obviously plotting to kill him and take over. *Deal with them now* counselled the voice, *send them off into the snowstorm or push them over the side*. Cale concentrated on finding a space within his mind to think where the voice could not hear him. The voice had grown much stronger since he had arrived in the Pit, changing from an echo of his own thoughts and fears into a full-fledged personality.

'I am not safe even inside my own mind,' thought Cale, and the voice responded *I am you, you fool, the part of you that can survive here. The first battle will be fought here, the ruins of your blasted half-soul. You must destroy all the weaknesses inherited from your humanity if you are to survive*.

Cale flexed his claws, drew the spawn-leather cloak around his scaled chest and wondered what humanity he had left to lose.



The Harrowing of Hell had begun.

For the first time, mortals had invaded the demon realm and won great victories – until the Houses took notice of them.

Theo looked out at the plains around Outremer. As far as the eye could see were ranks of demons. Twisted engines of destruction fired gobbets of acid and fire at the walls of the keep. Sir Bois had been taken by a flying horror; they had thrown his body back into the keep, but it was infested by pestilences beyond nightmare. His soul was somewhere down there, impaled on a demon banner.

All of Hell felt enclosed. Theo glanced up to see the far side of the Pit hanging over him, always about to fall. The screaming of the demons became more intense. His sword grew heavier in his hand and he took another step closer to the battlements. Then another. Just one more and it would –

No. A balmy presence fell over him.

The angel Aoul reached out a perfect hand to touch Theo's shoulder. Aoul was dying, if angels could die; there was a crack running from his left breast to right collarbone, like a break in the porcelain surface of a doll. Silver light bled slowly from it. The angel had fallen into the courtyard of Outremer a month before and had taught the knights much about the true nature of Hell.



The despair stems from corruption. This place eats at your soul and hope is the water of the soul.

'What hope have we against such an army?' asked Theo.

I don't know. I only know that if you abandon hope, you have lost.



'Mercenariesss' slurred the Oblurott noble, 'if I want mercenariessss I'll sssend down to Golgotha for them. There are crowdsss of them down there.' It wallowed obscenely in its vat-throne, as specially bred insects ran all over it, gobbling flakes of dead skin.

Cale adjusted his iron mask and pitched his voice to sound as demonic as possible. 'My lord, there indeed many mercenaries,' *you've learned to lie very well, good*, 'in the city of Golgotha. Which is on the Fifth Circle, beyond the Mountains of Toil. There is a flight of Sturrach fiends on your doorstep. If you do not hire us, I'm sure one of your noble neighbours will – and then their domain will be reinforced against the Sturrach assault.'

The fatty brows of the Oblurott contracted. Cale could almost hear the demon's thoughts as it considered the risk – if it hired Cale's brigade, it would be a less tempting target for any Sturrach strikes and would be able to raid its neighbours when *they* got hit by the Sturrach. The demonic logic was inescapable. It remained only for the lord to choose its method of attack, to negotiate or–

'Feh, your pathetic gang of thugs are unlikely to be able to stop a few imps with sticks, but I will generously offer you a chance to survive. There are a few outlying villages and farming towns which might suffer from raiding; you can guard those from thieves and poachers.'

'My lord is generous.' Cale glanced at Yrich, who nodded subtly. 'Standard mercenary contracts?'

The Oblurott wobbled a hand in acquiescence.

Cale bowed and walked out of the throne room, Yrich and his bodyguards in tow. *Now you're a warlord said the voice, a killer for hire.* He couldn't tell if it was disapproving or intrigued, or even if he was just imagining the words. The voice had grown more cunning of late, hiding itself behind his own thoughts.

'Skreee, and if the Sturrach really do attack us?' asked Yrich when they were clear of the fortress.

'Our scouts haven't seen a single Sturrach fiend within two hundred miles of here. No, the only attack will be the one we start. The Oblurott barons will devour whichever of their neighbours gets attacked by the Sturrach, right? And we'll be sent in to loot the barony when that happens.'

'So?'

'So in a few nights' time, word is going to spread of a Sturrach attack on a barony near here...'



Two dozen of the best knights of the Order knelt in the cathedral. The priests chanted and sprinkled them with some of the precious holy water brought from Rome itself. Others sang hymns to drown out the roaring of the demons outside. The stained glass windows blocked out the terrible sight of Hell. If one ignored the smell of brimstone and the blood that dripped from the ceiling despite the best efforts of craftsmen and exorcists alike, one could almost believe that this cathedral was in the mortal realm.

The words of Sir Tobias to the assembled knights, however, were anything other than spiritually uplifting.

'A faction of the demons wishes to parlay with us. They want to hire us as warriors in some war of theirs. They have promised us food, fresh water, such wealth as the demons use... they would also tempt us with hellish blandishments and pleasures of the flesh, no doubt. Any knights I sent would put their immortal souls at even greater risk than they are already. There is every likelihood that this is a deceit, that the devils now try to win with lies what they cannot win through force of arms.

But I cannot ignore our dire need. We must break this siege and to do that we need every weapon we can muster.

I cannot *demand* this of any of you. I can only ask that you take this burden for your brothers.'

Two dozen knights rode out of Outremer that day, marching under the banner of House Riethii.



The first Sturrach attack had been a fake, but allowed Cale and his marauders to loot the minor barony of Blackvale.

The second attack was a panicked rumour that spread from the ruins of the first attack.

The third was the real thing.

Despite the voice's whisperings and the advice given to him by Yrich, Cale still thought of war in terms of regiments of foot soldiers lining up and knights on horseback charging across the battlefield. The sort of warfare practised in Hell would not be invented in the mortal realm for centuries to come.

Cale leapt into the smoking crater as another barrage of hellfire exploded beside him. Behind him, the hulk screamed as a flight of imps darted down with memorials and circled around it, leaving gaping gashes in its stone armour. Shatterguns chattered endlessly, a staccato noise punctuated by roars of pain.

A muddy and blood-soaked shape crawled towards him. Cale's claws twitched reflexively, but the half-demon restrained itself when it recognised Yrich beneath the muck. 'Skree,' it moaned, 'but we're getting killed boss.'

'There's a storm moving in,' said Cale desperately, 'that'll stop them flying.'

'Aye, all but the biggest. But that's not the problem, *skree* – look.' The stalker handed a spyglass to Cale and pointed across the burning fields. In the distance, silhouetted against flames, were the shapes of a regimented, well-disciplined army. For a moment, he could not judge the scale, then he saw one of his demons crushed beneath a hulk's foot.

The approaching demons were the size of giants.

He tried to give the order to Yrich to flee, but something rose in his throat.

'Yrich, *Gather the troops and have them make for that corpse-pyre over yonder.*

'That'll bring us very *skreee* close to the Sturrach front, boss.'

'*We need to slip past their lines. It will be risky, but we can make it.*

Yrich nodded and crawled off. Cale watched him go as the world went dark.

The other demons would be dead within an hour, as they ran into the scouts moving ahead of the Sturrach advance and got slaughtered. Cale – or the thing controlling his body – would use this time to escape.



The succubus stared at the knights with unabashed curiosity. 'You're not at all like the usual mortals, are you?'

Theo kept his sword between the demoness and his body. 'Which other mortals? The damned sorcerers?'

She smiled and stretched like a jungle cat. 'No, the Bori barbarians of the Upper Hells.'

'We were told these were heathen mortals who lived in Hell.'

'Heathens? Such an *odd* term. You think your mortal superstitions have a place here?'

'You cannot try our faith, devil.'



She laughed. 'I don't try it – I ignore it. It endlessly amuses me when newcomers bleat about Lucifer and God and all their little prophets and messiahs. All those things are meaningless fancies. There is only power and pain.'

'You lie.'

'If there ever was a God, then He has turned His face from this place,' she hissed. 'I have done such things that you would consider irredeemably vile and depraved *and I profited from them all*. Morality is an illusion; what is right is defined by the strong and the cunning.'

'I was not sent to debate theology or philosophy with you, demon,' said Theo. Inwardly, he was shaken; it was one thing to dispute the problem of evil over a warm fire in a schoolroom or barracks – it was another to claim you were not damned (and a damned fool) when Hell was all around you.

The succubus switched tactics, letting her diaphanous gown shift in a transparent attempt to seduce him. Normally, the crusaders' oaths of chastity were more honoured in the preaching than the observance, but now he seized on the vow and used it as a mental shield to ward off unworthy thoughts. This creature was not some cunning harlot, she – it – was a demon of the Pit trying to corrupt him. She seemed to sense his resistance, considered testing it, then changed her mind once more. Her mood shifted smoothly to that of the most eloquent diplomat.

'We need you and your knights to attack a torture palace owned by House Carthenay –'

'Torture palace? Carthenay?'

'A torture palace is a great machine for torturing souls. House Carthenay is a family of noble demons who are obsessed with meaningless things like wealth and profit.'

The palace is defended by a magical barrier – a ward – like the one that the Sturrach ran aground of that protects your little castle. A mortal who isn't tainted can just walk through the barrier. Once inside, you will destroy the barrier and let our warriors seize the place.

The master of the torture palace is a powerful half-demon lord, who will undoubtedly try to stop you from destroying the barrier. His name is Cale.'



Now I'm the voice and you're me said Cale.

'You were too weak, too human to survive. I have reclaimed my rightful place,' said the creature that called itself Cale.

You killed Yrich. You betrayed them all.

'Exactly.'

Where are you going?

'I've seen enough of the Oblurott defences to be valuable to the Sturrach army. When they are defeated, as they must be at some point, then I'll turn on them too and strike at them as they retreat.'

You're not me. You're a demon. You're my ancestor possessing me.

'Did you think having a demon nature would be easy or simple?'

Cale watched helplessly for decades, trapped within his own body. The other Cale, the shadow-demon-self, grew vastly in power. In a labyrinthine series of deceptions and treacheries, it ascended through the ranks of the nobility of Hell.

He betrayed the Oblurott, telling the Sturrach which baronies to hit to deprive the Gluttons of their cavalry support. He led a mercenary band of dispossessed Oblurott and Haimon demons down in pursuit of the retreating Bloody Army, and caught them in a vice between his forces and the biomechanical army pouring out of Redhive.

He ruled the city of Golgotha for a while, until the angel Uriel drove him out of the city. He stole the city's fortune of iliaster as he fled, earning the unending hatred of every mercenary in the Pit.

On the Seventh Circle, he played the political game, seducing a Carthenay noblewoman and using his stolen wealth to gain control of her estate. He took her domain and her life on the same night.

He plunged a thousand souls into the lake of fire for entertainment. He grew fat and powerful on torment and suffering and Cale watched it all. The shadow-self ignored Cale-the-voice entirely; Cale could act only in dreams. There, he dreamed he was a knight in armour and the other was a hellish serpent that the

knight crushed underfoot. Cale always won in the dreams.



Four of the two dozen Harrowers were lost even before the torture palace was in sight. The night-oak forests surrounding it were thick with guardian spawn and demon groundskeepers. The keepers were expecting to deal with a few lost souls, not a host of skilled mortal warriors wielding holy swords. Still, two knights were slain by a cloud of poison breathed out by a demon and another was plucked up by a carnivorous tree and devoured whole. The last knight simply vanished during the bizarre witching hours between the true and the false days of the Pit.

Theo knelt in the rushes. A small stream ran through the haunted woods. It appeared to be actual water, as opposed to the rivers of tears and blood and fire and slime they had encountered elsewhere in Hell, but the waters were thronged with black leeches the size of a man's forearm. In the mist-cloaked distance, he could dimly make out the shapes of small boats on the stream; there were angular, beaked shapes aboard, but he could not tell if they were some sort of hook-faced demons or something even stranger.

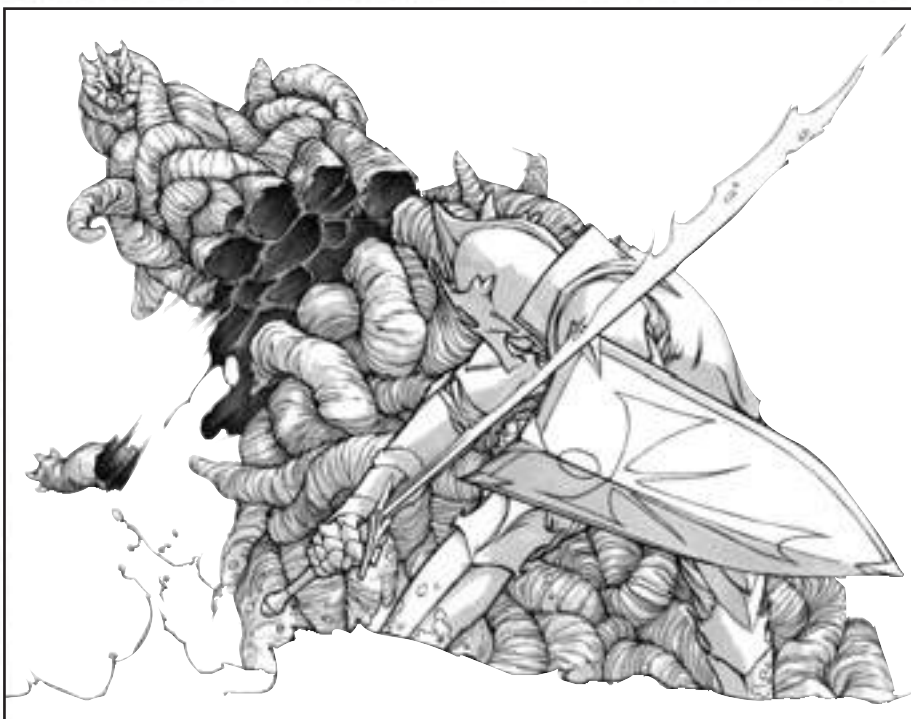
He thrust his sword into the waters to test their depth.

'It's shallow enough to wade, though it won't be pleasant. Follow me.'

He stepped into the stream. The waters immediately began to boil with leeches; dozens of them swam towards him and, horribly, started to twine together, forming humanoid shapes made up of colonies of ropy black leeches. He slashed at them, but the creatures reformed as swiftly as they were injured.

Behind him, one of the other knights was dragged into the water by a pair of leech-demons. One of the demons forced the knight's mouth open, while the other leech-swarm started forcing dozens of its body parts down the knight's gullet. 'By Michael and Aoul!' roared Theo and he leapt to the defence of his comrade.

His sword caught fire. A shining white aura of flame enveloped the sword. The leech-demons screamed as their wet flesh bubbled and blistered in the heat. It was too late for Anatole – his stomach and liver had been devoured by the leeches – but the rest fled. All along the row of knights, swords and maces began to burn with a holy light.



Still nothing. He searched his mind, searched every psychic nook and cranny where he had hidden and fought with his other-self for so long and found nothing.

He had won.

He reached out a clawed hand and took a bottle of Sorrow from a rack. He was a wealthy lord of the Pit, a scion of House Carthenay; he could afford such luxuries. Part of him urged that he should get away, flee this place before the demons realised that his human half was back in control, but the thought of fleeing seemed weak and foolish.

‘It is a miracle,’ breathed one. Theo nodded. So much for our ‘superstitions’, whore, he thought. Then he raised his sword and pointed towards the high walls of the torture palace.

‘They can see our cleaning flame from here, my brothers! But let us give them a closer view!’



One night, Cale’s dream was different. This time, the knight was conquered by the serpent. He awoke with a start – then he realised that *he* had awoken. He was back in control.

‘Voice?’

There was no reply.

He rose from the bed and padded over to a mirror. He barely recognised his own form; centuries of mutation had transformed his almost-mortal body into something quite demonic. Beneath the armour plating and the bat-wings and the scorpion tail, though, there was something in the horror’s carriage and bearing that reminded him of himself. The way the shoulders were hunched defensively was a trait he had learned in his village, back in the mortal realm. The defiance in his glare, that was an old sign of him, too.

‘Voice? Are you back in there?’

The power he had known as the leader of a band of renegades and as a mercenary commander seemed as nothing compared to the might of his fully mutated form, or to the wealth and influence at his command. He poured a draught of Sorrow and drank deeply, feeling the intoxicating rush of arrogance and hubris running through him. The suffering of thousands of souls was required for each drop of the liquor and he gloried in it.

With his inhumanly keen ears, he heard a messenger imp approaching.



Theo fought through his tears. The torture palace was almost indescribably ghastly. It seemed to go on forever, a ghoulish cavalcade of new methods of pain. The armies of demons surrounding Outremer had been nothing to this monstrosity. There, a soul was drawn out to the thinness of a hair and woven into a harp of nerves and bone. Here, souls were held immersed half in lava and half in ice. Ectoplasmic body parts tumbled through shredders and dissolved into grey mist. Blood ran down the walls, while glowing green liquid pulsed through fat pipes and cables everywhere, as if driven by the beating of some tremendous unseen heart.

Some of the knights, overcome by pity, had attempted to free souls from their chains. The damned now clustered around the knights, pawing at them and screaming in a dozen languages 'Kill me! Kill me and end this torment!' One of the knights desperately recited the rite of confession, perhaps hoping to win forgiveness for the souls clawing at him. Another had lost his composure entirely and was left screaming 'You're already dead! All of you! You're already dead!'

Demons were everywhere. As the flames on his sword guttered out, he cut at hulking brutes armoured in stone, at sinewy things with too many limbs, at creatures that looked like children's toys designed by sadistic madmen or at shapes of shadow and flame and nightmare. It was infinitely worse than any fighting he had experienced before; there seemed not only an endless supply of demons, but they got more ghastly as he fought on.

There were small mercies; the demons were so vicious that when he mortally wounded one, two others would attack it also, sucking the energy that flowed from the wound. These were not trained demon warriors, just thugs and torturers. Their chaotic natures betrayed them.

But there were so many of them.

One group of knights fought their way back towards the doors, hoping to secure an exit from the nightmare. Theo forged onwards; his quarry was in sight. There, just as the Riethii had promised, inset into the floor was a great rune of silver, the magical keystone of the ward surrounding the torture palace. Theo hacked down the last demon and began to prise it up.

A new wave of defenders rushed in just as the rune began to lift from the stone.

A shadow fell over him. A massive demon, bat-winged and scorpion-tailed with razor-edged claws approached him. 'Run,' ordered Theo desperately. With his last strength, he wrenched the seal from the ground. A shock ran through him.

He dropped the ruined seal and raised his sword in salute to the demon. He had no idea if the other Harrowers had made it out. He resolved only to die well.

'Prepare to die, serpent.'



'I've been waiting for you.'

Theo awoke. His armour had been stripped from him; he could see it lying on a bier nearby. It was laid out in ceremonial fashion, like stone armour on an ornate tomb. He was strapped to a wooden cross, his arms spread wide – crucified, he realised. The massive demon sat on a skull-headed throne, watching him.

'You are not like other mortals,' it said in passable Latin.

'So I've been told.'

'I am not like other demons.'

'Really?'

'I was born in the year of your lord 1503.'

'That is not possible. That year is yet to come.'

'Time flows differently here. You were trapped between for a very long time and an even longer time as the mortal world sees it. I have met souls that come from the 20th century, a time of war that almost equals the worst excesses of Hell. It is possible that I was born after you, but fell into Hell and rose to power long before you came into my domain.'

'You are Cale the half-demon, then?'

The horror shifted in its seat. Theo gasped for breath, as the weight of his crucified body pressed on his lungs.

'I thought I was. I am not so sure now.'

'I can assure you that you're the spawn of the devil,' spat Theo. 'There is no doubt in my mind of this.'

'Then let us sow doubt. Tell me, who is destined for damnation in Hell?'

'The wicked and the sinful, who are damned.'

'Ah, but you and I are in Hell. Are you wicked and damned, Sir Knight?'

'My order came to Hell... to wound the forces of darkness. Ours is a crusade, blessed by the Church.'

'If I kill you now, your soul will not be free. It will manifest inside your body, like a maggot manifests inside dead flesh. It will push its way out and fall on



the floor at my feet and I will torture it for my daily bread. There will be no reward, no salvation. There is only suffering.'

'You cannot frighten me, demon.'

'I, on the other hand, was dragged into Hell because of... an accident of birth, or so I believed for so long. One of my ancestors was a demon; his blood ran strongly in me and transformed me into a hybrid thing that could not dwell on Earth.

I thought I was wrongfully damned and that my ancestor was speaking to me to corrupt my soul. I even fancied that it had possessed me up until a few hours ago. Perhaps it was your arrival that triggered this... epiphany.'

'What are you talking about, demon?'

'I have done terrible things to survive and conquer here, because surviving and conquering is better than dying and suffering. A mortal poet – one after your time and mine – put these pretty words in Lucifer's mouth: "it is better to rule in Hell than it is to serve in Heaven."'

'Hubris.'

'He got it half right; I have never seen Heaven and not even the angels of the Pit know its true nature. But this much is true – it *is* better to rule in Hell.'

'I didn't come here to conquer Hell,' groaned Theo, 'I did not follow Tobias... through fire and nightmare... to win a kingdom amid the flames. We are here to... tear it all down.'

The demon's eyes – human eyes – glittered with amusement or wonder. 'Do you really think that you

can defeat all the armies of the Infernum? And you accuse *me* of hubris?'

'God wills it.'

The demon was suddenly next to him, its slaving jaws inches from his face.

'It is also said that God does not test us with any more than we cannot bear – but not one iota less. Do you want to find out how much pain you can bear, knight?'

'You cannot frighten me, demon.'

'You said that already.'

'It's still true.'

The demon said '*skreee*', under its breath, then turned and stalked away from him, as if in thought.

There was a moment of silence.

'It won't work, you know,' Cale remarked almost conversationally. 'The grand crusade. It's a fool's dream for knights to ride out against serpents. The sheen of your honour and faith will become corrupted by greed, by evil and worst of all by the brute necessity of *survival* in this deathless land. The best you can hope for is a kingdom amid the flames.'

The scorpion tail lashed out, slicing the restraints holding Theo to the cross. He fell to the ground at the demon's feet.

'Go now,' said Cale the demon, '*and remember who the conqueror was this day.*'

INTRODUCTION

The third book of *Infernum* puts the characters on a path to ruling Hell. The first law of the *Infernum* is that you must conquer or suffer – there are no other options. It is up to the characters to choose if they want to be tyrants or liberators; monsters or angels.

To Rule in Hell gives rules for overseeing demonic domains. While these rules are aimed at the lord of the domain, they can also be inverted to give guidelines on how to sabotage a rival's holdings.

Basic Structures describes the basic rules for constructions and fortifications used in the Pit. This provides the foundation for the chapters on **Fortresses**, which describes the mighty citadels and castles of the lords of Hell, and **Dark Satanic Mills**, which covers the various factories and industrial sites. Together, these three chapters give the rules for the prizes of warfare.

The Game of Lies and War in Hell cover the two avenues to power in Hell. A demon can play the political game, manipulating rivals through influence and blackmail, or it can conquer through force of arms, by marshalling great armies and mighty war machines.

Conquests describes nine locations in Hell, which should be considered targets for conquest. These are:

- ⊗ The Lost Tower on the First Circle
- ⊗ The Tomb of the Nameless on the Second Circle
- ⊗ The City of Meremouth on the Third Circle
- ⊗ The Tower of Nimue on the Fourth Circle
- ⊗ The Cathedral of Cracked Bone on the Fifth Circle
- ⊗ The City of Dis on the Sixth Circle

- ⊗ The Duchy of Boiling Lead on the Seventh Circle
- ⊗ The Citadel of House Riethii on the Eighth Circle
- ⊗ The City of Pandemonium on the Ninth Circle

Finally, there is an introductory adventure for 1st level characters entitled **Freedom in Chains**.

The adventures of many *Infernum* characters begin with them trapped in chains. This book is for those who are not content to stay that way.



TO RULE IN HELL

The demons carved up the Infernum like a fine roast once they drove the angels out. Today, the territories claimed by the demons reach from the dusty wilderness of the First Circle to the foothills of the Mountains of Silence on the Eighth. Over half the surface area of the Infernum is officially part of one domain or another and the majority of the hellkin dwell within these domains.

By Infernal law – and it should be pointed out, as always, that Infernal law is utterly corrupt and laughable and was created as just another tool to bind the lesser demons – the territories held by the Nine Great Houses are the personal fiefdoms of the Nine Princes of the Pit, the Heads of the Houses themselves. These terrible lords then grant lesser domains out to their Dukes and Grand Dukes, who similarly pass on lesser domains to their Earls and so on down to the level of petty Barons.

On the fringes of Infernal law and Infernal society are the lesser Houses and renegade domains, who claim their territory by deceit or force of arms and exist at the sufferance of the greater Houses. To be accounted a noble by the hellkin, a demon need only have a fortress and defend its territory – they can conceive of no greater virtue than taking and holding souls.

Domain Overview

The various ranks are described in *Book of the Tormentor*. To summarise, they are as follows:

Firstly, there are the commoners, who do not hold noble rank in the Pit.

Damned are the lowest of the low, with no rights whatsoever. They are property; more, they are property that can be freely abused and destroyed at the whim of the owner. Damned souls make up the vast majority of this rank, but mortals, angels, demon slaves and other creatures also fall into this category.

Demons are the common mass of the hellkin, low-level demons of no importance. While such demons are technically free, they are bound to the Houses by the House control of iliaster.

Housefellows have developed their first House mutation and so bear living proof of their breeding.

Devils are creatures of good standing within a House, worthy of note and respect. They are the lesser officers of the demon army.

Daemons are notably skilled in one field of endeavour or another; they command units of demons in battle.

Captains exist on the edge of the nobility; their position is roughly analogous to knights in medieval mortal society, as they are not landed but are considered noble.

Of infinitely greater importance, of course, are the true nobles.

Barons are the low-ranking landlords of the Pit. There are hundreds of Barons in each House and thousands across the Pit as a whole. The baronies are the agricultural and soul-collecting territories of the Infernum; the territory assigned to the barons tends to be on the fringes of the settled lands, where the soil still has some life left to it and where there are active soul fields.

Viscounts are generally assigned to rule over the industrial regions and trade routes of the Houses; the viscounties are located in factory-black valleys, at tunnel mouths and along rivers.

Earls are nobles of great and growing power, the rising stars of the demon hierarchy. While their duties are not much different from those of the lesser nobles, their responsibilities and influences are far greater. Earls can affect policy on a House-wide scale; many of the changes, wars and revolutions in the Pit stem from the manipulations of the Earls.

Dukes rule over dukedoms and at the core of each duchy is a city of some size. Dukes are the highest and richest of the nobility; duchies stretch for hundreds of miles and contain many thousands of factories, torture palaces and other sites of importance.

Grand Dukes are even more powerful; each grand duchy contains some site, some fortress or natural resource of such importance that it must be assigned a Duke as its special keeper. The rulers of the Houses are drawn from the ranks of the Grand Dukes.

Domain Traits

The rules given in this chapter allow a demon to rule a domain. Obviously, not every domain is identical, but listing every difference between two regions in terms of individual factories and fortresses would be pointless. Therefore, domains are described in terms of traits which make a sort of shorthand synopsis of the region. If a character is ruling a domain directly, then the Games Master and Player should take the time to note down important features and sites in detail, but traits alone will do for most domains the characters pass through or deal with.

Traits can be positive or negative. Some traits have a number after them; this means that the trait is especially pronounced; multiply the effects of the trait by the number. For example, a Wealthy (3) domain is three times as rich as a merely Wealthy domain.

The traits are:

- ⊗ **Populous/Empty** – how many demons dwell in the domain
- ⊗ **Rich/Poor** – the level of natural resources or other sources of wealth in the domain
- ⊗ **Iliaster-Rich/Iliaster-Poor** – how many souls and other sources of iliaster the domain has
- ⊗ **Fortified/Unfortified** – what sort of fortresses and defences the domain has
- ⊗ **Lawful/Chaotic** – how heavily indentured the folk of the domain are to their liege lord
- ⊗ **Industrialised/Undeveloped** – how many industrial sites and factories the domain has
- ⊗ **Secure/Dangerous** – how much the domain suffers from attack from inside (renegades, Free City heretics, mortal tribes) or outside

Demo(n)graphics

The demons are rulers of the Infernum, but they are massively outnumbered by their damned subjects. Indeed, at first glance it is astonishing that the Houses can indulge in constant warfare with so few warriors. The solution lies the resiliency of demonic reproduction and the power of the spawning pits; as demons take only a few months to grow to full size and each captured hellkin can be reduced to a dozen or so larvae. A domain emptied by war can be restocked with demons in only a few short years.

The demonic population of the Infernum, therefore, consists of a great number of low-level young demons who are constantly being slaughtered and respawned and a much smaller number of ancient demon lords who have ruled for centuries. The wars ensure that the lesser demons never rise to threaten their masters.

Souls present another problem. Unlike demons, the damned cannot reproduce, so the only source of new damned lies outside Hell altogether, with whatever unknown force hurling the damned into the Pit. The damned fall in great numbers, but they have a limited useful 'lifespan' – a soul will last for eternity but they can be stripped down to useless, mindless wastrel

shades. The tender mercies of the Infernum reduce most souls to wastrels within a few decades, so there is a constant demand for new souls.

The population figures given here, then, are just approximations; population domains change rapidly through war, spawning and soul collection. There are approximately five times more souls than demons in each domain; some of these are used as slaves, bound to items, or transformed into soulstone, but most are alternately processed in torture palaces and left to regenerate in prisons and pens before being tortured again.

COMITION POPULATIONS

Domain	Demon Population	Soul Population
Barony	3,000	15,000
Viscounty	5,000	25,000
Earldom	10,000	50,000
Dukedom	20,000	100,000
Grand Dukedom	50,000	250,000

These figures vary wildly from domain to domain. When determining population for a domain, roll on the Random Populations table on the next page.

RANDOM POPULATIONS

Domain	Demon Population ¹	Soul Population ²
Barony	4d6 x 200	4d6 x 600
Viscounty	8d6 x 200	8d6 x 600
Earldom	12d6 x 250	12d6 x 750
Dukedom	12d6 x 500	12d6 x 2500
Grand Dukedom	15d6 x 800	15d6 x 4000

¹+2d6 if Populous, +1d6 if Wealthy, -2d6 if Empty, -1d6 if Poor.

²+2d6 if Iliaster-Rich, +1d6 if Industrialised, -2d6 if Iliaster-Poor, -1d6 if Dangerous.

Starting Features

Domains are rarely found empty, except when new domains are carved out of the wilderness or else when old domains have suffered from such a damaging assault that they have been swept clean. Scorched earth tactics are an unsurprisingly common infernal policy, as there are always more slaves to rebuild what has been destroyed.

DOMAIN SIZE

Domain	Size Modifier	Size Multiplier
Barony	+0	x1
Viscounty	+1	x2
Earldom	+2	x4
Duchy	+4	x8
Grand Duchy	+8	x16



Natural Features

A domain has a number of natural features equal to 5 + its size modifier. Some features are bigger than others – if a die value is noted after a feature, roll to see how many feature ‘slots’ the natural feature takes up. If the feature is bigger than the domain, then it stretches outside the domain (for example, a domain with six slots that has a size 12 forest only encompasses half the forest within its borders).

Roll 1d10 on the following table, adding +2 per wealthy trait and subtracting -2 per poor trait.

NATURAL FEATURES

Roll	Feature
1	Empty wilderness, mountains or desert
2	Tunnel mouths and caves to outside Pit
3	River (if the domain is near one of the rivers of Hell, then this feature connects to that river and is of size 1d4)
4	Forest
5	Soul field
6-7	Mine or quarry site (unexploited)
8-10	Roll on Circle Natural Features table
11+	Roll on Circle Natural Features table twice

When rolling on the Circle Natural Features tables on page 17, apply a +2 bonus for Wealthy Domains and a -2 penalty for Poor ones.

Existing Industries

Not all the industrial sites in a domain are owned by the lord of the domain; the true mark of a lord’s authority is its control of the iliaster generation in a domain, not its industrial holdings. However, much of the industry in a domain will be owned by the lord and inherited by its heirs.

Roll 1d20 on the tables on page 18 a number of times equal to 5 + the domain’s size modifier, adding a +2 bonus to the roll for Industrialised domains and subtracting a -2 penalty for Undeveloped domains. The monthly workforce, iliaster requirement and profit are listed for each industry – see Dark Satanic Mills for more details on each industry type.

The Games Master can of course choose the industries present in a domain instead of rolling randomly; the tables below will reflect a rather badly run domain, the sort of place that a character might be put in charge of when the previous lord is killed for incompetence.

CIRCLE NATURAL FEATURES

First Circle (Emptiness)		Second Circle (Tempest)	
Roll (1d10)	Feature	Roll (1d10)	Feature
1 or less	Mortal Tribe (1d4)	1 or less	Mountains (1d4)
2	Mortal Tribe	2	Mountains
3	Empty Desert (1d4)	3	Mountains
4	Empty Desert	4	Mountains
5	Empty Desert	5	Mountains
6	Scarstone Deposit	6	River Phlegton (burning iron)
7	Brass Pillar	7	Soul Field
8	Soul Field	8	Mine or quarry site
9	Soul Field	9	Mine or quarry site
10+	Soul Field	10+	Mine or quarry site
Third Circle (Tears)		Fourth Circle (Toil)	
Roll (1d10)	Feature	Roll (1d10)	Feature
1 or less	Mud (1d4)	1 or less	Mountains (1d4)
2	Mud	2	Mountains
3	Swamp	3	Soul Field
4	Swamp	4	Mine or quarry site
5	River	5	Fell Oil
6	River Phlegton or Acheron	6	River Phlegton, Acheron or Lethe
7	Soul Field	7	Bloodfont
8	Soul Field	8	Mine or quarry site
9	Boneyard	9	Mine or quarry site
10+	Forest	10+	Mine or quarry site
Fifth Circle (Slaughter)		Sixth Circle (Industry)	
Roll (1d10)	Feature	Roll (1d10)	Feature
1 or less	Haunted Battlefield	1 or less	Rust Lake
2	Forest (1d4)	2	Industrial Wasteland (1d4)
3	Forest	3	Industrial Wasteland
4	Night oak Forest	4	Lava flow
5	Lava Flow	5	Soul Field
6	Lava Flow	6	Mine or quarry site
7	Mine	7	Bloodfont
8	Soul Field	8	River Phlegton or Styx
9	River Phlegton, Acheron or Styx	9	Biomechanical Harvesting Ground (inactive)
10+	Soul Field	10+	Soul Field
Seventh Circle (Unholy Delight)		Eighth Circle (Malebolge)	
Roll (1d10)	Feature	Roll (1d10)	Feature
1 or less	Forest (1d4)	1 or less	Mountains (1d4)
2	Night oak Forest	2	Mountains
3	Blasted Desert	3	Mine
4	Forest	4	Mine
5	Forest	5	River Cocytus
6	River	6	Soul Field
7	River Styx	7	Soul Field
8	Gardens	8	Garden
9	Gardens	9	Garden
10+	Soul Field	10+	Soul Field

BARONY

Roll	Industry	Roll	Industry
1	Farm	11	Forge
2	Farm	12	Forge
3	Farm	13	Foundry
4	Farm	14	Quarry
5	Tannery	15	Strain Gang
6	Tannery	16	Strain Gang
7	Orchard	17	Engineering Works
8	Orchard	18	Mill
9	Workshop	19	Mill
10	Workshop	20	Torture Palace

A barony also has at least one prison and torture palace or three mills and three iliaster stores.

VISCOUNTY

Roll	Industry	Roll	Industry
1	Farm	11	Mine
2	Farm	12	Mine
3	Workshop	13	Strain Gang
4	Workshop	14	Strain Gang
5	Light Factory	15	Agony Winery
6	Light Factory	16	Slave Pen
7	Engineering Works	17	Prison
8	Forge	18	Mill
9	Forge	19	Mill
10	Foundry	20	Torture Palace

A viscounty also has at least one prison and two torture palaces or six mills and six iliaster stores.

EARLDOM

Roll	Industry	Roll	Industry
1	Farm	11	Heavy Factory
2	Orchard	12	Alchemical Refinery
3	Tannery	13	Strain Gang
4	Light Factory	14	Agony Winery
5	Light Factory	15	Tear Chamber
6	Quarry	16	Prison
7	Mine	17	Prison
8	Mine	18	Mill
9	Foundry	19	Torture Palace
10	Engineering Works	20	Torture Palace

An earldom also has at least two prisons, four torture palaces and nine iliaster stores.

DUCHY OR GRAND DUCHY

Roll	Industry	Roll	Industry
1	Mine	11	Alchemical Refinery
2	Mine	12	Agony Winery
3	Foundry	13	Agony Winery
4	Light Factory	14	Tear Chamber
5	Light Factory	15	Tear Chamber
6	Screamer Station	16	Prison
7	Spawning Pit	17	Prison
8	Heavy Factory	18	Torture Palace
9	Heavy Factory	19	Torture Palace
10	Engineering Works	20	Torture Palace

A duchy also has at least three prisons and six torture palaces; a grand duchy also has at least four prisons and eight palaces. A duchy also has twelve iliaster stores; a grand duchy has sixteen.

Ruling a Domain

The duties of a noble demon are simple – ensure that there is enough iliaster produced by the domain to feed the demons and fuel the industry of that domain. Souls are, in essence, a licence to print money, as demons must by custom pay one horn to feed each day. It is through control of the iliaster supply that the lord of a domain maintains control.

The amount of iliaster produced depends on the number of mills and torture palaces in the domain. If there is not enough iliaster, then the lord must either purchase iliaster from outside the domain (at one crown per five points initially, but other domains will quickly raise their prices if a neighbour shows signs of weakness) or find ways to reduce the domain's need for iliaster.

If the lord fails to provide enough iliaster for its demons to feed upon, the domain will quickly descend into chaos as demons turn on each other or fall into Dissolution. See Domains in Dissolution, below.

This is complicated by the possibility of random events – each month, the Games Master should roll on the Random Event tables to see what, if anything, troubles the domain.

Construction, Trade and Wealth

If a domain has excess iliaster, then it can be invested back into the domain or used in trade. The days of a demon lord sitting in rulership over a wasteland of hellholes and screaming souls are long gone; Hell has

modernised and demands a return on its investment. While hellish industry may be less profitable than just selling iliaster directly, it has the advantage of allowing a lord to support a technologically advanced army. Most demonic labour and a great deal of iliaster, then, are invested in the construction and use of new industries in a lord's domain.

Construction of new industrial sites and structures is described in Basic Structures, page 32.

Industries and structures must be staffed; common demons will work for two horns per day. Slaves are owned by the lord of the domain and are 'free', but need overseers.

Trade between domains is uncommon but not unheard of. If a domain needs a particular item, it will pay 10 + 1d20% more than the average cost for that item or service. The main problems with trade are transport and protection – if there is not an established trade route between the two domains, then trade is impossible. Banditry, especially along the Iron Road, is a major problem in the Pit and most trade caravans must be escorted by armed guards, another expense that cuts deeply into any potential profit.

Accumulating wealth is difficult; plasmic iliaster diffuses over time and cannot be kept bottled for

more than a few weeks before vanishing. It can be held in special sealed containers or transformed into more lasting forms like Strain or crystalline iliaster. House Carthenay will also purchase iliaster at times in exchange for coin; much of the iliaster trade in the Infernum is now notational, swapping coins and promissory notes instead of tinctures of soul.

Random Events

Ruling a domain rarely goes smoothly – the Infernum is too chaotic and war-torn to allow for any measure of peace. Each month, roll 1d20 on the Random Event tables below.

I: TYPE OF EVENT

Roll	Type
1-12	None
13-14	Disasters & Natural Phenomena
15-16	Crime & War
17-18	Internal Problems
19-20	Fortunate Occurrences

DISASTERS & NATURAL PHENOMENA

Disasters and natural phenomena vary depending on the domain's location – roll on the table corresponding to the current Circle of Hell.

2.3: DISASTERS & NATURAL PHENOMENA

2.1: DISASTERS & NATURAL PHENOMENA ON THE FIRST CIRCLE OF HELL

Roll	Event
1-4	Lethe Fog – a purple fog sweeps across the domain. Travel becomes almost impossible; production in all fields drops by 1d6x10% for the month.
5-8	Sandstorm – a particularly vicious sandstorm sweeps the domain. Any farms are destroyed.
9-12	Hellgout – a new hellgout begins to manifest within the domain. The hellgout will open next month, bringing new places and people from the mortal realm into Hell.
13-16	Angel Fall – a new angel falls into the First Circle.
17-20	Burning Heat – a heatwave crosses the Circle. Increase iliaster requirements for demons by 10% this month.

2.2: DISASTERS & NATURAL PHENOMENA ON THE SECOND CIRCLE OF HELL

Roll	Event
1-4	Lightning Strike – a randomly selected building takes 4d20 points of structural damage
5-8	Storm – a heavy storm strikes the domain, grounding flyers and damaging wooden or other light structures.
9-12	Landslide – a mountainside collapses and buries a section of the domain. 1d4 selected structures are buried, their workforces buried alive within the rocky tomb.
13-16	Snowstorm – as Storm, above, but the cold increases iliaster requirement for demons by 10% this month.
17-20	Massive Tempest – 2d6 lightning strikes (see Lightning Strike, above), plus snowstorm

ON THE THIRD CIRCLE OF HELL

Roll	Event
1-4	Flooding – weep-canals and rivers burst their banks, inflicting 3d6 points of structural damage on any nearby structures. River travel becomes more difficult.
5-8	Spawn Rampage – untamed spawn of great power attack the domain, killing 1d10x50 demons unless dealt with by armed forces.
9-12	Sinking – a structure begins to sink into the mire. It will be consumed within 2d6 months unless reinforced, which requires one-third as much labour and materials as it cost to build.
13-16	Acid Rain – all structures in the domain take 2d6 points of structural damage
17-20	Slime Rain – travel in the domain is clogged by slime, doubling travel times.

2.4: DISASTERS & NATURAL PHENOMENA ON THE FOURTH CIRCLE OF HELL

Roll	Event
1-4	Earthquake – all underground structures must make a hardness roll (DC of 2d6) or suffer partial collapse.
5-8	Hellgout – a minor hellgout begins to manifest within the domain. It will open within a month, bringing new places and people from the mortal realm into Hell.
9-12	Leaden Zone – a leaden zone appears in a key site; that site's productive drops in half for 1d6 months.
13-16	Underground Spawn – underground spawn attack workers in a mine or other underground site, killing 1d10x50 of them.
17-20	Volcanic Eruption – inflicts 10d20 points of damage on nearby structures; 2d6 structures are affected.

2.5: DISASTERS & NATURAL PHENOMENA ON THE FIFTH CIRCLE OF HELL

Roll	Event
1-4	Lava Flow – a lava flow threatens a structure. Unless diverted, which requires 10,000 days of labour, the structure will take 10d20 points of damage.
5-8	Red Mist – the fearsome Red Mist of the Fifth Circle rises, driving demons and mortals mad. Productivity in the domain drops by 20% for the month, Dissent (see below) rises by 1d6.
9-12	Haunted Attack – warghosts attack the domain, killing 1d10x50 demons unless dealt with by force of arms.
13-16	Night-Oak Encroachment – a night-oak forest begins to spread across the domain, engulfing 1d4 structures unless kept back by fire and axes.
17-20	Volcanic Eruption – inflicts 10d20 points of damage on nearby structures; 2d6 structures are affected.

2.6: DISASTERS & NATURAL PHENOMENA ON THE SIXTH CIRCLE OF HELL

Roll	Event
1-4	Poison Rain – a front of tainted rain sweeps across the domain, inflicting 2d6 points of structural damage on every structure that is not acid-resistant and killing 1d10x50 demons.
5-8	Rust Lake Collapse – one structure proves to have been built upon a subterranean rust lake; the building will be destroyed in 1d6 months unless reinforced, which costs one-third as much in labour and materials as it cost to build.
9-12	Lava Flow – a lava flow threatens a structure. Unless diverted, which requires 10,000 days of labour, the structure will take 10d20 points of damage.
13-16	Cacaphractus Expansion – the machine city of Cacaphractus attempts to push into the domain, sending an army of mechanical warriors to test the domain's defences.
17-20	Volcanic Eruption – inflicts 10d20 points of damage on nearby structures; 2d6 structures are affected.

2.7: DISASTERS & NATURAL PHENOMENA ON THE SEVENTH CIRCLE OF HELL

Roll	Event
1-4	Corruption Geyser – a massive corruption geyser rises in the domain. This corrupts any mortals within the domain (SR 10).
5-8	Tattered Market – the infamous Tattered Market visits the domain. This brings an extra 1d10 x 500 Crowns in revenue for the domain, but also increases Dissent by +1d6.
9-12	Storm – a heavy storm strikes the domain, grounding flyers and damaging wooden or other light structures.
13-16	Indolence and Sloth – the demons of the domain are lazy and shiftless this month. Decrease production by 1d4 x 10%.
17-20	Extravagance and Indulgence – the demons of the domain are wild this month; increase the demand for iliaster by 1d4 x 10%.

2.8: DISASTERS & NATURAL PHENOMENA ON THE EIGHTH CIRCLE OF HELL

Roll	Event
1-4	Poisonous Gases – a cloud of tainted gases runs down the slopes of the Mountains of Silence, killing 1d10x50 demons unless shelters and healing are provided.
5-8	Earthquake – all underground structures must make a Hardness roll (DC of 2d6) or suffer partial collapse.
9-12	Lava Flow – a lava flow threatens a structure. Unless diverted, which requires 10,000 days of labour, the structure will take 10d20 points of damage.
13-16	Beggars on the Road – travellers on the road to Pandemonium visit the domain, increasing the demand for iliaster by 10%.
17-20	Volcanic Eruption – inflicts 10d20 points of damage on nearby structures; 2d6 structures are affected.



Crime & War

The dangers of crime and war are common to every domain, although the targets of the crime and the nature of the aggressors vary from place to place. Add a +2 to the roll if the domain is Unsecure; subtract -2 if the domain is Dangerous.

3: CRIME & WAR

Roll	Event
0 or less	No event.
1-2	Mortals Raids – mortals from an Early Tribe raid the domain, killing demons and freeing slaves. Unless hunted down, they will continue to attack for 1d6 months. Each attack kills 2d10 demons and frees twice as many damned.
3-4	Iliaster Thieves – some traitor loots iliaster from a mill, torture palace or other production plant. 2d10x100 Crowns worth of iliaster are stolen.
5-6	Demon Raiders – demon raiders target the domain, decreasing trade by 50% until stopped.
7-8	Sabotage – some traitor damages a key component, shutting down a particular industrial site until it is repaired.
9-10	Prison Break – souls try to escape from a prison or slave pen. The structure must make a Hardness check (DC 15) – for every point it fails by, 10% of the souls escape.
11-12	Nearby War – a neighbouring domain is attacked; the effects of the war boil over into this domain. Deserters, spies and other agents slip through the domain, causing havoc and decreasing production by 10%.
13-14	Minor Invasion – another domain tests the defences of the domain by sending a small army to capture an important site. The size of the army depends on the size and wealth of the attacking domain.
15-16	Sorcerous Attacks – a faustian or other enemy sorcerer attacks the domain by <i>Summoning</i> and <i>Binding</i> key demons. The attacks last for 1d6 months (one demon per month) unless the sorcerer is satisfied or punished.
17-18	Assassin – an assassin targets a key demon, such as the master of an industrial site or the lord of the domain itself.
19-20	Major Invasion – another domain or House launches a full-scale invasion of the domain.

Internal Problems

Internal problems bedevil every domain but can be made better or worse by the domain's Dissent. The Dissent score measures how much opposition and dissatisfaction there is with the lord's rule within the domain. Dissent begins at a value of (5 – the lord's Charisma modifier). Add the Dissent score to the dice roll on the Internal Problems table. A Lawful domain's Dissent begins at a value of zero minus the lord's Charisma modifier; a Chaotic domain begins at ten minus the lord's Charisma modifier.



Controlling Dissent

Stopping Dissent from rising requires a secret police network of spies, informants and torturers to find and deal with traitors. Dissent can also be dealt with by targeting the root causes of the Dissent – if a rival noble is sponsoring opposition within a domain, then assassinating the noble will stop that source of Dissent.

Running a secret police requires a demon spymaster to control the police, and costs a certain amount each month in bribes and other costs. A secret police reduces Dissent by 1d10-3 each month (police brutality can raise Dissent).

See Expenses, below.

4: INTERNAL PROBLEMS

Roll	Event
<0	No event.
1-2	Rumblings of Dissent – the hellkin chafe under the lord's rule. Domain dissent increases by +1.
3-4	Minor Corruption – one of the demons in the lord's service begins siphoning off wealth, taking bribes or otherwise engaging in illegal activities. While this does not immediately affect the domain, it is a cancer that will grow and weaken the domain.
5-6	Traitor – a notable and important character within the domain turns traitor and now serves an enemy of the lore.
7-8	Renegade – A notable and important character within the domain openly turns on the lord. Increase dissent by +1d6.
9-10	Free City Heretics – a cell of Free City heretics arrives in the domain. Dissent increases by +1d4 per month until they are caught; furthermore, if Dissent rises above 15, they attempt to transform a city within the domain into a Free City.
11-12	Church Dissent – the Church of the Morningstar begins to plot against the lord of the domain. Dissent rises by +1d4 per month until the church is driven out or placated.
13-14	Political Opposition – another noble in the lord's House takes an 'interest' in the running of the domain – increase Dissent by +1d4 per month until the noble is dealt with.
15-16	Conspiracy – a conspiracy forms within the domain, plotting against the lord. Increase Dissent by +1d6 per month until the Conspiracy is dealt with.
17-20	Strike – one of the domain's industrial sites demands more power and iliaster and goes on strike until its demands are met.
21-25	Minor Rebellion – a small section of the domain goes into rebellion against the lord, raising a rag-tag army and fighting against the occupying forces.
26-30	Major Rebellion – a large section of the domain launches an organised and well-armed revolt against the lord's rule.
31+	Coup – as major rebellion, but the traitors have planted agents within the lord's fortress who will attempt to let the rebels in.

Fortunate Occurrences

There is good fortune even in Hell.

Roll	Event
1-2	New Soul Field – a new soul field has formed within the domain, and fresh souls are falling into it. If this field is exploited, then the lord has a fresh source of damned.
3-4	Rich Iliaster Yield – the damned are especially... giving this month. Iliaster production is increased by 20%.
5-6	New Mine – a new vein of minerals or other valuable materials has been found. A new mine can be built to exploit this.
7-8	New Trade Route – a buyer comes to the domain, seeking a particular product of the domain's industry. A particular trade route has its profitability increased by 20%.
9-10	Souls Captured – 1d6 x 1000 souls are captured, either in the wild or from another domain.
11-12	Traitors Captured – a cell of traitors within the domain is exposed by some mischance. Dissent drops by 2d6.
13-14	Valuable Hellgout – a hellgout manifests within the domain's borders and will open by the end of the month. The hellgout brings with it useful technologies or weapons from the mortal realm.
15-16	Profitable War – a nearby war provides a ready market for the domain's goods. Increase profitability of industry by 20% this month.
17-20	Visit from a superior – see Noble Visit, page 104.

Income & Iliaster

Once a domain's random events have been resolved, the results of the iliaster harvest and industrial production for that month can be determined.

In normal circumstances, a mill or torture palace produces five points of iliaster per damned soul per week, or 20 iliaster per month.

Some of the damned are tortured beyond the point of usefulness, becoming wastrel souls. Make a Torture check (DC 20) for the master of each torture palace or mill; for every point by which the check result is below the DC, five souls are reduced to wastrels.

This iliaster is then distributed among the demons of the domain, channelled into industry, consumed by the lord, taken as taxes and so on. As iliaster does not keep unless placed into a magically sealed vessel, the iliaster allocated to these needs cannot normally be reallocated – if a demon lord does not put aside enough iliaster to meet the desires of its demons, it cannot recall the tribute caravan carrying its taxed iliaster or empty industrial storage tanks.

The Demons of the Domain: A demon needs one point of iliaster per level per day. The demons purchase that iliaster at the rate of one horn per point. Some of the demons of the domain will be higher level; some will purchase more iliaster than average to fuel their mutations. The demons' iliaster consumption is calculated as follows: (number of demons in the domain x 30+1d20).

The lord of the domain is paid one horn for every point of iliaster purchased from this pool of iliaster. Any excess iliaster is lost unless permanent iliaster storage (in an iliaster vault or iliaster store) is available.

Domains in Dissolution: If the demand for iliaster from the demons of the domain exceeds the amount of iliaster allocated, then the domain enters Dissolution. A domain in Dissolution suffers the following ill effects:

- ⊗ Dissent rises by +2d6
- ⊗ Demons are killed by violence or starvation. One demon dies for every ten points by which the demand exceeds the supply.
- ⊗ 2d6 x 50 demons leave the domain.

Industry of the Domain: If the lord of the domain operates any factories or other industrial structures in the domain, iliaster must be allocated to keep

Population Growth

A domain's population will grow if the domain is profitable, as more demons flock to such a rich source of iliaster. In general, one demon will come to the domain in a month for every 100 points of excess iliaster after all costs have been paid.

New demons can also be produced in spawning pits.

Avoiding Dissolution

There are several ways to pull a domain back from the edge of Dissolution.

Open Iliaster Stores: If the domain has stockpiled iliaster, then this can be distributed to the demons to keep the hellkin happy.

Purchase Iliaster: A certain amount of iliaster can be purchased from outside the domain. Less than a thousand iliaster can be purchased at the common rate of one horn per point. Buying larger amounts of iliaster in bulk is more difficult, as the other domains hear of the difficulty and seek to profit. The price per point of iliaster creeps up as the domain's needs become more desperate. For amounts above 1,000 iliaster, the price per point is one horn plus 1d6–1 fangs.

Home Torturing: A more desperate option is giving out souls to torture. Obviously, the lord must have a supply of souls to hand out; each soul spent in this fashion counts as ten points of iliaster for the purposes of staving off Dissolution.

them functioning. The iliaster requirements for each structure are listed in its description (see the Dark Satanic Mills chapter). If a particular structure is not given its full iliaster need, it works at half efficiency. If given less than half its needed supply, it does not function at all this month.

Taxes: A domain's liege lord demands payment from its vassals. This tax amounts to some 10% of the total iliaster gathered in the domain. Normally, the lord prefers to take this tax in the form of goods and coinage as opposed to swift-decaying plasmic iliaster. Not paying taxes incurs the wrath of the demon's liege lord.

Optionally, a demon lord may contribute iliaster to the Priests of the Morningstar. A tithe of 10% is customary among 'faithful' demons – for example those who want to use Church connections to accomplish some plot.

Any iliaster left over after paying all these costs belongs to the lord of the domain, to do with as it wishes. Unless the iliaster can be stored in a vault or store, it will swiftly decay (20% of the iliaster is lost each week).

Tax Income

There are two other sources of income for the discerning demon lord:

Vassals: Demons of Viscount and higher rank have vassal demons (Barons, in the case of Viscounts), who they can demand taxes from. The income from tax is equal to 10% of the iliaster production of the vassal's domain, including the income from the vassal's vassals and so on.

Taxes on Industry and Trade: A lord can choose to tax the industry and trade of the lesser demons in its domain. The higher the taxes go, the greater the income but also the greater the Dissent. The amount of tax income per month depends on the number of demons *not employed by the lord of the domain*.

Dissent +1	Dissent +3	Dissent +5	Dissent +10
1 crown per 10 demons	1 crown per 5 demons	1 crown per 3 demons	1 crown per demon

Double the income for Rich domains, halve it for Poor ones.

Industry & Trade

The other potential source of income for the lord of a domain is industry and trade. Industries controlled by the lord of the domain provide their listed income if the lord owns the prerequisite industries but income is cut by one-third for each prerequisite the lord does not control.

Having trade routes with other domains increases the value of traded goods; an average trade route for a particular industrial product increases the profit of that good by 20%. Trade routes must be negotiated and protected by the trading demons.

Excess iliaster can be sold off; it sells for half a horn per point as plasmic iliaster in peacetime and at normal prices for Strain and other forms of permanent iliaster. Of course, if a neighbouring domain is in trouble and must purchase iliaster to stave off starvation, then the price of iliaster will rise swiftly.



Expenses

Running a domain incurs significant costs.

Tithes: Firstly, there are tithes that must be paid to the ruler's liege lord. These taxes are equal to 10% of the domain's iliaster production each month. In heavily settled regions such as the Sixth or Seventh Circle, tithes are collected each month. In more isolated regions, tithes are paid on the 10th of Oathing.

Optionally, a lord can pay a tithe to the Priests of the Morningstar.

Salaries: Demons employed by the lord of a domain must be paid; common demons cost two horns a day, while more powerful hellkin can demand even more money. See the Retainers table for more details.

Maintenance: In general, few Houses bother to maintain their structures. Buildings are repaired when they are on the verge of collapse, and not before.

Secret Police: Having an internal security force costs money, as described above.

SECRET POLICE COST

Domain Size	Spymaster's Gather Information	Monthly Cost
Barony	+5	250 crowns
Viscounty	+10	500 crowns
Earldom	+15	2,000 crowns
Duchy	+20	4,000 crowns
Grand Duchy	+25	8,000 crowns

Domain Expenses: Finally, a domain incurs a certain amount of cost in simple bureaucracy, paperwork, minting coins and so on.

DOMAIN EXPENSES

Domain Size	Monthly Cost
Barony	2,000 crowns
Viscounty	4,000 crowns
Earldom	8,000 crowns
Duchy	16,000 crowns
Grand Duchy	32,000 crowns

A character does NOT get experience points for income from a domain.

Retainers

Expert Craftsman (skill +10): 3 crowns/day
Master Craftsman (skill +15): 5 crowns/day

Guard (1st level demon): 3 horns/day
Bodyguard (5th level demon): 2 crowns/day
Sorcerer (10th level human): 20 crowns/day
Toadying Servant: 3 horns/day
Court jester: 1 crown/day
Herald: 5 crowns/day
Master of spawn: 5 crowns/day

A Copious Example of Domain Rulership

The stalker demon Farel of House Carthenay has achieved its lifelong dream and has been made Viscount of the Domain of the Warped Hills on the Fourth Circle. Let us follow it, then as it takes custody of its new domain and rules it for a few months.

Rolling Up the Domain

The Warped Hills are a viscounty. The Games Master has decided to determine their contents randomly, although the domain has previously in the campaign been established as Dangerous.

Population of Demons: A viscounty has a population of 8d6x200; rolling we get a total of 21x200 or 4,200 demons.

Population of Damned: A viscounty has a damned population of 8d6x600; rolling, we get a total of 25x600 or 15,000 damned souls.

Natural Features: A viscounty has six natural feature 'slots'; the Games Master allocates one of these to the hills that give the Warped Hills their name. Rolling randomly, we get four mine sites and a forest – Viscount Farel is sitting on a literal gold mine.

Existing Industrial Sites: Slave pen, prison x3, mill, foundry, forge, two torture palaces, six iliaster vaults. Obviously, this domain has plenty of storage space for all those damned souls; three prisons and a slave pen can hold 7,700 souls, almost half the domain's damned population.

Farel has a Charisma modifier of +1, so the domain's Dissent starts at 4.

First Month

Farel must decide how to allocate the domain's workforce. The existing industries and their requirements are:

Industry	Labour Requirement
Slave Pen	50
Prisons	900
Foundry	100
Forge	5
Torture Palaces	1,000 + 10,000 damned

Farel chooses to fully staff all the domain's industries. This takes 2,055 demons and 10,000 damned. It also begins to construct a mine, allocating the rest of the domain's workforce to this task – some 5,000 damned. Digging a mine is easy (Construction DC 10), so the damned will have the mine dug in six months. However, the 5,000 damned must be supervised by demon slavers; there is one slaver per 20 damned (see Basic Structures chapter), so that is another 250 demons to be employed.

Rolling on the table for random events, we get no event.

The torture palaces can produce 20 iliaster per soul per month, so the domain produces 200,000 points of iliaster this month. The demand for iliaster from industry is: 10,000 from the two torture palaces, 500 from the forge, for a total of 10,500.

The demons of the domain consume another 4,200 x 30+1d20; the Games Master rolls an 11, so they devour 172,200 iliaster and the demon lord earns 34,440 crowns.

However, the workers in industry must be paid – they earn two horns a day, or 12 crowns a month each. There are 2,305 of them, which eats another 27,660 crowns. Farel's liege lord demands 4,000 crowns in tax (one-tenth of 200,000 iliaster is 20,000 horns).

The expenses for running the domain are 2,000 crowns.

There is another 17,300 iliaster left over; the domain's six iliaster stores are filled to capacity, holding 3,000 iliaster. The remaining 14,300 iliaster is lost unless it can be traded off to another domain. As it is plasmic iliaster and has not been converted into another

form, it can only be sold off at half price, producing another 1,430 crowns. Another 143 demons come to the domain this month, increasing the population to 4,343 demons.

The forge and foundry would normally produce 160 crowns profit but the domain lacks a working mine. The raw materials must be bought from elsewhere, so they only produce two-thirds the normal amount of cash – 106 crowns.

Finally, the Games Master checks for soul wastage. All the torturers pass their checks, so no souls are lost.

Farel comes out with 2,316 crowns this month, which it spends on the materials for the mine, leaving the demon with a profit of 316 crowns.

Month 2

The mine continues to be built, so as long as random events go well, the domain should run smoothly this month.

Rolling for random events, we get a Fortunate Occurrence – new trade route. A neighbouring domain without a foundry offers to purchase the refined metal back.

Iliaster production and industrial demand is unchanged. The demonic consumption this month is 4343 x 31 – a lean month. The demons consume 134,633 iliaster and pay 26,927 crowns for the privilege.

Costs are largely unchanged: Taxes at 4,000 crowns, Domain Expenses at 2,000 crowns, Wages at 27,660 crowns, for a total of 33,660 crowns. The industries produce 126 crowns profit. Unused iliaster is a massive 54,867 points, which allows the domain to earn another 5,487 crowns and attract another 550 demons. Population rises to 4,893 demons; Farel currently has 5,803 crowns in its treasury.

Month 3

Farel hires a hundred demons as guards – a rather paltry guard for a viscounty but the place is not well established and is still rather precarious. These guards will cost 3,000 crowns per month – one crown each per day.

The random event this month is Crime & War; the Games Master rolls a 17, but the Warped Hills are Dangerous, giving a +2 to the result. The final event is an invasion. Obviously, some other lord has seen

Monthly Rulership Checklist

Start of Month:

- ⊗ **Allocate Workers** (remember, one demon overseer is required for every 20 damned workers)
- ⊗ **Begin new construction projects** (pay materials cost now)

During the Month:

- ⊗ **Roll for random events**

End of the Month:

- ⊗ **Calculate Iliaster Harvest**
- ⊗ **Feed the demons** (demon population x 30+1d20 iliaster is consumed; the demons pay one horn per point; if there is not enough iliaster, the domain enters Dissolution)
- ⊗ **Feed industry**
- ⊗ **Pay tithes** (tenth of iliaster harvest)
- ⊗ **Pay workers** (2 horns/demon at least)
- ⊗ **Pay expenses**
- ⊗ **Calculate industry revenue**
- ⊗ **Sell off or store excess iliaster**
- ⊗ **Check for population growth**
- ⊗ **Check for soul wastage**

the wealth flowing out of the Warped Hills and wants its share. Farel's paltry 100 guards are slaughtered swiftly and the demon finds itself besieged in its fortress. The lesson to be learned here is that a secure domain is better than a wealthy one...

Domains and the Campaign

Winning a domain is a goal for many demons; this is *Book of the Conqueror* after all, and the desire to become a lord of Hell with all its attendant benefits and wealth will drive many campaigns (both roleplaying and military). However, the Games Master and Players should be careful not to let the campaign bog down into the 'Accountancy of the Damned' when one or more characters get their domain. Ideally, most

domain management should be handled 'off-screen' during downtime – unless there is a problem to be solved, the Player and Games Master should work out domain income and costs between game sessions.

Once characters get domains, the campaign will change greatly. Where once they were scrabbling for a few crowns, now even the lowliest baron has an income measured in tens of thousands of crowns. A Grand Duke can throw a million crowns at a problem without blinking an eye. Iliaster is horribly scarce at low levels, but the characters will be awash in it once they get control of torture palaces filled with thousands of souls.

Domains fulfil the following roles in campaigns:

- ⊗ **A Home Base and Familiar Setting:** Like a fortress, a domain is a base for the characters to operate from; it becomes home. The domain should be a recurring place for adventures and encounters, a place where the characters can build their fortresses and make preparations to defeat their enemies.
- ⊗ **A Source of Problems:** Ruling brings with it its own burdens. There are the dull problems of finding iliaster and cash to pay for a domain's expenses, but more interestingly, there are tasks like keeping visiting nobles entertained, finding spies and traitors, dealing with dissent, spying and sabotaging your neighbours and so on.
- ⊗ **A Responsibility:** Domains are handed down by even more powerful nobles, who expect their tithes to be paid and for the character to provide political and military support. If the characters do not run the domain properly,
- ⊗ **A Weapon to be Wielded:** Having a domain makes the characters powerful and influential. They can raise and fund armies, exert political power on their enemies and so on; they become players in the games of thrones and Houses. The aims and influence of the characters should expand with their domains.
- ⊗ **A Resource to be Protected:** One instant way to catch the players' attention is to threaten their domain. Throw a few raiders or an invading army at them and they will fall over themselves coming up with counterattacks and defensive strategies.

Domain-Based Adventures

Just because a character is lord of a domain does not mean that he cannot be sent off on missions to further the goals and needs of his House or faction. A demon lord is wealthy enough to afford to be *summoned* back home if needs be, so many nobles spend years

away from their estates. The demons who are best at killing rise to positions of power in Hell, but they are still called to kill for their House.

Adventure and challenge can also find a character at home, of course:

- ⊗ A powerful demon from another House takes up residency in the domain. How does the ruler respond; does he spy on the new demon or invite it to attend court, or ignore the problem and hope it goes away.
- ⊗ A criminal gang is operating within the domain. They are not targeting the lord's holdings, however, but are using his territory as a base from which to raid the domain's neighbours. How does the character deal with the problem?
- ⊗ A ruined fortress dating from the time of the angels is discovered on the domain. What wonders and dangers are locked inside?
- ⊗ A group of demons demands that the lord of the domain arbitrate a dispute. Justice in Hell is notoriously unjust, so how does the demon exploit this problem?

Furthermore, any problem facing a domain should be turned into an adventure. Does the lord of the domain need to build a torture palace to supply iliaster for the growing population? Then he must kidnap and Covenant an expert torturer from another domain and capture enough souls to stock the torture chambers. Is the domain under attack from rampaging spawn? Then let the lord ride out and slay the largest of them.

Shared Domains

Ruling a domain is a lonely, solitary activity; however, most *Infernum* games will involve a party of characters. Dealing with a domain becomes trickier when there are several characters to keep involved in the game. Possibilities include:

- ⊗ **Everybody Gets A Domain At The Same Time:** The characters have risen through the ranks of the Houses together; why should they not become Barons or better at the same time? This approach works best if all the characters are part of the same or allied Houses; they can all be given new domains under the same liege lord, keeping the party together. Mass expansions of this sort only happen when a House has suddenly and drastically expanded its sphere of influence; did the characters get their new domains because a new frontier opened up in Hell, or because of conquest?

Alternatively, the characters could be granted neighbouring domains even if they are part of different Houses. This will add to the tension; while associating with lesser demons from other Houses is acceptable for commoners, being seen as close to lords of rival domains is quite scandalous.

- ⊗ **Domains Offscreen:** It is possible to keep a character's domain 'offscreen' for most of a campaign. For example, a political game set in the parties and citadels of Lower Hell, or a dungeon crawling game in the Inferno Line will hardly be affected if one of the characters becomes the in absentia ruler of an Earldom on the Fifth. The character gets the experience and wealth





bonuses from ruling the domain, but any domain-related plots are handled offscreen.

- ⊗ **Shared Domain:** The council chamber upgrade (see page 43) for a fortress allows several demons to share the benefits of a fortress; several demons can also share the benefits of a domain. Only one can develop the noble mutations associated with the domain, but they can divide up the wealth and responsibility.

- ⊗ **Officers and Courtiers:** A variation on the shared domain is to give each character a specific role to play in the running of the domain. Roles include Court Sorcerer, Warlord, Spymaster, Chief Torturer, Herald, Master Courtier, Seneschal and so on. There is only one lord, but all the characters have their duties in the running of the domain.

Mortal Domains

Mortals (or damned or angels) adopted into a demonic House can win domains just like ordinary demons and use the rules listed above. The other demonic factions like the Priests of the Morningstar or Free Cities do not have formal domains, but their holdings also use the above rules. A demon lord is a demon lord, whether it professes loyalty to freedom or the Nine.

However, the Early tribes, Knights of the Harrowing and other mortal factions have their own holdings and domains – the chieftain of an Early tribe must protect and lead his kin with even more care and responsibility than a demon rules over its domain. Mortal tribes obviously do not need to worry about iliaster. However, they do have to worry about starvation.

A Tiny farm produces enough food for one hundred people for a month. These farms are all that allows the tribe to survive in the Infernum, so they must be kept safe and secret from demon attack. Another option is to build underground farm caves in a mortal fortress, but these caves can only feed 25 people per month.

Finding water is another problem. A well can be dug to supply water for 100 people per month but most tribes do not have the resources to dig enough wells and so rely on tainted rainwater or liquid from the rivers.

In the absence of hard currency like horns and crowns, the mortal tribe must steal or harvest its building material elsewhere instead of purchasing it.

CRIME & WAR

Roll	Event
1-2	Theft of Food – someone in the tribe is stealing food or water. The tribe will be short food this month.
3-4	Wild Raiders – young hotheads from the tribe are attacking demon slavers and drawing their wrath on the rest of the tribe. They must be stopped without losing their loyalty.
5-6	Failed Raid – a chain-breaking or supply raid has gone wrong, and some of the tribe's warriors have been captured by demons.
7-8	Enemy Raid – another tribe has attacked the tribe, trying to steal food and water.
9-10	Feuds – internal arguments within the tribe spill over into violence; a brawl injures 1d20 tribe members.
11-12	Murder – someone within the tribe is a murderer; the damned soul cannot identify who the killer was.
13-14	Demon War – neighbouring demon groups are at war with each other; the tribe risks becoming collateral damage in the war.
15-16	Spawn Attack – rampaging spawn kill 3d20 tribe members unless stopped by force of arms.
17-18	Demon Attack – demons attack the tribe, killing or capturing 4d20 members.
19-20	Demon Harvest – a demon force of significant size attempts to capture the tribe.

INTERNAL PROBLEMS

Roll	Event
1-2	One of the tribe's sources of water, such as a well, dries up or is befouled. A new source of water must be found.
3-4	The harvest is bad this month; 1d6 x 10% of the food supplies are lost.
5-6	A tainted blight wipes out 1d6 farms or farm caves.
7-8	Dissent and argument divides the tribe; unless the dispute is dealt with, many will leave the tribe.
9-10	A key member of the tribe, such as a sorcerer, is ailing and needs a healer.
11-12	A key member of the tribe is ageing and needs to train a replacement before he dies.
13-14	A mortal within the tribe turns traitor and plans to reveal the tribe's location and defences to a demon lord.
15-16	Corrupting winds are especially strong; increase the SR of the region by +2 this month.
17-18	A cave-in buries part of the tribe and destroys one structure in a warren.
19-20	Fate Storm – any existing fate pools are destroyed.

FORTUNATE OCCURRENCES

Roll	Event
1-2	Bountiful Harvest – double the farm production this month
3-4	New source of water discovered – this will provide water for 1d6 x 50 people per month
5-6	Valuable Hellgout – a hellgout manifests in an area accessible to the tribe, bringing with it useful equipment or mortals from the mortal realm.
7-8	New arrivals – a group of 2d6 travellers join the tribe, bringing news and skills with them.
9-10	Freed Slaves – Chainbreakers manage to free some mortal slaves from a nearby demonic prison, adding 5d6 people to the tribe.
11-12	Demonic Infighting – local demons go to war with each other, opening them up to raids by the tribe
13-14	New Contact – a faustian, angel or renegade demon contacts the tribe as a potential ally
15-16	New Alliance – another group of mortals offers their help to the tribe
17-18	Negative Fate Pool – the combined beliefs of the mortal tribe alter fate in Hell. A nearby demonic domain automatically suffers a non-beneficial event next month.
19-20	Positive Fate Pool – the combined beliefs of the mortal tribe alter fate in Hell. The tribe automatically has a Fortunate Occurrence next month.

Mortal rulers must also watch for Corruption among their ranks. In general, an ordinary mortal in Upper Hell will rise to Corruption level 10 unless regularly purified using sorcery. However, warriors, scouts and those exposed to corrupting environments will become tainted much more quickly.

Mortal tribes suffer from random events each month too – use the same Random Events and Disasters & Natural Phenomena tables as demon domains, but use the following Crime & War, Internal Problems and Fortunate Events tables.

Raids & Security

The Early tribes are like rats in Hell's Kitchen; they must either steal supplies from the hellkin, or else hide from the demons. There are far more humans in chains in the Pit than there are free mortals,

Monthly Rulership Checklist

Start of Month:

- ⊗ Allocate Workers, Guards & Raiders
- ⊗ Begin new construction projects

During the Month:

- ⊗ Roll for random events

End of the Month:

- ⊗ Calculate Food Harvest
- ⊗ Feed the Tribe
- ⊗ Survive another month in Hell

BASIC STRUCTURES

The Infernum is a great machine. Once, it was designed to produce an army to destroy Heaven, but its purpose has become twisted and altered. Now, it exists to further itself, consuming all it can and spewing out an endless number of new castles and factories. The more the Infernum grows, the more it hungers. The most obvious sign of this blind progress is the great number of demonic structures found in the Pit.

Basic Structure Rules

These rules apply both to full-scale fortresses (described in the Fortresses chapter) and the smaller buildings (described in the Dark Satanic Mills chapter). A fortress is the most infamous and terrible of all the twisted structures of the Infernum, but still obeys the same rules and restrictions.

Structure Size

Like creatures and vehicles, structures use a scale of sizes.

Each step on the size table roughly multiplies the structure's size by 4 – a Medium building is four times bigger than a Small building.

It is possible to build larger or smaller versions of various structures; it is possible, for example, to build a Colossal bunker or a Tiny foundry. In such cases, calculate the modifiers by working out the Medium version of a building of that type, then re-multiplying to get the values for the new size. Common building sizes are listed in the description of each structure.

STRUCTURE SIZES

Size	Modifier	Multiplier	Examples
Fine	–8	x¼	Outhouse, bunker, hellhole
Diminutive	–4	x½	Common dwelling, storehouse
Tiny	–2	x1	Shrine, workshop, fine dwelling
Small	–1	x2	Small fortress (Baron), tenement block, small factory
Medium	+0	x4	Common fortress (Viscount), agony winery, ritual site
Large	+1	x8	Large fortress (Earl), large factory, foundry
Huge	+2	x16	Huge fortress (Duke), biomech harvester
Gargantuan	+4	x32	Mighty fortress (Grand Duke), shipyard
Colossal	+8	x64	House citadel

Structure Points

Structures have structure points just like creatures have hit points. A structure reduced to zero structure points is completely smashed; nothing remains of it but rubble. A structure reduced to 50% of its structure points is so damaged it cannot function properly. At 25% of its structure points, the structure risks collapse (see Catastrophic Damage, below).

A structure has a base number of structure points that depends on its size and design. Changing the material the structure is built out of changes the structure's structure point and hardness totals.

1 structure point (SP) is equal to 10 hit points.

Hardness

A structure also has a hardness score, which measures how structurally tough it is and how resistant it is to damage. The hardness score is mostly dependant on the material the building is made out of, but buildings specially designed to resist attack, such as castle towers, have a hardness bonus.

Design DC

How hard is it to design the structure, using Knowledge (architecture). This is a trivial check for most common buildings, but the arcane geometries of larger fortresses can test even the most cunning mind.

Construction DC

How hard is it to build the structure. The builders must be able to make Craft (fortress) checks that exceed this DC – the more they can exceed the DC by, the faster the structure will be built.

Labour Required

How much labour is required, expressed in slave days (48 hour day, with each slave being worked as much as possible). Using more labour can reduce the time required.

Cost

The base cost of the materials for the structure. In general, three-quarters of this value will be the base cost of the materials used, while the rest will cover construction tools, scaffolds, cranes and other expenses.

Materials

The 'default' material for hellish constructions is stone; volcanic rock like basalt and granite can be quarried almost anywhere in the Pit. Black fortresses of tortured stone rise like lava-flows vomited out by the fires throughout Hell.

Other materials are available to the discerning demonic architect, however. Each material type has the following qualities:

Hardness

The base hardness of the material. This is further modified by the actual building design. Hardness is used to measure the structural stability of the building and its ability to resist damage.

Structure Point Modifier

The change, if any, to the building's structure points.

Resists

What, if anything, the material is especially resistant to. Energy attacks that are resisted have their damage halved (quartered, in the case of Cold).

DC Modifier

The change, if any, to the Craft DC for working with the building. If the Craft DC is reduced to zero or less, then the structure will build itself and does not need any labourers.

Cost Modifier

The change to the building's cost caused by using this material.

MATERIAL TYPES

Material	Hardness	Resists	Structure Point Modifier	DC Modifier	Cost Modifier
Stone	8	Fire, Cold, Electricity	x1	+0	100%
Wood	5	Cold, Electricity	x1	-5	50%
Brick	6	Fire, Cold, Electricity	x1	-5	60%
Bone	5	Acid, Electrical	x1	+5	70%
Sinew-Wood	8	Fire, Cold, Electricity	x1½	+0	150%
Frothstone	2	Fire, Acid, Cold, Electricity	x½	+0	50%
Iron	10	Fire, Sonic, Cold	x2	+5	200%
Bronze	10	Fire, Sonic, Cold	x1½	+0	150 %
Gold	8	Fire, Sonic, Cold	x1	+5	300%
Living Flesh	3	—	x1½	+5	250%
Congeaed Blood	3	Acid, Sonic	x⅔	-5	200%
Creeping Bile ¹	0	Acid	x1	+5	100%
Hellforged Iron	15	Fire, Sonic, Cold	x2	+5	300%
Hellglass	20	All	x½	+5	250%
Soulstone	15	All	x3	-5 ²	500%
Moliate ³	5	All	x1	-10	200%
Biomechanical ⁴	10	—	x3	-5	400%

¹Creeping Bile requires living workers.

²If the labourers working on the structure cannot all soulshape, then the DC modifier is increased to +10.

³House Glabretch only

⁴House Zethu only

Stone: The volcanic rock of the Infernum must be quarried from the ground and shaped into blocks for construction work. There is such demand for this work that the quarries work night and day, using explosive charges and spells to blast open the ground in gaping wounds.

Wood: Wood is rarely used; the oppressive heat of most Circles dries it out quickly and turns the structure into a firetrap. As demons have resistance to most fire attacks, they have little fear of using flaming weapons in warfare. Wood is only used for the cheapest and least important structures.

Brick: Fired red bricks are used to build factories and other industrial facilities, especially in Dis. Few fortresses are built of brick, as it is seen as a cheap and common material not worthy of a lord of Hell.

Bone: The ossuaries of the Third Circle provide this material, as do the battlefields of the rest of Hell. Few entire fortresses are built of bone, but having a tower or throne room built out of the bones of your foes has a certain old-fashioned charm.

Sinew-Wood: This black wood grows only in certain reaches of the Pit, especially in the dangerous Wood of Suicides. It is expensive, but relatively easy to work and is resistant to flame unlike mundane timber.

Frothstone: This pumice-like substance is hardly stone at all, being so soft and crumbly that it can be crushed by a mortal fist. It is easy enough to work and resists both flame and acid, so it is sometimes used for inner buildings that do not have to stand up to direct assault.

Iron: Towers and walls of black iron are forged in the foundries and can resist the most powerful attacks of the hellkin. Cunning artificers can make the iron into virtually invulnerable structures.

Bronze: Bronze is slightly softer than iron, but is easier to work and more pleasing to the eye.

Gold: The ultimate in showy excess, gold is far from an ideal building material but is still used to demonstrate a demon's wealth, especially in the Seventh Circle.

Living Flesh: Usually, structures of living flesh are made from the bodies of spawn and demons sewn onto a framework of iron or wood, although especially wealthy demons have made towers of living, human bodies.

Congeaed Blood: A relatively simple alchemical concoction makes blood set hard enough to work like stone. Congeaed blood is easy to shape and makes for an impressive spectacle.

Creeping Bile: Another product of demonic ingenuity, creeping bile is created by having the workers swallow tablets that makes them vomit up a thick and gritty slime that can then be shaped. As it requires the churning stomach juices of a living creature, the damned cannot normally be used to work on buildings made of Creeping Bile.

Hellforged Iron: This is iron mixed with a tincture of Strain, making it tougher and giving it a greenish tinge.

Hellglass: Infernally sharp obsidian, hellglass is incredibly tough but brittle – it is very difficult to damage, but collapses with alarming swiftness should a blow strike true.

Soulstone: The reshaped bodies of damned souls, soulstone is the quintessential Hellish construction material. Soulstone buildings regenerate a number of hit points equal to their Size Multiplier each day.



Moliate: This is the living fungal mat found throughout the Glabretch lands. Growing new patches of moliate requires the Moliate Seed link of the Glabretch Noble Chain of the Fungal Bloom, but the fungus can be shaped using alchemical compounds and demon artistry.

Buildings made of the moliate regenerate a number of hit points equal to their Size Multiplier each day. Moliate buildings can only be built on moliate patches.

Biomechanical: Living buildings can be grown using Zethu technology, but it is exceedingly expensive. Biomechanoid buildings regenerate hit points equal to twice their Size Multiplier each day.

Design & Labour

Labour

The Infernum is built on the labour of damned souls. While most of the damned slaves are thrown into the torture palaces to be processed for iliaster, a sizeable minority are used as slaves in the construction yards and factories of the Pit.

Spawn are used for brute-force work, but even the humanoid spawn-things are useless for anything that requires even a modicum of intelligence. The twisted creatures are mindless and incapable of learning anything other than the simplest tasks. Every construction workforce has a few spawn for heavy lifting, but spawn on their own cannot be used to build a structure.

The lower classes of demon also toil for their masters, although these demons work for the pay of iliaster. In lands where there are sufficient souls, the demons are overseers and slave-drivers, but in most Circles, the demons must work as all the souls are worn thin through endless torments. Demons are the most skilled of workers, although they are also expensive.

House Zethu alone controls the biomechanical servant race, although biomechanicals have been hired out on occasion. The Zethu ability to breed a biomechanical for a specific task makes them a very adaptable yet specialised race; they can make set spindly biomechs to work on the tallest, most delicate towers of hellglass or spawn muscle-bound freaks to drag huge blocks of stone into place.

LABOURER TYPES

Labourer	Cost (Day)	Craft Skill
Slave	0 ¹	+0
Common Demon	2 horns	+5
Skilled Demon	1 crown	+8
Demonic Artisan	5 crowns	+15
Master Artisan	10 crowns	+20
Biomechanical	3 crowns	+10

¹Assuming the slaves are already gathered. Hiring slaves from another demon generally costs one horn per slave per day. Slaves also need one demon overseer per 20 slaves – the overseer is a common demon costing two horns a day.

The labourer's Craft skill determines how fast the labourer works. If the labourer must take 10 on a check to equal or exceed the Craft DC of the structure being built, then the labourer achieves one day's worth of work each day. If the labourer must take 20 to equal or exceed the building's Craft DC, then it achieves one day's worth of work every five days.

If the labourer's Craft check exceeds the DC, then it achieves even more work. For every 10 points the labourer's check result exceeds the Craft DC, it achieves an extra day of work.

For example, a common dwelling has a Craft DC of 10 and requires ten days worth of labour. Even a slave (Craft +0) can take 10 to equal this DC. A single slave would therefore take ten days to build the structure. If a master artisan was working on the structure, it would get three days worth of work done each day – the master artisan has a check result of 30 (Takes 10 on Craft +20); this exceeds the DC by 20, and for every 10 points it exceeds the check DC by, it achieves an extra day's worth of effort.

Design

Demonic architects are skilled professionals, normally imps, beasts or artificers. Their skill comes at a high price; an architect charges its Knowledge (architecture) skill bonus x the Design DC of the building in crowns. For example, a beast with a Knowledge (architecture) of +15 designing a DC 10 Structure would charge 10 x 15=150 crowns. More complex structures require even higher prices – an unusual design multiplies the cost by five, while a unique design multiplies the cost by ten.

If the designer must take 20 on the check, then the cost is multiplied by ten again.

If the Design Check is failed, then the structure is flawed in some fashion. For every point of difference between the DC and the result, then reduce one of the structure's traits by 20%. Applicable traits are structure points, hardness, or effectiveness (take whatever the structure is designed to do, and reduce this by 20%). If the design check is failed by more than five, the design is obviously flawed and must be scrapped.

Building a Structure: an Example

A watchtower has the following base traits:

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
Diminutive	50	+0	15	10	20 days	100 cr

Assuming the building is made out of stone, the only change to the above base traits would be an increase in hardness to 8.

Designing the structure costs 75 crowns; a designer with 5 ranks in Knowledge (architecture) can design a tower by taking 10, and a skill of +5 x DC 15 works out at 75 crowns.

The demon lord has no slaves to allocate to the watchtower's construction, so it must hire demon workers. It uses common demons; these cost 2 horns per day and can finish the tower in 20 days, for a final cost of 40 horns or 8 crowns. The total price, then, is:

Design: 75 crowns

Labour: 8 crowns

Base Cost: 100 crowns

Total: 183 crowns.

Damage to Structures

Structures can be harmed by the attacks of individual creatures, by armies, or by war machines and siege engines.

An individual creature attacks the structure by making a normal attack roll and

determining damage, remembering to subtract the hardness of the structure. For every 10 full points of damage dealt, subtract 1 structure point from the building, then treat the attack like a normal war machine attack, below.

Units can attack a structure from outside, but are rather ineffective; the unit inflicts the minimum amount of damage possible for it (instead of rolling the dice, assume that all the dice roll 1s). It is generally more effective for a few individuals from the unit to smash through the doors of the structure and the whole unit can move inside. From inside, a unit can run rampage and inflicts damage normally (remember to subtract the hardness). Alternatively, a unit can attack using an energy-based weapon, such as torches to set the structure alight.

To attack a structure with a war machine, simply roll to hit as usual. The attacker must specify the spot on the structure that they are attacking, as some structures have multiple components. If the attack hits successfully, roll for damage and deduct this from the building's structure points. When a building reaches zero structure points, it collapses completely.



Obviously, buildings do not simply stand there while their fabric is battered to powder and then suddenly crumble all at once. There are varying degrees of destruction to which a structure may be subjected. A structure may have one or more breaches and still remain standing.

Breaches

A breach is created when part, but not all, of a structure has been broken through. Often in siege warfare the intention is not to smash down the whole wall or the whole castle but instead to create a hole in the defences large enough for troops to invade.

A breach is, by default, an irregular and roughly circular hole five feet deep and five feet across. If a breach is created in a structure of approximately the same dimensions as this (such as a door) then it is completely destroyed. Some exceptionally thick structures must be breached more than once in roughly the same place in order to create catastrophic damage (see below) and smash through to the other side, which is why invading forces prefer to assault the gate than the walls.

There are three ways in which a breach may be created in a structure.

- ⊗ If an attacking war machine scores a successful breach threat by rolling within the breach range on its roll to hit and the damage scored overcomes the hardness rating of the structure, then the structure must make an immediate hardness saving throw ($1d20 + \text{hardness}$). The DC is 10 plus 1 for every point of damage in excess of the structure's hardness rating. If the hardness saving throw is failed, a breach is created. The damage inflicted is deducted from the structure's total SP as usual.
- ⊗ If a structure has been reduced to half its total structure points or lower, every successful hit is counted as a breach threat as above. This only applies to attacks made against areas that have already suffered damage; you cannot take advantage of this rule to batter the front of a structure, then wheel the catapult round to the back and create a breach there.
- ⊗ If a single attack inflicts more than 30 points of structural damage in a round, whether or not the roll to hit resulted in a breach threat, the structure must make a hardness saving throw (DC 15) or suffer a breach. Again, the damage is deducted as usual.

Catastrophic Damage

There are three ways in which catastrophic damage can occur.

- ⊗ When a structure has been reduced to lower than 25% of its total structure points, it must make a hardness saving throw (DC 15) every time it takes structural damage. Failure means that catastrophic damage ensues.
- ⊗ Every time a fresh breach is created within 30 feet of an existing breach on the same wall of a building, it must make a hardness saving throw (DC 15) or suffer catastrophic damage.
- ⊗ If a breach is created in a tower on any level below the top floor, it must make a hardness saving throw (DC 20) or collapse down to the point of the breach.

Any modular structure that fails its hardness saving throw and suffers catastrophic damage collapses outright. Any neighbouring structure connected to the collapsing one (such as another section of wall) must also make an immediate hardness saving throw, adjusted according to the amount of damage it has taken; the DC is 5 if it has suffered no damage, 10 if it has lost fewer than 50% of its structure points and 15 if it has fewer than 50% of its structure points remaining. Failure means that that structure also collapses and the structures attached to it must also save; and so on.

A stand-alone structure that fails its hardness save suffers partial collapse. A collapse effect eats away at the building, as if a chunk had been taken out of it. The extent of collapse depends on the arrangement of the structure. First, determine the point of impact. If the attack was aimed, the point of impact is set by the character aiming it; otherwise, it is determined randomly. The structure crumbles in a wave that spreads out in a sphere from the point of impact. The radius of the sphere is $1d6 \times 10$ feet. If the spreading wave encounters a breach, a new wave of crumbling begins, centred on the breach. In this way, a badly damaged structure may be destroyed altogether with a single impact.

Once this initial phase of damage has been resolved, a second hardness saving throw must be made at -4 to the roll, but only if there is still an intact structure above the area of effect. If the saving throw succeeds, no further damage is sustained. If it fails, all levels of the structure directly above the area of effect fall down.

Any tower that the wave encounters must immediately make a hardness saving throw (DC 15, or DC 20 if it is below 50% of its structure points). If it succeeds, it does not take any damage and remains standing; if it fails, it collapses at the level where the wave hit it.

A collapsing structure falls down in the opposite direction to that from which the damage came. If the collapse was not the result of an impact, roll randomly to see in which direction the structure falls.

Damage From Falling Debris

As a building crumbles, it can cause terrible damage to those trapped in the path of the wreckage.

- ⊗ Anyone who is inside a building when it collapses and who is within ten feet of an exit may make a Reflex saving throw (DC 20) to dive out of the building before it comes down. This may mean leaping out of the window but in some cases this is preferable to being squashed by tumbling masonry.
- ⊗ Anyone in the same circumstances who is close to a point of potential shelter, such as a natural cave or a strongroom, may make the same Reflex

saving throw to dive under cover. Though they may avoid taking damage from the building's collapse, they will still begin to suffocate if they are not dug out.

- ⊗ Those who do not manage to avoid the destruction of the building are treated as if they were trapped in a cave-in.
- ⊗ If one structure collapses on to another, such as a tall tower falling down on to the top of a keep, 1d8 structure points of damage are inflicted for every ten feet that the toppling structure was in height above the level to which it is collapsing. This assumes the structure was made of stone. A collapsing wooden structure inflicts the same amount in d4, not d8.

Closing Breaches

The defenders of a structure may attempt to close up a breach. This is primarily to stop invaders getting in and secondly to provide some support for the compromised wall. There must be sufficient material to hand in order to achieve this.

For every five rounds of barricading, one breach may be closed. Enemies cannot enter it and it no longer counts as a breach for catastrophic damage purposes. Every additional defender who helps block a breach reduces the time it takes (up to a maximum of five defenders who can block a breach in one round).

Energy Attacks

Some materials are resistant to a particular form of energy; in such cases, halve the damage from the attack before applying hardness (quarter the damage in the case of cold attacks).

Acid attacks ignore hardness unless the material is resistant to acid.

Fire attacks can set the target on fire. In the case of structures, divide the damage inflicted by the fire attack by five and roll a d20. If the dice roll is less than one-fifth of the damage, then the structure has been set on fire and takes 1d6 damage per round until the fire is extinguished. If a six is rolled for fire damage, then the fire spread and now deals 2d6 damage per round and so on.



FORTRESSES

The Pit's terrain is dominated by great demonic fortresses, conceived of by hellish minds and raised by the work of millions of slaves. These edifices are more than mere fortifications built to defend strategic locations or demonstrate a lord's mastery over its slaves. The fortresses of Hell are bulwarks against assault by both sorcerous and conventional means. A lord enthroned within the walls of its fortress knows that it is virtually invulnerable to its enemy's attacks. By means of unholy geometries and geomantic rites, the fortress draws on the power of Hell itself to augment the ruler attuned to it.

The Nature of Fortresses

Unlike normal structures, a fortress can contain several special upgrades and architectural devices. These are divided into three categories – Geomantic Designs, Structural Enhancements and Special Chambers (for more details see Upgrades & Additions, below). Depending on the size of a fortress, it can contain more and more of these upgrades. These upgrades are built just like normal buildings and use the same rules.

A fortress can be built as a single huge entity, or as a conglomeration of smaller structures. The bigger a fortress, the more protection it offers against hostile sorceries. Creating the fortress as a single huge structure is more expensive, but is also more secure – building a fortress made of a web of small

shrines may be cheaper, but destroying a single component in the web collapses the geomantic protection.

To work out the effective size of a fortress, use the size of the largest component structure, then increase the size by one category for every two outlying structures with a geomantic node (see page 46). For example, a Large fortress with four Tiny shrines, all of which have geomantic nodes would count as a Gargantuan fortress (Large + 2) for the purpose of sorcery effects. Of course, if any of the four shrines was destroyed, then the fortress' protection would be broken.

Fortress Types

There are seven types of fortress. The larger a fortress is, the more upgrades it can hold (see Fortress Properties table, below).

Shrines are minor fortresses, usually used only for geomantic manipulation. They are commonly built as monuments to a particular great victory, or as guard posts or symbols of authority. Few nobles rule from a mere shrine; they are given to Captains of the demon armies or to Viceroys of domains.

Manors are home to Barons; they are perhaps the most homely of the fortress types, as they have enough room for the demon lord and its servants, but little else. Manors are often richly decorated, as an unambitious demon might rise to baronial rank and no higher, squandering its wealth on its manor.

FORTRESS PROPERTIES

Fortress Type	Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Geomantic Designs	Structural Enhancements	Special Chambers	Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
Shrine	Tin.	500	+5	1	1	1	15	15	1,000	5,000 cr.
Manor	Sml.	1,000	+5	2	2	2	15	15	5,000	10,000 cr.
Keep	Med.	2,000	+5	4	4	4	20	15	25,000	20,000 cr.
Fortress	Lge.	4,000	+5	5	5	5	20	20	125,000	80,000 cr.
Lesser Citadel	Hge.	8,000	+5	7	7	7	25	20	625,500	320,000 cr.
Mighty Fortress	Gar.	16,000	+5	8	8	8	25	20	3,125,000	1,280,000 cr.
Citadel	Col	32,000	+5	9	9	9	30	25	15,625,000	5,120,000 cr.

The Chain of the Living Fortress

The common mutation Chain of the Living Fortress gives its possessor the power to transform into a fortress. The third link in the Chain gives the demon the same protections against sorcery as if it was within a Small fortress all the time. The fifth link allows the demon to shapeshift into a manor; the demon can have upgrades installed as normal, but can only use these upgrades in fortress form.

Keeps are significant structures, the defensive lynchpin of whole viscounties. Keeps are usually built in strategically important areas, such as mountain passes, as they can contain enough troops and weapons to hold out against a siege.

Fortresses, the home to Earls, are massive fortifications on a scale wholly above petty manors and keeps. These are labyrinthine affairs, like artificial mountains gnawed through by generations of worms. Most Hellish fortresses are well known across their Circles as landmarks.

Lesser Citadels are built in imitation of the great citadels of the Malebolge. These castles are among the most prized possessions of the Houses and are held by the richer Dukes.

Mighty Fortresses are incredibly valuable and rare; each House has only a handful, and there are none in the possession of lesser Houses or unaligned demons. The loss of a mighty fortress is a dolorous blow indeed; during Sturrach's War, the loss of such a fortress marked the end of Zethu, Astyanath and Carthenay resistance to the Bloody Army. The few mighty fortresses are known across Hell by such names as Hell's Kitchen or the Vaults of Mammon.

There are but nine **Citadels** in Hell, although the Palace of the Morningstar and Sturrach's Hold are technically just as big. These structures are unimaginably vast and powerful, protected by layer upon layer of fortification and sorcery. A mortal could be born in a citadel and wander the halls until his death without ever retracing his steps.

Basic Structure

Every fortress, regardless of upgrades and overall design, has a number of common properties. It has a main gate and basic defences like battlements and gun ports. Internally, it has living space for the demon lord and a number of creatures equal to the fortress' Size Multiplier x 20.

The amount of space the fortress takes up varies depending on the geomantic layout of the surrounding Hell. Some are towering spires that reach out of the ground as if trying to claw the Morningstar from the sky. Others are low, squat structures that spread out over a wide area. In general, a shrine has around 50,000 square feet of space.

In the heart of every fortress, regardless of size or design, there is a throne room. A basic fortress has only a simple chamber with a stone seat; more elaborate fortresses have correspondingly grander thrones. The throne room is the central chamber of the fortress and is the most important. All the geomantic power of the structure is channelled through this room.

Designs vary from House to House and style to style.

House Astyanath favours keeps made of Hellglass, decorated with spikes and thorns. The elegant gardens of the Seventh Circle practically demand tall commanding towers to rise above them. Similarly, the Riethii fortresses tend towards beauty instead of strength, but they are gaudier and more conventionally beautiful than the eerie alien shapes of the Cruel Ones. By contrast to their Seventh-Circle neighbours, the Carthenay keeps are much more conventional. The House prefers heavily fortified monolithic structures of great strength that can be easily defended.

House Sturrach pioneered the construction of military fortresses, although its mastery of geomantic counter-magic is somewhat lacking. The House's fortresses are invariably well-protected against aerial assault; the House is well used to using control of the sky to conquer foes, and wishes to ensure that it never falls victim to the same tactic.

The Zethu fortresses are almost always mechanical or biomechanical structures, although outlying nodes in their geomantic webs are normally built of stone. The Zethu are skilled at using geomantic nodes to create effective defences against sorcery, but their lack of conventional defences allowed them to be easily overwhelmed in the chaos after the Free City revolt.

Glabretch fortresses are outgrowths of the moliata in most places and look like cancerous growths or mouldy towers of festering slime. A few are made of bone or flesh, but these are rare and are created by eccentric demon lords, or the occasional Glabretchi mortal noble who does not want to rule from a toadstool.

The Oblurott fortresses are very conventional; they tend to be luxurious, but also heavily fortified. War is rarely far from the Oblurott's door. Haimon fortresses resemble those of House Zethu, but are made of stone and bone instead of metal. Finally, Lictat lack the design experience of the other Houses, so their keeps are often ramshackle and half-built.

The Benefits of Fortresses

Fortresses are magical structures, which tap into the very power of Hell itself. They are used as defensive redoubts in the event of siege or invasion and as symbols of a demon's power and authority over its subjects. Fortresses also permit a demon lord to draw power from its domain, allowing it to manifest an extra noble mutation.

Sorcerous assaults can be broken by the magical defences of a fortress. If a demon is within its fortress or tied to one, then any attempts to use certain rites on the demon are penalised. A demon who is resident within the fortress it is tied to is almost invulnerable to magical assault – so long as that assault comes from outside the walls of the fortress. Get into a fortress, or bring down the geomantic pattern that creates the sorcerous defence and the demon has no added protection.

Claiming a Fortress

To claim a fortress, a demon (or other creature) must seat itself on the throne of the fortress and spend an amount of iliaster that depends on the size of the fortress:

CLAIMING A FORTRESS

Fortress Size	Iliaster Cost to Claim
Shrine	3
Manor	6
Keep	9
Fortress	15
Lesser Citadel	20
Mighty Fortress	25
Citadel	35

The fortress cannot be claimed while its previous owner is still alive and still holds a claim on it. A demon can relinquish its claim at any time as a free action. It can only claim one fortress at a time and must relinquish a claim on one fortress to claim another.

Once a fortress is claimed, it gives benefits as follows:

- ⊗ Immediately, the demon may claim the title of 'Lord'. It gains the experience bonus for winning Lordship (see *Book of the Tormentor*, page 96).
- ⊗ The demon develops a noble mutation of his choice within a day of claiming the fortress. If the demon relinquishes the fortress or the fortress is destroyed, the demon may retain this mutation, but cannot gain another mutation for claiming the same fortress twice.
- ⊗ The demon gains the sorcerous protection of the fortress (see Fortresses & Sorcery, below).

Multiple Claimants

A basic fortress has but a single throne room. However, it is possible for multiple demons to be tied to the same fortress. This requires the installation of a Council Chamber (see below).

Upgrades & Additions

With the proper upgrades and additions, a fortress gives its master added powers. One of the most common additions is a device called a Soul Cage, which ensures that any souls personally Covenanted to the lord are instantly transported to the demon's fortress. The iliaster extracted from souls in a cage can be transmitted directly to the lord of the fortress. Other fortresses contain geomantic chambers that enhance the lord's physical abilities or magical might.

In general:

- ⊗ A **Geomantic Design** improves the ability of the fortress to manipulate iliaster and defend against sorcery.
- ⊗ A **Structural Enhancement** makes the fortress sturdier or more dangerous. This category includes adding new weapons to the fortress.
- ⊗ Finally, **Special Chambers** make the fortress more luxurious or desirable, increasing the demon's standing in society.

Some upgrades count as two 'slots', or can be built as one category or another. A blasting tower, for example, is both a Geomantic Design and a Structural Enhancement.

Upgrades are described as follows:

Name of the Upgrade

Description: What the upgrade looks like.

Structure Traits Table: The cost, size, design DC and so on of the upgrade.

Prerequisites: What upgrades or conditions, if any, that the upgrade requires.

Properties: What benefits or properties the upgrade gives the fortress.

Variants: The effect of building larger or smaller versions of the upgrade and any other versions that exist.

Special: Any special rules or notes that apply to this upgrade.

All upgrades are listed as being Tiny; an upgrade can be made larger, but cannot be bigger than the fortress it is placed in.

If an upgrade does not have listings for its structure points or hardness, then it is either distributed throughout the fortress or is an upgrade to an existing chamber. In either case, there is no need to choose a material to build this upgrade out of; just multiply its costs by the desired size.

Geomantic Designs

Blasting Tower

Size	Structure		Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
	Points	Hardness				
Tiny	200	+0	16	16	300	500 cr

Description: A blasting tower is a spike of black metal and crystal that juts at an angle from the tower. It crackles with crawling bolts of lightning

and drips quicksilver from its joints. It is obviously too small and narrow to be inhabited.

Prerequisites: None.

Properties: A blasting tower is essentially a fortress-mounted hellcannon. The device draws its power from the lord of the fortress. A Tiny blasting tower costs five iliaster to activate and fires a sphere of hellfire ten feet in radius to any point within one mile of the tower. The blasting tower is targeted like a siege weapon (see page 136) with an attack penalty of -5. The blasting tower does not need any chemical components or ammunition other than iliaster.

A creature caught in a blasting tower strike may make a Reflex save (DC equal to the normal save against the demon lord's Save DC) to take half damage. A blasting tower may fire once every minute (ten rounds). A demon lord can activate its fortress' blasting towers from the throne room as an attack action; any number of blasting towers can be activated as a single attack.



Variants: For larger towers, multiply the activation cost, hellfire damage, blast radius and range by the structure's Size modifier (for example, a Gargantuan blasting tower has a range of 64 miles, covers an area 640 feet in radius and costs 320 iliaster to fire).

Special: A blasting tower counts as a Geomantic Design and a Structural Enhancement. Multiple blasting towers may be added to a fortress.

Correspondence Window

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
Tiny	—	—	18	10	20	50 cr

Description: This upgrade is an ornate glowing portal, usually made out of hellglass. When activated, a hazy image appears within the portal's confines of the throne room of the fortress.

Prerequisites: None or geomantic node

Properties: Correspondence windows allow a demon lord to swiftly travel to or speak with outlying parts of its fortress. They can only be used in structures linked with geomantic nodes, although a window can be constructed in one part of a building to communicate with the throne room elsewhere in the building.

By spending one iliaster, a creature who touches the window can activate it. Creatures standing at the window can see the throne room, while creatures in the throne room can see a hazy image of those standing at the window. By spending another iliaster, a creature can teleport itself from one place to the other by walking into the image.

While any creature can activate a correspondence window by touching it, the lord of a fortress can activate a correspondence window from its throne room as a free action.

Variants: If two structures are linked using geomantic nodes, then a correspondence window can be used to transport between the two. Larger windows allow more creatures to transport through to the throne room at once; the number is equal to the window's Size Multiplier.

Special: A correspondence window can be installed in a dungeon. Multiple correspondence windows may be installed in a fortress.

Corruption Font

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
Tiny	30	+2	20	10	30	250 cr

Description: A corruption font is not so much seen as felt; a palpable aura of malice and hate emanates from the fortress. There are signs of the font's presence, like black veins throbbing beneath the surface of the walls and a foul stench of brimstone, as well as unholy runes and symbols carved into every surface, but it is most truly perceived with the soul directly.

Prerequisites: None.

Properties: A corruption font channels the lord's evil into its fortress. Anyone spending a day within the fortress is exposed to Corruption of SR equal to the lord's level, to a maximum of 20. Demon lords use this upgrade to transform mortal servants into more... usable forms.

Variants: Larger corruption fonts spread the SR of the fortress over an area in miles equal to the structure's Size Multiplier.

Special: A corruption font is blasphemous and can be detected by sensitive creatures. A font can be installed in a dungeon.

Council Chamber

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
Tiny	100	+0	15	15	400	300 cr

Description: This chamber contains two or more thrones, arranged around a great altar of bloodied marble. A spike of iron rises from the centre of the altar. If multiple demons wish to claim the same fortress, they must impale their hands in unison on that spike (suffering 1d10 damage).

Prerequisites: None.

Properties: A council chamber allows a group of demons to share the benefits of ruling a fortress.

They may divide the iliaster cost of claiming the fortress amongst themselves. They each gain *half* the normal protection against sorcery (see below). They share the experience bonus for claiming a fortress. One demon amongst them may claim the title of Lord and one demon (not necessarily the same one) may develop a noble mutation.

Only one demon counts as the lord of the fortress at any time. If only one demon is within the fortress, it gains that title; otherwise, the demons must choose who is the currently active lord. The lordship can be transferred as a free action; if contested, have the demons make daily 1d20 + level rolls, the one with the highest result becoming the lord for one day.

A Tiny council chamber contains three thrones, allowing up to three demons to share a fortress.

Variants: Larger chambers allow more demons to share the fortress.

Size	Lords	Size	Lords
Small	4	Huge	12
Medium	6	Gargantuan	16
Large	8	Colossal	20

Special: A council chamber counts as both a Geomantic Design and a Special Chamber.

Council Chamber, Greater

Structure		Design		Labour	
Size	Points	Hardness	DC	Required	Cost
Tiny	—	—	20	15	500 cr

Description: A greater council chamber is considerably grander and more imposing than the lesser version. The demons now sit in a great circle below golden plates bearing their personal sigils. The iron spike is replaced with a beating heart made of crystal and ichor. An eerie child, mortal in appearance, manifests sometimes within the room; this is the offspring of the combined spirits of the demons, an expression of their union and speaks as their consensus.

Prerequisites: Council chamber

Properties: A greater council chamber allows all the demons bonded using the basic council chamber to claim the full benefits of having a fortress; they are all equally protected from hostile sorceries, they all



gain noble mutations and the full experience bonus for being lords and they all count equally as the lord of the fortress for other effects. Again, in the event of a contestation between council members, roll 1d20 + level to determine who wins.

Variants: The size of the greater chamber must be equal to or bigger than the council chamber it is replacing.

Special: A greater council chamber replaces a normal council chamber and so does not take a Geomantic Design or Special Chamber slot.

Debtor's Chains

Structure		Design		Labour	
Size	Points	Hardness	DC	Required	Cost
Tiny	—	—	17	17	300 cr

Description: Debtor's chains are ornamental chains strung throughout a fortress; they are hung in every chamber and over every entrance. They remind the lord's subjects of its power over them and how they are inescapably bound to it.

Prerequisites: None.

Properties: Debtor's chains increase the effective Covenant strength of any debts owed the lord by +5 while inside its fortress. This increase in strength only applies when both lord and debtor are within the confines of the fortress.

Variants: None. If the chains in a room are broken, then their benefit is lost in that room.

Special: The size of the chains must be equal to the size of the fortress.

Dominion Nexus

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
Tiny	50	+0	20	20	200	400 cr

Description: A dominion nexus consists of a map of the demon's domain, with every significant site and population centre marked on it. An iron gauntlet hangs above the map, symbolising the demon lord's mastery of the surrounding territory.

Prerequisites: The demon must have a domain.

Properties: A dominion nexus enhances the demon's mastery over its domain. It may choose any one of the following benefits for having a dominion nexus:

- ⊗ +20 bonus hit points while within its domain.
- ⊗ +2 bonus to Armour Class while within its domain.
- ⊗ +4 insight bonus to Spot, Listen, Gather Information and Knowledge (local) checks while within its domain
- ⊗ +2 bonus to a chosen saving throw while within its domain.
- ⊗ -2 penalty to one type of saving throw against the demon's mutations while both demon and target are in its domain.
- ⊗ +2 to all Influencing attempts made within its domain.

Variants: Larger Dominion Nexuses give more benefits:

Size	Benefits	Size	Benefits
Small	2	Huge	6
Medium	4	Gargantuan	7
Large	5	Colossal	9

Each benefit can only be chosen once, although the modifiers to saving throws can be selected individually for each saving throw type.

Special: The benefits of a dominion nexus only function while the lord of the domain is in possession of the domain; conquering the domain stops the nexus from working. A dominion nexus can be installed in a dungeon.

Gargoyles

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
Tiny	—	—	18	15	300	250 cr

Description: Stone gargoyles are more than gutters and ugly decorations in the Infernum; by tying the statues into the geomantic energy flow and implanting eyeballs in their sockets, the gargoyles can be made into watchers who raise the alarm when they spot invaders. The nature of the alarm varies; some gargoyles yelp, while others are connected to belltowers or screamer networks.

Prerequisites: None.



Properties: Gargoyles provide a bonus to a fortress' security; see below.

Variants: None.

Special: The deployment of gargoyles must be equal in size to that of the fortress to provide full security.

Geomantic Node

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
Tiny	100	+0	15	15	300	100 cr

Description: A geomantic node is a pyramidal device faced with gold and decorated with crystal and bone. At its core is an eyeball frozen into a solid using an alchemical compound, then engraved with a tiny image of the main fortress. When a geomantic node is active, the eyeball within glows brightly. The node is active when the fortress is resisting sorcerous assault.

Prerequisites: None.

Properties: If a structure contains a geomantic node, it counts as being part of the fortress for the purposes of resisting sorcery and other iliaster-based effects that depend on the size of the fortress. Every node-bearing structure increases the effective size of a fortress by one step.

Variants: There are no common geomantic node variants. Some demons do build larger nodes to make the node harder to smash, but even a Tiny node can connect a Colossal building into a fortress.

Special: If any geomantic nodes in a fortress are destroyed, or if the walls of their host buildings are breached, then all the geomantic nodes in the fortress shut down. Multiple geomantic nodes may be installed in a fortress, but only one per structure.

A geomantic node only works while the fortress it sits in is in the same domain as the master fortress.

Geomantic Node, Reinforced

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
Tiny	100	+5	20	20	150	100 cr

Description: A reinforced node looks like the basic node, but is armoured in steel plate and marked with runes filled with frozen blood.

Prerequisites: Geomantic node.

Properties: A reinforced node works just like a normal node, but it retains its place in the fortress web if the other nodes are shut down.

Variants: None.

Special: A reinforced node replaces an existing geomantic node.

Ghostly Servants

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
Tiny	—	—	10	10	200	100 cr

Description: Faces and vaguely humanoid shapes slip through the walls of the fortress, as if something was alive within the stone. At a word of command, a damned soul materialises to attend to its master's wishes.

Prerequisites: None.

Properties: Adding ghostly servants to a fortress gives the denizens of the fortress a stock of spectral servants. The damned servants gain the ability to become incorporeal at will within the fortress. Only those damned branded with the mark of the lord of the fortress can use the ghostly servant passages.

Variants: The size of the upgrade must be the same as that of the fortress itself.

Special: This upgrade does not include the cost of the damned themselves, who cost two oboli (40 crowns) each.

The labourers must be able to soulshape to install this upgrade.

Iliaster Shield

Size	Structure		Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
	Points	Hardness				
Tiny	—	—	20	20	500	500 cr

Description: Adding an iliaster shield to a fortress requires that millions of tiny channels and rivulets be carved into the walls of the fortress. The shield itself is a contraption of brass and bubbling liquids created by Zethu artificers. When the shield is activated, ichor flows from the shield mechanism down through all the channels into every inch of the fortress. A pulse of iliaster then surges through the ichor, binding the fortress together.

Prerequisites: None.

Properties: When the shield is activated, which requires that a control be pressed on the mechanism itself, the lord of the fortress must be within the walls of the fortress and spend any amount of iliaster. For every ten points of iliaster spent, the hardness of the fortress walls is increased by +1 for one hour. Only the lord of the fortress may spend this iliaster. The walls of the fortress glow when the shield is active, making it obvious that a supernatural defence is present.

Variants: Larger shields are needed for larger structures.

Special: The size of the iliaster shield must be at least equal to the size of the structure it is installed in.

Iliaster Vault

Size	Structure		Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
	Points	Hardness				
Tiny	150	+5	25	20	500	500 cr

Description: An iliaster vault is a chamber of iron containing a deep well. The well is capped with a leaden cover, which nonetheless leaks sparks of life energy and echoes with the screams of pain and suffering contained within. Energy sneaks across the walls of the chamber and grounds itself in spasms of molten metal and splashes of blood.

Prerequisites: None.

Properties: A Tiny iliaster vault contains 500 points of iliaster. While the lord is within the confines of the fortress, the iliaster in the vault can be used as if it were contained within an implanted reserve. The iliaster in the vault can be replenished by simply pouring bottled plasmic iliaster down into the well.

Variants: A larger vault contains proportionally more iliaster. A Small vault contains 1,000 iliaster, a Medium vault 2,000 iliaster and so on.

Special: If the vault structure is breached, the iliaster flows out as if the vault was a breached demon. The vault loses hardness instead of Constitution or Charisma. A vault can be installed in a dungeon.

Iliaster Vault, Greater

Size	Structure		Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
	Points	Hardness				
Tiny	+50	+0	30	20	700	250 cr

Description: A greater vault uses potent sorceries and compressive geometries to hold even more iliaster inside it. Walking through a greater vault is an unsettling experience, as the very iliaster in the trespasser's soul is wrenched and twisted by the churning vortex of the vault. The feeling is like someone walking over your grave while you are in it.

Prerequisites: Iliaster vault.

Properties: A greater iliaster vault replaces the basic iliaster vault, and doubles the capacity of the vault. A Tiny greater iliaster vault has a capacity of 1,000 iliaster and so on.

Variants: The vault can be reinforced; for every 50 crowns added to its price, the hardness of the vault increases by +1 to a maximum of +10.

Special: The greater vault must be the same size as the lesser vault it replaces. As the greater vault replaces an existing structure, it does not take up a Geomantic Design slot. A greater vault can be installed in a dungeon.

Labyrinth

Size	Structure		Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
	Points	Hardness				
Tiny	50	+0	Varies	10	500	100 cr

Description: A labyrinth is a magical maze. It can be placed within the fortress, in which case navigating the inside of the tower is exceedingly difficult, or it can be built outside the walls making the approach to the main gate of the fortress a puzzling proposition. Iliaster channelled into the maze's geometries clouds the mind of those within the labyrinth, making it harder for them to find their way.

Prerequisites: None.

Properties: Solving the maze requires an Intelligence or Knowledge (architecture) check at a DC equal to the DC of the Design. Survival or Search checks to follow another creature in the maze can also be used. The builder of the Labyrinth must choose the Design DC before the architect makes the Design check.

A new check to solve the maze is made every minute (ten rounds). One successful check is required to solve a Tiny maze, two for a Small maze, four for a Medium maze and so on. If the check is failed by five or more, then all accumulated successes are lost.

The lord of the fortress can activate the mind-warping power of the maze by channelling iliaster into it. Every three points of iliaster spent gives a -1 circumstance penalty to all checks made to solve the maze for one minute.

Variants: Larger mazes are common. For an extra 10% cost in labour and materials, the builder can make the maze into a covered maze, preventing flying creatures from leaving it once they enter. For another extra 10%, the maze can be set to have a special route through it that goes directly from entrance to exit. Pulling a lever scrambles this route until the lever is reset.

Special: The mind-dampening powers of the labyrinth are a mind-affecting effect.

Land-Eating Spines

Size	Structure		Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
	Points	Hardness				
Tiny	60	+2	20	20	600	600 cr

Description: The land-eating spines are just that – huge spikes of bone and flesh, armoured in stone, that jut from the walls of the fortress and drive themselves deep into the ground. When the fortress is injured, the spines twist and pulse like living organs, sucking stone and other matter from the agonised ground. The fortress becomes a parasite upon its host domain, draining strength from the land to heal itself.

Prerequisites: None.

Properties: Activating the land-eating spines costs five iliaster for a Tiny set of spines; the cost is increased proportionately for larger spines. When activated, the spines suck hungrily at the land, drawing up material to repair the fortress. A Tiny spine heals 3d6 structure points of damage to a fortress per activation; larger spines heal proportionally more.



This creates all sorts of unpleasant effects on the surrounding land; earthquakes, eruptions, corruption geysers and other foul expressions of the land's discomfort become more common. A fortress with land-eating spines will automatically destroy any farms or biomechanical harvesting ground within one mile for Tiny spines (the distance is increased proportionately for larger spines).

Variants: Larger spines heal more damage, but there is no requirement for, say, a Large fortress to be equipped with Large spines.

For 10% extra cost in materials, the spines can be made into directed spines. Instead of draining life within a circular area around the fortress, the spines drain life in a line a mile wide and three miles long in a direction chosen when the spines are activated.

Special: The spines must be constructed of the same material as the fortress they are to repair.

Projection Tower

Size	Structure		Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
	Points	Hardness				
Tiny	75	+0	20	15	550	400 cr

Description: A projection tower rises high above the rest of the fortress, glittering in the light of the Morningstar. Atop the tower is a statue or metal plate bearing the personal sigil of the lord of the fortress. When the tower is activated, iliaster courses up the tower and surges out with a roar of anger.

Prerequisites: Soul cage or iliaster vault.

Properties: While the lord of the fortress is within the confines of its domain, it can draw on the iliaster of the fortress' iliaster vault or soul cage at will, as if it was standing in the fortress. A maximum of three points of iliaster can be drawn through the projection tower each round. The lord of the fortress can draw from the tower as a free action.

Variants: Larger Towers can project proportionately more iliaster. For example, a Gargantuan tower could project 192 points of iliaster each round.

Special: A projection tower counts as both a Geomantic Design and a Structural Enhancement.

Ritual Chamber

Size	Structure		Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
	Points	Hardness				
Tiny	—	—	20	15	500	1,000 cr

Description: A fortress-based ritual chamber is an ornate structure contained within the heart of the building. It focuses the sorcerer's spells on the land around the fortress, making the lord's magic harder to resist. The effects of the chamber only apply to spells targeting creatures or places within the lord's domain.

Prerequisites: None.

Properties: The lord of the fortress gains a +5 profane bonus to Sorcery checks made from this chamber when casting rituals that target something within the lord's domain.

Variants: Larger ritual chambers are necessary for larger domains, as follows:

Domain Size	Chamber Size	Domain Size	Chamber Size
Barony	Tiny	Duchy	Large
Viscounty	Small	Grand Duchy	Huge
Earldom	Medium	Anywhere within House Holdings	Colossal

The chamber can also be augmented further; every 20% increase in the cost gives a +1 bonus to Sorcery checks.

Special: If the fortress has a seneschal harness or will crystal, then the bearers of those items can use the ritual chamber too. A ritual chamber counts as a Geomantic Design and a Special Chamber. A ritual chamber can be installed in a dungeon.

Sacrificial Chamber

Size	Structure		Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
	Points	Hardness				
Tiny	—	—	15	10	300	500 cr

Description: A sacrificial chamber looks like something out of a nightmare; a gory stone slab covered in entrails dominates the room, while hungry leering gargoyles and unholy symbols loom from the shadows. A blood heat flows through the room, which echoes with cries of pain and the beating of invisible heart-drums.

Prerequisites: Iliaster vault or other iliaster-consuming upgrade.

Properties: When a victim is sacrificed on the altar, its life energy is converted into iliaster. If the fortress has an iliaster vault, then the iliaster is transferred to the vault. Alternatively, it can be fired out through a blasting tower or projection tower. The iliaster torn from the victim cannot be bottled or consumed directly by a creature.

The amount of iliaster extracted is calculated as follows: **Victim's current iliaster reserve + one point per level of the victim + (20 – Victim's Corruption level).**

Variants: A Tiny sacrificial chamber can process one victim per round; larger chambers can process proportionately more victims.

Special: Sacrificial chambers are almost invariably blasphemous. A sacrificial chamber can be installed in a dungeon.

Screamer Network

Size	Structure		Design		Craft		Labour Required	Cost
	Points	Hardness	DC	DC	DC	DC		
Tiny	—	—	20	20	100	500 cr		

Description: Screamers are souls drawn wire-thin and threaded through the walls of the fortress. Special devices are attached to the souls to modulate and decode their pain, transmitting a demon's words along the soul at the speed of remembered nerves – the mass-communication system of the Infernum.

Prerequisites: None.

Properties: Adding an internal screamer network ensures there's a screamer set in every room of the fortress, usable for both internal communication and long-distance conversations.

Variants: Some wealthy and technophilic demons connect their screamers to brazen heads.

Special: All those involved in installing the screamer network must be able to soulshape.

Seneschal Harness

Size	Structure		Design		Craft		Labour Required	Cost
	Points	Hardness	DC	DC	DC	DC		
Tiny	—	—	25	15	500	1,000 cr		

Description: 'Harness' is a euphemism; this device is a spike that juts from a wall. Wires and plugs hang around it, ready to be stuck into the flesh of a creature impaled on the spike. It looks like the unholy offspring of a torture device and the most cunning machinery of the Zethu.

Prerequisites: None.

Properties: A seneschal harness allows the lord of the fortress to leave another creature in charge. The creature must be impaled on the spike, which requires a Heal check (DC 20) and causes 2d10 points of damage (failing or ignoring the Heal check increases the damage to 4d10).

While the creature is impaled, it counts as the lord of the fortress for the purposes of activating the various upgrades installed in the fortress. The harness can be made mobile by installing tracks in the ceiling or floor of the chambers, allowing the creature to move while still stuck on the spike.

Variants: There is usually no point to constructing larger seneschal harnesses, although creatures of Huge size require a Small harness, Gargantuan ones a Medium harness, and Colossal ones a Large harness.

For twice the normal price and a +5 to the Design DC, a brazen head can be installed (see *Book of the Tormentor* for details on brazen heads). The brazen head functions just like a normal seneschal.

Special: None.

Shade Warriors

Size	Structure		Design		Craft		Labour Required	Cost
	Points	Hardness	DC	DC	DC	DC		
Tiny	—	—	20	10	150	300 cr		

Description: Shade Warriors are spectral combatants, armed with rusty swords and girded in decaying armour, who are the last line of defence for some fortresses. The shades are part of the fortress and so cannot be permanently destroyed while the fortress stands.



Prerequisites: Ghostly servants.

Properties: When this upgrade is activated at the cost of one iliaster for a Tiny fortress (proportionately more for a larger fortress), 1d4 shade warriors manifest (again, this number is multiplied by the Size multiplier for a larger fortress). The fortress must have enough ghostly servants to support this manifestation, as the upgrade transforms the servants into shade warriors. The shade warriors have the same statistics as warghosts (see *Book of the Tormentor*).

The shade warriors manifest wherever they are needed in the fortress, and can use the ghostly servant passages to become incorporeal at will.

Should a shade warrior be shredded, it sinks back into the walls of the fortress and will be restored back to its beginning hit points within one day.

Variants: The size of this upgrade must be equal to that of the ghostly servants upgrade.

Special: The creatures who install the shade warriors must be capable of soulshaping.

Although this upgrade enhances the ability of the ghostly servants, it does not replace the ghostly servants and so takes another Geomantic Design slot.

Shroud Engraving

Size	Structure		Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
	Points	Hardness				
Tiny	—	—	Varies	15	500	50 cr

Description: Shroud engraving involves the carving of incredibly complex and confusing designs into the walls of the fortress. These fractal carvings block attempts to scry on the fortress by deflecting the divination magic.

Prerequisites: None.

Properties: The penalty imposed on *scrying* attempts by this upgrade varies depending on the Design DC. The Design DC begins at DC 5, and every +5 increase in the Design DC increases the penalty to any *scrying* attempts made on those within the fortress by -1. This is in addition to the normal defences against sorcery given by the fortress.

Variants: The size of this upgrade must be the same as that of the fortress.

Special: None.

Sorcery Bastion

Size	Structure		Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
	Points	Hardness				
Tiny	100	+0	15	10	700	150 cr

Description: A sorcery bastion is a lead-faced tower with a strangely angular shape, vaguely reminiscent of the prow of a ship. When spells target those within the tower, energy crackles around the tower as it shatters the incoming spell.

Prerequisites: None.

Properties: A sorcery bastion increases the penalty to Sorcery checks made against those within the fortress by 10%.

Variants: There is no extra bonus for having larger sorcery bastions, but it is possible add extra sorcery bastions.

Special: Multiple sorcery bastions can be installed in a fortress.

Spirit Cache

Size	Structure		Design		Craft		Labour	
	Points	Hardness	DC	DC	DC	DC	Required	Cost
Tiny	25	-2	30	25	500	500	cr	

Description: A spirit cache is the most secret and well-protected part of any demon's fortress, as it will hold the lord's spirit should the demon be slain. Physically, the cache looks like an ornate crypt, marked with the personal sigil of the demon.

Prerequisites: Iliaster vault or soul cage.

Properties: Should the lord of a fortress containing a spirit cache be slain, its spirit flits back instantly to the cache. The fleeing spirit is incorporeal and moves at a speed of 100 miles per round, but cannot pass through *wardings*. Once in the cache,

the demon begins to regenerate. It only consumes half its normal amount of iliaster each day, draining it directly from the fortress' soul cage or iliaster vault. If the cached spirit has no source of iliaster, it will succumb to dissolution and death.

The demon regains 1 hit point per day until it reaches 0 hit points, at which point it heals normally. The demon is still the lord of the fortress while in a disembodied state and can use its fortress-based abilities normally.

Variants: None.

Special: In the case of fortresses with multiple lords, such as ones with a council chamber, only one spirit can occupy the cache at a time. If another lord dies while the cache is occupied, the second lord is destroyed. A spirit cache can be installed in a dungeon.

Summoning Circle

Size	Structure		Design		Craft		Labour	
	Points	Hardness	DC	DC	DC	DC	Required	Cost
Tiny	30	+0	20	15	500	200	cr	

Description: This elaborate summoning circle is built into the fortress itself; the warding runes are deeply incised into the floor and the walls are shaped around the circle to reinforce its magic. The weight of the fortress is oppressive here; a creature standing within the circle feels as though all the thousands of tons of stone are bearing down directly upon it.

Prerequisites: Ritual chamber.

Properties: Fortress-based summoning circles can use the sorcery-deflecting power of a fortress to their advantage. The magical geometries can be bent inwards, trapping a creature instead of blocking hostile magic. The protection granted by the fortress can be reduced; every -3 reduction in the Sorcery penalty granted by the fortress gives a +1 bonus to a *summoning* or *warding* ritual cast in the summoning circle. The fortress' protection re-establishes itself once the circle is empty - this happens when the demon is summoned or when the *warding* is collapsed.



There is no visible sign of the fortress' protections being inverted, although creatures outside can make a Knowledge (arcana) check (DC 20) to sense the change in the geomantic fields.

Variants: There are no benefits to building a larger summoning circle, although creatures of Huge size require a Small circle, Gargantuan ones a Medium circle, and Colossal ones a Large circle.

Special: A summoning circle can be installed in a dungeon.

Soul Cage

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
Tiny	50	+2	18	15	1000	250 cr

Description: A soul cage is just that; a barred prison within a demon's fortress, marked with the sigil of that demon. It is generally crowded with miserable and condemned souls.

Prerequisites: None.

Properties: The practice of soul caging originated with the Zethu and their gift of sorcery to the mortal realm. If a corrupt mortal has a Covenant with a demon when the mortal dies and the demon's fortress has a soul cage, then the mortal's damned soul materialises in the cage. Over the centuries, the design has been improved so that shredded souls who are Covenanted to the demon also reform there instead of where they fell.

Furthermore, soul cages can also catch souls who fall into the demon's domain. A Tiny cage captures one new-fallen soul per month; larger cages catch more souls.

Iliaster extracted in a soul cage goes directly to the demon if the demon is within the fortress.

A Tiny soul cage can hold five Medium souls.

Variants: Larger cages can hold proportionately more souls.

Special: If the soul cage is installed in the same fortress as a projection tower, then the iliaster extracted while in the cage can be drawn on by the

demon anywhere within its domain. A soul cage can be installed in a dungeon.

Strain Engine

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
Tiny	50	+0	17	15	550	150 cr

Description: This is a hellish engine that crackles with unholy power. Liquid Strain bubbles through it, burning in internal furnaces to be spat out as iliaster to power the fortresses' weapons and other functions.

Prerequisites: None.

Properties: A Strain engine converts the hellbroth Strain into iliaster, but this iliaster can only be used to activate the various upgrades in the fortress. A Strain engine produces 3d6 points of iliaster for every dose of Strain.

A Strain engine cannot power a projection tower, iliaster vault or spirit cache.

Variants: Larger engines can consume more Strain to produce more iliaster. A Small Strain engine can consume two doses of Strain per round to produce 6d6 iliaster and so on.

Special: A Strain engine must be made out of iron, brass or another metal, or hellglass. Strain engines are designed using Knowledge (engineering) and Craft (engines). A Strain engine can be installed in a dungeon.

Temple of the Demon King

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
Tiny	100	+0	15	10	1000	500 cr

Description: This unholy temple venerates the lord of the fortress above all other beings. Here, the demon's worshippers bow before profane icons of the demon lord and pledge their faith. The terrible geometries of the temple drain this faith and belief and transform it into power the demon can feast upon.

Prerequisites: None.

Properties: A Temple of the Demon King lets the lord of the fortress feed on the belief of its servants. Demons and damned souls have little faith to offer, but both mortals and angels are veritable feasts of faith for a covetous demon.

If a creature worships the demon in its Temple, then the demon gains Worship Points equal to the level of the creature. Angels and mortals produce five times their level in Worship Points. A creature must worship the demon for at least eight hours once per week to provide Worship Points. If the demon gains Worship Points equal to ten times its level, it gains a +2 enhancement bonus to an ability score of its choice while within its domain.

A maximum of 20 Medium creatures can worship within a Tiny temple at any time.

Variants: Larger temples not only allow for more worshippers, but can also give more ability score bonuses. Another +2 bonus is given at (level x 20 Worship Points), another at (level x 40) and so on.

Special: A Temple of the Demon King counts as a Special Chamber and a Geomantic Design.

Temple of the Morningstar

Structure Size	Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
Tiny	100	+0	15	10	1,000	500 cr

Description: This chapel is built according to the same designs as the other Temples of the Morningstar; it is decorated in gold and contains symbols of the Morningstar that make up the core of priestly iconography. Demonic chants and the constant stench of brimstone make this an unpleasant place for those not among the faithful.

Prerequisites: None.

Properties: A Temple of the Morningstar works just like a Temple of the Demon King, but channels the Worship Points to the Priests of the Morningstar instead of to the demon itself. The benefits for this are as follows:

Temple Size	Worship Points Needed/Week	Benefit
Tiny	100	+2 bonus to Influencing when dealing with the priests
Small	200	Chain of the Hierophant I when within the fortress
Medium	400	+4 bonus to Influencing when dealing with the priests
Large	800	Chain of the Hierophant II when within the fortress
Huge	1600	+6 bonus to Influencing when dealing with the priests
Gargantuan	3200	Chain of the Hierophant III when within the fortress
Colossal	6400	+10 bonus to Influencing when dealing with the priests

The mutations from the Chain of the Hierophant can only be accessed by the demon lord while within its fortress.

Variants: Larger temples allow for more influence and mutations, as well as more worshippers.

Special: This upgrade includes a crystal infurnarium used to recharge demons on the Chain of the Morningstar. This upgrade counts as a Special Chamber as well as a Geomantic Design.

Unravelling Altar

Structure Size	Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
Tiny	50	+0	20	20	500	300 cr

Description: An unravelling altar is the height of Infernal geomancy; the fortresses' magic is used to dissect a creature cell by cell, body and soul. Every drop of ichor and iliaster is spun away into the stone and the creature is reduced to utter nothingness.

Prerequisites: Sacrificial chamber.

Properties: An unravelling altar utterly destroys any creatures upon it when it is activated. Activating the altar costs five iliaster per level of the victim. There is no saving throw or *counterspell* to block the altar's effect; mortals killed by the

altar do not become damned, nor can demons with spirit caches or other life-protecting effects avoid their fate. Anything upon the altar when it is activated is painfully, completely and permanently annihilated.

Variants: Larger altars allow for bigger creatures to be annihilated. One Medium creature can be destroyed by a Tiny altar, two by a Small, four by a Large altar and so on.

Special: An unravelling altar is blasphemous. The lord of the fortress gets 50 xp per level of any creature destroyed on the altar. An unravelling altar can be installed in a dungeon.

Will Crystal Core

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
Tiny	25	-5	25	25	400	500 cr

Description: This upgrade is a slender pillar of blood-red crystal, which is grown from the blood flowing from the dozens of corpses hung around it in a shaft. The sigil of the demon lord of the fortress is engraved on the floor from which the pillar springs.

Prerequisites: None.

Properties: A will crystal core allows the lord of the fortress to control its home from a distance. At the heart of the crystalline pillar, an iron key forms. Any creature holding this key counts as the lord of the fortress for activating the fortresses' upgrades and using its abilities. The will crystal core outranks the authority given by a seneschal harness or council chamber; not even the lord of a fortress can countermand the orders given by a creature who has stolen a key from a will crystal core.

Variants: None.

Special: The size of the will crystal core must equal the size of the fortress. A will crystal core can be installed in a dungeon.

Structural Enhancements

Aerial Defences

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
Tiny	—	—	15	10	500	200 cr

Description: The upper reaches of the fortress are secured against flying attack; all the windows of the complex are too narrow for anything other than Diminutive creatures to pass through; there are no easy landing places or ledges for a fiend or imp to cling to. In short, the fortress is secured against aerial assault.

Prerequisites: None.

Properties: Adding aerial defences to a fortress gives a -4 penalty to aerial assaults during a siege (see page 74).

Variants: For an extra 50% in labour and cost, the penalty can be increased to -6.

Special: The size of this upgrade must be equal to the size of the fortress.

Barbican Complex

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
Tiny	200	+2	15	10	500	500 cr

Description: A barbican complex contains a massive main gate, protected by both a huge portcullis and defensive traps and *warding* spells. It is the imposing main entrance to a fortress, which humbles those who look upon it and turns back invading armies.

Prerequisites: None.

Properties: The lord of the fortress can cause the gate to open or close at will by spending one *iliaster*.

The fortress gate is one foot thick for a Tiny fortress and has hit points depending on the material the barbican is made of.

SUBSTANCE HARDNESS

Substance	Hardness	HP/Inch of Thickness
Stone	8	15
Wood	5	10
Bone	5	5
Sinew-Wood	8	10
Iron	10	30
Bronze	10	20
Gold	8	20
Living Flesh	3	5
Congeaed Blood	3	5
Creeping Bile	0	5
Hellforged Iron	15	50
Hellglass	20	20
Soulstone	15	30
Biomechanical	10	15

Remember that 10 hit points equals one structure point.

Variants: Larger barbicans have proportionately thicker gates with more hit points. A gate can be

further reinforced with any facing for a fifth of the normal cost of a facing for the gate's size (for example, a soulstone facing for a Medium barbican gate would cost one-fifth of the cost for a Medium facing).

Special: Multiple barbicans can be added to a fortress.

Battlements

Structure Size	Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
Tiny	—	—	10	10	500	100 cr

Description: Mighty battlements are attached to the fortresses' walls and ramparts, giving cover to the defenders.

Prerequisites: None.

Properties: Adding battlements to a fortress gives the defenders improved cover (+8 to Armour Class, +4 to Reflex saves, improved evasion) while atop the walls.

Variants: None.

Special: This upgrade must be equal in size to the fortress it is attached to and made from the same material.

Copper Netting (Electrical)

Structure Size	Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
Tiny	—	—	20	15	100	250 cr

Description: Copper netting consists of heavy-duty conductive cables that are strung between the towers and walls of the fortress. A smaller mesh of wires runs through the stone. When a lightning blast hits the fortress, its destructive force is channelled away from the walls into the netting. Most of the power is redirected into the ground; the excess electricity explodes in spurts of molten metal and steam.

Prerequisites: None.

Properties: A fortress equipped with copper netting halves all damage from electrical attacks.

Variants: None.



Special: Most building materials already resist electrical attacks; adding copper netting reduces the damage to one-quarter normal. Copper netting must be the same size as the fortress it is installed with.

Curtain Wall

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
Tiny	200	+0	10	10	600	400 cr

Description: One of the simplest of all defensive structures, this is an extra wall around the fortress that creates an outlying courtyard/killing field. Ground-based attackers must overcome the wall before attacking the fortress itself directly.

Prerequisites: None.

Properties: A curtain wall has no notable properties. It is just a wall. It has a few small gates through it or stairs over it, but these can easily be secured against invaders.

Variants: The size of the curtain wall determines how large an area it encloses. A wall smaller than the fortress creates a courtyard attached to one side of the fortress; one equal to the fortress makes a narrow ring around the structure, while a larger wall creates a considerably larger open expanse that must be crossed to reach the fortress.

Special: Multiple curtain walls can be added to a fortress.

Death Traps

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
Tiny	—	—	Varies	15	100	300 cr

Description: Pits filled with acid, needles tipped with poison, falling blocks, spike traps, swinging axes – the demonic imagination for maiming and killing is virtually unlimited. Adding death traps to a fortress ensures that invaders and trespassers will meet unpleasant ends.

Prerequisites: None.

Properties: The Search DC, Disable Device DC and damage inflicted by the traps vary depending on the Design DC, as follows:

DEATH TRAPS

Design DC	Search DC	Disable Device DC	Damage (Normal)	Damage (Ability Score)
10	15	12	1d8	1
15	18	15	1d10	1d3
20	20	18	2d6	1d4
25	23	20	2d8	1d6
30	25	23	2d10	2d4
35	28	25	4d6	2d6
40	30	28	4d8	2d8

A trespasser in a fortress will encounter 1d4 traps just going through the corridors and hallways and 2d4 traps if trying to reach any of the Special Chambers or Geomantic Designs.

Variants: The lord of the fortress may select the type of traps when this feature is built.

Special: The death traps do not have to be the same size as the fortress, but if the fortress is larger, then there are sections that do not contain traps. Death traps can be installed in a dungeon. Multiple sets of death traps can be added to a fortress.

Death Traps, Improved

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
Tiny	—	—	Varies	20	100	100 cr

Description: The improved death traps are even more imaginatively lethal than the basic traps. These are works of art in pain, blood and secrecy.

Prerequisites: Death traps.

Properties: Improved death traps work just like normal death traps, but deal more damage and have higher DCs to detect.

IMPROVED DEATH TRAPS

Design DC	Search DC	Disable Device DC	Damage (Normal)	Damage (Ability Score)
10	20	18	2d6	1d6
15	23	20	2d8	2d4
20	25	23	2d10	2d6
25	28	25	4d6	2d8
30	30	28	4d8	3d6
35	33	30	4d10	3d8
40	35	33	4d12	4d6

Variants: None.

Special: Improved death traps can be installed in a dungeon.

Dungeons

	Structure		Design	Craft	Labour	
Size	Points	Hardness	DC	DC	Required	Cost
Tiny	200	+0	12	10	1,000	400 cr

Description: A dungeon complex expands the fortress underground. These subterranean vaults can contain extra supplies, torture chambers, barracks, treasure vaults and all sorts of other wonders.

Prerequisites: None.

Properties: Adding a dungeon allows the addition of two more Geomantic Designs, Structural Enhancements or Special Chambers, as long as these additions can go underground. Items that can be placed in a dungeon have this fact noted in their individual descriptions. A dungeon can only hold upgrades that are the same size or smaller than itself.

If a dungeon's upgrade slots are not filled, then the extra room can be used to hold more troops and supplies.

Variants: Each increase in the size of a dungeon increases the number of upgrades that can be installed in the dungeon by two.

Special: A fortress can have multiple dungeons.

Flyer Perch

	Structure		Design	Craft	Labour	
Size	Points	Hardness	DC	DC	Required	Cost
Tiny	50	+2	15	15	300	300 cr

Description: A flyer perch is a narrow arc of stone that juts out from the upper stories of a fortress. It provides a place for fiends, imps, gauntflyers or dirigibles to take off from or land on. The door leading from the perch into the fortress is heavily reinforced, so having this landing strip does not weaken the fortresses' defences.

Prerequisites: Sealed structure



Properties: A flyer perch allows creatures who can fly to take off from a sealed structure.

Variants: None.

Special: None.

Hellglass Facing (Acid)

	Structure		Design	Craft	Labour	
Size	Points	Hardness	DC	DC	Required	Cost
Tiny	—	—	10	15	800	800 cr

Description: The incredibly sharp form of obsidian known as hellglass is found in many places in the Pit. Gathering this glass is difficult – a single misstep in the Pits, and the slave is reduced to a few wet rags of flesh, while the shards can cut through any basket or container short of an iron box – but hellglass is so tough and useful that tens of thousands of damned are sacrificed to obtain it.

Prerequisites: None.

Properties: Hellglass is resistant to acid. Adding this upgrade to a fortress makes the whole fortress

resistant to acid, halving the damage and allowing the fortresses' hardness to count against the acid's damage.

Variants: Individual components of a fortress can be given hellglass facing, instead of the whole complex.

Special: If a whole fortress is given a hellglass facing, then the size of the facing must be equal to that of the fortress.

Ichor Channels (Cold)

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
Tiny	—	—	10	10	400	400 cr

Description: Ichor channels are grooves cut into the stone of a fortresses' walls. Unlike the ornate magical rune-tracks and symbols of a Geomantic Design, ichor channels are brutally direct and simplistic. They are pumped full of hot demon blood when in use; the thick, sticky blood rushes through the cut veins of the keep and drips down the walls.

Prerequisites: None.

Properties: Adding ichor channels makes a fortress resistant to cold.

Variants: Individual components of a fortress can be given ichor channels, instead of the whole complex.

Special: If a whole fortress is given ichor channels, then the size of the channels must be equal to that of the fortress.

Moat & Drawbridge

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
Tiny	100	+2	15	10	1,000	500 cr

Description: A defensive structure that would not be out of place in a mortal castle, this is a wide and deep moat that encircles the whole fortress and a mighty drawbridge that can be lowered across it. The moat is filled with slime by default, although fortresses near a lava flow or the burning river Phlegton sometimes divert the molten rock into their moats.

Prerequisites: Barbican complex.

Properties: An attacking force must cross the moat before they can attack the walls of the fortress directly.

Variants: For an extra 100 crowns, the moat can be filled with molten rock (3d6 fire damage/round) or acid.

Special: The moat must be the same size as the structure it encircles.

Reinforced Keep

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
Tiny	+20%	+4	Varies	20	500	1,000 cr

Description: This upgrade consists of thickening and reinforcing the walls of the stronghold, replacing any damaged or weak sections, adding extra support and generally making the whole complex much tougher and more enduring.

Prerequisites: None.

Properties: Making a fortress reinforced improves its hardness and Structure Points as described above.

The Design DC is equal to the original Design DC +5.

Variants: An individual component of a fortress can be individually reinforced.

Special: The size of a reinforcement must be equal to that of the component or fortress that is being reinforced.

Resonant Structure (Sonic)

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
Tiny	—	—	15	10	400	400 cr

Description: A resonant structure has curved walls and sonic dampeners that absorb much of the damaging effects of sonic detonations.

Prerequisites: None.

Properties: Making a structure resonant makes it resistant to sonic damage.

Variants: Individual components of a fortress can be made resonant, instead of the whole complex.

Special: If a whole fortress is made resonant, then the size of the upgrade must be equal to that of the fortress.

Sealed Structure

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
Tiny	50% of Structure	-2	25	20	1,500	2,000 cr

Description: A sealed fortress is a great dome or egg; massive curved plates of stone run from tower to tower, enclosing the whole place in armour. There are no walls to fly over, no easy back routes for an assassin or fiend to enter by. The fortress is an impregnable and terrible monolith.

Prerequisites: Aerial defences, curtain wall.

Properties: A sealed structure cannot be attacked by aerial assault. The whole complex is protected equally from all sides, even above.

Variants: For an extra 10% in cost and labour, the fortress can be made airtight, guarding it against gases and biological attacks.

Special: The size of a sealed structure must be equal to that of the fortress it encloses.

Secrets

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
Tiny	—	—	Varies	15	200	200 cr

Description: Hidden chambers and passageways are exceedingly common in the fortresses of the hellkin; it is always worth having a back door or escape route. Whole chambers can be hidden; concealed spirit caches are especially valuable.

Prerequisites: None.

Properties: Adding secrets to a fortress installs a number of secret passages equal to 5 + the

fortresses' size modifier. Also, one Special Chamber or Geomantic Design can be concealed from view. The difficulty to Search for a secret passage or hidden chamber is equal to 10 + the Design DC of the Secrets.

Variants: None.

Special: Extra secrets can be installed; each set of secrets allows another room to be hidden.

Soulstone Facing (Fire)

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
Tiny	—	—	15	10	400	400 cr

Description: Adding thin plates of unholy soulstone makes a fortress immune to the damaging effects of fire.

Prerequisites: None.

Properties: Adding a lacquer of soulstone makes the fortress fire-resistant.

Variants: Individual components of a fortress can be made resistant, instead of the whole complex.

Special: If a whole fortress is made resistant, then the size of the upgrade must be equal to that of the fortress.

Watchtower

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
Tiny	150	+0	16	15	600	400 cr

Description: A watchtower is an exceedingly high and narrow tower that reaches out of the fortress below and seems to claw at the sky overhead. Creatures who ascend to the vertiginous perch can see the terrain of the Infernum for miles around, so they can spot approaching armies and travellers from a great distance.

Prerequisites: None.

Properties: A creature in a watchtower gains a +10 bonus to Spot checks when looking for far-away targets like armies. The tower includes telescopes and lenses to make the look-out's task easier.

Variants: One common variant is the observatory towers of the Haimon, where the Deathly scholars watch the unnatural stars that are sometimes glimpsed through the Lethe Clouds.

Special: Multiple watchtowers can be added to a fortress.

Weapon Mounts

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
Tiny	100	+0	15	10	300	500 cr

Description: This upgrade attaches several heavy weapons to the fortresses' frame, ready to repel attackers. The upgrade includes space for ammunition, quarters for the gunners and so on.

Prerequisites: None.

Properties: A Tiny weapons mount places two weapons on the fortress. Larger upgrades add more weapons. Select the weapons from the Artillery & Siege Weapon list on page 137.

Variants: Any combination of weapons may be selected.

Special: Multiple weapons mounts can be added to a fortress.

Special Chambers

Agony Vault

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
Tiny	50	+0	10	10	300	400 cr

Description: To be kept properly, the fine wine of Agony must be slightly chilled and held in a chamber where its moans and cries can echo back into itself. Agony is not so much aged to perfection as it is reminded of pain until the Agony transmutes itself into progressively purer forms.

Physically, this room is an echo chamber crossed with a wine cellar. Servants sent down to get a particular old bottle of Agony have their ears stopped or removed lest the sound drive them insane.

Prerequisites: None.

Properties: An Agony vault presents Agony in the proper and accepted fashion; while the hellbroth can be stored in any common pantry or chamber, the refined sensibilities of the Riethii and Astyanath will be offended if the Agony served to them does not come from a Vault.

Variants: Larger vaults can hold more Agony; a tiny vault holds 100 bottles worth.

Special: An Agony vault can be placed in a dungeon.

Armoury

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
Tiny	100	+0	12	10	400	450 cr

Description: This armoury holds a wealth of demonic weapons and armour. There are forges to repair them when damaged, racks to hold them, a full arsenal of ammunition for exotic devices like shatterguns and bile rifles, as well as stands for suits of iron plate and tanks of crawling armour.

Prerequisites: None.

Properties: Having an armoury ensures that a fortresses' guards always have well-maintained and fully loaded weapons and that they have a strong point to rally at in an emergency. A Tiny armoury contains enough space for the weapons of 20 Medium warriors; larger armouries and larger warriors provide and require more space, respectively.

The cost of the armoury does not include the cost of any expensive or unique weapons or armour, but it can be assumed that common and basic weapons like swords or chain mail can be found in any armoury.

Variants: Larger or multiple armouries are used in larger fortresses. Some warlike demon lords maintain personal armouries where only their tools of carnage are kept.

Special: An armoury can be placed in a dungeon. Multiple armouries can be added to a fortress.

Ballroom

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
Tiny	50	+0	15	15	200	1,000 cr

Description: While most parties and celebrations are held in the gardens outside a fortress, some demons do invite guests into their fortresses.

Prerequisites: None.

Properties: A Tiny ballroom can cater for 200 guests. Having a ballroom means better parties (see Fortresses & Rule, below).

Variants: Larger ballrooms can cater for proportionately more guests.

Special: None.

Barracks

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
Tiny	100	+0	10	10	400	300 cr

Description: By default, a Tiny fortress has room for 20 Medium guards. Adding a barracks provides living space for another 20 such warriors. They are crammed into a chamber that is stacked to the ceiling with bunks, weapons lockers and stores, and their existence is confined to pacing the walls of the fortress and watching for intruders.

Prerequisites: None.

Properties: Each barracks added provides room for (20 x the fortresses' Size Multiplier) troops; a Huge barracks has room for 320 Medium guards.

Variants: Barracks can be added for damned souls, in which case twice as many souls can fit into the space as the unfortunate creatures need neither air nor sleep. Barracks – or pens – can be built for particularly dangerous and hungry spawn.

Special: Multiple barracks can be added to a fortress. A barracks can be placed in a dungeon.

Bedchamber

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
Tiny	—	—	18	15	300	500 cr

Description: Comfort is of secondary importance to most demon lords; this Bedchamber is more a hymn to some blind god of lust. It is richly decorated with the finest in erotic art, while the bed itself is reinforced to cope with the most enthusiastic demon coupling.

Prerequisites: None.

Properties: A guest in a demon's bedchamber suffers a –4 penalty to Concentration checks made to resist Seduction attempts.

Variants: None.

Special: Multiple bedchambers can be added to a fortress. A bedchamber can be placed in a dungeon.

Belltower

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
Tiny	100	+2	15	15	400	450 cr

Description: The bells of Hell are invariably discordant; according to some traditions, demons cannot bear the sound of churchbells, so every bell forged in the Infernum is deliberately flawed. This belltower hangs over the fortress, its misshapen brass heart clanging away marking the hours of the night.

Prerequisites: None.

Properties: A belltower can be used to signal the denizens of the fortress, raising the alarm in times of emergency. This can be heard five miles away for a Tiny belltower. The distance increases proportionally with size.

Variants: Larger belltowers have larger bells that can be heard over much greater distances. Some fortresses have clocks in their belltowers, even the clocks of Hell that carry the time-warping power of the Brass Pillars down into the Pit.

Special: None.

Dining Hall

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
Tiny	—	—	15	12	300	400 cr

Description: Common only in those places that must deal with Oblurott guests on a regular basis, a dining hall incorporates a great banqueting hall as well as kitchens, meat lockers and pantries to prepare the food. Black chimneys carry the smoke from the cooking fires away.

Prerequisites: None.

Properties: Dining Halls are not necessary in most fortresses, as most demons consume iliaster directly instead of mixing it with food. However, an Oblurott noble guest will be insulted if a dining hall is not set aside for its use. A Tiny hall can seat and serve five demons.

Variants: Larger halls can seat more demons.

Special: A dining hall can be placed in a dungeon.

Castle Forge

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
Tiny	50	+0	15	15	200	500 cr

Description: With leaping flames and splashes of molten metal, this chamber looks like a classic rendition of the inferno, but it is nothing more than a demon forge; with the hellkin's natural resistance to fire, they take few safety precautions.

Prerequisites: None.

Properties: A castle forge allows a fortress to repair vehicles and weapons and to construct more devices. The cost of the castle forge also includes a large stock of iron ingots and other metals, although most fortresses under siege quickly learn the value of recycling and reforging. Having a castle forge allows Craft checks relating to metal to be made with a +2 equipment bonus.

Variants: For an extra 50 crowns in cost, the castle forge can be equipped with the tools necessary to improve soulshaping and give Craft (soulshaping) checks a +2 bonus.

Special: None.

Guard Posts

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
Tiny	—	—	10	10	300	200 cr

Description: While the guards of a fortress are normally sent to patrol its walls and watch key sites within it, there are too few to guard every gate. Adding a barracks (see above) and guard posts throughout the fortress means that demon watchmen are assigned to keep watch from carefully hidden posts.

Prerequisites: Barracks.

Properties: Having guard posts increases a fortresses' security; see below.

Variants: None.

Special: It is possible to have multiple sets of guard posts; each requires another barracks. Guard posts must be equal in size to the fortress to provide full coverage.

Inner Sanctum

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
Tiny	150	+2	20	16	400	800 cr

Description: An inner sanctum is the heart of a fortress, a chamber where folds of stone and geomantic wardings combine to provide the most secure place possible for the demon lord. Some inner sanctums are spartan affairs, containing nothing more than the supplies and weapons needed to wait out a siege.

Prerequisites: None.

Properties: An inner sanctum gives an additional –5 bonus to a fortresses' ability to block sorcery targeting creatures within the sanctum. Furthermore, the security of the sanctum means that it is harder for assassins and spies to penetrate it.

Most Sanctums are protected by heavy locked doors, or are kept secret and hidden.

For a 25% increase in cost and labour, one Geomantic Design, Special Chamber or Structural Enhancement can be included in the space of the



inner sanctum and gain the benefit of the enhanced security.

Variants: Larger sanctums may contain more upgrades with them; each larger sanctum can contain an extra upgrade, so a Small sanctum can hold two upgrades, a Medium sanctum three and so on.

Special: An inner sanctum counts as both a Geomantic Design and a Special Chamber.

Laboratory

Structure Size	Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
Tiny	—	—	20	15	300	600 cr

Description: Filled with beakers of bubbling chemicals, alchemical reactors and ovens, books of abstruse lore and cryptic devices that resemble insects cast in steel and amber, laboratories like this are a surprisingly common site in the fortresses of powerful demons. Half the nobility of the

Glabretch are inveterate experimenters in plagues and diseases; the Haimon and Zethu respect intellectual accomplishment, while all the other Houses rely on their rich and bored nobles for new developments.

Prerequisites: Library.

Properties: A laboratory is a necessity for research and experimentation.

Variants: Larger laboratories are possible but rarely useful unless the demon is working with unusually large subjects such as Huge biomechanical horrors.

Special: A laboratory can be placed in a dungeon.

Library

Structure Size	Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
Tiny	—	—	15	10	300	500 cr

Description: This library is stacked floor to ceiling with books and scrolls. The printing press was invented long ago in Hell, but before that tens of thousands of damned slaves would toil copying scrolls for their overlords. Hell has a fine literary tradition, especially among the Riethii, Astyanath and Zethu. A library also contains tracts on matters scientific, theological and arcane.

Prerequisites: None.

Properties: Having a Library gives a bonus to Knowledge checks. A Tiny library has a total bonus of +5, which is divided amongst the various Knowledge skills when the Library is constructed. Larger libraries have proportionately larger bonuses.

Variants: A library can contain books on sorcery; having books on sorcery does not give any bonuses to Sorcery checks, but contains one ritual for every two points of bonus allocated to Sorcery (for example a Tiny library would allow access to two bonus rituals).

Special: A library can be placed in a dungeon.

Luxurious Quarters

Structure		Hardness	Design	Craft	Labour	Cost
Size	Points		DC	DC	Required	
Tiny	—	—	15	15	400	1,000 cr

Description: While the hardy demonic form does not appreciate luxury nor feel hardship as keenly as a sensitive mortal does, this does not prevent demons from striving to reach the apexes of pain and pleasure. These luxurious quarters are richly decorated with every possible convenience and entertainment; slaves of all sorts are on hand at all times to ensure that the guests within these quarters want for nothing.

Prerequisites: None.

Properties: Luxurious quarters have no direct benefits, but are a sign of a demon's wealth. If a demon has won its domain, why not enjoy it?

Variants: The style of the luxury can be tailored to the particular desires and perversions of the demon.

Special: None.

Ostentatious D'cor

Structure		Hardness	Design	Craft	Labour	Cost
Size	Points		DC	DC	Required	
Tiny	—	—	15	15	400	1,000 cr

Description: Some demons have style; others merely make do with excess. This upgrade decorates the fortress with treasures from all over the Pit, from gold and gilt to soulshaped tapestries to rich drug-vapours from incense burners.

Prerequisites: None.

Properties: Making a fortress ostentatious is a sign of the demon's wealth and decadence. It has no defensive or magical properties, but shows the demon's might and impresses its guests.

Variants: A demon may choose the style and nature of the ostentation.

Special: This upgrade can be of any size, although not drenching one's entire keep in gold and blood is a sign of unbecoming restraint.

Personal Towers

Structure		Hardness	Design	Craft	Labour	Cost
Size	Points		DC	DC	Required	
Tiny	100	+0	15	10	500	400 cr

Description: Many of the fortresses of Hell look like spiked crowns, as great sharp towers rise from their battlements to skewer the sky. Often, each tower is dedicated to a particular purpose or noble.

Prerequisites: None.

Properties: A Tiny set of personal towers includes two towers; larger upgrades can have more or bigger towers. Each tower is essentially a discrete complex within the fortress and can be sealed off from the fortress by closing a single door. Upgrades can be applied to individual towers (up to a maximum of one for a Tiny tower and proportionally more for larger towers).

Variants: None.

Special: None.

Slave Pens

Structure		Hardness	Design	Craft	Labour	Cost
Size	Points		DC	DC	Required	
Tiny	50	+0	10	10	300	200 cr

Description: Fortresses that must deal with large numbers of mortal or damned slaves need prison cells and corrals to hold them in, chains to bind them, whips to spur them and so on. This upgrade provides a space in the fortress to hold these slaves. A fortress without a slave pen can of course have a staff of enslaved creatures, but alternate and less effective arrangements must be made for them.

Prerequisites: None.

Properties: A Tiny slave pen can hold 50 mortals or 100 damned; larger pens can hold proportionately more slaves. The bars of the cages are of iron; the locks of steel and have an Open Lock DC of 25. The pens are deliberately designed to contain breakouts and channel slave revolts into places where the demon slavers and guards can stop the escapees and restore the proper order of Hell.

Variants: Larger slave pens hold more slaves.

Special: A slave pen can be placed in a dungeon.

Sorrowery

	Structure		Design	Craft	Labour	
Size	Points	Hardness	DC	DC	Required	Cost
Tiny	100	+2	20	16	300	500 cr

Description: The finest wine in Hell is the wine of Sorrow, which shows the hellkin the truest extent of their majestic power. Sorrow is held in these vaults, which resemble terrible mausoleums. A sorrowery is colder than the grave, and has a melancholy that seeps into the bones and chills them to their core.

Prerequisites: None.

Properties: Like an Agony vault, a sorrowery has no function other than being the way Sorrow is stored and presented; it is a mark of status and breeding, twin obsessions for the bastard-blood hellkin who claim descent from angels.

Variants: Larger vaults can hold more Sorrow; a Tiny sorrowery holds 50 bottles worth.

Special: A sorrowery can be placed in a dungeon.

Stables

	Structure		Design	Craft	Labour	
Size	Points	Hardness	DC	DC	Required	Cost
Tiny	120	+0	12	10	400	400 cr

Description: The hideous spawn of the Pit are used as mounts and beasts of burden by the demons; this stable contains bedding, feeding troughs and other tools necessary to keep such creatures. Alternatively, some demons pride themselves on keeping mortal animals like horses and wolves alive in the Pit, so a stable could technically be a set of kennels for hounds or hellhounds.

Prerequisites: None.

Properties: A Tiny stable has space for 10 Large, 20 Medium or 40 Small creatures; larger stables have room for more creatures. Having a stable gives a +4 bonus to Handle Animal or Spawn checks relating to training, care and so on.

Variants: Larger stables hold proportionately more creatures.

Special: None.

Storage Vaults

	Structure		Design	Craft	Labour	
Size	Points	Hardness	DC	DC	Required	Cost
Tiny	100	+0	12	10	500	400 cr

Description: These rounded vaults are packed to the ceiling with preserved supplies to last out a siege. For demons, these supplies include crystallised iliaster, ointments and unguents to string out the usefulness of souls, torture gear, hellbroths and so on. Mortal vaults contain more mundane supplies like water barrels and spiced meat.

Prerequisites: None.

Properties: Having a storage vault lets a fortress endure sieges for longer; each vault increases the time before the castle runs out of basic supplies by 50%.

Variants: A fortress must have a storage vault equal to its own size to have enough supplies to last; smaller vaults contain fewer supplies.

Special: A storage vault can be placed in a dungeon.

Strain Tank

	Structure		Design	Craft	Labour	
Size	Points	Hardness	DC	DC	Required	Cost
Tiny	100	+2	12	10	300	300 cr

Description: Unlike the more exalted hellbroths of Agony and Sorrow, humble Strain is just held in great vats and tanks until it is needed.

Prerequisites: None.

Properties: A Tiny Strain tank holds 500 points worth of Strain, which can be pumped to anywhere in the fortress.

Variants: Larger Strain tanks hold proportionately more Strain.

Special: A Strain tank can be placed in a dungeon.

Surgical Laboratory

Size	Structure		Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
	Points	Hardness				
Tiny	—	—	16	12	300	500 cr

Description: This chamber has the harsh tang of chemicals and blood; harsh electric lights reflect from surgical steel knives and jars containing freshly-carved organs. Demons have a fascination with the workings of flesh, so unlike their own crude and misshapen forms. A surgical laboratory lets a demon dig – literally – into this mystery.

Prerequisites: Laboratory.

Properties: Having a surgical laboratory gives a +4 bonus to Heal checks and a +2 bonus to Torture checks. It is also used for Astyanath, Glabretch or abhorei fleshcrafting.

Variants: A larger surgical laboratory is of little use, unless the demon lord wants to deal with very large subjects.

Special: A surgical laboratory can be placed in a dungeon.

Theatre

Size	Structure		Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
	Points	Hardness				
Tiny	—	—	15	10	400	300 cr

Description: The art of drama is quite advanced in Hell; many demon lords differ only from pantomime or opera villains in that they mean it when they say they will flay the flesh from your bones and torture your soul for a thousand years. The Riethii are the best of the demon actors, but every House has its own thespians and playwrights. Of late, more exotic entertainments are filtering down from the mortal realm and the flicker of celluloid images now delight demons in the Sixth Circle.

Prerequisites: None.

Properties: A theatre is used for entertaining a demon's guests. A Tiny theatre can hold 25 creatures in the audience in relative comfort.

Variants: Larger theatres can hold a greater audience.

Special: None.

Throne Room, Improved

Size	Structure		Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
	Points	Hardness				
Tiny	—	—	20	16	300	500 cr

Description: Every fortress has a throne room located somewhere deep within in, but a demon lord wishing to enforce its will on its subjects might build this improved throne room. Here, the lord of the fortress sits on a great seat of skulls, surrounding by arcs of burning hellfire. Its courtiers skulk in the shadows, while supplicants must kneel in a fiery circle before the throne.

Prerequisites: None.

Properties: An improved throne room gives the lord of the fortress a +4 bonus to Intimidation checks made within the chamber.

Variants: A larger fortress has a larger throne room and hence requires a larger improved throne room.

Special: None.

Torture Chamber

Size	Structure		Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
	Points	Hardness				
Tiny	100	+0	15	10	300	400 cr

Description: This torture chamber contains every horrible device and method of torment conceived of by the inventive minds of the hellkin. The flood is pierced by many holes, to allow the veritable flood of plasm and blood to flow down into hidden drains. The room echoes with the cries and whimpers of those who are being tortured here. The room is lit by flaring gas torches; each spurt of gas illuminates a new scene of horror.

Prerequisites: None.

Properties: A torture chamber contains every form of torture device listed in the Equipment chapter of *Book of the Damned*. Furthermore, the oppressive feeling of certain doom present in this awful chamber gives a further +2 bonus to Torture checks made here. There are plenty of extraction rigs to collect the iliaster from souls being tortured here.

A Tiny torture chamber can service 25 clients at a time.

Variants: Larger torture chambers can service proportionately more clients.

Special: A torture chamber can be placed in a dungeon.

Trophy Room

Structure Size	Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
Tiny	—	—	15	10	300	300 cr

Description: This chamber contains the severed heads of enemies, the broken standards of defeated armies, fused stone from crushed fortresses, skulls of slain foes and other ghastly mementoes of a lord's triumphs. Having a trophy room allows a lord to demonstrate its past victories.

Prerequisites: None.

Properties: A trophy room gives no immediate bonus, but can be used to entertain and impress guests.

Variants: Larger trophy rooms give no direct benefit, but especially large trophies (*'this is the skull of Behemoth'*) require bigger rooms.

Special: None.

Treasure Vault

Structure Size	Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
Tiny	150	+4	20	20	400	600 cr

Description: This great vault has thick walls and massive doors; it is built so tightly that not a wisp of air nor ray of light can escape its confines. It is grim and foreboding, as empty as a demon's heart. Here, in this vault, a demon lord can store its wealth with perfect confidence of its safety.

Prerequisites: None.

Properties: The vault's door has a Break DC of 30 + the material's hardness and is three feet thick. The lock is magical and has an Open Lock DC of 50.

Variants: A Tiny vault can contain up to 100,000 crowns; larger vaults can contain proportionately more treasure.

Special: A treasure vault can be placed in a dungeon.

War Room

Structure Size	Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
Tiny	100	+0	15	10	300	300 cr

Description: This vaulted chamber contains a detailed map of the terrain surrounding the fortress, marked with notes about local fortifications, roads, troop concentrations and so on. Little models of Hellish armies stride about the map, made of damned souls shrunk down to miniature size. The chamber also contains books of strategy, intelligence reports and other writings and records necessary to conducting war and genocide.

Prerequisites: None.

Properties: Having a full-equipped war room gives a demon lord a +4 bonus to Warcraft checks made from the fortress.

Variants: None.

Special: A war room can be placed in a dungeon.



Vehicle Garage

Size	Structure		Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
	Points	Hardness				
Tiny	100	+0	10	10	400	300 cr

Description: This shed contains maintenance equipment and spare parts for a fleet of vehicles. It has the stink of oil and Strain and rust. Artificers dart and roll between the great iron bulk of their charges, machines tending to machines tending to machines.

Prerequisites: None.

Properties: Like a stable, this chamber provides housing and repair facilities for five Large vehicles.

Variants: Larger garages hold proportionately more vehicles.

Special: None.

Sample fortresses

The towers of the fortresses rise like jagged teeth from the skyline of the Pit. Petty lords have bankrupted themselves and worn their slaves to shreds to build pettier keeps, while the Houses spend vast sums on massive fortresses to defend their lords against hostile sorcery. The fortresses described below are relatively typical for Infernal fortifications, in that they are all utterly unlike each other.

The Shrine of Crawling Eyes

A Tiny Fortress of House Lictat

This little shrine protects one of the mountain passes that leads into the fragile Lictat estates on the Tempest Circle. The fortress is made of the



black stone of the mountains but unlike the towering peaks around it, it hugs the ground to avoid the howling winds. From many angles, in fact, it looks like a trapdoor spider hiding beneath rubble.

The lord of the fortress is a 9th level stalker named Asth. The demon's position is precarious; there are several captains serving under it who would gladly bury Asth in the foundations of its still-unfinished fortress and take the demon's place. While the keep's stables have thousands of specially-bred eyeball spiders that were meant to crawl around the pass watching for invaders, Asth has chosen to keep several dozen of these spiders with it at all times to watch for assassins.

SHRINE OF CRAWLING EYES FORTRESS STATISTICS

Component	Size	Material	Structure		Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
			Points	Hardness				
Shrine	Tiny	Stone	500	13	15	15	1,000	5000 cr
Stable	Tiny	Wood	120	5	12	5	400	200 cr
Gargoyles	Tiny	Stone	—	—	18	15	300	250 cr
Watchtower	Tiny	Stone	150	8	16	15	600	400 cr
Totals	—	—	—	—	—	—	9,900 days using slaves	5,850 cr

Sorcerous Defence: -5

Security: +10

VAROOL'S HOLD FORTRESS STATISTICS

Component	Size	Material	Structure		Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
			Points	Hardness				
Manor	Small	Frothstone	500	7	15	15	5,000	5,000 cr
Blasting Tower	Tiny	Frothstone	100	2	16	16	300	250 cr
Blasting Tower	Tiny	Frothstone	100	2	16	16	300	250 cr
Treasure Vault	Tiny	Stone	150	12	20	20	400	600 cr
Vehicle Garage	Small	Stone	200	8	10	10	800	600 cr
Totals	—	—	—	—	—	—	33,300 days using slaves	6,700 cr

Sorcerous Defence: -10**Security:** +0

Asth's fortress is far from luxurious; the structure is designed to watch over the pass, not protect its lord or be a pleasant place to dwell. The watchtower is built into the mountains surrounding it, connected to the keep through narrow and smoke-filled passages.

The demon Varool is a lord of Hell; it has a fortress, but no other holdings or domain. Varool's fortress is built on a precarious cliff overlooking the Sunless Sea. It is used as a base by pirates and raiders, but Varool's true allegiance is to the ancient spawn of the sea. The demon sacrifices creatures to the Leviathan, who rewards it with servitor spawn and treasure from the sea bed.

Varool's Hold

A Small Fortress of the Independent Demon Varool

The keep looks like something of salt and coral; wreckage from ships has been incorporated into

THE WHISPER GALLERY FORTRESS STATISTICS

Component	Size	Material	Structure		Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
			Points	Hardness				
Keep	Medium	Hellglass	1,000	25	20	25	25,000	45,000 cr
Debtor's Chains	Medium	—	—	—	17	17	1,200	800 cr
Labyrinth	Medium	Hellglass	25	20	25	15	2,000	1,000 cr
Screamer Network	Medium	—	—	—	20	20	400	2,000 cr
Shroud Engraving	Medium	—	—	—	25	15	2,000	200 cr
Aerial Defences	Medium	—	—	—	15	10	2,000	800 cr
Death Traps	Medium	—	—	—	30	15	400	1,200 cr
Weapon Mounts x2	Medium	Hellglass	200	20	15	15	2,400	10,000 cr
Inner Sanctum	Tiny	Hellglass	75	22	20	21	400	2,000 cr
Library	Medium	—	—	—	15	5	1,200	1,000 cr
Stables	Medium	Wood	480	5	12	5	1,600	800 cr
Torture Chamber	Tiny	Stone	100	8	15	10	300	400 cr
Totals	—	—	—	—	—	—	127,000 days using demon labourers; 44,300 days using slaves	64,200 cr

The Library specialises in the fields of Knowledge (history) and Knowledge (infernography).

Sorcerous Defence: -15**Security:** +0 (+5 in inner sanctum)

its walls. In the heart of the keep is a treasure vault containing Varool's ill-gotten wealth; below the fortress is a Small dock containing Varool's slaveships.

The Whisper Gallery

A Medium Fortress of House Riethii

While restraint is one thing the Riethii are rarely accused of, the elegant hellglass spires of the Whisper Gallery are a far cry from the gaudy excesses of their golden pleasure-domes elsewhere in the Seventh. This fortress is still used to host celebrations on occasion but the true purpose of the Whisper Gallery is to be the clearing house for information gathered by the Riethii spies.

The master of the fortress was a mortal originally, although one so corrupted by exposure to the taint of the Unholy circle and by the ministrations of Riethii seducers and sorcerers that it is hard to tell if he is still a mortal, or has transmuted into a demon, or is a damned soul cloaked in conjured flesh. He calls himself Beauregard and is the undisputed spymaster of House Riethii.

The Ferrul Spike

A Large Fortress of the Free Cities

The grim tower of the Ferrul Spike was built by House Zethu to house its sorcerous researchers. The place was a hive of research and industry; it became a literal hive when the biomechanical additions were added. Crackling arcs of iliaster leap from

THE FERRUL SPIKE FORTRESS STATISTICS

Component	Size	Material	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
Keep	Medium	Stone	2,000	13	20	15	25,000	20,000 cr.
Ritual Chamber	Medium	Stone	120	8	20	15	2,000	1,200 cr.
Projection Tower	Medium	Biomechanical	900	10	20	15	2,200	6,400 cr.
Soul Cage	Medium	Biomechanical	600	12	18	5	4,000	4,000 cr.
Library	Medium	—	—	—	15	10	1,200	2,000 cr.
Personal Towers	Medium	Biomechanical	1,200	10	15	—	2,000	6,400 cr.
Laboratory	Medium	—	—	—	20	15	1,200	3,200 cr.
Manor	Small	Stone	1,000	13	15	15	5,000	10,000 cr.
Geomantic Node	Tiny	Stone	100	8	15	15	300	100 cr.
Sorcery Bastion	Tiny	Stone	100	8	15	10	700	150 cr.
Flyer Perch	Tiny	Stone	50	10	15	15	300	300 cr.
Watchtower	Tiny	Stone	150	8	16	15	600	400 cr.
Belltower	Tiny	Stone	100	10	15	15	400	450 cr.
Vehicle Garage	Tiny	Biomechanical	300	10	10	—	400	1,200 cr.
Manor	Small	Stone	1,000	13	15	15	5,000	10,000 cr.
Geomantic Node	Tiny	Stone	100	8	15	15	300	100 cr.
Sorcery Bastion	Tiny	Stone	100	8	15	10	700	150 cr.
Strain Engine	Tiny	Brass	75	10	17	15	550	225 cr.
Strain Tank	Tiny	Stone	100	10	12	10	300	300 cr.
Totals	—	—	—	—	—	—	248,650 days using slaves	66,575 cr.

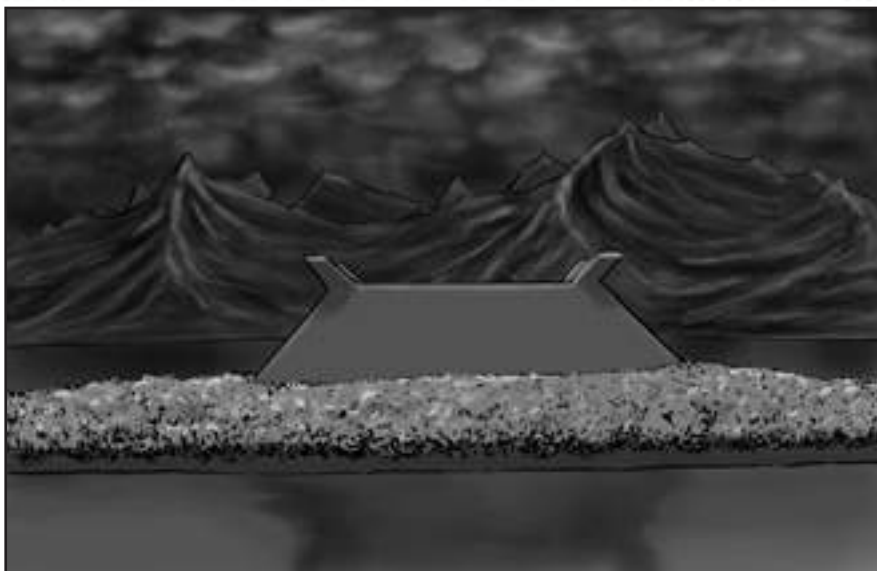
The Ferrul Spike consists of the central spike itself, a stone keep augmented with biomechanical towers and two outlying manors connected to the central keep using geomantic nodes.

Sorcerous Defence: -50

Security: +0

the Spike. True names of demons are engraved onto every flagstone and the walls whisper incantations and charms from past centuries. Here in the Ferrul Spike, a legion of demon sorcerers were trained in the black arts of House Zethu.

Then came the disastrous retreat from the Free City revolt. For all their artistry and cunning, the sages of the Zethu panicked like the rest of their kin and gave up the Ferrul Spike without a fight. The fortress was claimed by renegade demons who lacked the understanding of the arcane arts necessary to use the secrets of the Ferrul Spike. A disastrous experiment resulted in a large section of the fortress being gutted by an explosion. The City Council of Dis has placed the Spike under the control of Quarter Co-Ordinator Nalboros, who has been ordered to repair the Spike as best he can and salvage what has not been destroyed. Nalboros has far more ambitious plans



for its new home, however, and is rapidly teaching itself sorcery.

Dunwater Keep

A Huge Fortress of House Haimon

The Dunwater Keep sits on an island in a lake, in the midst of one of the stunted, leafless forests that sprout suddenly from the mud of the Third Circle. Few come to Dunwater Keep willingly; the place is

DUNWATER KEEP FORTRESS STATISTICS

Component	Size	Material	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Cost
Lesser Citadel	Huge	Stone	8,000	13	25	20	625,500	320,000 cr.
Dominion Nexus	Huge	Stone	800	8	20	20	3,200	6,400 cr.
Gargoyles	Huge	—	—	—	18	15	4,800	4,000 cr.
Ghostly Servants	Huge	—	—	—	10	10	3,200	1,600 cr.
Greater Iliaster Vault	Huge	Stone	3,200	13	30	20	19,200	12,000 cr.
Shade Warriors	Huge	—	—	—	20	10	2,400	4,800 cr.
Ritual Chamber	Huge	—	—	—	20	15	8,000	16,000 cr.
Summoning Circle	Tiny	Stone	30	8	20	15	500	200 cr.
Battlements	Huge	Stone	—	—	10	10	8,000	1,600 cr.
Curtain Wall	Huge	Stone	3,200	8	10	10	9,600	6,400cr.
Hellglass Facing	Huge	—	—	—	10	15	12,800	12,800 cr.
Barbican Complex	Huge	Stone	3,200	10	15	10	8,000	8,000 cr.
Weapons Mounts x 3	Huge	Stone	1,600	8	15	10	14,400	24,000 cr.
Armoury	Huge	Stone	1,600	8	12	10	6,400	7,200 cr.
Barracks x2	Huge	Stone	1,600	8	10	10	12,800	9,600 cr.
Guard Post x2	Huge	—	—	—	10	10	9,600	6,400 cr.
Totals	—	—	—	—	—	—	3,950,000 days using slaves	426,600 cr.

Sorcerous Defence: -40
Security DC: +25

so isolated and lonely that the traveller would ride for days and not see a single soul.

This isolation makes Dunwater an ideal prison. Some of those held here are demons captured or summoned from other Houses who are being tortured for their secrets or who are doomed to the spawning pits; others are mad scions of House Haimon who still hold key secrets or Covenants and so must be stored for future use.

The current master of Dunwater is a Haimon beast that calls itself the Horned King. It spends little time in its fortress, preferring to stalk game in the woods around the keep. It returns without warning once every few months, devouring any of its servants that have let their duties run slack in its absence.

Fortresses & Warfare

Attacking a fortress with an army is a difficult proposition; the walls of the fortress must be breached, which takes a great deal of damage. With a stout force of defenders, a fortress can hold off an attacking army for months or years.

If a fortress' upgrades have their own hardness ratings, then they are external add-ons to the main structure of the fortress and can therefore be targeted separately by siege weapons. For example, personal towers have their own hardness and are therefore considered to rise above the central bulk of the keep. A library, in contrast, does not have its

Applicable Upgrades in Battle

Aerial Defences: Blocks attacking flyers.

Armoury: Having an armoury allows missile troops to reload and re-supply from the fortress.

Barbican Complex: Having a main gate allows more troops to issue forth from the fortress at once.

Barracks: Obviously, having more warriors in the fortress is very useful.

Battlements: Provides cover.

Belltower: Raises the alarm.

Blasting Tower: Rains down burning death upon the enemy.

Copper Netting: Defends against electrical attack.

Curtain Wall: Provides an external defence and marshalling space.

Hellglass Facing: Defends against acid attack.

Ichor Channels: Defends against cold attack.

Iliaster Shield: Increases hardness of fortress.

Labyrinth: Provides an external defence against invaders.

Land-Eating Spines: Allows fortress to regenerate.

Moat and Drawbridge: Provides an external defence.

Reinforced Keep: Increases strength of fortress.

Resonant Structure: Defends against sonic attack.

Sealed Structure: Protects against flyers and gaseous attacks.

Shade Warriors: Undead warriors kill invaders.

Soulstone Facing: Protects against fire attacks.

Stable: Supplies and housing for war-spawn.

Strain Tank: Allows war machines to be refuelled.

Weapon Mounts: Rains down a variety of forms of death on the enemy.

War Room: Gives a bonus to Warcraft checks.

Vehicle Garage: Supplies and housing for war machines.

own hardness score; it is therefore internal to the fortress and cannot be targeted directly.

Upgrades placed in a dungeon, regardless of type, cannot be attacked directly from outside.

When targeting an upgrade with a siege weapon, the attacker suffers a -4 penalty to his attack roll. If the attack roll misses by a margin of four or less, then the attack has struck the main fortress and not the upgrade.

Sieges

Instead of destroying a fortress by battering it with firepower, a common tactic is to just surround the place and wait for it to run out of iliaster. Within a few days, the hunger of the hellkin will consume all the iliaster stored within the castle and force them into Dissolution – or so the theory goes. Most fortresses do have tanks of plasmic iliaster

and slave pens full of souls to provide them with sustenance but the standard approach for a fortress under siege is for the bigger, stronger demons to kill off the weaker ones early in the siege and drink them for power. A handful of demons can hold a fortress against attackers, so wiping out the competition for iliaster makes sense.

On average, a fortress has enough stored iliaster and damned souls to sustain its demonic population for a week. Culling the servitor demons and other non-essential personnel increases this figure to a month; killing everyone in the fortress except the dozen or so highest-level defenders increases the figure to six months. If the fortress has a well-stocked iliaster vault, then these figures can be doubled – and are only approximations anyway. An army besieging a penniless minor lord's fortress can starve it into submission quickly, but a Carthenay vault has enough supplies to endure a siege for years (admittedly, that is partly because the Carthenay cull their lesser ranks as a matter of standard procedure).

A fortress also runs the risk of running out of supplies for repairing structures, weapons and so on. The average fortress can repair up to 25% of its structure points using stockpiled material; by cannibalising other parts of the fortress, this can be raised to 50%. Having storage vaults also increases this amount.

The Following Upgrades Affect Sieges

Castle Forge: Allows tools to be repaired.

Iliaster Vault: Stock of iliaster. In desperation, agony vaults and sorroweries can be opened to the common mass. Some even stoop to drinking from the Strain tanks.

Land-Eating Spines: Repairs the fortress.

Sacrificial Chamber: Converts unneeded demons into helpful iliaster.

Slave Pens: Most fortresses have at least a few dozen damned playthings running around, but a slave pen contains a solid stock of souls.

Soul Cage: More and potent souls.

Storage Vaults: Holds supplies for repairing the fortress.

Torture Chamber: Used in concert with slave pens or a soul cage.

Flying Units and Sieges

If a flying unit tries to land within a fortress, it must execute a successful Swoop order to do so. Aerial defences give a –4 penalty to the flyer's Warcraft check. Furthermore, the defenders of the fortress may immediately make an attack against the flyers. If the attack hits, then the flying unit is driven back and does not gain a foothold within the fortress. Aerial defences give a –4 penalty to the flying unit's Armour Class on the round in which they land.

Security

Sending spies or assassins into a fortress is another key tactic in Infernal politics and warfare; one of the chief reasons for building a fortress is to defend against this kind of incursion. It is assumed that a fortress has enough guards to watch key entrances such as the main gate, but it is still possible for a spy to slip into a fortress by another route, like climbing over a wall, entering in disguise, climbing up a waste chute and so on.

There is a chance that an intruder is detected by the fortresses' guards and defensive measures. An intruder must make Hide, Move Silently, Bluff or Disguise rolls (depending on the nature of the incursion) while within the fortress. The DC for these checks depends on the fortresses' alert status, the quality of the guards, and the fortresses' upgrades.

Alert Levels

There are five alert levels:

- ⊗ **Lax:** A fortress with lax security indicates an undisciplined or indolent set of guards – or the aftermath of an exhausting battle or party. A fortress with fewer than the normal number of guards might also be forced into lax status. The base security DC for lax security is DC 5.
- ⊗ **Average:** Most fortresses have at least average security; regular patrols, visitors are questioned at the gates, guards stationed at key internal doors and in sensitive or important chambers. The base security DC for average security is DC 10.
- ⊗ **Heightened:** Heightened security means that the guards are on alert for intruders; they are much more watchful and paranoid than normal.

This added security increases the DC to 15, but it comes at a cost. If heightened security is maintained for more than a week by the same group of guards, then the cumulative exhaustion and nervousness gives them a -4 penalty to all skill checks until they have rested.

- ⊗ **Full:** Full security is normally in effect only when the alarm has been raised. Guards are rushing everywhere in the fortress, every door is locked and watched. Full security can be maintained for a maximum of eight hours before exhaustion sets in (-4 penalty to all skill checks until the guards have rested), but the security DC is raised to 20.
- ⊗ **Chaos:** A fortress under attack or distracted by some other crisis is in chaos. During chaos, roll 1d20 to determine the base security DC.

Security Checks

A Security check is an abstract way of working out if an intruder has been detected by the fortress guards. If more detail is called for, use the usual rules for hiding and detection – security checks are really just a quick-and-dirty method for dealing with spies.

In general, a Security check should be made the first time an intruder enters a fortress, and whenever it moves from one important location to another, or when it enters or leaves an upgraded area. In the cases of structures like labyrinths and guard posts, moving between areas should call for 1d4 checks instead of one.

Depending on how the intruder is moving through the fortress, the Security DC might be applied to a Bluff, Disguise, Hide or Move Silently check. A shadowy assassin might have to make plenty of Hide checks; a thief who is pretending to be a guard would make Bluff and Disguise checks.



Guards

Work out the profile of the 'average' guard in the fortress (or section of the fortress). The guards increase the base Security DC as follows:

- +2 for every five levels, rounded *up*.
- +2 for every five ranks in any of the following skills: Listen, Spot, Search, Sense Motive.
- +2 for each appropriate ability possessed by the guard (scent, telepathy etc).
- +2 if the guards are loyal and well trained.
- +2 if the guards are Covenanted or otherwise bound to the lord of the fortress.
- 2 if the guards are disloyal or lazy.
- 4 if the guards are open to bribes, infighting and other distractions.

Upgrades

The following upgrades affect security:

Belltower: Having a belltower allows the alert status of the whole fortress to be changed in 1d10 minutes.

Correspondence Window: No direct increase, but the lord of the fortress can randomly activate these

windows from its throne room to monitor events elsewhere in the fortress.

Death Traps: Do not affect security directly, but a creature who falls victim to a trap must immediately make a Security check (see sidebar) to avoid detection by the guards.

Gargoyles: Gargoyles provide a flat +10 increase to the Security DC.

Ghostly Servants: Ghostly servants increase the security DC by +5.

Guard Posts: Having guard posts increases the Security DC of the fortress by +10. Extra posts do not increase the DC, but do make checks more common.

Inner Sanctum: The Security DC is raised by +5 while inside a sanctum.

Labyrinth: Having an internal labyrinth makes moving through the fortress more time-consuming, increasing the number of security checks.

Screamer Network: Allows the fortress to change security level in 2d10 minutes.

Shade Warriors: Does not increase the security DC.

Example: Using the Ferrul Spike as an example, that fortress has only one upgrade – the belltower – that affects security. The guards of the Ferrul Spike are, say, the Mercenary Fiends described on page 218 of *Book of the Tormentor*. They increase the DC by:

+2 (levels)

+2 (five ranks in Spot)

+2 (appropriate ability – Hungry Mind)
for a total of +6.

Under normal circumstances, sneaking into the Ferrul Spike would require a skill check against DC 16 – average alert gives DC 10, +6 for the guard's abilities. A spy trying to reach the library in the Ferrul Spike would have to make at least two checks – one to enter the fortress and another to enter the library itself.

Repairing a fortress

A fortress can be temporarily repaired in an emergency. To do so, the workers must make Craft checks at the Craft DC of the structure –5, and repair damage equal to the difference between the DC and the dice result. For example, a stone curtain

wall has a Craft DC of 10. A creature with a Craft (fortresses) skill of +10 could take 10 on a repair check, for a total result of 20. This is a margin of success of 15 (Craft DC of 10, –5 for the temporary repair), repairing 15 points of damage to the wall. A structure cannot be repaired to more than 50% of its lost hit points using temporary repairs.

Making a temporary repair takes eight hours of work.

Permanent repairs are more difficult; they are essentially the same as building the structure again. A new Design check must be made at the original DC –5, and the Craft DC is unchanged from normal building. The cost and the amount of labour required are exactly proportional to the damage sustained by the structure.

For example, if a curtain wall has taken 25 points of damage, this is equal to one-eighth of the wall's Structure Points. Therefore, the labour required is one-eighth normal (75 days) as is the cost (50 crowns).

Changing Upgrades & Expansion

An upgrade can be demolished – for free in the case of upgrades without hardness and for one-tenth the normal cost for other upgrades. This frees up the upgrade 'slot(s)' which can now be used for a different upgrade. Demolishing an upgrade does take time, however, so most cannot be destroyed to deny them to an enemy (there are exceptions, of course – burning a Library or smashing the tools in a Ritual Chamber is fairly quick and easy).

A fortress can be expanded in several ways. The cheapest and easiest is just to build more structures onto it. These extra structures can be other fortress-type buildings (shrines, manors, keeps and so on), in which case the rules elsewhere in this chapter are used to determine construction costs) or they can be ordinary buildings (in which case, use the rules from *Dark Satanic Mills*, page 83). In either case, the added structures are not really part of the fortress and will not benefit from all-fortress upgrades like an iliaster shield.

Expanding a fortress properly is more expensive, but is doable. A fortress can be expanded from a shrine into a manor and so on; subtract the cost of

existing fortress from the new one. If the upgrades in the original fortress affect the whole structure, then they must be expanded at the same time to fit the new, larger fortress or else removed.

A half-way measure is to build outlying fortresses and connect them to the main stronghold using geomantic nodes.

Fortresses & Rule

A fortress is the seat of a demon's rule over its servants, a symbol of hellish power and authority. Having a fortress gives a demon great power over others.

Dealing with a demon in its own fortress is an unsettling experience. In essence, the demon gets a 'free' Intimidate check, which can be resisted using a Will or Fortitude save. This check is modified using the demon's ranks in Intimidate, and the fortresses' Size Modifier. If the visitor fails to resist, then he suffers a -2 morale penalty in all Influencing contests with the demon.

For example, a diplomat from the Glabretchi enters Dunwater Keep. The lord of Dunwater has an Intimidate bonus of +10 and Dunwater is Huge (+2). The diplomat must make a Fortitude or Will save against a DC of 1d20 + 12 or be intimidated by the sheer size of the fortress and the implied power of the lord.

Specific upgrades also affect rulership and diplomacy. These should be used in concert with the rules for parties and politics on page 99 (see *The Game of Lies*).

Agony Vault: Not serving Agony to guests at a party gives a -5 penalty to all Entertainment checks (see *The Game of Lies*), but serving Agony from anything other than an Agony vault gives a -10 penalty if it is discovered that the fortress is without a vault. Agony is expected to be served at any party involving nobles of any rank.

Ballroom: Inviting guests into one's fortress is a sign of power and confidence, as it exposes the lord of the fortress to hostile sorcery and spies. Holding a celebration in a ballroom increases the Influence bonus by 50%, but the lord must have the appropriate upgrades to keep his guests happy.

Bedchamber: Gives a bonus to Seduction.

Debtor's Chains: Increases the effectiveness of Covenants within the fortress.

Dining Hall: Entertaining an Oblurott guest without a dining hall gives a -5 penalty to Entertainment checks.

Dominion Nexus: Depending on the properties of the dominion nexus, it can give significant bonuses to rule within the domain.

Library: The scholars of House Zethu are impressed by knowledge; entertaining a Zethu guest without a library on hand gives a -5 penalty to Entertainment checks.

Ostentatious Décor: The simple minds of House Lictat and other minor Houses are impressed by obvious and gaudy wealth. Not being ostentatious gives a -2 penalty to Entertainment attempts against them.

Sorrowery: A sorrowery works just like an Agony vault, but Sorrow must be served at any party for Earls or higher.

Temple of the Morningstar: Not showing one's faith does not impress House Haimon; entertaining a guest from that House or from the Church of the Morningstar itself without having a temple gives a -5 penalty to Entertainment checks.

Theatre: The aesthetes of the Riethii demand entertainment. Not having a theatre – or a suitable bedchamber – gives a -5 penalty to Entertaining them.

Throne Room, Improved: Gives a +4 bonus to Intimidation attempts. Note that this applies to the 'free' Intimidation for dealing with a demon lord in its seat of power.

Torture Chamber: The Astyanath demand the fine art of torture; not having a torture chamber on hand for an Astyanath guest gives a -5 penalty when Entertaining it.

Treasure Vault: A treasure vault can impress guests from House Carthenay, provided it is full. The penalty for entertaining Carthenay guests at one's fortress depends on the amount of wealth in the vault:

Vault Contents	Penalty	Vault Contents	Penalty
0 cr	-8	5,001-10,000 cr	-3
1-100 cr	-7	10,001-20,000 cr	-2
101-500 cr	-6	20,001-50,000 cr	-1
501-1,000 cr	-5	50,001-100,000 cr	-0
1,001-5,000 cr	-4	Per 50,000 extra cr	+1

Trophy Room: Finally, a trophy room can impress

guests from House Sturrach. A trophy can be any of the following:

- ⊗ The head or other memento of a foe of 15th level or more.
- ⊗ The standard of a defeated army.
- ⊗ A marker from a defeated fortress.
- ⊗ A gift from a Duke or higher.

Trophies	Penalty	Trophies	Penalty
0	-8	5	-3
1	-7	6	-2
2	-6	7	-1
3	-5	8	-0
4	-4	Per two extra trophies	+1

fortresses & Sorcery

The other great property of a fortress is its ability to block hostile sorceries. The incoming tangle of arcane will and directed iliaster is broken by the telluric defences of the fortress; the geometries of the fortresses' walls and towers act like a *counterspell* in stone, dispersing the hostile energies before they can affect those within the fortress.

A fortress protects:

- ⊗ The lord of the fortress.
- ⊗ Those within the fortress.

The protection is *doubled* for the lord while within its fortress.

The protection depends on the size of the fortress:

Fortress Type	Size	Base Protection
Shrine	Tiny	-5
Manor	Small	-10
Keep	Medium	-15
Fortress	Large	-20
Lesser Citadel	Huge	-30
Mighty Fortress	Gargantuan	-40
House Citadel	Colossal	-50

Some upgrades, notable geomantic nodes and sorcery bastions, increase the protection.

Rituals Affected

The effects of this sorcerous protection are as follows – subtract the protection score of the fortress from any Sorcery checks made targeting creatures within the fortress. Any ritual that affects the target through the indirect application of iliaster is affected by this protection – a spell can still be used to spit hellfire directly at a target, but any magic that allows the sorcerer to affect a target invisibly from a distance is blocked. The following rituals from *Book of the Damned* are affected by a fortress' sorcerous defence score:

- ⊗ All variations of *summoning*.
- ⊗ *Swift dispatch of the agent* if trying to transport a creature inside a fortress.
- ⊗ *Screaming*
- ⊗ *Invisible current of will*

Breaking the Protection

The protection offered by a fortress can be countered in several ways:

- ⊗ A spell cast from within the fortress is unaffected by the protection, even when targeting the lord of the fortress.
- ⊗ Breaching the fortress walls disrupts the geomantic protection; each breach reduces the protection by 10, as does destroying any of the fortress' upgrades.
- ⊗ It is possible to disrupt a fortress' geomantic shape by building additions. This requires a Knowledge (arcana) check when designing the addition; the result of the check determines the size of the 'hole' created – the protection is reduced by the size of the hole. This hole is known only to the designer and those who study the designs and make a successful Knowledge (arcana) check (DC 15). For example, a demon architect is hired to design an inner sanctum for a fortress. The architect is secretly allied with a foe of the demon lord who wants the sanctum, so the architect introduces a deliberate flaw into the geometries of the sanctum. He makes a Knowledge (arcana) check and gets a result of 25 – anyone who knows about this flaw can use it to reduce the sorcerous defence of the fortress by 25. This flaw can be discerned by anyone who studies either the plans of the fortress or the fortress itself.

Mortal fortresses

The hellkin are not the only denizens of the Infernum to build defensive structures. Mortals and angels also make their homes here, although few are as impressive as the massive fortresses of the demons. Obviously, mortals and angels who have succumbed to the corruption and decay of the Infernum and joined with the Houses use the above rules for fortress construction – Hell is egalitarian in its evil and mortals can rule hellish domains just as well as demons.

The groups on the fringes of the Pit, however, have very different strongholds. One notable difference is that these groups cannot normally just purchase building materials and supplies from other domains; if an early tribe needs to build a watchtower to keep an eye out for invading demon armies, then they must quarry every stone and build every wall themselves. Increase the labour required by 50% to reflect this added burden.

Early Tribes

The barbarian tribes of the First Circle dwell in caves beneath the dusty plains. These caves are not as strong as a well-built fortress, but are relatively cheap to convert into a home and are hard to find. Caves are everywhere in Hell, left by cooling lava flows or the endless gnawing of rock-hungry spawn, but they require some work to make them habitable – digging air vents, stairwells and so on.

CAVES

Cave Network Size	Labour Cost to Excavate	Living Space	Special Features
Fine	1	1	0
Diminutive	5	5	0
Tiny	25	25	1
Small	100	50	2
Medium	500	100	4
Large	1,000	200	6
Huge	5,000	500	8
Gargantuan	20,000	1,000	10
Colossal	50,000	5,000	13

Digging a Cave: For four times the normal labour, a cave can be dug out from scratch instead of simply found and expanded.

Special features are essentially the crude, cave-built version of upgrades. Any of the following upgrades can be built as a special feature:

CAVE UPGRADES

Geomantic Designs	Special Chamber
Ritual Chamber	Armoury
Summoning Circle	Barracks
	Belltower
Structural Enhancements	Dining Hall
Death Traps	Guard Posts
Sealed Structure ¹	Laboratory
Watchtower	Library
Weapon Mounts	Storage Vault
	Stables
	Torture Chamber
	Treasure Vault
	War Room
	Vehicle Garage

¹This now has gas flaps as a prerequisite instead of aerial defences.

There are also several structures unique to caves:

Deathstill

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required
Tiny	30	+0	15	10	500

Description: The Early tribes must make do with what they have. When one of their members dies, their soul is bound into a weapon or is traded for supplies. The left-over body is placed in a deathstill, to have its water recycled and its bones stripped out for meat.

Prerequisites: None.

Properties: A deathstill is the ceremonial method for getting rid of an Early corpse. It produces enough water and food from the corpse to sustain another human for two weeks or more. A Tiny deathstill can process five corpses a day.

Variants: Larger deathstills can process proportionately more corpses.

Special: None.

Farm Cave

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required
Tiny	—	—	—	10	1,000

Description: These dismal caves provide most of the food for the mortal tribes. Fungi are one of the few things that thrive in the unnatural soil of Hell. A little iliaster from a buried soul allows slightly more palatable food to be grown, while spawn and animals from Earth are also herded through the caves to feed on the fungi and grow greasily fat. The caves are lit using crystal lenses that reflect and gather the harsh light of the Morningstar.

Prerequisites: Well.

Properties: A Tiny farm cave produces enough food for 25 mortals.

Variants: Larger farms produce proportionately more food.

Special: In unfavourable conditions, a farm cave needs a damned soul to be buried in it.

Gas Flaps

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required
Tiny	—	—	—	10	100

Description: Gas flaps are heavy hangings of spawn-leather or textiles that divide one section of the cave network from another. They keep out the foul vapours of the Pit and make the caves less tainted by the infernal miasmas.

Prerequisites: None.

Properties: Gas flaps decrease the SR of the daily Corruption by 2, so creatures can live on the First or Second Circle of the Infernum without becoming corrupt so long as they spend most of their time within a protected area. They also give a +2 circumstance bonus to Fortitude saves against gas-based attacks filtering down from above.

Variants: None, although in most caves, the gas flaps are expanded to cover the whole network.

Special: None.

Hospice

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required
Tiny	—	—	—	15	3,000

Caves & Sieges

Obviously, a cave cannot have its walls smashed in by a siege engine – living in a hole in the ground has some advantages. However, caves do risk cave-ins; for every 30 points of Structure Damage inflicted on a cave, there is a one in six chance that the cave partially collapses. If a cave does collapse, roll on the following table to see how much of the cave is destroyed:

Roll	Size of Cave-in	Roll	Size of Cave-in
1-4	Diminutive	17-20	Large
5-7	Tiny	21-22	Huge
8-14	Small	23-24	Gargantuan
15-16	Medium	25+	Colossal

Increase the size of the cave-in by +1 per previous cave-in. A creature caught in a cave-in takes 8d6 points of damage (Reflex save, DC 15 for half damage) and is buried and may suffocate (Strength or Escape Artist check, DC 25, to dig oneself out).



Description: The Early tribes take care of their injured members in hospice caves. Wounds exposed to corruption swiftly fester and weep pus, so the hospice caves must be kept cleansed and pure. The tribes have skilled healers and shamans who can bring a wounded warrior back from the brink of death. Often, damned souls crowd around the Hospice cave, urging a wounded descendant not to die and moaning of the injustices and unpleasantness of death. In Hell, there is no release from suffering.

Prerequisites: Gas flaps.

Properties: Having a hospice cave gives a +4 bonus to Heal checks made on mortals or angels. A Tiny hospice cave can treat ten people.

Variants: Larger caves can treat more patients.

Special: None.

Purity Cave

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required
Tiny	—	—	—	15	1,000

Description: The Early tribes have little knowledge of the mortal world, or of anything beyond that. For them, the briefest descriptions of the mortal world are as beautiful and haunting as any dream of Heaven. That there might be a place where the demons do not rule, where suffering is not absolute, where each day does not bring new pain... it is too good to be true, yet some believe in it.

The purity caves are an expression of this belief in a better world. They are little islands of tranquil beauty in the midst of Hell, carved out by faith and will and hope.

Prerequisites: None.

Properties: Purity caves give a +4 bonus to Sorcery checks when performing the *purification rite*. Furthermore, once per day, a mortal who spends an hour resting in the cave may reset the Will save DC for generating iliaster to DC 10.

Variants: None.

Special: Purity caves register on senses that detect Blasphemy.

Well

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required
Diminutive	30	—	—	15	2,000

Description: Fresh, drinkable water is almost unknown in Hell – some decadent Riethii serve distilled water at their parties as a novelty. The water drawn up through this well is black and foul, so it must be boiled and purified before it can be drunk. Still, it is the water of life, a necessity for mortals.

Prerequisites: None.

Properties: A diminutive well provides enough water for 100 people per day. Finding a good site for a well requires a Survival or Knowledge (infernography) check (DC 25).

Variants: Larger wells can provide more water, but finding a large enough aquifer is difficult.

Special: None.

faustian Towers

The towers of the faustian sorcerers are built just like fortresses and need no special rules. The faustians tend to use bound demons as servants and labourers.

⊕OUTREITER STATS

Component	Size	Material	Structure Points	Hardness
Lesser Citadel	Huge	Stone	10,000	17
Cathedral	Huge	Stone	1,600	8
Ritual Chamber	Tiny	—	—	—
Ghostly Servants	Huge	—	—	—
Shade Warriors	Huge	—	—	—
Sorcery Bastion	Tiny	Stone	+0	8
Aerial Defences	Huge	—	—	—
Barbican Complex	Huge	Stone	3,200	10
Battlements	Huge	—	—	—
Curtain Wall	Huge	Stone	3,200	8
Dungeons	Huge	Stone	3,200	8
Reinforced Keep	Huge	—	—	—
Weapon Mounts x2	Huge	Stone	1,600	8
Armoury	Huge	Stone	1,600	8
Barracks x2	Huge	Stone	1,600	8
Belltower	Large	Stone	800	10
Castle Forge	Large	Stone	400	10
Guard Posts	Huge	—	—	—
Library	Large	—	—	—
Stables	Huge	Stone	1,920	8
War Room	Medium	Stone	400	8

Sorcerous Defence: -35

Security DC: +15

Harrower Keeps

The most notable keep of the Knights of the Harrowing is the mighty fortress of Outremer. This was mostly constructed in the mortal realm, although it has been greatly augmented and rebuilt in Hell. Outremer is the size of a Mighty Fortress, although its sorcerous protection is only that of a lesser citadel as it was not originally built with geomantic principles in mind.

The cathedral atop the mountain functions like a purity cave, but on a much greater scale.

DARK SATANIC MILLS

It was just another day in Hell.

Surch rose from its bed when the dawn klaxon sounded. It brushed the larger of the bugs and parasites from its hide before leaving the tenement room; a Glabretch trade caravan had passed through the barony a month ago and left a crawling, quick-breeding memento of their visit. The demon made its way down the crumbling brick stairs of the tenement. Most of its neighbours were indolent, shiftless wretches who would pay for their daily iliaster ration through theft and grift; Surch held itself above such things – it had suffered from Dissolution before and would not willingly risk that pain again.

As it passed the dwelling of the fiend Astu, Surch inclined its horn-browed head. For a fiend to dwell in a tenement block filled with humble slavers and imps was unusual; everyone assumed Astu was a spy for the baron and so avoided the flyer. Outside, the Morningstar was rising hot and red above the corrugated roofs and soot-black chimneys of the Sixth. Surch peered off abmouth and clockwise through a gap in the buildings, looking towards the besieged city of Dis. A green haze hung above the city once again this morning; rumours claimed that the Sturrach besiegers had poisoned everything inside the city, while others said that the Disonians had brewed up a new form of hellfire storm.

A shower of shit broke Surch's reverie. The imps of the tenement block had risen also and taken flight. The slaver cursed and decided to spend some of its pay on quicklime to spread on its windowsill. 'That'd show the vermin. Burn their silly little feet right off.'

The construction site was thronged with damned chained to posts and railings. The work crews toiled day, night and witching. Only the demon overseers were permitted to rest and sleep; the souls worked until they dropped. Surch snatched a whip from one of the night shift and instantly regretted it, for the whip's handle was slick with the sweat and ichor of hundreds of demons using the weapon ceaselessly for months. It took out its momentary distaste on a soul, slashing at it with the barbed whip. The soul yelped and picked up another stone.

Again, Surch's attention wandered from the task at hand. No one on the work crew knew what they were

building anyway. Orders had come down from the fortress a decade ago and so they built. The walls now towered two hundred feet high and gangs of artificers and beasts crowded round rune-covered pillars and brass engines in other sections of the structure. Another replacement for some industrial wonder lost to Dis, perhaps.

The slaver's guts made a rumbling, squelching noise. It glanced around to make sure no-one was watching, then strapped an extraction rig to one of the work-souls and twisted the damned's neck until it bled iliaster. Torturing the damned for food was forbidden, but half the crew did it. The days were too long to wait until false twilight to be fed.

The Morningstar slowly ascended out of sight into the clouds and a pall of darkness fell across the circle. Great arc-lights flickered into harsh life and the damned groaned in unison as the whips cracked again.

When the klaxon sounded once more, Surch was almost surprised. The shift had passed swiftly. It shook its head, trying to clear it of this damned fog. The purser grudgingly pressed two horn coins into Surch's hand, then the slaver joined the queue of demons at the feeding trough. The iliaster it had stolen earlier had tasted far sweeter than this filthy slop.

'Must buy quicklime,' it mused to itself as it trudged back towards the tenement. Other overseers were spending their pay on entertainments or shots of Agony or other distractions. Surch clutched its coin tight, even as the braver of its peers jeered 'miser' and 'tightpurse' at it. 'Let them all starve,' thought Surch, 'that'll show them'.

Astu the fiend was waiting in Surch's room.

'What do you want?' roared the slaver.

In response, Astu opened its claw. Golden oboli tumbled out onto Surch's floor. The slaver threw itself to the floor and scrabbled for the shining coins.

'Why, to help you show them all of course', said the fiend. 'To make them starve. It will just take a bit of sabotage...'

The industrial revolution came to the Infernum just as surely as it came to the mortal realm; the demons have always been both imitative of mortal devices and innovative in the creation of new horrors. These two traits came together in unholy union to give birth to a ghastly child of iron and Strain. Like a rust stain, factories and mills and torture palaces have spread across the Pit. The Sixth Circle, the Circle of Industry even in the earliest days of Hell, is the centre of this iron cancer, but there are industrial devices in every domain.

The laws of physics are different in the Pit; their industry mixes heavy engineering that would not be out of place in the mortal realm with alchemy and foul sorcery. Just as the crude demonic form can endure all sorts of surgical indignities and botched alterations, the industry of Hell is cobbled together and fuelled by the hellbroth of Strain.

In terms of innovation, the Infernum's technology is roughly on a par with that of the late 19th century. They have combustion and steam engines, the basics of electricity (although electronics are unlikely to ever be developed in Hell – the disjointed nature of

Hellish time means that subtle signals and precisely timed electron flows tend to fail), light and heavy manufacturing industry and so on. Clockworks and mechanical computing are also highly advanced, thanks mainly to the influence of Cacaphractus. The Infernum also has a great pool of slave labour in the form of damned souls, spawn and biomechanicals to drive the industrial machine.

Factories and other Industries

Building an industrial base has become a necessity for a demonic lord; the demands of the Houses for iliaster has grown greatly of late as the Pit moves towards another great war and torture palaces are the only way to generate enough wealth. A demon lord cannot sit idly torturing its serfs; every domain must be a hive of industry, trade and suffering to feed the infernal beast.

Ironically, as the Infernum's industry grows to prepare for war, it generates more wars. It is often easier to raid a neighbouring domain for slaves, goods and key industrial sites than it is to build one's own. Factories and industrial complexes have become the target of



choice for raiders and thieves; the great number of slaves used in industry also draws the attention of the chain-breakers of the Early tribes. Every industrial site is a potential battlefield.

A demon lord must build the industries of its domain, then tax them to the bone to pay its tithes and the cost of defending them and supporting its armies. It is a delicate balancing act over a pit of knives.

Industry Descriptions

Each structure in this chapter is described using the rules for structures covered in Basic Structures, page 32, with the following additions:

Workforce: How much labour is needed to work in the structure. See To Rule in Hell, page 19.

Iliaster Needed: How much plasmic iliaster the structure needs each month— usually, this is in the form of Strain, each unit of which consumes ten units of plasmic iliaster.

Profit: How much profit the structure produces in a month. See To Rule in Hell, page 23.

Size Range: The listed size is the default size for the structure, but most buildings can be built bigger or smaller.

Prerequisites: What industries are needed to support this structure. For example, a Forge needs the raw material from a Mine to work. A structure cannot be used without access to these prerequisites. These prerequisites can come from an existing industry in the domain, or can be traded for (although this runs the risk of having trade routes cut off by war or politics). If the same lord controls both an industry and its prerequisite, it can supply its own holdings.

If the supplier is smaller than the industrial facility it supports (such as a Large foundry feeding into a Huge engineering works), then the larger facility is limited to the productivity of the smaller facility (so the huge engineering works would function as though it were only a Large works). Multiple suppliers can combine to supply a single facility; four Tiny suppliers make a Small one, four Small suppliers make a Medium one and so on.

Requirements: Any special skills or rules that apply to the industry.

Defences: The typical defences of a structure of that

type.

In general, the Size listed for the structure is a default size for a building of that type. Larger or smaller structures of that type are possible; in the cases of structures that tend to vary greatly in size, the Tiny structure is listed to make calculation easier.

Agony Winery

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC
Tiny	50	+0	20	15

Labour Required	Workforce	Iliaster Needed	Profit	Cost
10,000	100 + 30 damned	—	—	10,000 cr

Description: In an Agony winery, souls are brought to the absolute peak of pain and held there for as long as possible. In this state of perfect, endless cruelty, their torment echoes back to that eternal moment before Lucifer brought time to Hell and produces the fine, heady broth known as Agony. This is the rich wine of Hell, prized by the nobility of the hellkin.

Inside the winery, the unfortunate souls are kept in individual torture chambers where they are precisely and carefully dissected, their remembered nerves played like instruments to cause perfect pain. The iliaster drawn off is gathered droplet by droplet and purified; ensuring that the Agony is free of common plasmic iliaster and other imperfections is just as important as the process of torture itself.

Size Range: Tiny to Medium.

Prerequisites: Forge, mill.

Requirements: The workforce must have a Torture skill of +10 or more.

Properties: A Tiny Agony winery has 30 damned souls being tormented in it at any time, producing 60 doses of Agony each month. Larger wineries can process more souls and produce more Agony.

Defences: None.

Alchemical Refinery

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC
Huge	3,200	-2	30	20

Labour Required	Workforce	Iliaster Needed	Profit	Cost
320,000	3,000	10,000/month	3,000 cr/month	40,000 cr

Description: Alchemical refineries look like spider

Garrisons

Key industrial sites such as torture palaces are protected by garrisons of demons troops. The size and nature of the garrison depends on the size of the site. Garrisons can be normal or heavy – the troops in a heavy garrison wear better armour and carry more powerful weapons.

GARRISON SIZES

Site Size	Normal Garrison	Heavy Garrison
Fine	1 demon of 1 st level	1 demon of 2 nd level
Diminutive	5 demons of 1 st level, 1 commander of 2 nd level	5 demon of 2 nd level, 5 hellhounds, 1 commander of 4 th level
Tiny	20 demons of 1 st levels or 2, commander of 5 th level	20 demons of 3 rd level, 10 of which are mounted on spawn, commander of 8 th level
Small	50 demons of 1 st to 3 rd levels, 10 elite guards of 4 th level, 8 th level commander	50 demons of 4 th level, 20 elite guards of 6 th level, 10 th level commander.
Medium	100 demons of 1 st to 3 rd level, 20 officers of 4 th level, 10 elite guards of 6 th level, 10 th level commander, vehicle support	120 demons of 4 th level, 20 officers of 6 th level, 20 elite guards of 8 th level, 12 th level commander, vehicle support
Large	200 demons of level 1-3, 50 officers of level 4-5, 20 elite guards of level 8, level 12 commander, vehicle support	300 demons of level 4-5, 50 officers of 6 th level, 50 elite guards of 8 th level, 15 th level commander, vehicle and sorcery support
Huge	400 demons of 1 st to 3 rd level, 80 officers of 4 th to 5 th level, 40 elite guards of 8 th level, 15 th level commander, vehicle support	500 demons of 4 th to 5 th level, 80 officers of 8 th level, 80 elite guards of 12 th level, 18 th level commander, vehicle and sorcery support
Gargantuan	800 demons of 1 st to 3 rd level, 160 officers of 4 th to 5 th level, 80 elite guards of 8 th level, 18 th level commander, vehicle and sorcery support	1000 demons of 4 th to 5 th level, 200 officers of 8 th level, 80 elite guards of 13 th level, 20 th level commander, vehicle and sorcery support
Colossal	1200 demons of 1 st to 3 rd level, 400 officers of 4 th to 5 th level, 100 elite guards of 10 th level, 20 th level commander, vehicle and sorcery support	2000 demons of 4 th to 5 th level, 400 officers of 8 th level, 120 elite guards of 14 th level, 22 nd level commander, vehicle and sorcery support

Vehicle support means that the garrison has access to demon tanks, gauntflyers and so on. Sorcerous support implies that the garrison has access to a sorcerer of level equal to the level of the elite guards.

webs of brass pipes, or like intestines and veins traced in iron and copper. Bubbling vats of chemicals splutter and smoke. Caustic gases stain the metals and scar the flesh of those who toil on the walkways and pumps above the vats. Great storage tanks ferment the blood, plasm, fell oil and other chemicals that are brewed in these refineries.

This massive industrial complexes are a necessity for the production of various hellbroths, not to mention biomechanical life.

Size Range: Large to Colossal.

Prerequisites: Mine, orchard, foundry, engineering works.

Requirements: The master of the structure must have Knowledge (arcana) +15 or better.

Properties: An alchemical refinery produces hellbroths like the lesser hellbroths, acids, the chemicals for firing hellcannons and bile rifles.

An alchemical refinery can also produce Strain, at the ratio of one Strain for 20 units of plasmic iliaster.

Defences: Basic garrison with hellcannons and bile rifles.

Arena

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC
Large	500	+0	15	10

Labour Required	Workforce	Iliaster Needed	Profit	Cost
20,000	300	—	1d6 x 100 cr per month	15,000 cr

Description: Arenas of this sort are used for demon duels and blood sports, as well as public meetings, executions, floggings and other popular entertainments. Arenas keep the common demons entertained.

Size Range: Large to Colossal.

Prerequisites: None.

Requirements: The master of the structure must have Perform +10 or better.

Properties: A Large arena can seat 1,000 demons. In addition to its income generation, having an arena lowers a domain's Dissent by -1 per month.

Defences: None.

Biomechanical Harvesting Ground

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC
Huge	—	—	25	—



Labour Required	Workforce	Iliaster Needed	Profit	Cost
50,000	1,000	10,000/month	—	60,000 cr

Description: A biomechanical harvesting ground is not so much a structure as it is a landscape – an undulating black nightmare of throbbing organs and chitinous growths where embryonic horrors writhe beneath slimy folds of translucent skin. Take an orchard of steel trees and throw the still-living entrails of a slaughterhouse on their branches, then cover the whole mess in melted rubber and a crude oil slick and you approach the stench and bizarre environment of a harvesting ground.

Biomechanical creatures are spawned here, crawling out from abscesses in the ground.

Size Range: Medium to Colossal.

Prerequisites: Alchemical refinery, orchard.

Requirements: Only House Zethu can produce biomechanical harvesting grounds. The master of the structure must have Heal +10 or better. A few of those who work on the grounds are surgeons and midwives to the horrors; the rest just roam the twisted landscape with iron bars, kneading the chitinous ground and ensuring that one growing biomechanical entity does not engulf another.

Properties:
A



Huge harvesting ground produces 40 Hit Dice worth of biomechanical creatures per month, or 800 crowns worth of biomechanical structures. The master of the harvesting ground can choose what is produced each month.

Defences: Heavy garrison of biomechanical warriors.

Bunker

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC
Diminutive	10	+2	10	10
Labour Required	Workforce	Iliaster Needed	Profit	Cost
300	—	—	—	50 cr

Description: Squat little concrete structures like this dot the landscape of the Infernum. They are used to watch for the approach of enemies, to store weapons or troops, or just as strongpoints in case of emergency or revolt.

Size Range: Diminutive to Tiny.

Prerequisites: None.

Requirements: None

Properties: A bunker is essentially a small fortification, big enough for a half-dozen or so demons. It includes arrow-slits from which they can fire weapons.

Defences: None.

City Wall

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC
Tiny	200	+0	10	10
Labour Required	Workforce	Iliaster Needed	Profit	Cost
6,000	—	—	—	400 cr

Description: This defensive wall is 250 feet long, 15 feet high and some eight feet thick. Massive walls of this sort surround most demon cities to ward off intruders.

Size Range: Tiny to Colossal.

Prerequisites: Quarry.

Requirements: None.

Properties: None. Battlements can be added for an extra 25% cost in labour and materials.

Defences: None.

Common Building

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC
Fine	20	+0	10	10
Labour Required	Workforce	Iliaster Needed	Profit	Cost
2,000	—	—	—	20 cr

Description: A squat, ugly and unpleasant-looking structure, this little building is a living quarters for a low-ranking demon. It contains a sleeping area and a common room, but has little else in the way of amenities or pleasantries.

Size Range: Fine to Medium.

Prerequisites: None.

Requirements: None

Properties: This is a generic hovel or office, big enough for a single demon or small group.

Defences: None.

Engineering Works

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC
Large	1,000	+0	16	15
Labour Required	Workforce	Iliaster Needed	Profit	Cost
80,000	1,000	10,000	500 cr/month	10,000 cr

Description: This structure produces heavy engine components, used in infernal industry. Devices like omvourers and strain engines are built in facilities like this. Inside, the works are a maze of spinning and grinding engines, with massive pistons and presses working night and day.

Size Range: Medium to Huge.

Prerequisites: Forge, foundry, mine.

Requirements: The master of the engineering works must have Craft (engines) +10 or better.

Properties: An engineering works rarely produces finished goods; it supplies parts to factories which

assemble them into the final product. A lord who commands an engineering works can order it to produce engines for a specific purpose.

Defences: Basic garrison.

Farm

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC
Tiny	50	+0	10	10

Labour Required	Workforce	Iliaster Needed	Profit	Cost
40,00	10	90	25 cr/month	100 cr

Description: The farms of Hell are unlike the farms of the mortal

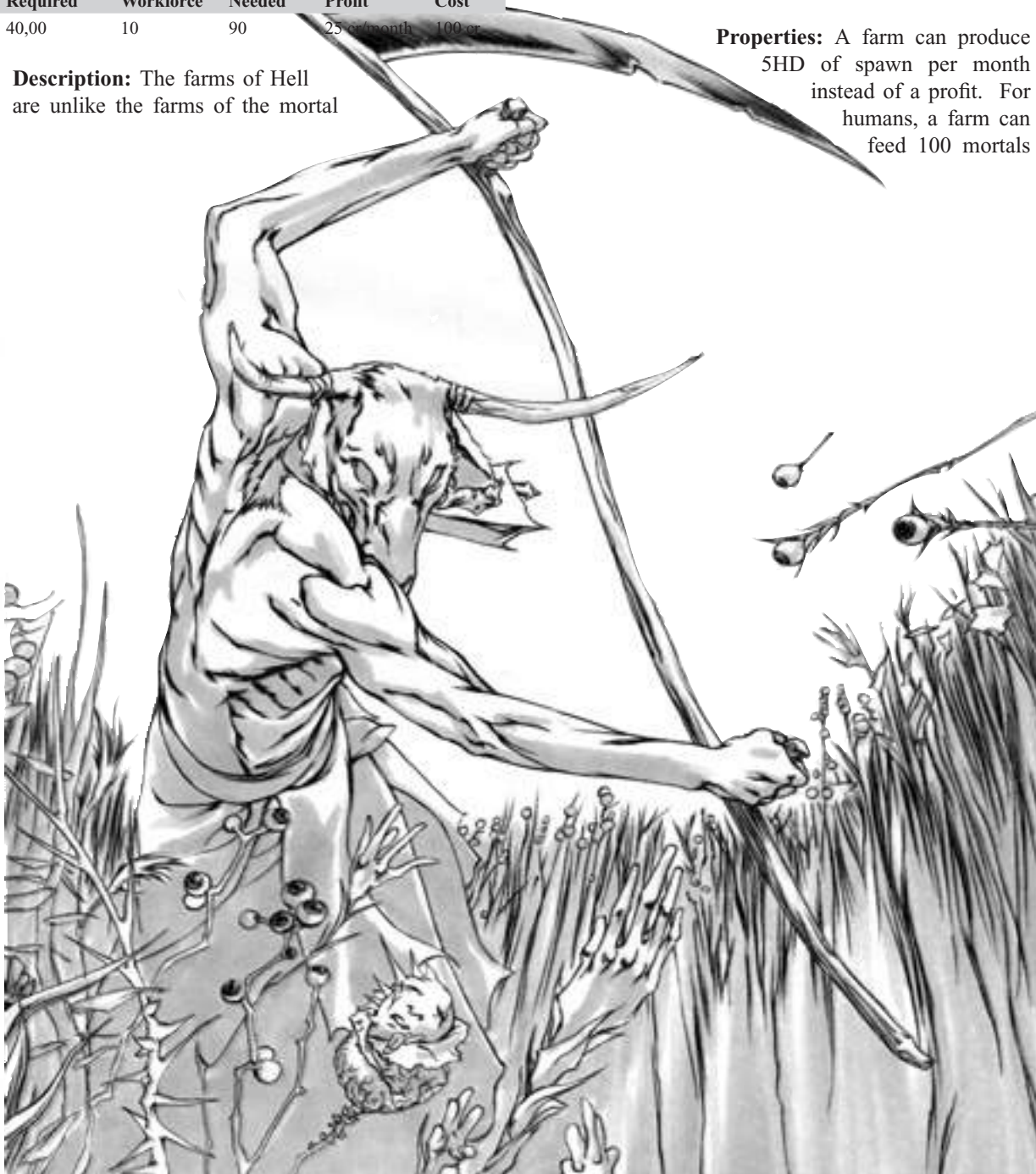
realm. The demons do not need food, so the farms exist to breed new servitor spawn and raw materials for hellish industry. Their farms, then, look like tangles of weeds and twisted, unnatural growths, or else ghastly pens where spawn feed on other spawn and mortals.

Size Range: Tiny to Colossal.

Prerequisites: None.

Requirements: None.

Properties: A farm can produce 5HD of spawn per month instead of a profit. For humans, a farm can feed 100 mortals



per month.

Defences: None.

Fine Building

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC
Diminutive	40	+0	16	15

Labour Required	Workforce	Iliaster Needed	Profit	Cost
4,000	—	—	—	400 cr

Description: This elegant and ornate building mimics the strange architecture of the ancient city of Pandemonium, but mixes in more conventional demonic elements like skulls, horns, infernal rules and petrified human bodies. It could be used as the residence of a wealthy demon or as an office for House business.

Size Range: Diminutive to Large.

Prerequisites: None.

Requirements: None.

Properties: This building has enough living room for a half-dozen demons who are willing to share a den, but more commonly a single Daemon or Captain lives within these walls. Larger Fine buildings are magnificent mansions or palaces.

Defences: None by default.

Forge

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC
Fine	40	+0	12	12

Labour Required	Workforce	Iliaster Needed	Profit	Cost
3,000	5	—	10 cr	200 cr

Description: The forges of the Infernum work night, day and witching, making weapons for the wars. Raw materials are easy to come by; most forges tap the flowing metal of the Phlegton or the endless ore from the deep mines of Hell.

Size Range: Fine to Medium.

Prerequisites: Mine.

Requirements: The master of the forge must have

Craft (weapons & armour) +5 or better.

Properties: A forge can produce 30 crowns worth of weapons or armour per month instead of selling them for profit.

Defences: None.

Foundry

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC
Large	2,000	+0	20	15

Labour Required	Workforce	Iliaster Needed	Profit	Cost
20,000	100	500/month	150 cr/month	5,000 cr

Description: This massive foundry is built atop a volcanic vent; the heat from the subterranean magma is channelled into the ore dragged out of the mines to extract the pure iron or other metals.

Size Range: Medium to Colossal.

Prerequisites: Mine

Requirements: None.

Properties: A foundry produces raw materials for engineering works and heavy factories.

Defences: None.

Hellhole

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC
Fine	10	+0	5	5

Labour Required	Workforce	Iliaster Needed	Profit	Cost
10	—	—	—	1 cr

Description: Most rural demons live in hellholes – rough holes bored into the rocky surface of the Pit, containing a bed of bones and a little space for iliaster and trophies. Demons are considerably hardier and care less about petty comforts than mortals, so they feel quite at home in such ugly dens.

Size Range: Fine to Medium.

Prerequisites: None.

Requirements: None.

Properties: A basic hellhole has space for a single demon. Larger warrens contain more demons. Each

living quarter has a den for the demon to sleep in, a hole or sluice for waste and another cave for storage and weapons.

Defences: None.

Heavy Factory

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC
Gargantuan	5,000	+0	25	15

Labour Required	Workforce	Iliaster Needed	Profit	Cost
400,000	5,000	10,000/month	3,000 cr/month	200,000 cr

Description: Vast factories of this sort are located throughout the Sixth Circle of Hell, manufacturing large items like vehicles, ships, fortress components, the Minotaur trains and so on. Thousands of souls are worked to shreds each day in these mountain-sized factories.

Size Range: Huge to Colossal.

Prerequisites: Engineering works, foundry, alchemical refinery, warehouses.

Requirements: Depending on the type of factory, the master of the facility must have an appropriate Craft or Knowledge skill at +20.

Properties: A heavy factory can built to produce any of the following types of machinery:

- ⊗ Artillery
- ⊗ Engine Parts and Components
- ⊗ Vehicles
- ⊗ Ships
- ⊗ Weapons

Instead of producing such objects for trade, the factory can produce 5,000 crowns worth of them per month.

Defences: Heavy garrison at minimum.

Iliaster Store

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC
Tiny	50	+0	20	15

Labour Required	Workforce	Iliaster Needed	Profit	Cost
5,000	—	—	—	500 cr

Description: Iliaster stores are foreboding, monolithic

structures of black iron and congealed blood. They rock back and forth on their foundations and moan slightly. They are essentially massive sealed containers for holding iliaster.

Size Range: Tiny to Medium.

Prerequisites: Forge.

Requirements: None.

Properties: A Tiny iliaster store can hold 500 points of plasmic iliaster indefinitely.

Defences: None.

Light Factory

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC
Large	100	+0	15	12

Labour Required	Workforce	Iliaster Needed	Profit	Cost
50,000	500	2000/month	750 cr/month	10,000 cr

Description: Light factories produce all the basic goods of the Infernum; basic tools, torture devices, vessels for storing iliaster, drugs and so on. The demons are wasteful in the extreme; they need for little save iliaster, so they consume randomly to fill their days, following bizarre fashions and crazes and entertainments.

Size Range: Medium to Huge.

Prerequisites: Foundry, Forge, Warehouse.

Requirements: The master of the factory must have an appropriate Craft skill at +5 or better.

Properties: A light factory can be built to produce any common item.

Defences: None.

Mill

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC
Medium	500	+0	15	10

Labour Required	Workforce	Iliaster Needed	Profit	Cost
60,000	100 + 200 damned	—	—	20,000 cr

Description: A modern mill is essentially a small torture palace, where damned souls are processed

for their iliaster. The mill is composed of a central plasm churn where souls are hurled to be chopped up by rotating blades. Around the edge of the mill are individual nooks containing more traditional torture methods, like flayers and prison cells.

Size Range: Small to Large.

Prerequisites: Forge, slave pen.

Requirements: The master of the mill must have a Torture skill of +10 or better.

Properties: A mill can process 1500 damned per week, extracting about five points of iliaster from each. This means the mill produces around 6,000 crowns worth of iliaster each month.

Defences: Basic Garrison.

Mine

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC
Large	100	+0	20	20

Labour Required	Workforce	Iliaster Needed	Profit	Cost
200,000	10,000	—	—	4,000 cr

Description: For reasons unknown to the hellkin, the Infernum is rich in minerals and metals. Some of these treasures date back to the Fall, when ruins of Heaven were scattered across the burning slopes of the Pit. Others predate that primordial event; perhaps the hellish realm was composed of the lowest, heaviest emanations formed during the creation.

Size Range: Small to Colossal.

Prerequisites: None, but a suitable mine site must be present within the domain. Finding a suitable site requires a Search or Knowledge (infernography) check (DC 30) and a month's work.

Requirements: None.

Properties: A mine does not produce any wealth; the ore it produces must be processed either in a forge or in a foundry. A Medium mine produces enough ore to fully occupy a Medium foundry or 16 forges.

Defences: None.

Orchard

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC
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Tiny 50 +0 10 10

Labour Required	Workforce	Iliaster Needed	Profit	Cost
4,000	10	20	15 cr/month	60 cr

Description: The orchards of Hell are ghastly places. Those that use actual trees are perhaps the worst – the trees must be driven back with fire and long-handled sickles, as the tentacled horrors reach for the warmth of demon ichor; they whisper amongst themselves with rustling branches and intertwining roots and press against the iron railings to try to force the bars apart and escape.

Other orchards are composed for horribly distended and bloated humans nailed to iron struts; alchemical compounds are injected directly into their hearts, warping their bodies into grotesque forms and producing pendulous fruit-growths.

Size Range: Tiny to Colossal.

Prerequisites: Farm.

Requirements: None.

Properties: Orchards produce fine fruit for the tables of the nobility, but their chemical products are even more important – many hellbroths need ingredients grown in such places.

Defences: None.

Pavilion

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC
Small	10	-5	15	15

Labour Required	Workforce	Iliaster Needed	Profit	Cost
500	—	—	—	500 cr

Description: This is a tent made of spawn-leather and richly decorated with gold, gemstones and other treasures. These tents are used to hold demonic celebrations in places where the infernal climate is unpleasant.

Size Range: Tiny to Huge.

Prerequisites: Tannery

Requirements: None.

Properties: A Small pavilion can hold 200 guests.

Defences: None.

Prison

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC
Large	400	+2	20	12

Labour Required	Workforce	Iliaster Needed	Profit	Cost
100,000	300	—	—	15,000 cr

Description: While this ugly grey prison can be used to hold demon captives, it is more often used for the dead; they are held to recuperate here before being thrown back into the torture palaces.

Size Range: Large to Colossal.

Prerequisites: Slave pen.

Requirements: None.

Properties: A Large prison can hold 2,500 souls; the souls are crammed into lightless vaults or holes.

Defences: Heavy garrison.

Quarry

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC
Medium	—	—	10	10

Labour Required	Workforce	Iliaster Needed	Profit	Cost
10,000	1,000	—	50 cr/month	500 cr

Description: This gash on the face of Hell is where the black stone of the Pit is quarried for use in Hellish fortresses. Most quarries use high-explosive charges or specially bred spawn to tear the rock asunder.

Size Range: Small to Gargantuan.

Prerequisites: None, but if a suitable quarry site is not present in the domain, then the cost of the quarry is doubled.

Requirements: None.

Properties: Stone from a quarry can pay three-quarters of the cost of a stone structure; a quarry produces 150 crowns worth of stone each month.

Defences: None.

Screamer Station

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC
Small	50	+2	16	12

Labour Required	Workforce	Iliaster Needed	Profit	Cost
2,000	10	100	50 cr/month	4,000 cr

Description: Screamer stations are easy to find; thousands of screamer lines run into these squat buildings. Each screamer line is a soul stretched out to exquisite thinness; inside in the station, the demon operators connect the cries of agony that serve as the Pit's telecommunications network.

Size Range: Small to Medium

Prerequisites: Slave pen.

Requirements: The master of the screamer station must have a Craft (soulshaping) and Torture skill of +5 each.

Properties: Screamer stations act as relays for the screamer network. Adding new screamer lines costs five crowns per mile. The operator in a screamer station can choose to eavesdrop on any conversation; therefore, the screamer service is normally heavily bound to the lord of a domain.

Defences: None.

Slave Pen

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC
Medium	100	+0	10	10

Labour Required	Workforce	Iliaster Needed	Profit	Cost
5,000	50	—	—	1,000 cr

Description: These slave pens are used to hold damned souls before they are processed by the mills and torture palaces. Like the larger prisons, the slave pens are nightmarishly cramped quarters with dozens of souls crushed into every cage. Large hooks on poles are used by the demon jailers to drag souls out through the bars.

Size Range: Tiny to Large.

Prerequisites: Forge.

Requirements: None.

Properties: A slave pen can hold 200 damned souls or 100 mortals.

Defences: Basic garrison.

Soul Field

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC
Tiny	—	—	—	—

Labour Required	Workforce	Iliaster Needed	Profit	Cost
—	25	—	—	—

Description: Soul fields are not built, they are found. A soul field is a place where damned souls fall in noticeable greater quantities and with greater frequency than they do elsewhere in Hell. Some soul fields move with the winds and the swirling of the Lethe Clouds; others have remained static since the first fall.

To exploit a soul field, a lord must send demons out to hunt for the newly-fallen souls. Usually, these demons travel with hellhounds or other trackers to find the souls. They carry chains and whips to carry them back to the branding house, where they will be marked as property of the domain.

Size Range: Tiny to Huge.

Prerequisites: Slave pen.

Requirements: To brand a soul, a demon must be able to soulshape.

Properties: A Tiny soul field produces 1d4 souls per month. Larger soul fields produce proportionately more souls. Assigning stalker demons to the field increases this figure to 1d4+1, as does assigning hellhounds. Some fields are notably richer than others.

Defences: Basic garrison.

Spawning Pit

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC
Large	500	+0	20	10

Labour Required	Workforce	Iliaster Needed	Profit	Cost
5,000	100	10,000/month	—	25,000 cr

Description: A spawning pit consists of a wide vat of churning acid, located in front of a strange temple marked with the sigil of a House. Around the vat are wet caves and dark reefs of stone, thronged by demon larvae. A demon thrown into a spawning pit swiftly dissolves into a swarm of embryonic demons, who will grow into larvae and eventually into full hellkin.

The spawning pits are of vital importance to the Houses; it is here that the vast majority of new demons are created. The caustic fluids in each pit contain a tincture derived from the ichor of the House founders – every Sturrach pit has a little of Sturrach's blood in it, every Zethu pit contains the essence of the first Zethu and so on. It is this essence that makes House mutations unique to each House.

Different spawning pits are known for different traits. The Estate of Flints, for example, is known for the martial skills of demons spawned from its Pits, while the Black Pit of Fellmar is one of the few unaligned Pits in the Infernum.

Size Range: Large to Colossal.

Prerequisites: Alchemical refinery.

Requirements: None.

Properties: A Large spawning pit can hold a maximum of 500 larvae. A larva spends an average of six months in the dark, damp tunnels of a pit before pupating into a grown demon. To determine the number of larvae produced by sacrificing a demon to the Pits, roll 1d20 on the following table and add the demon's level.

SPAWNED LARVAE

Total	Spawn	Total	Spawn
<10	1d6 average	31-35	5d6 average, 1d6 powerful
11-15	1d6 average	36-40	4d6 average, 2d6 powerful
16-19	2d6 average, 1 powerful	41-45	3d6 average, 3d6 powerful
20-25	3d6 average, 1d4 powerful	46-49	6d6 powerful
26-30	4d6 average, 1d6 powerful	50+	6d6 powerful, with memories of parent demon

Average larvae grow into 1st level demons with average ability scores. Powerful larvae, on the other hand, can be considerably more potent creatures; roll 1d20 to see what bonuses the newborn demon has:

POWERFUL LARVAE

Roll	Bonuses	Roll	Bonuses
1-2	+2 to one ability score	11-12	+2 to three ability scores, max. hit points at 3 rd level, starts at level 2
3-4	+2 to two ability scores	13-14	+2 to three ability scores, max. hit points at 3 rd level, starts at level 3
5-6	+2 to two ability scores, max. hit points at 2 nd level	15-16	+2 to two ability scores, +4 to one ability score, max. hit points at 3 rd level, starts at level 3
7-8	+2 to two ability scores, max. hit points at 3 rd level	17-18	+2 to two ability scores, +4 to two ability scores, max. hit points at 3 rd level, starts at level 3
9-10	+2 to three ability scores, max. hit points at 3 rd level	19-20	+4 to three ability scores, max. hit points at 3 rd level, starts at level 3

Larval demons generally grow into the same type of demon as their sire, although there is usually a little genetic drift between generations. The new spawn also inherit the potential to develop the House mutations of their parent, although for this potential to manifest, the essence of the House founder must be temporarily removed from the Pit.

It is possible to boost the spawned larvae and powerful larvae rolls by adding expensive alchemical compounds to the pit's acid. Giving a once-off +4 bonus to a roll costs 1,000 crowns.

Defences: Heavy garrison.

Strain Gang

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC
Tiny	100	+0	15	10

Labour Required	Workforce	Iliaster Needed	Profit	Cost
3,000	10 + 100 damned	—	—	2,000 cr

Description: Strain gangs embody the principle of futility, specifically futile labour. Strain is produced from the sweat of damned souls forced to work for days without the slightest rest. In a Strain gang, the souls drag massive boulders up slopes before rolling them back down again; they turn wheels of lead, or push against tireless engines. They construct roads to nowhere up the sides of steep mountains. All the while, the remorseless demons suck the Strain from the exhausted souls.

Size Range: Tiny to Huge.

Prerequisites: Forge, slave pit.

Requirements: The master of the Strain gang must have Torture +10 or better.

Properties: A Tiny Strain gang produces 150 doses of Strain each month.

Defences: None.

Tannery

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC
Tiny	50	+0	10	10

Labour Required	Workforce	Iliaster Needed	Profit	Cost
5,000	50	—	10 cr	1,000 cr

Description: The first sign of a tanner is the stench of mercury and blood carried by the wind. Here, spawn are stripped of their hides, which are then stretched, treated and preserved. Flaying the spawn of their skin rarely kills them, so the second sign of a tannery are the blind and skinless spawn that lumber around outside hopelessly until they fall dead. Tanneries produce the spawn-leather that is used throughout the

Infernum for clothing and in industry.

Size Range: Tiny to Medium.

Prerequisites: Farm

Requirements: None.

Properties: A tannery produces clothing and spawnleather. The higher the Craft skill of the tannery, the better the quality of the leather.

Defences: None.

Tenement

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC
Medium	200	+0	15	10
Labour Required	Workforce	Iliaster Needed	Profit	Cost
12,000	—	—	—	1,000 cr

Description: Ugly tenement buildings of this sort are common in the heavily-populated Third and Sixth Circles, where the vast majority of the demons dwell. These towering blocks of stone resemble anthills, with the demons crammed into artificial hellholes along the tenement's walls.

Size Range: Medium to Gargantuan.

Prerequisites: None.

Requirements: None.

Properties: Structures of this sort provide accommodation for two hundred demons. Normally, a demon's home is given by its lord as part of its duty to its vassals, but some cruel lords do charge rent of a horn a week or so. The war in Dis has resulted in many demons being crushed by collapsing tenements, as the cheap brick-built structures cannot withstand siege weapons.

Defences: None.

Tear Chamber

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC
Small	250	+2	20	15
Labour Required	Workforce	Iliaster Needed	Profit	Cost
2,000	200+100 damned	500/month	—	5,000 cr

Description: Tear chambers are elegant structures, normally made of marble or congealed blood. While Strain is a mere industrial resource and Agony is used for celebrations and revelries, Sorrow is as close to a solemn sacrament as the demons have. Those who produce Sorrow are dour and careful demons, craftsmen focused on their grim task to the exclusion of all else. To make Sorrow, a soul must be plunged into the uttermost depths of despair – not through suffering alone, but by a deconstruction and destruction of the self. The soul must be shown the utter depth of its hopelessness, of its loss; it must know and believe that there is nothing but suffering at the hands of the demons. In the moment that hope is utterly extinguished, a few drops of Sorrow form.

Sorrow is greatly sought after; many of the demons employed in a tear chamber are actually responsible for security, searching the torturers for condensed droplets of Sorrow. Theft is a constant worry.

Size Range: Small.

Prerequisites: Forge, slave pen.

Requirements: The master of the tear chamber must have Torture +15 or better.

Properties: A tear chamber produces one bottle of fine Sorrow each day.

Defences: Basic garrison.

Torture Palace

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC
Huge	2,000	+0	20	15
Labour Required	Workforce	Iliaster Needed	Profit	Cost
250,000	500 + 5,000 damned	5,000/month	—	250,000 cr

Description: There is nothing that symbolises the modern Infernum more than the wonder of the torture palace. This is a factory for pain, agony on the industrial scale! The damned souls are tortured by machines of whirling blades and grinding stones. There is no need for a demon to individually torture each soul to wring a few precious ounces of iliaster – instead, a skilled torturer need merely alter a few settings on a machine and a thousand souls cry out in pain.

Size Range: Huge to Colossal.



Prerequisites: Prison, foundry, engineering works

Requirements: The master of the torture palace must have Craft (torture devices) +10, Craft (engineering) +10 and Torture +10.

Properties: A Torture Palace can process five thousand souls, extracting around five iliaster from each of them each week, giving it a weekly production of 5,000 crowns – or 20,000 crowns a month. The souls are left to regenerate in prison between processing cycles, healing the rents and psychological injuries before they are trucked back in for another bout.

Larger torture palaces can process proportionately more souls.

Defences: Heavy garrison.

Warehouse

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC
Small	50	+0	10	10
Labour Required	Workforce	Iliaster Needed	Profit	Cost
400	10	—	—	200 cr

Description: While commerce is still a relatively new development in the Infernum – the chaos after

Sturrach's War shattered the unity of the Pit, and it is only recently that trade routes have been reopened – the wheels of inter-circle finance grind inexorably on. Warehouses such as this are needed to store goods from all over the Pit, like Haimon soulstone, Glabretchi drugs or Oblurott spawnmeat.

Size Range: Small to Huge.

Prerequisites: None.

Requirements: None.

Properties: A Warehouse holds goods produced in the factories of the Infernum.

Defences: None.

Workshop

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC
Diminutive	50	+0	10	10
Labour Required	Workforce	Iliaster Needed	Profit	Cost
500	50	150/month	25 cr	300 cr

Description: Petty workshops like this produce simple goods in regions that lack the industrial base necessary for a factory. These are hellish sweatshops where demons and damned toil side by side.

Size Range: Diminutive to Small.

Prerequisites: None.

Requirements: The master of the Workshop must have an appropriate Craft skill at +5.

Properties: Workshops can produce any common goods.

Defences: None.

THE GAME OF LIES

The boats were made from fancifully curved and filigreed souls, like spun glass. They glittered in the light of the feverish Morningstar. The flotilla lazily sailed out across Lake Inferno.

At the prow of each ship there was chained a mortal, dressed in the ornate robes of the Priests of the Morningstar. The mortals had been driven mad by the artificers of the Riethii and each one was now convinced that it was a priest giving a sermon. Their deranged babblings formed a counterpoint with the harpists and the sound of the fire waves breaking off the hull.

I spied my target on the lead ship. He was a deceiver like myself, although his massive curled horns and robe of flame marked him as one far more noble and more powerful than I. Still, I had my soulknife hidden within my ribcage. The artisans can make wonderful ships and instruments and other pretty things, but their true genius is in weapons. I felt it twitch and stretch and tickle my heart.

I coughed and turned in conversation to an imp of the Lictat. My vessel had the very dregs of the party on it, the late arrivals and the unpopular guests. We were all on the port side of the boat, as the starboard side had been claimed by the Glabretch contingent. The stench was considerable. The imp droned on about the strength of House Lictat and the marvellous things they are doing with spiderwebs up on the Second Circle. This whole industrial revolution nonsense has really gone to the heads of many demons – they have become weak and effete, cloaking torture and malice with works like ‘progress’ and ‘industry’. If you’re going to torture people, be honest about it.

I am.

My wine glass suddenly vibrates in my hand. I look down, and invisible fingers are sending ripples through the blood-red liquid. It’s time. My sorcerer contact is scrying me. Using the imp’s babbling as a cover, I slip into the mind of the damned at the tiller of the ship and steer us a little closer to the lead boat.

I shift back and the imp is pawing at my shirt and asking if I am well. One of its little bony hands gets too close to the hidden slit, and my knife stabs him through the throat. Oh well, so much for the subtle approach. The soulbound knife emerges from my

side, my wings burst out of my back, the quicksilver in my veins starts pumping and I take flight. I may as well hang a sign around my neck saying ‘assassin on a mission’. Actually, that’s not a half-bad idea. Great advertising.

My target doesn’t react in time. Now, even with my magic knife, I doubt I could cut him. What I can do, however, is injure him even more deeply. I cut the head off of the slaver Earl Hala, the wealthiest demon here and the reason for the party. We look into each other’s eyes for a moment, as he realises what I’ve done to him. Without Hala’s support, my target is going to default on his debts to the Carthenay and they’ll send stalkers after him. Hell, they may even hire me to kill him, but that’ll cost them a lot more than I’m getting paid for this job.

Anyway, he raises his hand to blast me with hellfire, but before I get incinerated, my sorcerer summons me away to a dank little room in Port Despair. The last thing I hear before I dematerialise is the sound of applause. The demons appreciate a good show when they see one.

Celebrations

The celebrations of the hellkin are, by tradition, raucous and depraved. Some demons seek to shock by having sedate and formal dances; others like the Carthenay are so dull and repressed that they could not be wild if their lives depended on it. Still, every House has its balls and parties. These are more than mere celebrations of course; the Houses use the cover of these gatherings to seduce, to spy, to test and to plot against each other. The common celebrations also compel the common demons to expend more iliaster, forcing them to pay more to the lord of the domain.

Parties of Hell

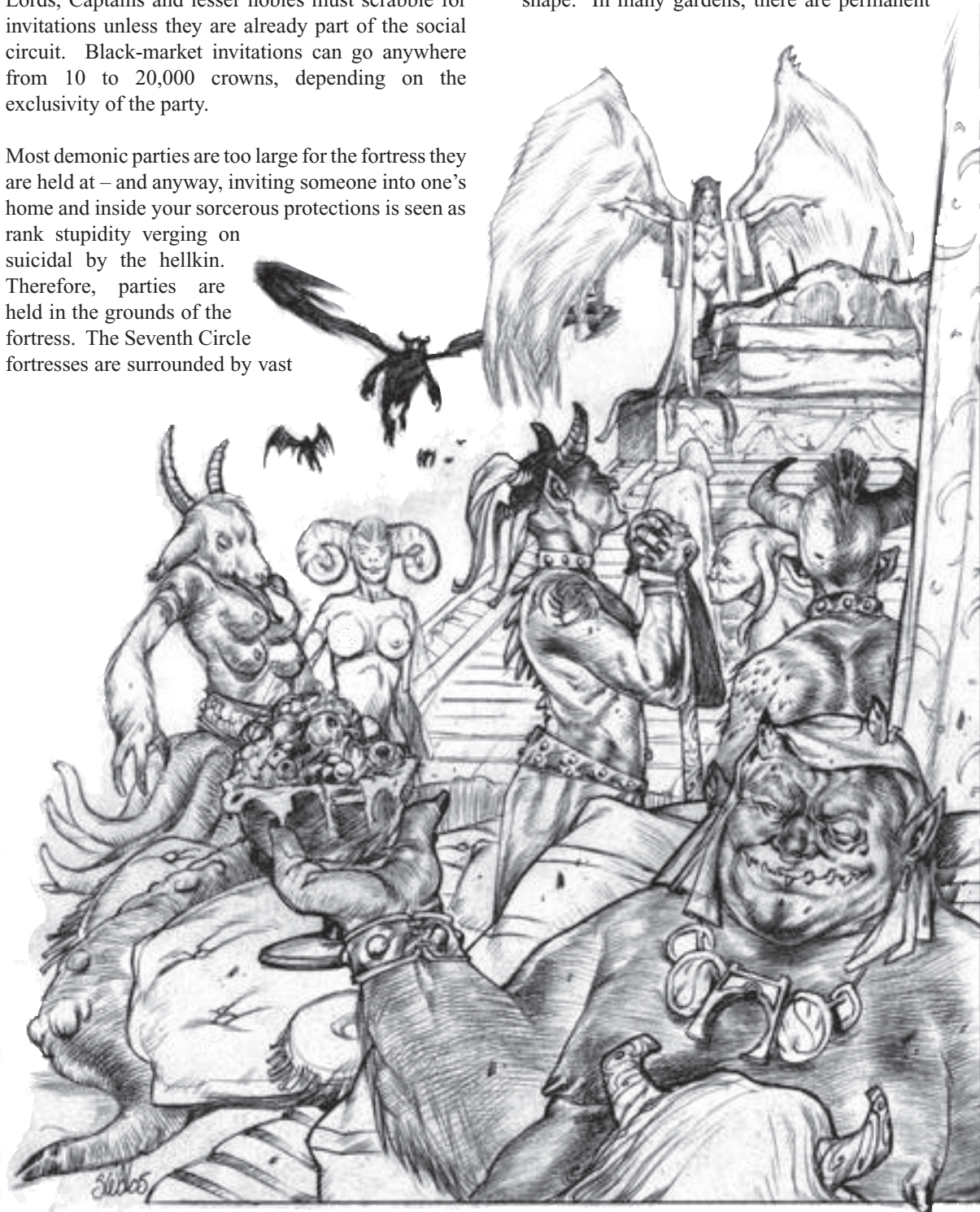
The Infernal social calendar is a packed one – for those in the Lower Hells, anyway. Every night, a socialite demon can while away the hours at one celebration or another. Higher in the Pit, the parties are fewer but still important. The host of a successful party gains considerable prestige among the hellkin, although the effects of a failed party are considerably damaging – among the Riethii, it is better to lose a war than bore the guests.

Demons of Earl or higher status – with the exception of the Glabretchi – can turn up at almost any party and be admitted. Such nobles are rare and famous enough to be welcome at any celebration. Local Viscounts can normally count on an invitation to most nearby celebrations and certainly any major parties. Barons must use a modicum of diplomacy unless they have a reputation for being an entertaining guest. Lords, Captains and lesser nobles must scabble for invitations unless they are already part of the social circuit. Black-market invitations can go anywhere from 10 to 20,000 crowns, depending on the exclusivity of the party.

Most demonic parties are too large for the fortress they are held at – and anyway, inviting someone into one's home and inside your sorcerous protections is seen as rank stupidity verging on suicidal by the hellkin. Therefore, parties are held in the grounds of the fortress. The Seventh Circle fortresses are surrounded by vast

formal gardens, dotted with little pleasure-domes and bone bowers, where the demons walk along twisting paths beneath moaning trees and play by sculptures of flesh.

The weather in Hell is rarely clement, of course, so a considerate host erects pavilions and other shelters, or has a sorcerer mould the clouds into a more pleasing shape. In many gardens, there are permanent



PARTY SIZES

Party Size	Guests (Maximum)	Cost (Minimum)	Influence Bonus	Entertainment DC (Checks)
Private	50	600 cr	+5	15 (1)
Small	100	1,200 cr	+10	15 (2)
Medium	200	2,500 cr	+20	20 (3)
Large	400	5,000 cr	+30	20 (4)
Grand	800	10,000 cr	+50	25 (5)
Extravagant	1,500	21,000 cr	+100	25 (6)
Magnificent	5,000	70,000 cr	+200	30 (7)
Legendary	10,000+	120,000 cr	+500	30 (10)

pavilions that have been used for centuries (but are redecorated each year, because novelty and shock is everything in the Seventh Circle).

The host of the party is expected to provide entertainments both common (creative torturing, drugs, Agony, malcubi and mortal slaves to be abused) and exotic (strange creatures from beyond the Pit, novelties from the mortal realm, famed actors or courtesans, new drugs). Most guests can expect at least one drink of Agony and plenty of iliaster; higher-ranking nobles demand Sorrow.

Hosting a party is a costly affair, but the boost in influence and prestige is worth it.

Guests: The number of guests at the party. On average, one-fifth of these will be actual nobles; the rest are lesser demons, courtiers, hangers-on, servants, bodyguards and spies.

Cost: The cost of the party. Spending more on the party reduces the Entertainment check DC; every 10% extra spent on the party reduces the DC by two. This price does not include the construction of a pavilion (see page 93) or ballroom (see page 62) to host the party, or the cost of the entertainers.

Influence Bonus: The bonus to Influencing attempts garnered by the host of the party; a maximum bonus of +50 can be used on any one check, so for larger parties, the bonus must be split amongst multiple Influencing attempts. Multiple hosts split this bonus amongst themselves. See Politics & Influence, below. This bonus is gained over the course of the party. A host can only have Influence from one party at a time.

The Influence bonus from celebrations can normally only be applied to the Personal & Social arenas (see below).

Entertainment DC (Checks):

The number of Entertainment checks that must be made over the course of the party by the host or other entertainers. If any of these checks are failed, then the guests become bored and the party is deemed a failure – the host loses the Influence bonus and suffers a penalty to further Influencing attempts equal to the bonus. This penalty is spent by the Games Master just like the

Player spends the Influence bonus but does not drop by five points per month as the Influence bonus does.

Each entertainment check takes the entirety of the party to perform. Multiple entertainers may attempt the same check; as long as one passes, the check is considered to be successful, but each entertainer may only make one check during the party.

Entertainers

Demonic entertainments are many and varied; the hellkin are imaginative in their depravities. These entertainers can be hired for a single party, or as long-term retainers. If hired for a party, multiply the cost of the entertainer by a size modifier for the party:

Party Size	Cost Multiplier
Private	x1
Small	x2
Medium	x5
Large	x10
Grand	x20
Extravagant	x25
Magnificent	x50
Legendary	x100

The skill listed for each entertainer is used for making Entertainment checks. Each type of entertainer can only be used once at a party – repetition is boring.

Acrobats (Cost: 2 crowns, Tumble +5): Acrobatic tumbling and rolling is not especially impressive, as it is overshadowed by the aerial display of skilled fiends and imps. It is most often used, oddly, by the Oblurott, with their barrel-shaped entertainers rolling round on their bloated bellies.

Bone Flautists (Cost: 15 crowns, Perform (music) +10): One of the most common instruments used in

the Pit, bone flutes carved from the thighs or spines of enemies. The eerie piping of these cadaverous flutes is most pleasing to the demonic ear. Bands of bone flautists wander through the party, matching their playing to the mood and actions of the guests and providing a weird musical accompaniment to every event.

Candlemen (Cost: 30 crowns, Perform (explode) +25): One of the most amusing distractions, candlemen are damned souls filled with paraffin wax and noxious chemicals. They are lit and sent running through the crowd as living fireworks. Candlemen are expensive due to the cost of the chemicals and the likelihood that the souls will be reduced to wastrels.

Castrati (Cost: 15 crowns, Perform (sing) +15): These mortal singers have exquisite high-pitched voices, thanks to Astyanath surgery. They have been castrated and their vocal cords lengthened and adjusted to ensure the perfect sound. Most demonic surgeons scrape the skin of the chest and throat to transparency, to show off their handiwork. Castrati gain a +5 circumstance bonus to Perform when entertaining Astyanath guests.

Chanters (Cost: 2 crowns, Perform (sing) +5): Chanters sing the strange hymns favoured by the Priests of the Morningstar – chants which speak of the Morningstar burning the land with its fiery wrath and the end of the Infernum. Chanters gain a +5 circumstance bonus to Perform when entertaining Priests of the Morningstar.

Character Assassins (Cost: 50 crowns, Sense Motive +20): One of the most exclusive forms of entertainment, character assassins are skilled in identifying the most embarrassing and private traits of guests and mocking them in front of the rest of the party. For an extra 10 crowns, the assassins will privately report whatever they find out to the host.

Chefs (Cost: 20 crowns, Craft (cooking) +5): Making a meal of plasmic iliaster is unusual in most of the Pit – only the Oblurott practise it commonly, but the novelty can be appealing to jaded palettes. Chefs gain a +10 circumstance bonus when cooking to entertain Oblurott guests.

Curiosities (Cost: Varies, Perform +5 to +30): Strange creatures like new breeds of spawn, captured Brokenlanders, unusually corrupt or pure souls, notorious mortal warriors in chains – anything that has not been seen before will impress guests.

Dancers (Cost: 5 crowns, Perform (dance) +10): Demonic dancers use their mutations and physical augmentations to the utmost; there are coiling dances that can only be performed by creatures more like snakes than humans, dances that shed skin like veils and twist bones to match a fevered musical rhythm.

Dissectionists (Cost: 30 crowns, Heal +15): This macabre entertainment involves taking a creature apart, piece by piece. Agony injections are used to keep the subject alive as the surgeon works, stripping flesh from bone and then carefully drawing each organ from the body, leaving them connected by veins and tubes which hanging them from a steel frame. By the end of the night, the still-living body has blossomed into a strange morbid flower of viscera. The Haimon delight in dissectionists; they have a +10 circumstance bonus to Perform when entertaining Haimon guests.

Dreamers (Cost: 25 crowns, Craft (dream) +15): Dreamers are a curious form of mortals created by the Riethii; they have been bred to develop mild telepathic abilities and an addiction to certain drugs. The pale, sore-ridden bodies of the dreamers writhe as bizarre images and emotions flit through their minds – and are transmitted to the demons around them. The Riethii love dreamers – they have a +10 circumstance bonus to Perform when entertaining Riethii guests.

Druggists (Cost: Varies, Perform Varies): Distributing free drugs to all one's guests is a sure-fire way to popularity. The bonus to Perform varies depending on the drug; the cost is equal to the cost of the drug x 20 x the party's size multiplier (Drugs are detailed on page 106).

FREE DRUGS

Drug	Perform Bonus
Astinic	+10
Lotus Dust	+15
Fermented Agony	+20
Deathdust	+25

Duellists (Cost: 25 crowns, Attack +15): Successful duellists in the arenas swiftly become celebrities to the demons, the toast of every party. The main disadvantage to having duellists at a party is their tendency to start fights – with each other, with guests, with servants, with inanimate objects... Duellists have a +10 bonus when entertaining Sturrach guests.

Head-Tossers (Cost: 10 crowns, Perform (head-toss) +10): The sport of head-tossing is popular among the

demons; at its heart it is a relatively simple game. A damned soul is torn limb from limb and its body parts hurled into a field of demons. The two teams fight for possession of the parts; the team which has the largest reassembled section of damned soul wins. The head is worth extra points, hence the name. While head-tossing is normally played in a sporting arena, it can also be played in a crowded pavilion, although hulk players are unpopular among smaller guests.

Hellfire Conjurers (Cost: 3 crowns, Craft (hellfire) +5): Hellfire is a noble art. Throwing great arcs of hellfire across a crowd is slightly less noble but still amusing to younger demons. Hellfire conjurers are somewhat distrusted, as they are often used as a cover for assassins.

Illusionists (Cost: 20 crowns, Sorcery +10): Spellcasters using *deceit of the clouded eye* can create amusing and entertaining images for the guests. Illusionists have also been used as a cover by sorcerer spies and assassins. An illusionist can also be employed to distract guests or hide embarrassing problems.

Malcubi (Cost: 15 crowns, Seduction +5): Malcubi courtiers for use as bed-mates and playthings for guests. As mere sex is tiresome, the malcubi have to be imaginatively bizarre in their practises. Malcubi have a +10 circumstance bonus to Seduction when entertaining mortal guests, who still have the drives and desires that make them vulnerable to such manipulation.

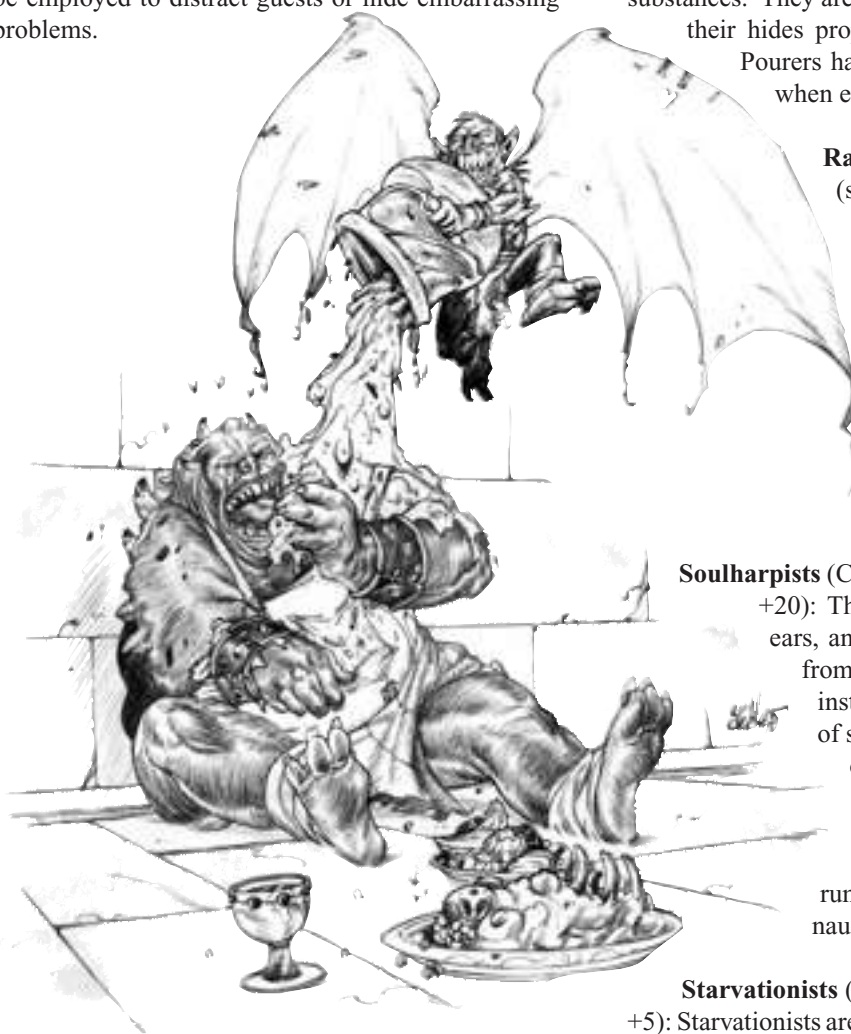
Murder Mummurs (Cost: 50 crowns, Bluff +20): One of the more outré forms of demonic entertainment, the murder mummurs hunt down and kill some unfortunate low-ranking demon during the party. The host must provide the mummurs with a target and ensure that there will be no repercussions for the death.

Filth Pourers (Cost: 2 crowns, Perform (filth pouring) -10): Filth pourers are only used at Glabretchi parties; they disgust other demons (hence the negative Perform). Filth pourers carry great urns of glutinous slime that runs thick with bile, ordure and other vile substances. They are dumped over the guests to keep their hides properly infested and slick. Filth Pourers have an effective Perform of +15 when entertaining Glabretchi guests.

Ranters (Cost: 0 crowns, Perform (speech) +5): A cheap and effective form of entertainment, ranters are mortals and damned driven insane by the horrors of the Pit. They ramble and babble and scream about the nightmares they have seen. At a party, gangs of ranters are allowed to wander through the crowd, amusing the demons with their deranged speeches.

Soulharpists (Cost: 30 crowns, Perform (music) +20): The most beautiful – to demonic ears, anyway – music in the Pit comes from the soul harps. These are instruments shaped from the souls of skilled performers and played by other skilled performers. The screams ascend into musical scales never heard in the mortal realm and fall into tones that rumble through the earth and nauseate the spirits of the listeners.

Starvationists (Cost: 1 crown, Perform (acting) +5): Starvationists are mortals who have, quite simply,



Unique Entertainment

There are specialised entertainers of greater skill and fame than the common entertainers listed above. These demons must be specially sought out and hired; they are too wealthy and influential to be swayed by mere crowns.

been starved to the point of death. The demons find the wobbling, fainting and quiet whimpering hilariously funny. The Oblurots are especially amused (Perform +10 when entertaining Oblurots).

Sycophants (Cost: 10 crowns, Grovel +10): Nothing beats a good sycophant walking by your side, telling you how wonderful you are. The Carthenay are especially fond of this practice; the sycophants have a +10 circumstance bonus to Grovelling when entertaining Carthenay guests.

Torture Artistes (Cost: 25 crowns, Torture +20): The one thing the demons never grow tired of is inflicting pain. Torture artistes use the more imaginative forms of torment and the latest tools from the Zethu factories to entertain the guests.

Tumble-Flyers (Cost: 5 crowns, Tumble +10): Skilled flyers can entertain a crowd of demons for hours with their acrobatics. Blasts of hellfire and shots from anti-aircraft guns add to the show.

Wonderworkers (Cost: 20 crowns, Craft (engineering) +15): Wonderworkers are familiar with the latest works of the artificers and sorcerers and demonstrate them to the amazement of the guests. With the loss of Dis and the chaos in House Zethu, the flow of new technological wonders has slowed – although the rising technology of the mortal world has made up for this. The Zethu are bitterly fascinated by wonderworkers, so the entertainers have a +10 circumstance bonus when entertaining Zethu guests.

Party Variants

The party described above is a grand celebration of the demons, where their nightmare joys and twisted pleasures are indulged and exalted. The purpose of the party is to mark a victory or bring fame and influence

to the demon who hosts the party. There are other demonic gatherings which are slightly more focused than these wild celebrations, but work according to the same rules.

Festivals

Festivals mark special dates in the Infernal calendar. Most demon lords who are wealthy enough celebrate these festivals with small gatherings for their Captains and trusted servants. For more details on these festivals, see page 38-39 in *Book of the Tormentor*.

New Year (1st Mortis): The New Year calls for great celebrations; every demon, no matter how poor, puts aside a little iliaster to mark this day. Young demons who have developed their first House mutation present themselves to their Captain or Baron, to have their status as scions of the House confirmed; most demon lords keep a list of petty problems and tasks that they can dump on the eager young demons on New Year's Day, which must be completed before the demons are recognised as Housefellows.

Founding (1st Carcis): Founding is also heavily celebrated. Wild parties are held in every domain. Often, nobles prefer to visit the estates of their subjects for this festival, to remind them of their loyalty to the House. See Noble Visits, below.

Renewal of the Flame (9th Agony): The religious festival of the Renewal is only formally celebrated in a few places, notably the domains of the Haimon and those estates that can see Pandemonium far below them. Especially pious nobles do celebrate this fiery dawn with a ritual.

Gout's Eve (15th Lament): This is a customary date for hunts (see below). The competition to get the biggest, nastiest prey is fierce; the first two weeks of Lament see stalkers being sent all over the Pit and beyond to bring back enemy demons, new spawn and particularly tough and cunning mortals for the hunt.

First Fall (30th Lament): First Fall marks the first arrival of the damned in Hell, so this is a day for torturing the damned with especial fervour.

High Muster (1st Ascenis): High Muster is the pre-eminent date on the military calendar, when the demons gather their armies to assess their strength. Every domain must hold a muster (see below) on this date.

Feast of Fools (30th Vincere): The chaotic Feast of Fools draws most of its amusement from the chaos

caused by abandoning the normal rules of behaviour. Therefore, parties held on the Feast of Fools cost only half the base amount, but the Influence bonus from the party is reduced to half normal, +1d20. However, if a Covenant is used in an Influencing attempt, the Influence from the party cannot be used.

Body Dance (25th Inferno): The Body Dance is always a formal ball (see below). The host of the Body Dance must participate and gains a +10 bonus to Influencing at the end of the party.

Oathing (10th Harrowing): The day of Oathing is when tithes must be handed in. Oathing is commonly celebrated by a Meeting or Noble Visit.

Formal Ball

Formal balls are... dull, which means the Carthenay and Haimon rather like them. These agonisingly rule-bound and difficult dances are believed to be based on angelic principles – given the precision of many of the steps, they could certainly be performed on the head of a pin. At a formal ball, entertainment is secondary to the necessary steps of the ritual; the Entertainment DC is halved, but only musicians and dancers can be used to entertain the guests – and only one musician or dancer can be used per Entertainment check. Furthermore, most demons avoid these balls like the plague; only the most hide-bound or boring demons willingly attend them.

Fundraiser

Fundraisers – parties where the guests have to bear part of the cost – are unpopular. Most demons take the not unreasonable stance that if a lord has the power of life and death over its subjects, takes their souls and locks them away in great torture palaces from which it grudgingly doles out the vital life-sustaining iliaster at an extortionate price, then the least the lord can do is pay for the drinks and dancing succubi. Fundraisers, then, increase the DC of each entertainment check by +2 for every crown of cost. Furthermore, the Influence bonus from a successful party is halved.

Hunt

The key attraction in a hunt is the quarry – the creature that will be hunted by the participants. As hunts range across the terrain of Hell, they are considerably cheaper than normal parties – the cost is halved. Furthermore, there is no need for entertainers; the beast is the

entertainment. The CR of the quarry is used as the Entertainment skill. For example, a private hunt that chases a 5th level mortal would roll 1d20+5 against a DC of 15. Up to three quarries may be combined in a single check – for example, a private hunt for three such mortals would roll 1d20+15 against a DC of 15 for the Entertainment check.

Meeting

A meeting is a formal council called to discuss some point of Infernal policy or important event. There is no need for entertainment at a meeting, but the cost for hosting the meeting is doubled and the Influence bonus is halved.

Mustering

A mustering is a gathering of military force, where the armies of a domain are paraded in front of their lord and its guests to show their strength. This display of martial might can be used for ‘gunboat diplomacy’ – influencing neighbouring domains with the threat of invasion or attack. A mustering does not use entertainers per se; instead, individual military units count as the entertainers and must make an attack roll, Formation check or Cohesion check against the listed entertainment DC. Musterings cost half as much as normal parties.

Noble Visit

Having one’s liege lord or other potent noble visit a domain is an expensive and nerve-wracking event. It is mercifully cheap – even the most demanding Duke cannot consume as much as 10,000 demons a day – but nobles will gleefully scorn every entertainment and find fault with their host’s every action. The cost for a noble visit is listed below, but the Entertainment DC is increased by +5 and the Influence bonus is halved. Unlike other parties, which last for a single day at most, a noble visit lasts for at least one day per entertainment check.

NOBLE VISITS

Noble Rank	Daily Cost
Captain	5 crowns
Baron	20 crowns
Viscount	50 crowns
Earl	100 crowns
Duke	200 crowns
Grand Duke	500 crowns
Head of House	1,000 crowns

While wandering through the party, a character might encounter...

RANDOM GUEST TABLE

Roll	Encounter
1	Low-ranking demon who has snuck into the party without an invitation.
2	Gossiping imp, looking for scandalous rumour.
3	Nervous and jumpy stalker, forced to attend but wishing it was elsewhere.
4	Drunken and aggressive hulk.
5	Malcubus courtesan hanging on the arm of a more powerful demon.
6	Damned soul being led about on a chain by its demon master.
7	Artificer spy examining defences of the party host's fortress.
8	Deceiver party-goer, looking for a weak and vulnerable target for possession.
9	Beast party-animal.
10	Slaver servant sullenly serving Sorrow.
11	Entertainer hired by the host.
12	Guard in the employ of the host.
13	Fiend, bored and decadent.
14	Aggressive demon, looking for a fight.
15	Arrogant and supercilious sorcerer.
16	Low-ranking Captain or other noble.
17	Spy from another House.
18	High-ranking noble guest.
19	The host.
20	Assassin targeting a dignitary at the party.

RANDOM EVENTS

Roll	Event
1	Brawl – two or more demons begin to fight using claws and teeth. Unless stopped, one will kill the other.
2	Stabbing – a party-goer is stabbed in the back by another guest. Unless the attacker is caught and punished, the associates of the victim will be angered.
3	Lover's Tiff – two demons have a loud and unpleasant screaming argument.
4	Escaped Damned – a damned soul uses the chaos of the party as a cover to escape its bonds. The guests see the soul and chase it, resulting in a small riot.
5	Discordant Note – one of the entertainers messes up and automatically fails their Entertainment check.
6	Covenanting – one of the guests falls victim to another and is put into significant debt.
7	Summoning – one of the guests is summoned away by a sorcerer.
8	Fire – a fire breaks out somewhere at the party.
9	Paranoia – rumours of assassins or heretics sweep through the party; increase all Entertainment DCs by +2.
10	Whispers in Corners – the party is awash with rumour and speculation; all characters present get free Gather Information rolls.
11	Lush – a demon is drinking more than its share of Agony or Sorrow.
12	Kidnapping – one of the guests is abducted by another.
13	Seduction – one of the guests is seduced by another.
14	Intimidation – one of the guests is bullied by another.
15	Groveling – one of the guests kneels to another.
16	Foul Weather – the weather changes and will ruin the party unless it is held in a fortress or pavilion.
17	Spy Discovered – a spy from another House is discovered at the party.
18	Rampage – a powerful demon or spawn attacks the party.
19	Missing Entertainer – one of the entertainers goes missing at the worst possible moment.
20	Assassination – one of the guests is assassinated at the party.

Select Invitations

A demon lord can carefully tailor its guest list to the entertainments provided, by only inviting particular guests. A party with select invitations has only half as many guests, but the Entertainment DC and Influencing bonus both increase by +5.

Tournament

A tournament works like a hunt, but needs combatants to fight duels instead of monsters to hunt. The levels of the combatants are used when making the Entertainment checks.

A Sample Event of the Season

Viscountess Kyri of House Riethii wishes to raise her standing in the Seventh Circle. The obvious way to do this is by hosting a celebration; Kyri decides to spend a maximum of 10,000 crowns on the party. The obvious choice here is a Large party, which has a base cost of 5,000 crowns. Her estate is on the Seventh Circle, but rather than risk an unseasonal storm ruining the celebration, she invests in a Medium pavilion which will hold the 400 guests at a Large party. She builds the pavilion out of wood to halve the price, so it costs only another 500 crowns. Her servants cause the black forests of her domain to weave together into a shadow realm lit by eerie green torches.

A Large party has an Entertainment DC of 20 and requires four successful entertainment checks. Kyri herself has both Seduction and Perform at high enough ranks to be confident of keeping her guests very happy, so she needs only provide another three entertainments. She spends 300 crowns on candlemen (30 crowns base cost, x 10 for a Large party). Torture artistes cost another 250 crowns and soul harpists another 300 crowns. All three of these entertainers have a skill of +20 or better, so they will only fail the check on a 1. Just to be on the safe side, she also stocks the party with a few cheap entertainers like Malcubi, dancers and sycophants.

During the party, four Entertainment checks must be made. If any of these are failed, then the party is a failure. Fortune favours Kyri, however, and her party is a success. She now has a +30 bonus to Influence.

Drugs

Alchemy has produced hellbroths for the Infernum's militaries and spell components for sorcerers, but its primary purpose is producing drugs. Drugs and intoxicants are popular in most Houses; only the

Haimon frown on them, and the Haimon frown on fun in general. Many low-ranking demons scrape together a few coins for iliaster and drugs and spend most of their time in an ecstatic haze.

New and stranger drugs are constantly being produced by alchemists, but some of the most popular are listed below. Mechanically, drugs function exactly like poisons, only a character can voluntarily fail its Fortitude save to succumb to the drug.

Astinic: A silvery liquid extracted from weeds that grow throughout Middle Hell, astinic is a mild hallucinogen favoured by imps and stalkers. Drooling imps, their spittle stained with astinic, congregate on rooftops and shout abuse down at the streets below.

Cost: 1 crown. **Method:** Ingested. **Save DC:** 10. **Effect:** 1d6 Wisdom damage/1d6 Wisdom damage

Deathdust: Deathdust can be created in only one way – blasting a damned into wastrel status with a single burst of hellfire. Once, it was made by skilled fiendish artisans; today, sorcerous furnaces are used. When inhaled, deathdust gives the demon the rush of experiencing the soul's mortal life – or as much of it as survived the Lethe Clouds, anyway.

Cost: 20 crowns. **Method:** Inhaled. **Save DC:** 10. **Effect:** 1d6 Wisdom damage/1d6 Wisdom damage

Dream: This drug is created from mortal dreams using sorcery. It is a favoured tool of the Riethii, as they claim it enhances creativity and the experience of pleasure. Most demons just find the experience strange.

Cost: 3 crowns. **Method:** Inhaled. **Save DC:** 12. **Effect:** 1d4 Wisdom damage/1d4 Wisdom damage

Fermented Agony (Scab): Fermented Agony is made by letting normal Agony age and settle within a damned soul. The damned is nearly torn asunder by the Agony rushing through its ghostly veins, but the eventual product – a viscous, brownish-red slime that has none of the healing effects of Agony, but has a kick like Behemoth.

Cost: 15 crowns. **Method:** Ingested. **Save DC:** 5. **Effect:** Writhing around on the floor unable to do anything for 1d10 hours.

Gullhead: Perhaps the most lethal of the drugs in common use in Hell, gullhead was created by the abhorei as a weapon. It comes in the form of prepared eggs, which are implanted beneath the skin of the user (during the abhorei invasion, the eggs were in cilia-covered pouches which skittered ahead

of the invaders and forcibly attached themselves to demons). The egg contains a mutated seabird, which hatches beneath the skin. In the abhorei version, the gull would then tear itself out of the demon's body, but the new form of gullhead allows the demon's body to break down the gull as it grows. The thrill is strange but undeniable. Gullhead addicts have weird, twisted bodies that bulge and screech as the eggs within them hatch and die.

Cost: 25 crowns. **Method:** Injected. **Save DC:** 5. **Effect:** 1d4 Constitution damage/1d4 Constitution damage

Lotus Dust: This dust is made from the pollen of the roses of Hell, mixed with a tincture of Agony and other chemicals. The dust produces feelings of euphoria and well-being. As the dust does not significantly interfere with the demon's ability to function, many mid-ranking demons are permanently under the effects of the dust.

Cost: 3 crowns. **Method:** Inhaled. **Save DC:** 10. **Effect:** 1d2 Intelligence damage/1d2 Intelligence damage

Lucifer's Spit: A vile green-coloured liquid that glows in the dark, Lucifer's Spit is another product of the alchemical refineries. It was originally created by the Oblurott in an attempt to addict the demons of other Houses and yoke them to Oblurott dealers, but the formula was quickly replicated across the Pit.

Cost: 4 crowns. **Method:** Injected. **Save DC:** 8. **Effect:** 1d6 Wisdom Damage + 1 Constitution Damage/1d6 Wisdom Damage + 1 Constitution Damage

Millshade: A drug made from a fungus that grows in the nooks and cracks of torture mills and palaces, millshade appears to be drawn to suffering. Adding ground millshade to a drink of iliaster, even humble plasmic iliaster, makes the taste far more pleasant and intoxicating.

Cost: 1 crown. **Method:** Ingested. **Save DC:** 10. **Effect:** None.

Scoil: A product of Astyanath alchemy, scoil shoots through the user's veins like a thunderbolt. The skin becomes pale and transparent, and also somewhat harder. Crystals form along the body, storing up pleasure and pain and releasing them in small, random bursts.

Cost: 10 crowns. **Method:** Ingested. **Save DC:** 10. **Effect:** 1 Wisdom damage/1 Wisdom damage

Soulsnuff: One of the oldest drugs in the Pit, soulsnuff is made by crushing a soul down to dust and inhaling

it. The actual effect of the drug is relatively mild; little more than a tickling as the soul makes its way through the demon's lungs and intestinal tract. The soul must make a Fortitude save (DC10 + the demon's level) or be reduced to wastrel status.

Cost: 2 oboli (40 crowns). **Method:** Ingested. **Save DC:** 10. **Effect:** 1 Wisdom damage/1 Wisdom damage

Infernal Law, Justice & Politics

The politics of the Infernum had settled into a comfortable stalemate until the twin upheavals of the formation of House Lictat and the Free City Heresy. Now, they are in chaos, with House Zethu on the verge of disaster and House Sturrach facing multiple wars and increasing instability.

The Free City Heresy is also the first significant change to the fortunes of the common demon since the formation of the Houses. Up until the Heresy, most demons had lives scarcely better than the damned they tortured. They crawled out of the spawning pits and toiled in the farms, factories, torture palaces and armies of the nobility. A few demons were spawned in the cities as part of a fragile and powerless middle class, and these were lucky enough to be out of the direct control of the nobility.

For those hoping to rise in power, their only options were to risk their lives in the wilderness or to swear strong Covenants to the nobility and become part of the oppressive machine. Most of these ambitious demons were killed in the course of their duties, or else captured and dragged off to the spawning pits of another House. Often, these deaths were machinated by the lords of the Houses, eliminating growing rivals by passing information to other lords. In many ways, the lords felt besieged by the vast numbers of lesser demons – it was an eternal war between the short-lived hordes of lesser demons and the immortal elder demons.

The whole of Infernal society exists to maintain the supremacy of the House lords. While every domain has its courts and bureaucracies, their purpose is to locate and destroy traitors and other threats to the nobility. The Priests of the Morningstar had their own aims, but one of the chief uses of their order was taking troublesome demons off the hands of the nobility and re-channelling their treacherous impulses into religion. The armies and constant wars kept the demon population under control and with the violent

House Sturrach yoked by poverty and the need to rebuild, the remaining seven Houses could get on with the business of ruling the Infernum and enjoying Hell. None of them was strong enough to control Pandemonium, but they were also relatively secure against invasion from another House or from an outside power like the abhorei or the Brokenlanders.

On the outskirts of the Infernum, the mighty Bori tribe had become almost tame – divided by internal dissent, true, but with its energies drawn off by the mercenary trade. The other mortal groups, like the other Early tribes and the Knights of the Harrowing, were nothing more than troublesome irritants that the Infernum could control but not get rid of. The only wild card in the affairs of the Pit were the cryptic politics of the faustians, who sat in their towers and argued over abstruse points of arcane theory. Few demons could follow the differences between House Malthus, Malthian League, Circle of Thorns and the dozens of other minor factions within the mortal sorcerers.

The current situation is somewhat more fluid. Not since the rebellion against the angels has there been so much potential for change and conquest in the Pit.

Starting from the bottom...

Priests of the Morningstar

Pandemonium is still securely in the hands of the

Priests of the Morningstar, but where once only a few demons were permitted onto the unholy streets of the angel-built city, now the Ninth Circle is thronged with demons from every House. The Ninth has become as decadent and joyous as the Seventh. The ancient machinery of the Ninth, such as the Morningstar itself and the Clocks of Hell, is at risk of damage as the city becomes more crowded. The Priests also fear that the uncontrolled city could be subverted by Free City heretics. The Pandemonium Guard is completely overextended trying to keep the city under control.

The hierarchy of the Church is more concerned with events higher in the Pit. As the other Houses descend into chaos, the Priests need more and more agents and are establishing more outposts – thinly disguised fortresses – in the Pit.

Hellish Politics

The Auditorium is currently dominated by the Oblurott/Sturrach war and the Free City Heresy. The Bloody House has never been politically adept, so its attempts to win the council's support in censuring the Oblurott's attacks on the Fourth have been clumsy, but are growing in subtlety and effectiveness. The Free City Heresy is the only issue that unites the hellkin, but as yet none have agreed on what should be done. Many older demons remember the last issue that united the hellkin, back at the Bileflot Conclave and what happened there.

The number of spies attending court has tripled in the last three decades. With all the Houses moving



their pieces into position for war, the councils may be where the first lines are drawn. If House Zethu does collapse, then the council may also be where the carcass of the House is divided up.

House Astyanath

The Cruel Ones have studiously ignored the chaos of Middle Hell. With Zethu collapsing, the Astyanath have taken the lead in research and technology in the Pit. Their armies are small but well-armed and highly trained, their artistry of agony unparalleled. House Astyanath is in a very strong position.

Their main political aim is stringing out the Sturrach/Oblurott crisis for as long as possible, weakening the other Houses. The Astyanath have agents in the Sixth Circle, dealing with the expansion of Cacaphractus and the looting of the Zethu territories, so the longer the Sturrach suffer and the Zethu twist in the wind, the better for the Cruel Ones. Indeed, if a war could be brought to Upper Hell that plunges those Circles into as much chaos as Middle Hell, that would serve the purposes of House Astyanath exquisitely. Say, a Glabretch or Haimon attack on the vulnerable Oblurott estates...

House Riethii

Unlike their cousins, the Riethii are well aware of matters higher in the Pit. The Astyanath may be willing to fiddle while Dis burns, but the proactive nobles of the Riethii are busy gathering intelligence and plotting. The Seducers may be the best chance for an Infernum-wide alliance against the Heretics – but the majority of their numbers are busy partying and indulging themselves. By the time the Riethii notice that the iliaster supply has run dry, it may be too late.

House Carthenay

War is good for business – as long as the Carthenay control it. They could tolerate the Oblurott war – it puts the Sturrach deeper in the Misers' debt – but this whole Dis affair is terribly messy. The economy of the Pit is dependant on Covenants, on the cities, on the damned staying enslaved and the Free Cities threaten all of that. However, political action has never been the Carthenay's strong point. They are currently working through mercenaries to gain some insight into the Dis situation, but this is a slow process that the bankers cannot handle well.

Free Cities

The Free Cities stand in opposition to the politics and institutions of the Infernum and wonder how the Hell they got there. Dis, the strongest and proudest of the Free Cities, has been bombed into rubble and is undergoing a reign of terror that makes the worst Dissolution seem pleasant. None of the city-folk are quite sure where the whole movement came from, or who first cast the Breaking of Bonds ritual. Still, they know they are all heretics who will be executed unless they overthrow the lords of Hell.

If Dis can hold for another few years, if more cities can throw off their shackles, if they can bring change to the changeless realm of Hell – then they have a chance. Already, some within the Infernum are realising that the heretics may be here to stay and cautious diplomatic contacts have been opened with the cities.

House Sturrach

The once-mighty Bloody House is reduced to being the Carthenay's watchdog, snarling at Dis while the Oblurott steal their holdings. Unable to fight back directly at the thieving Gluttons, House Sturrach is reduced to trying to turn the Oblurots back in court. The Bloody House is also the primary force besieging Dis – which has pinned down its armies and prevented it from claiming the abandoned Zethu territories.

Politically, the Sturrachs are desperate for support. They are too proud to admit this (and possibly too politically unaware to recognise this) but they need allies to break the Oblurott influence in the courts.

Faustians

Ever since the first mortal sorcerers broke from their Zethu masters, the faustians have had a very tangential relationship with the rest of the Infernum. They have the same rights as any demon, but considerably more power than the average. The towers of the faustians are dotted around the Pitscape, and from these spires the sorcerers commune using arcane methods and discuss arcane matters. Most faustians at least pretend to be more interested in the secrets of magic than in Hellish politics.

In truth, the faustians are just as involved as any other faction. Their current schism, however, between the Circle of Black Thorns and the other politically adept group, the Malthian League, means that they are currently more focused on internal divisions than the affairs of Hell. With the faustian's seat contested, the

Houses are looking to the other groups of sorcerers like Goetics or Cult of the Beast for aid.

Independent Demons

Marginalized and oppressed since the rise of the Houses, the Independent demons are suddenly being courted by no less than three factions. Firstly, there is the House of the Independents, the Lictat, who would greatly love to cement their standing by gobbling up the other major demon lords who are not part of an existing House. Second, the other Great Houses are suddenly much better disposed to the Independents since the threat of the Free Cities appeared. And thirdly, the Free Cities need allies and where better to look than among the oppressed?

Of course, choosing the third option will probably result in the Independents getting executed for heresy, and both the first and second options carry with them the threat of conquest and execution for treason. Being popular and desired in Hell is not a good thing. For the Independent demons to survive the coming chaos, they will have to thread the needle between these conflicting groups and find their own destiny.

Knights of the Harrowing

The Knights swore to make unending war on Hell, but their efforts have been less than successful (although dropping a fortress down into the Circle of Slaughter and holding it against demonic attack for centuries is no small feat). Now, they have a chance to strike a dolorous blow against the demons – the two closest targets, Sturrach and Zethu, are both severely weakened and the path is clear for an attack on the relatively undefended and notoriously sinful Seventh Circle.

If there was ever a time to strike, it is now.

Mercenaries

War is coming back to the Pit, so times are going to get merry and bloody again. What is equally profitable for the mercenaries, however, is the trade in secrets. The mercenaries are the only faction in the Infernum who are friendly with the Houses, with the mortals (through the Bori) and with the Free Cities. Golgotha has become a clearing house for rumour and treachery.

House Zethu

The House of the Unveilers has had its veils torn away and cowers naked and unprotected in the mountains of the Fourth. Zethu is in deep, deep trouble. Its old

estates are being looted and ransacked, its current holdings are fragile and tenuous, and one of the other Houses must soon strike against it. The Zethu need allies and they need them now. The main question is, what secrets will the Zethu give away?

House Oblurott

The bloated slugs of House Oblurott are rather happy with the current situation. Every day they hold the Sturrach mines, they get a little richer and the Bloody House gets a lot poorer. By the time they are forced to retreat – and they know they cannot hold the mines indefinitely – the vaults of the Carthenay will be so bare as to shatter the Carthenay/Sturrach accord. The Oblurotts have realised that they are outsiders in the Pit just as much as the Glabretch and Haimon, and that this status makes them very powerful – the Houses of Middle and Lower Hell do not expect attacks from above.

A longer-term Oblurott project is filling the nascent House Lictat with puppets and spies. It makes sense to know your neighbours.

House Haimon

The Deathly House is moving in the shadows and secret places. Agents of the Haimon are active all over Hell, gathering information. House Haimon would be especially vulnerable to a revolt of the damned, so they plan to take action against the Free City Heresy. They recognise that the Infernum must be held together in the face of this threat, so the Haimon have renewed their customary place as mediators and keepers of tradition.

House Glabretch

The Glabretchi are playing a waiting game for the moment. They are causing as much chaos in court as possible, are happily tweaking the refined noses of the Astyanath and Riethii at parties and are even secretly supplying various groups with bio-weapons. The Glabretchi would quite like to see the Infernum collapse in civil war and slaughter once again. They can win such a war...

House Lictat

The Lictat expected this decade to be a time when the other Houses tried to take what the Lictat had won. Instead, they are being ignored or even courted as allies while the Houses turn on the Free Cities. Never ones to miss an opportunity, the Lictat are building and making allies as fast as they can.

Bori

Long ago, Bori led his people out of chains and brought them into the wilderness. The Bori are the mightiest warriors in the Pit, tempered in the fires of Hell. They have proved their strength on the battlefield a thousand times, fighting as mercenaries for every flag in the Pit. Now, they must choose if they are part of Hell or are still human – they depend more on the Pit than they do on the other mortal tribes and would suffer the most if the Infernum fell.

Branded

The Branded have heard rumours of the chaos in the Middle Hells, but have yet to find out the truth of the matter. Events have certainly been chaotic in the First Circle – slaver raids have been more common since the Lictat arrived, but the demons have also been more fractious and prone to infighting. This may be the time to unite the mortals and make a stand against Hell.

Damned

And there are the dead, who outnumber all the demons and mortals and angels put together ten times over.

In Dis and her sister cities, the dead are free. Everywhere else, they are in chains.

What do they whisper to each other in the slave pens at night, when the demons are sleeping?

Politics & Influence

The basic rules for Influence (see page 82, *Book of the Damned*) describe characters using their diplomatic skills, seductive wiles, brute-force intimidation or pathetic grovelling to alter the opinions and desires of others. The rules in this second expand on the uses and scope of Influence. These are the social and political counterparts to the mass combat rules on page 121 – they should not be used for every encounter, but can be used to resolve key scenes in the campaign.

The chief additions to the basic rules are:

- ⊗ **Influence Arenas:** Arenas determine the scope of an Influencing attempt. For example, a basic Influence attempt can make a Non Player Character helpful, but such help varies depending on the resources and power of the character. Choosing

an arena allows a character to push for more help or a particular type of help.

- ⊗ **Influence Bonuses and Penalties:** These bonuses and penalties are often very large, but can only be used in particular arenas. One of the most important penalties comes from a character's position – a noble has responsibilities and duties that will block it acceding to many Influencing attempts, even if it wants to officially agree. It is very difficult, for example, to convince a noble to betray its liege lord and go to war, no matter how big a character's Diplomacy skill is.

Arenas

An Influence arena is a mechanical representation of the scale and scope of the Influence attempt. For example, a demon who asks another for aid might get a handful of fangs or a bit of advice or guidance. If, however, the first demon moves the conversation to the High Personal arena and makes a successful Influencing check, then the second demon might accompany the first, or give significant aid like handing over its savings or its personal soul.

The arenas are Personal, Social and Formal, and they can be High, Medium or Low intensity. The Personal arena covers interpersonal matters and a character's private life. The Social arena is the character's standing in society and fame, while the Formal arena is dominated by a character's duties, obligations and control of its office or field of expertise.

Low Personal: Casual interactions, basic bribes, conversations between strangers on the road. A Low Personal request might be asking for directions or advice about the local area. A hostile Low Personal reaction is just being ignored or minor acts of spite; a friendly reaction is complying with the request or volunteering information.

Diplomacy: Fast talking, informal persuasion.

Seduction: Casual flirtation.

Intimidation: Bullying.

Grovelling: Wheedling, whining.

Medium Personal: Medium Personal interactions are important questions, persuading a character to make a significant decision and so on. A hostile Medium Personal reaction is attacking or vowing revenge on the character; a friendly Medium Personal reaction might be agreeing to what the character proposes.

Diplomacy: Reasoned arguments over a period of time.

Seduction: Seduction and a brief affair.

Intimidation: Threats of violence.

Grovelling: Kneeling, abject grovelling.

High Personal: High Personal interactions involve significant sacrifices or life-altering decisions for the target of the influencing attempt. Convincing a character to commit to a war or betraying its master is a High Personal request. A hostile High Personal reaction is attacking and using all one's resources to destroy the influencer; a friendly High Personal reaction is doing whatever can be done to help the influencer.

Diplomacy: Desperate arguments, impassioned speeches.

Seduction: Promising anything.

Intimidation: Dramatic and brutal threats backed up by mutations or other powers.

Grovelling: Ohgreatandpowerfulmasteriwhoamnothi
ngbutalowlyworm...

Low Social: Social interactions normally involve demonic society and social contacts. A Low Social interaction requires no risk on the part of the target; examples might be introducing the character to a contact, spreading a rumour and so on. A hostile Low Social reaction might be snubbing or insulting the influencer; a positive result might be giving the character some simple help.

Diplomacy: Smooth talking.

Seduction: Flirtation and charm.

Intimidation: Veiled threats.

Grovelling: Flattery.

Medium Social: These interactions are ones that will impact on the target and make it risk its social standing to a degree. Examples might be supporting the character politically or socially, or the target using his social sway to benefit the character. A hostile Medium Social reaction generally involves the target deliberately making the character's life hell, sabotaging future social events and other malice. A friendly Medium Social reaction would be supporting the character.

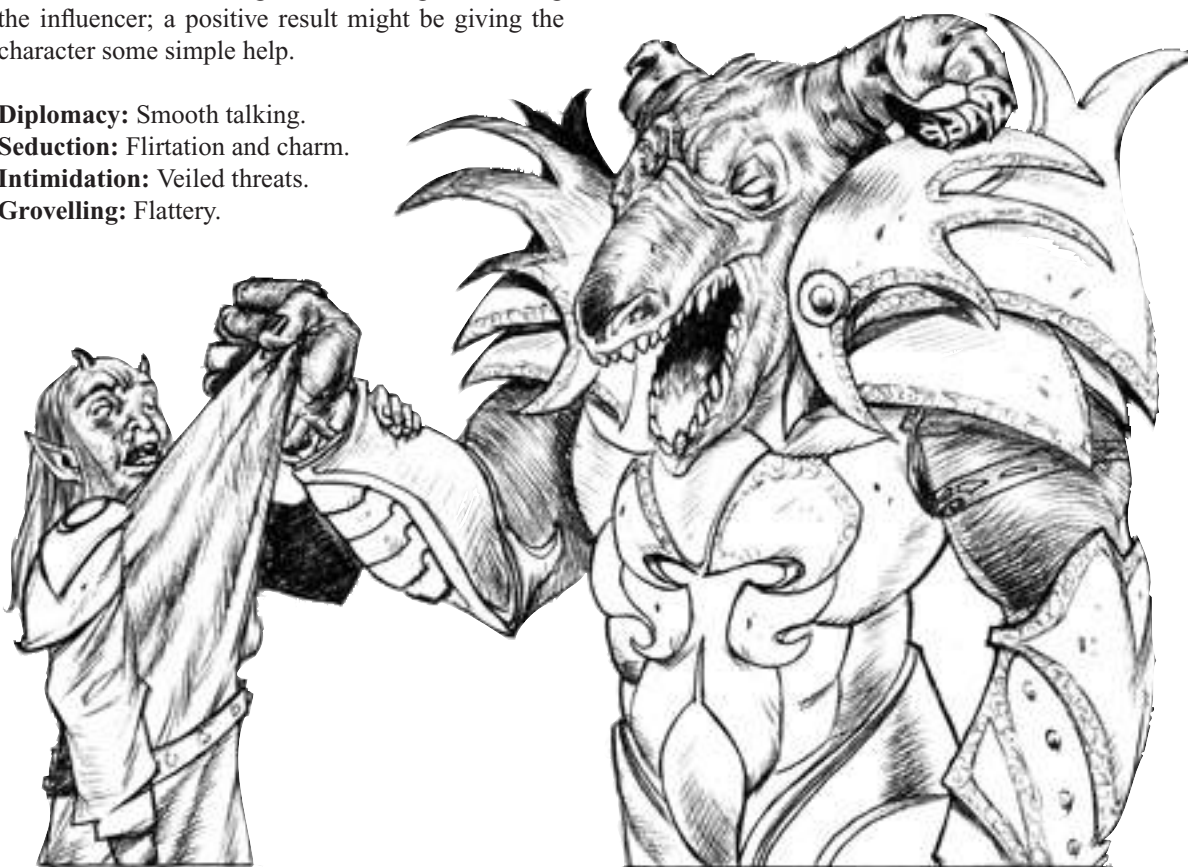
Diplomacy: Carefully chosen lies and a well-constructed argument.

Seduction: Flattering the ego.

Intimidation: Threatening the target's allies and holdings.

Grovelling: Reverse psychology.

High Social: A High Social influencing attempt could ruin the target's reputation; examples include a noble supporting an unpopular new tax, freeing damned souls, coming out against a famed duellist. A hostile High Social reaction might be the target trying to have the character executed for heresy or spreading vicious accusations and rumours about the character. A friendly High Social reaction is wholehearted and complete support for the character's goals.



Diplomacy: Eloquent and inspiring speeches.
Seduction: Glamour and charm.
Intimidation: Raging threats and fury.
Grovelling: Pathetic despair.

Low Formal: Low Formal interactions are petty bureaucratic requests or problems, quotidian affairs of state, minor official business and so on. A character needing to expedite a bureaucratic request or beg a favour from a noble might make a Low Formal request. A failed Low Formal influence attempt might result in mere bureaucratic indifference or petty malice. A successful attempt results in the character's request being heard.

Diplomacy: Well-worded request.
Seduction: Flirtation.
Intimidation: Mild threats
Grovelling: Flattery and hard-luck stories.

Medium Formal: Medium Formal interactions require the target to extend the reach of his bureaucratic or official power to the maximum without actually breaking the rules. A baron might be convinced to send its army to threaten another noble's border; a clerk might 'forget' to process an arrest warrant. A failed Medium Formal attempt draws official wrath and censure.

Diplomacy: Clever bureaucratic doubletalk.
Seduction: Under-the-counter seduction.
Intimidation: Threats of attack or assassination.
Grovelling: Throwing oneself on the mercy of the court.

High Formal: High Formal interactions force the target to do whatever he can using the resources of his official power. A successful attempt could plunge a domain into war and get the target executed for treason. A failed attempt invariably draws the full wrath of the office down upon the character.

Diplomacy: Deeply persuasive argument.
Seduction: Affairs against the better judgement of the target.
Intimidation: Threats which outweigh the risk.
Grovelling: Convincing the target that the character is his only true ally and that everyone else is out to get him.

Starting Arena

In most cases, an Influence attempt will begin in a Low or Medium arena – this is the Games Master's choice. Any life-threatening or otherwise significant situation is going to be Medium. The influencer can attempt to escalate the attempt to another arena by increasing the DC. Moving from a Low to a Medium arena increases the DC by +10. Moving from a Medium to a High arena increases the DC by +20.

A character can also shift Arena from one type to another – from Formal to Social or Personal and vice versa. A shift in Arena increases the DC by +10. An Arena shift cannot be combined with an escalation – just because a character can seduce a noble lord does not mean he can convince the lord to declare war on the rest of the Pit. If an encounter is shifted from one Arena to another, the influencer can choose which of the two arenas will be used to determine the result – a character could get a Social result out of a Formal encounter by moving the Formal to the Social.

Influence Basics

Characters can use the **Diplomacy**, **Grovel**, **Intimidate** and **Seduction** skill to alter the attitudes of other characters. Use the Changing Non Player Character Attitudes table below to determine the effectiveness of checks.

During any Influencing attempt, the target may make a Sense Motive check opposed by the influencer's Bluff to discern the influencer's rough goals in making the Influence attempt – a target could realise that the Influencer is deliberately trying to seduce him and does not have any real desire for him – but this does not affect the result of the Influencing check. A target may attempt to result an Influencing check by making a skill check to resist, opposed by the influencer's Influence skill check; if this check is successful, the new Attitude is one worse than it would normally be.

Diplomacy is the most flexible, but also the most difficult. There is no set result for a Diplomacy attempt, but the DC is increased by +5 over the values

CHANGING NON PLAYER CHARACTER ATTITUDES

Initial Attitude	New Attitude (DC to achieve)				
	Hostile	Unfriendly	Indifferent	Friendly	Helpful
Hostile	Less than 20	20	25	35	50
Unfriendly	Less than 5	5	15	25	40
Indifferent	—	Less than 1	1	15	30
Friendly	—	—	Less than 1	1	20
Helpful	—	—	—	Less than 1	1

listed in the table above. Diplomacy is resisted with Diplomacy.

Groveling works best when the Influencing character appears weaker than the target. Mortals and damned are almost always weaker than demons – unless the non-demon is known to be a particularly potent individual, then use the DC listed above. Demons who are five or more levels lower than the target also use the listed DC. When creatures are attempting to Grovel to their peers, the listed DC is increased by +10. Grovel is resisted with Sense Motive.

Intimidation works best when the Influencing character appears stronger than the target. Mortals and damned are almost always weaker than demons – unless the non-demon is known to be a particularly potent individual, then increase the listed DC by +10. Demons who are five or more levels lower than the target also increase the listed DC by +10. Otherwise, use the listed DC. Intimidate is resisted with Intimidate.

Seduction works best between peers. It relies primarily but not exclusively on sexual and emotional appeals; increase the DC by +5 or more for unlikely pairings or lack of appeal. A successful Seduction check generally leads to some sort of bonding between the Influencer and the target. Seduction is resisted with Concentration.

Most of the modifiers listed below can be applied to the influence's Influence skill check, or to the DC to alter the target's attitude. In general, no modifier should be bigger than +20, although there are exceptions.

Universal Arena Modifiers

These apply to all Influence attempts.

Noble Ranks: Nobility carries with it a great deal of weight in demonic circles. The mortal tribes, too, have their chieftains and sorcerers. The modifiers for noble rank are as follows:

NOBLE INFLUENCE

Rank	Bonus
Captain	+1
Baron	+2
Viscount	+3
Earl	+4
Duke	+5
Grand Duke	+8
Head of House	+10

Faking Noble Rank

A character can attempt to disguise himself as a noble to get the noble's Influence bonus. This is quite difficult, as the character must both disguise himself and make a successful Bluff check. Any noble above the rank of Earl is famous throughout the Pit, so it is very likely the character will be recognised.

These values are multiplied by five in any Social or Formal arena. A character representing a noble gets an Influence bonus equal to that of noble two ranks lower than his master (so the word of a Duke's agent is on a par with that of a Viscount).

Note that the bonuses for two nobles of the same rank cancel each other out – two Dukes arguing in the Auditorium would be evenly matched. One has a +25 bonus to its Influence attempt (+5, multiplied by 5 as this is a Formal arena), the other increases the DC to Influence it by +25 for the same reason.

Covenants: The magical bonds on Covenants have a strong effect on any Influencing attempts – the holder of the Covenant has a bonus equal to one-fifth of the Covenant strength when trying to Influence the debtor. Furthermore, the debtor may gain a bonus equal to one-fifth of the Covenant strength when trying to resist Influences that would force him to act against the Covenant's holder.

For example, an impish major-domo is Covenanted to its fiend master with a strength of 30. The DC to Intimidate the imp is increased by +6 when trying to convince the imp to betray its master.

Personal Arena Modifiers

These modifiers only apply to Personal Arenas.

Blackmail: Threatening to expose some crime or damaging secret of the target is a classic debating technique in the Pit, one of the cornerstones of Infernal politics and society. The size of the bonus depends on how damaging the blackmail material is.

BLACKTAIL

Material	Bonus
Minor failing, one that would draw mild punishment; slackness on duty	+1
Minor scandal, taking bribes	+2
Associating with enemy, criminal behaviour	+4
Seduced by enemy, associating with heretics, treachery	+10
Revealing this evidence will get the target killed	+20

Bribery: Cash is always welcome in the Pit. A bribe of one crown per level of the character *squared* gives a +1 bonus to Influencing.

Celebrations: The lavish celebrations of the hellkin carry with them a considerable cachet; promising the target an invitation to a party and so on gives an Influence bonus. See page 100 for the rules for Influence bonuses from celebrations.

Deceit & Bluff: An influencer can attempt to trick a character in a Personal Arena with a Bluff check – the other two arenas are too public and it is easy to prove the falseness of a Bluff, so Bluffs cannot normally be used in these arenas. The influencer makes a Bluff check, opposed by the target's Sense Motive. If the check is successful, up to half the check result can be used as a bonus to the Influence attempt.

Personal Risk: The personal risk posed to the target by agreeing to the Influencing attempt can increase the DC, as follows.

PERSONAL RISK

Risk	DC Increase
Minor injury, loss of items	+1
Painful injury, loss of money or significant item	+2
Significant injury, loss of all possessions, Dissolution	+4
Death	+10
Certain, painful, agonising death	+20

Social Arena Modifiers

These modifiers only apply to Social Arenas.

Celebrations: The bonuses from celebrations are normally used in the Social Arena. Under normal circumstances, celebration bonuses cannot be used to increase an Influence DC.

Fame: The bonus from noble rank is essentially a fame bonus, but even commoner characters who have won renown or infamy in the Pit can benefit from fame. Fame can both increase the DC and provide a bonus to an Influence check.

FAME

Nature of Fame	Bonus
Well known locally	+1
Respected warrior or daemon	+2
Has accomplished one or more great deeds; a rising star in the Pit	+4
Famed throughout the whole Pit for your deeds.	+10
One of a handful of powerful and famous hellkin who would be recognised anywhere.	+20

Saving Face: Threats of injury and damage are rare in the Social Arena – saying 'I'll smash your ugly face in if you don't help me' is rather empty if the target knows there are lots of powerful guards present at the party who will intervene to stop such attacks. However, the threat of losing social standing is almost as great as that of physical injury.

SAVING FACE

Level of Damage	Bonus
Minor embarrassment	+1
Insult	+2
Significant embarrassment and loss of influence	+4
Disgrace and ruin	+10
Permanent exile	+20

Social Pressure: In the Personal Arena, the best another character can do is make an Aid Another action to give a +2 bonus to a Diplomacy check. The Social Arena, however, is far more open to peer pressure. Another character can give an Influence bonus to a check, but the total size of this Influence bonus cannot be larger than the total of existing Influence bonuses. For example, if a character has an Influence bonus of +5 to a Seduction check, then having a Baron (Influence +10 normally) lend its support to the attempt would only add a maximum of +5 Influence.

Formal Arena Modifiers

The following modifiers apply to the Formal Arenas.

Law & Precedent: The demonic justice system is largely non-existent, being based primarily on bribes and threats. However, to arbitrate inter-House

arguments, a massive bureaucracy has grown up in Pandemonium and the edicts of this bureaucracy have filtered down to the level of individual demons. With a successful Knowledge (law) check, a character can quote laws to suit its purpose.

LAW & PRECEDENT

Knowledge (law) Check Result	Bonus
0-9	+0
10-14	+1
15-19	+2
20-29	+4
30-39	+10
40+	+20

Official, Economic or Military Pressure: While the Formal Arena is not open to peer pressure like the Social Arena is, characters can still exert pressure through other means. Dealing with a bureaucracy or other noble might call for Official Pressure – the support of another organisation or faction. Economic pressure involves threats to the target's finances, holdings and iliaster supply, while Military pressure comes from having warriors or armies that can threaten the target.

OFFICIAL PRESSURE

Type	Bonus
Stern letter	+1
Support from a part of a faction – from a Duke, or from a minor House.	+2
Support from all local faction members – all the Glabretchi in a city, for example	+4
Support from a whole faction	+10
Wholehearted support from a whole faction – refuse us and the Glabretchi will be at your throats for all time	+20

ECONOMIC PRESSURE

Type	Bonus
Minor loss of wealth or trading partner	+1
Denial of a trivial item or luxury	+2
Significant loss of wealth or major trading partner	+4
Denial of a significant item, like the supply of souls or ore.	+10
Economic ruin and devastation	+20

MILITARY PRESSURE

Type	Bonus
Sabre-rattling – mentioning that you have armies at the ready	+1
Armies on the border – provoking and pressing the issue	+2
Raids – attacking key industrial sites, or just causing chaos	+4
Invasion	+10
Total war	+20

Forgery: Bluffing is difficult in the Formal Arena; a demon can claim to be the representative of the Grand Duke of Skulls at a party and get away with it, but try the same trick at a court and the demon would be asked for proof. Forgery can provide such proofs. The influencer makes a Craft (script) check, opposed by the target's Spot. If the check is successful, up to half the check result can be used as a bonus to the Influence attempt.

Duties: A demon's loyalty and determination to serve – or, more likely, its abject terror at the thought of being punished for disloyalty – can give it a bonus to resisting Influence attempts. Even demons who want to betray their lord might get this bonus, as their desire for treachery wars with their fear or punishment.

DUTIES

Type	Bonus
Minor clerk, guard on the roads	+1
Guard at a toll-booth, city watch	+2
Guard at a fortress or industrial site	+4
Trusted bodyguard, Covenant-holder	+10
Major-domo or aide, warlord.	+20

Making an Influence Check

The rules for making an Influence check using these expanded options are largely unchanged from the basic rules presented in *Book of the Damned*.

- ⊗ The Games Master selects the type of arena. Normally, the type will be determined by where the encounter takes place – Personal under most circumstances, Social at any public event or gathering, Formal when dealing with another character in an official capacity and so on. The intensity is determined by the character's urgency and the current situation – Low for most encounters, Medium for dangerous or important encounters, High in climactic encounters and dire situations.

- ⊗ Both the influencer and the target work out which bonuses apply. The influencer can try to escalate the arena or switch to another type of arena. Bonuses can be Influence bonuses, the modifiers that apply to each form of Influencing (Groveling works best when the influencer is weaker than the target, Seduction between peers and so on), as well as the normal bonuses for a high Charisma and so on.
- ⊗ The influencer makes an Influence check (using Diplomacy, Groveling, Intimidation or Seduction) against a DC. The DCs are listed in the Changing Non Player Character Attitudes table above, and may be increased by the modifiers for rank, duties and so on.
- ⊗ The target may make a Sense Motive check to determine the influencer's intentions. If this check is successful, the target may then attempt to resist the Influencing attempt. Diplomacy is resisted with Diplomacy, Groveling with Sense Motive, Intimidation with Intimidation and Seduction with Concentration.

- ⊗ If the Influencing check was successful, then the target's attitude is changed. If the target successfully resisted the influencing, then the resulting attitude is one step worse than it would normally be.
- ⊗ If the Influencing check failed, then the target's attitude may also change for the worse, depending on the situation. Failed Intimidation checks are the most likely to anger a target; failed Diplomacy checks the least likely. The more intense the arena, the bigger the shift in attitude on a success or failure.

Results

The results of an attitude change vary depending on the arena. Getting a friendly result from a Helpful Personal Arena basically means that the target is well disposed towards the influencer, but owes him nothing more than a nod, a positive word and a minor helping hand. A Friendly High Personal result means that the target will probably give his life for the influencer.

PERSONAL

	Low	Medium	High
Hostile	Malice and dislike	Attack, malice	Vicious attack
Unfriendly	Insults and petty sabotage	Deliberate sabotage	Permanent hatred
Indifferent	Blank ignorance	Callous disregard	Indifference
Friendly	Acceptance and convivial chat	Advice, minor gifts	Hospitality, all reasonable aid, protection from enemies
Helpful	Advice, minor gifts	Invitation of hospitality, some aid	Whatever can be done

SOCIAL

	Low	Medium	High
Hostile	Malice and insults	Character assassination	Actual assassination
Unfriendly	Snubbing	Social backbiting and gossip	Character assassination
Indifferent	Polite nothings	Very polite nothings	The most eloquent nothings ever uttered
Friendly	Chat and charm	Advice and patronage	Endorsement and support
Helpful	Advice and patronage	Endorsement and support	Full and unrestrained support; what's mine is yours

FORNIAL

	Low	Medium	High
Hostile	Bureaucratic sabotage and missing files	Criminal proceedings	Execution
Unfriendly	'You'll need to fill out these forms... all of them.'	Accusations of treachery; attention of local authorities	Accusations of treachery and heresy, with manufactured proof
Indifferent	Blank indifference.	Grey bureaucratic boredom	The machine moves on uncaring
Friendly	'Fill out this form, it'll cut through all the red tape.'	Aid and support	Full aid and support possible
Helpful	Aid and quick expedition of requests	Full aid and support possible	Full aid and support, even if it breaks the rules

Examples

Bribing the Guards: The stalker Timon needs to get past some guards at a canal lock on the Third Circle. Timon has an Intimidate score of +10. The Games Master rules that the encounter begins at Low Formal; the guards are just doing their jobs and Timon is just another traveller on a little boat sailing down the weep-canal. Timon needs to get the guards to Friendly at least. If Timon attempts to Intimidate the guards, they will get a +1 bonus to the DC because of their duties – and the Games Master rules that because of the guards' defences atop the lock, they feel superior to Timon, increasing the DC by another +10.

Rather than risk an Intimidate check at DC 26, Timon decides on a different approach. It docks its ship and creeps up to the dock. It meets with one of the guards privately, which is a Personal situation instead of a Formal one. Here, the guard does not have the bonuses from the lock or from its duties. Timon catches one of the guards and explains, in hideous detail, what the stalker will do unless the lock is opened to its boat. Intimidated, the guard complies.

Rallying the Troops: Bronwyn of the Bori tribe is a warrior and raider; she advocates attacking the demons preying on the Bori territory before they can launch another onslaught. The chieftain of the camp, an elder warrior named Tiac, believes that such an attack would be disastrous.

Bronwyn has a high Diplomacy, as does Tiac. Tiac also has the Influence bonus from his rank, Bronwyn has a bonus from her fame as a skilled warrior.

If Bronwyn challenges Tiac in the tribe's council, that would be a Formal arena. Her Fame would give her no bonus there. However, the decision to go to war is a Formal decision. She waits until the tribe are having a feast – a Social occasion. There, she tries to convince the tribe to support her, using Diplomacy and her Fame. She can try to convert the Social occasion into a Formal area if she wishes, by increasing the DC by +10 – or she can just win the support of the tribe and use that as Pressure to convince Tiac at the next council.

The Inferno Line Scam: A similar situation – Kyri the succubus is plotting an expedition to the legendary Inferno Line in the Second Circle. For this, she needs vehicles and equipment. She meets with an artificer industrialist called Gallic of the Zethu at a party. She simply switches the arena result from Social to Formal and blasts Gallic with Seduction and charm. The poor artificer is quite overcome by this social onslaught and – quite without realising what it is doing – agrees to give Kyri what she needs.

Debate in the High Halls: Houses Oblurott and Sturrach are clashing again in the Auditorium. The current speakers are their two Hierarchs. Both Hierarchs



have the full support of their Houses (+20 Pressure) and are the equivalent of Dukes (+20 Rank). They also have sufficient economic and military sway to give them both another +20 Influence. A low-ranking demon who happened to irritate a Hierarch would be instantly destroyed, politically and socially – a Hierarch could easily escalate a Formal complaint from Low to High and have plenty of influence left over to get a Helpful (execute this irritation now) result.

Influence & Roleplaying

The detailed rules for Influence described above are not intended to replace roleplaying – indeed, the Games Master should give bonuses for well-roleplayed encounters. The intent of the rules is to make diplomacy and politics as tactical as combat and war – the Players should be scouting out what political allies a foe has, sabotaging his support and building their own power base. Even if a Games Master prefers to use roleplaying to resolve social situations instead of rolling, then the various Influence bonuses should be used as guideline to determine how successful a character's attempt to persuade another is.

There is no need to use these rules for every social encounter; an imp trying to wheedle information from another demon can just make a quick Grovel check and get the target babbling instead of going through the lengthy 'Low Personal Arena, +5 bonus because the target is drunk' ritual.

The other effect of these new rules is to scale what can be done with a high Influencing skill. For example, it is relatively easy for a character to get a high Intimidate (high Strength + lots of size increases) or Seduction (Riethii malcubus with the right mutations) bonus. However, just because a character has the skill ranks, he should not automatically be able to bully a Duke into submission in the middle of court. The necessity to escalate arenas and the bonuses for rank and other situational modifiers make sure that characters have to plan major social encounters just like they would plan for major conflicts.

Influence Bonuses

The various forms of Influence bonuses work slightly differently; in long-term political games, the Games Master may want the players to keep track of these bonuses, as follows.

- ⊗ **Circumstance Bonuses:** These bonuses, which include Pressure, Forgeries & Bluffs, Blackmail, Personal Risk and other factors stemming from

the immediate situation, are essentially once-offs. The Games Master should determine these modifiers on the fly depending on the encounter. While the characters can prepare these bonuses in advance – say, by raiding soul-slaves to put economic pressure on a domain – circumstance bonuses are in constant flux and will change over time.

- ⊗ **Celebrations & Fame:** Influence bonuses – or penalties – stemming from notoriety or recent deeds are notoriously short-lived. The Pit moves ever onwards, forgetting past heroism and crimes and looking for the next thrill. These bonuses drop by five points each month until reduced to zero. Furthermore, Influence bonus from Celebrations and Fame can only be used once – a demon cannot trade on its actions for long.

The flipside of this is that Celebration and Fame bonuses are usually very large indeed – a bonus of +10 or +20 for a glorious deed is not uncommon and as the Party Sizes table above shows, bonuses can exceed +500. A maximum of +20 can be used on any one check. The usual approach is to parlay a huge temporary bonus into a smaller but permanent rank bonus.

- ⊗ **Ranks & Position:** Influence bonuses that come from a character's social position or title are constantly in effect. They have their greatest effect in the Social and Formal arenas and are permanent as long as the character holds the rank.

Investigation & Gossip

Demonic society is merrily vicious. They tear shreds out of each other – often literally – for entertainment. The few Earls, Dukes and Grand Dukes are the permanent rocks and shoals and landmarks in the ocean of blood; the hosts of courtesans and gossips are the sharks. Minor nobles and rising demons can be torn down with a few poisonous words.

There is a constant hunger for new information; the much-vaunted Riethii spy network feeds this hunger. Every rising demon is investigated and scanned for any weaknesses or handles that can be used to manipulate them. Slay a mortal hero or benandanti champion on the Second Circle, and by the next witching every malcubus and deceiver on the Seventh knows your name, your deed – and your secret shames and weaknesses.

Discovering another character's weaknesses requires research. Gather Information checks are the usual tool, although Knowledge (nobility & royalty) and other investigative skills can also be useful.

INVESTIGATION & GOSSIP

Target	Skill (DC)
Current Rank	Gather Information (DC 10) or Knowledge (nobility & royalty) (DC 10)
Current Fame	Gather Information (DC 10)
Current Celebration	Gather Information (DC 10)
Current Title	Gather Information (DC 15) or Knowledge (nobility & royalty) (DC 20)
Secrets for blackmail	Gather Information (DC 25+)
Pressure	Knowledge (local) or Warcraft or Appraise (DC 20+)

Social Poison

It is possible to sabotage another character's Influence. Social Poisoning requires spreading damaging rumours and lies about the target. Mechanically, this is an Influencing attempt against a suitable target, like a noble, social lynchpin, gossip, influential courtesan or newspaper. 1d20 points of the victim's Fame or Celebration bonus oppose this Influencing attempt – and as Fame and Celebration bonuses can only be used once, this saps the victim's influence. The risk is that the sapped Fame and Celebration bonus to the

DC results in the Influence attempt failing and turning others against the poisoner.

Social Poison can also be used to attack permanent Influence, although at lesser effect. Each successful Influencing attempt drops Influence by 1d6 points in the Social or Formal arenas for one month.

Negotiation

Major negotiations and diplomatic events should be broken into several Influencing attempts. For example, a trade negotiation between two domains could be broken into an initial approach, a formal ball to welcome the delegates, and the negotiation itself. Failing to get a Friendly reaction or better results in the negotiation failing.

The various Houses and factions of the Pit are deeply divided. Even the mortal groups distrust each other. Initial attitudes are:

Rising in Rank

Advancing in rank requires an Influence check with a result of Helpful in the Formal arena. The modifiers listed under each rank in *Book of the Tormentor* apply.

	Astyanath	Carthenay	Glabretch	Haimon	Oblurott	Lictat	Riethii	Sturrach	Zethu	Priests of the Morningstar	Free Cities	Independents	Mercenaries	Faustians	Early Tribes	Bori	Harrowers
Astyanath	—	I	H	U	U	U	F	U	I	F	H	U	F	I	H	U	H
Carthenay	I	—	U	F	F	U	U	F	F	U	H	U	F	I	U	U	H
Glabretch	H	U	—	H	H	I	H	U	U	U	I	U	I	I	H	H	H
Haimon	U	F	H	—	H	U	U	U	U	Hp	H	U	I	U	H	H	H
Oblurott	U	F	H	H	—	U	U	H	U	I	H	U	F	F	H	H	H
Lictat	U	U	I	U	U	—	U	U	U	F	I	F	F	F	H	H	H
Riethii	F	U	H	U	U	U	—	H	I	U	H	I	F	F	H	H	H
Sturrach	U	F	U	U	H	U	H	—	U	I	H	U	I	U	H	H	H
Zethu	I	F	U	U	U	U	I	U	—	I	H	U	U	F	H	H	H
Priests of the Morningstar	F	U	U	Hp	I	F	U	U	I	—	H	F	I	I	H	H	H
Free Cities	H	H	I	H	H	I	H	H	H	H	—	F	F	I	U	U	U
Independents	U	U	U	U	U	F	I	U	U	F	F	—	F	I	U	U	U
Mercenaries	F	F	I	I	F	F	F	I	U	I	F	F	—	I	U	F	H
Faustians	I	I	I	U	F	F	F	U	F	I	I	I	I	—	I	U	U
Early Tribes	H	U	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	U	U	U	I	—	F	F
Bori	U	U	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	U	U	F	U	F	—	I
Harrowers	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	U	U	H	U	F	I	—

H=Hostile U=Unfriendly I=Indifferent F=Friendly Hp=Helpful

WAR IN HELL

The Infernum is a realm born of and sustained by war. The purpose of the hellkin is to make war – once, they were a weapon aimed at Heaven, but now they turn on themselves. Souls are tormented and the bounty of Hell squandered on an endless civil strife. The rising powers of the Houses find glory on the battlefields; every throne is built on a pile of skulls.

War in Hell is constantly evolving; where the demons once fought with claw and tooth alone, now they employ artillery and tanks and war-sorceries as well. The progress towards total war is inevitable and moves ever swifter.

This chapter covers rules for mass combat between units of demons and other forces in Hell. These rules replace those covered in the Warcraft skill description (see page 96, *Book of the Damned*).

Unit Statistics

A unit is a group of soldiers on the battlefield, who move and act as a single entity. Units have a similar set of ability scores to normal characters – indeed, the statistics of a unit are derived from those of the normal characters who make up the unit.

Size

Units use the same categorisations of size as characters, but obviously the scale is different.

Size	Number of Troops	Size Modifier
Fine	1	+8
Diminutive	5	+4
Tiny	25	+2
Small	100	+1
Medium	250	+0
Large	500	-1
Huge	1,000	-2
Gargantuan	5,000	-4
Colossal	10,000	-8

Creatures of Large size or bigger count as multiple troops, as do vehicles. A Large creature counts as

five troops, a Huge creature as 25, a Gargantuan creature as 100 and a Colossal creature as 250. Two Colossal creatures on the battlefield count as a Large unit, for example.

Average Level (Hit Points)

The average level of a unit is calculated by adding up the levels or hit dice of the creatures in the unit and dividing by the number of creatures in the unit. Creatures who are more than five levels higher or lower than the majority of the unit cannot be part of the unit – they can be special characters (see below), but cannot be ordinary troopers within that unit.

A unit's hit points are calculated by multiplying the average level plus a modifier by the number of creatures in the unit. The modifier depends on the type of creatures in the unit (see the Creature Traits table on page 122).

The modifier is based on the above average hit points per hit dice for each creature type, +1 per +2 Constitution modifier. Damned, embodied damned and angels have bigger modifiers because of their resilience or healing abilities.

Unit Rating

Unit rating measures the unit's experience with battle, training, cohesion, morale and camaraderie.

Rating	Rating Modifier	Sample Units
Rabble	-6	Damned
Untrained	-4	Free City Levy, spawn host
Green	-2	Branded
Average	+0	Biomechanoids, average demon force, benandanti raiders
Veteran	+2	Mercenary force, Haimon Legionnaires
Crack	+4	Joyous Legion, Brokenlanders
Elite	+6	Slaughterers, Bori

CREATURE TRAITS

Creature Type	Unit Hit Point Modifier	Natural Armour	Good Saving Throws	Poor Saving Throws
Abhorei	Base Creature +1	Base Creature +1	Fortitude and Will	Reflex
Angels	+3	+0	Fortitude and Will	Reflex
Animals	+0	+1	Fortitude	Reflex and Will
Artificers	-1	+3	Fortitude and Will	Reflex
Beasts	+0	+4	Will	Fortitude, Reflex
Benandanti	+3	+6	Fortitude and Reflex	Will
Biomechanoid	+2	+4	None	Fortitude, Reflex, Will
Brokenlanders	+2	+6	Reflex and Will	Fortitude
Constructs	+2	+4	None	Fortitude, Reflex and Will
Damned	+2	+0	Fortitude	Reflex and Will
Deceivers	+0	+2	Will	Fortitude and Reflex
Embodied Damned	+3	+2	Fortitude	Reflex and Will
Fiends	+2	+3	Reflex	Fortitude and Will
Hulks	+3	+4	Fortitude	Reflex and Will
Imps	-1	+2	Reflex and Will	Fortitude
Malcubi	+0	+2	Reflex and Will	Fortitude
Mortals	+0	+0	Reflex and Will	Fortitude
Slavers	+0	+3	Fortitude	Reflex and Will
Spawn	+0	+2	Fortitude	Reflex and Will
Stalkers	+0	+3	Fortitude and Reflex	Will

Rabble are untrained troops that do not wish to fight; press-ganged or slave units, for example. Almost all units of the damned (except the Haimon legions) are Rabble.

Untrained troops are peasant levies, rioters and other groups of eager but unskilled fighters. Herds of wild spawn are also Untrained.

Green troops have had some basic military discipline instilled into them, but are not fully trained and have never been tested in combat.

Average troops are unremarkable; they can fight competently against other forces, but have not distinguished themselves. Average and green troops make up the majority of the demonic forces in the Pit.

Veteran troops have faced battle on multiple occasions and are considerably more skilled than lesser troops.

Crack and elite forces are exceedingly rare in the Pit; they are incredibly competent and skilled fighters who have faced death together many times.

A unit's rating modifier is added to its attack and damage rolls, Armour Class, saving throws and damage thresholds.

Damage Thresholds

A unit has three damage thresholds – one when it has taken one-quarter of its hit points in damage, one when it has taken half its hit points in damage and one when it has taken three-quarters of its hit points in damage. Passing these thresholds has the following effects on the unit:

Threshold	Cohesion Check	Attack	Damage
¼	DC 5	-2	Normal
½	DC 10	-4	½
¾	DC 15	-8	½

Cohesion Check: The unit must make a Fortitude save against the listed DC or be Broken (see page 126).

Attack: The penalty the unit suffers to its attack rolls.

Damage: The reduction, if any, to the unit's damage dealing capacity.

Averages and Quick Calculations

As units are made up of groups of characters, the 'correct' way to work out most unit traits is to add up the numbers and divide by the number of characters, then add the rating modifier to reflex group tactics.

However, for situations where the Games Master does not want to bother working out the averages, the quick calculation methods described below can be used. These use a level modifier to approximate the effect of mutations, equipment and other bonuses. Quick calculations should be used when working out unit traits on the fly.

A unit that crosses its $\frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{3}{4}$ thresholds must also make Morale checks against the listed DC or be Broken.

Movement

Movement works similarly to normal character movement, but takes place at chase scale – one 'square' is 50 feet in length, not five feet. A unit's battle movement score is equal to one-tenth of its normal movement score, as battle rounds take much longer than normal rounds. For example, a unit with a movement of 30' would have a battle movement of 3.

Unlike characters, units have a facing, so they must move in a particular direction, can be attacked in the flank or rear and so on. Turning up to 45° costs one movement.

Armour Class

The Armour Class of a unit is the same as the average Armour Class of the soldiers in the unit. To work this out quickly, add the base natural armour of the majority of the creatures in the unit, plus their armour, helmet and shield bonuses, their rating modifier (see Unit Rating, above), the unit size modifier and a bonus depending on the unit level:

Unit Level	Level Bonus
0-5	+1
6-10	+2
11-15	+4
16-20	+6
21-25	+8
26-30	+10

For example, a Small veteran unit composed of 8th level hulks would have an Armour Class of 10 (base) +4 (natural armour) +5 (iron plate) +2 (heavy shield) +2 (facemask) +2 (level bonus) +2 (veterans) +1 (Size) = AC 28.

Attack

The attack bonus of a unit is the average of the attack bonuses of the creatures in the unit, plus their rating modifier. To approximate it, take $\frac{3}{4}$ of average level and add on the average strength bonus, plus the rating and level bonuses as for Armour Class. Note that unlike normal characters, units do not add their size modifier to their attacks – it is not any harder for a Huge unit to attack a Fine one.

Again, the same unit of 8th level veteran hulks would have an attack bonus of 6 ($\frac{3}{4}$ average level) +3 (Strength) +2 (level bonus) +2 (veterans) = 13.

Damage

The damage of a unit is equal to the normal damage inflicted by the unit's weapons plus the average attack bonus plus the unit's rating modifier, minus its size modifier. For quick calculations, take the weapon, including any Strength bonuses, plus its level bonus, plus its rating modifier, *minus* its size modifier – bigger units do more damage.

However, the size modifier normally applies only to *ranged* attacks; to get the size modifier to *melee* attacks, then the unit must execute an Encircle order (see below).

Some weapons have special properties in mass combat; see Weapons, below.

Saving Throws

The saving throws for a unit are again calculated by working out the average saving throw of the characters in the unit and adding on the unit rating

modifier. To quickly calculate saving throws, look up the saving throw tables in *Book of the Damned* and add on the level modifier.

While saving throws are used by units in the same way as they are used normally by characters, they also have three special uses.

Fortitude Saves are used to make **Cohesion checks**, to see if a unit stays intact after taking severe damage.

Reflex Saves are used to make **Warcraft checks** when a unit changes formation.

Will Saves are used to make **Morale checks**, to determine if a unit is shaken or otherwise demoralised.

Warcraft

A unit's Warcraft score measures its ability to follow and execute orders. It is normally equal to the unit's average Warcraft score plus its rating and size modifiers, but if the unit has a special character leading it, then the special character may use his Warcraft skill + the unit's size and rating modifier instead. Larger units are harder to direct in combat.

Mutations & Special Abilities

In battle, the hellkin use their mutations and unholy powers on each other with abandon. Bursts of hellfire and acid rip through troop formations, possessors make commanders turn on their troops or give false orders, sorceries twist the battlefield and block advancing units.

The mass battle system assumes that most of these horrors counter each other out under normal circumstances; it does not matter if a random stalker in the midst of a formation uses a Cloak of Flies to incapacitate another fighter or stabs it in the face. However, if every character in a unit has a particular mutation or ability then this becomes much more of a factor in battle.

The following list of special abilities is not exhaustive; the Games Master is encouraged to come up with new abilities to cover powerful units with mutation combinations. Every unit has a racial special ability; House units also have a House special ability.

CREATURE SPECIAL ABILITIES

Creature Type	Abilities
Abhorei	None
Angels	Boost
Animals	None
Artificers	Weapon Affinity
Astyanath	+2 to hit point modifier
Beasts	None
Benandanti	Boost, DR10/Silver
Biomechanoid	Mindless
Bori	Rage
Brokenlanders	Ignore Armour
Carthenay	None
Constructs	Mindless
Damned	None
Deceivers	Possession
Embodied Damned	None
Fiends	Hellfire (range 3)
Free City Demons	Combined Arms
Glabretch	DR2/Fire, Pestilence
Haimon	Combined Arms
Hulks	Rage
Imps	Messenger
Knights of the Morningstar	+4 bonus to Morale Checks
Lictat	None
Malcubi	Confuse
Mortals	Boost
Oblurott	DR5/Slashing
Riethii	Confuse
Slavers	Handle (damned)
Spawn	Respawn
Stalkers	Scatter
Sturrach	Sturrach units have a +2 bonus to their unit rating modifier
Zethu	Weapon Affinity (bile rifle or shattergun)

Common Special Abilities

Agile: An agile unit can take a 90° turn by spending one movement instead of a 45° turn.

Boost: A unit with the Boost ability can spend iliastrer to improve its dice rolls. Once per round, the unit can get a +4 bonus to an attack roll or saving throw.

Combined Arms: Combined Arms units are trained to work with other units, typically units of the damned. Combined Arms units give a +4

Example Unit: Average Haimon Legion

One of the Haimon dead warriors has the following ability scores and traits:

Haimon Legionnaire (3rd level Damned)

Medium Damned

Progressions: Good Hit Points and Base Attack Bonus, Average Skills and Feats, Poor Saves

Hit Dice: 3d12+6 (25 hp)

Initiative: +1

Speed: 25 ft.

Armour Class: 21 (+1 Dex, +2 natural, +5 chain, +2 shield, +2 helmet), touch 11, flat-footed 20

Base Attack/Grapple: +3/+5

Attack: Spear +6 melee (1d8+4) or javelin +4 ranged (1d6+2)

Full Attack: Spear +6 melee (1d8+4) or javelin +4 ranged (1d6+2)

Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.

Saves: Fort +5, Ref +2, Will +2

Abilities: Str 14, Dex 13, Con 15, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 10

Skills: Disguise +2, Escape Artist +3, Listen +7, Spot +7, Warcraft +5

Feats: Martial Weapons Proficiency, Plasmic Body, Weapon Focus (spear), Weapon Specialisation (spear)

Corruption: 15

Challenge Rating: 3

Equipment: Chain mail, heavy shield, spear, helmet, shortsword, two javelins

Determining the ability scores for a legion of these warriors is as follows:

Size: These damned are deployed in cohorts (ten cohorts to a legion), which are composed of around 1,000 troops. This means the unit size is Huge.

Average Level: The average level is three (there will be higher or lower-level damned in the unit, but they will average out at three. The cohort commander will probably be a special

character. Unit hit points are the average level + 2 (damned) x the number of damned. This works out at a massive 5,000 hit points. The **Threshold** value shows at what point the unit will have to make a Cohesion check. In the case of the Haimon Legion, this is when they are reduced to 3,750, 2,500 and 1,250 hit points.

Rating: Haimon legionnaires are Veterans, giving them a +2 bonus to their attack and damage rolls, saving throws and damage thresholds.

Armour Class: This is taken straight from the character scale, modified by the unit's Size modifier; the legion has AC 21, -4, for a total of 17.

Attack: This is based on the character's attack, plus the unit's Veteran status, for a final attack of +8.

Damage: Again, this is based on the character scale damage plus the rating modifier, for a damage of 1d8+6. Furthermore, if the unit Encircles a foe, it will do at least 1d8+6+4 (Huge size) and will probably be able to flank or rear attack to double or triple its damage.

Saving Throws: As per the character, plus its rating modifier, for Fortitude +7, Reflex +4, Will +4.

Warcraft: The default Warcraft score for this unit is 5 (base) +2 (rating) -4 (size), for a final score of +3. However, the cohort is lead by a 12th level damned with a Warcraft score of +15, so the final rating is a mighty +17.

The cohort ends up looking like this on the battlefield:

Huge Veteran Damned Unit Level 3 (5,000 hp)

Threshold: 3,750/2,500/1,250

Movement: 2.5

AC: 17

Attack: Spear +8 (1d8+6)

Saves: Fortitude +7, Reflex +4, Will +4

Warcraft: +17

bonus to any Warcraft checks made by damned units within 250 feet (5 movement) of them.

Confuse: A unit with the Confuse ability can force an adjacent unit to make a Will save (DC 10 + the confusing unit's level modifier and rating modifier) instead of attacking. If the Will save is failed, the target unit suffers a -4 penalty to all attacks against the confusing unit for the remainder of the battle or automatically fails its next Warcraft check.

DR: Damage reduction functions for unit just as it does for characters.

Handle: A unit with the Handle ability has whips and goads or other tools to force another unit to stay fighting. If the Handle unit is within 50 feet (range 1), then the other unit may use the Handlers' Will save and Warcraft scores.

Hellfire: Hellfire functions in the same way as it does for characters; the damage inflicted by the blast is equal to the result of a Fortitude save.

Ignore Armour: Attacks that ignore armour do not include a unit's armour, helmet or shield bonuses when determining Armour Class.

Messenger: Messenger units can carry orders to neighbouring units. A Messenger unit gives a +4 bonus to Warcraft checks to all units within 250' (5 movement).

Mindless: Mindless units are immune to Morale and Cohesion checks. However, if they do not have an order to execute, they do nothing.

Overrun: A unit with the Crushing ability can move through an enemy unit when executing a charge order.

Pestilence: A unit in combat with a Pestilent unit must make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + the confusing unit's level modifier) or suffer a -2 penalty to all attacks against that unit.

Possession: Possession is used on the battlefield to sow discord and confusion. Instead of attacking, a unit with the Possession trait can attempt to Possess key members of another unit on the battlefield. The target unit must make a Will save (DC 10 + the possessing unit's level modifier) or automatically fail its next Warcraft check.

Rage: A unit with the Rage ability can gain a +4 bonus to attack rolls and damage for one round but automatically fails its next Warcraft check.

Respawn: Spawn produce more spawn when killed. A spawn unit that hits a damage threshold may make a Fortitude save (DC 15) to instantly regain 2d10 hit points, which may bring it back up above the threshold score.

Scatter: A unit with the Scatter ability can switch to Skirmish formation when not engaged without making a Warcraft check.

Terrifying: A Terrifying unit intimidates units in combat with it. A unit damaged by a Terrifying unit must make a Morale check (DC 10 + the Terrifying unit's level modifier + the Terrifying unit's size modifier) or be broken.

Weapon Affinity: A unit with the Weapon Affinity trait gains a +2 bonus to attack when using a particular weapon.

Setup

The battlefield and initial disposition of forces depends on where the armies meet. The bloody plains of the Fifth Circle are the normal venue for combat, but a clever commander will choose the best battlefield for his troops. See the Terrains sidebar for details on the effects different terrains and weathers have on battle.

Formations

A unit's formation affects its performance on the battlefield. By executing a Formation Change order, a unit can attempt a Warcraft check to change formation. If the check is failed, the unit becomes a Mob.

Units can begin in any formation. The only positions allowed to flying units are Broken and Flight.

Broken: A unit that has been defeated in combat and completely shattered is broken. A broken unit is a loose gang of individuals fleeing across the battlefield. They cannot fight back as a unit and take double damage from melee attacks. The only action a broken unit can take is moving away from the enemy, or trying to execute a Rally order.

Terrains

Desert: Any hot, desolate region can swiftly exhaust combatants. Creatures must make a Fortitude save (DC 10) each round or become tired, suffering a cumulative -1 penalty to attacks and movement.

Forest: Forests slow movement to half normal, but block ranged attacks – ranges are reduced to a maximum of 2.

Marsh: Marshes slow movement; all movement is reduced to half normal.

Mountain: Characters attacking downhill have a +1 bonus to attacks.

Ocean: Creatures can only fight in water if they have a Swim speed or are in ships or other ocean-going vehicles.

Urban: Like forests, urban environments block ranged attacks. Furthermore, units larger than Tiny cannot move through streets or buildings.

Conditions

Night: All melee attacks suffer a -2 penalty at night. Ranged attacks suffer a -8 penalty unless the target is illuminated.

Storms & high winds: All ranged attacks suffer a penalty depending on the strength of the wind (see *Book of the Tormentor*, page 50). Flight becomes more difficult.

Smoke & fire: The volcanic environments of the Pit often affect battle; non-demon units lose 5% of their hit points each round due to exposure to poisonous gases and gouts of flame.

Column: Columns are the normal method for organising large numbers of troops as they move across the terrain of Hell. Columns are less than ideal for combat, but can still crop up during ambushes.

Concealed: A Concealed unit is hidden from view. Make a Reflex save for the unit (DC 20) modified by its size modifier. If this check is successful, the unit has concealed itself on the battlefield. It gains a +8 Armour Class bonus against ranged attacks, and has a +4 bonus to attacks on the round it reveals itself.

Defensive Line: A Defensive Line is a shield wall or other protective formation. The troops

are almost stuck in position; they can only trudge slowly forward while maintaining the Defensive Line.

Dug In: A Dug In unit has taken full advantage of whatever cover it can find; it is hiding in buildings or trenches, lurking behind rocks and so on. It cannot move, but gains a massive +8 bonus to Armour Class.

Firing Line: A Firing Line involves stringing the archers or gunners out over a wide area, to give as many of them as possible a shot at the enemy. This works very well as long as they are not attacked in melee, as their spread-out formation leaves them vulnerable to attacks.

Formations

Formation	Formation Check DC	Effects
Broken	—	Double melee damage inflicted on the unit, -8 to Warcraft checks.
Column	5	Allows marching for long periods of time, -2 attacks, -4 Armour Class.
Concealed	20	Hidden from view.
Defensive Line	10	+4 Armour Class, quarter movement.
Dug In	20	+8 Armour Class, no movement.
Firing Line	10	+2 to ranged attacks, double melee damage inflicted on the unit.
Flight	5	Only formation for flyers; +2 Armour Class, -2 to Warcraft checks.
Mob	0	-4 to all Warcraft checks.
Normal	10	—
Skirmish	10	+2 Armour Class, free turns, -4 to Warcraft checks.
Square	10	Cannot be flanked, no movement.
Wedge	15	-2 Armour Class, +2 to melee attacks on a charge.

Flight: Attempting to keep to any formation in the air is very difficult; a Flight is the only non-Broken formation allowable to flyers. It is really just an organised aerial mob.

Mob: A Mob is the generic gang of demons or damned fighting in battle. While a Mob has no major penalties in combat, they are very hard to direct in battle and so suffer a -4 penalty to Warcraft checks.

Normal: A standard formation; a mob with a modicum of discipline.

Skirmish: Units who are Skirmishing have several advantages, notably they can turn for free and have a significant bonus to Armour Class. The downside is that skirmishers are hard to direct in battle.

Square: Normally, a unit has a single face, pointed towards the enemy. However, when surrounded in battle, the normal tactic is to adopt a Square formation in which there are troops with weapons pointed in every direction.

Wedge: A Wedge is an offensive formation, used for smashing into enemy units.

Battle

The stage is set, and the units march in glorious formation into battle. The damned are pushed out in huddled masses, to absorb missile fire from the enemy gunners. Small groups of slavers whip them forward, while stalkers lurk at the sides, ready to flank the enemy. The hulk shock troops are forced into wedges, to shatter the enemy lines. Little artificers cling to the side of tanks and war-spawn, waiting for the signal to strike. Overhead, hosts of fiends flock, hellfire dripping from their claws.

An imp darts forward, its wings beating furiously.

They are all going to die.



Commanders, Generals and Special Characters

General: The character in charge of a whole army.

Commander: The character in charge of a whole unit. If there is no specified commander, then use the unit's Warcraft score.

Special Character: Any character or notable Non-Player Character who is important enough to the campaign to take special actions in battle.

Initiative in Battle

Units have an initiative equal to 1d6 + their Reflex save, rolled at the start of battle. At the start of battle, both generals make opposed Warcraft checks; the higher score wins all initiative ties. A unit's initiative score does not change unless it is broken and reforms after initiating the Rally order.

Mass battle follows the following phases in each round:

- ⊗ Orders
 - ⊗ Execute Orders in sequence of initiative.
 - Exception: A unit can abort to an Attack or Retreat
 - Exception: Special characters can take heroic actions when their unit is affected by an action or is executing an order
- ⊗ Resolution

Each round of battle represents approximately a minute of combat.

Orders

During the Orders phase, the general sends orders to his commanders. The commander must make a Warcraft check to execute the order successfully. Each order lists a Warcraft DC and the results of a failed check. A unit can only execute one order each round.

The two generals also make opposed Warcraft checks at the start of the round, to see which of them has the better grasp of the current situation. The winner's army gets a +4 bonus to all Warcraft checks this round.

Depending on the situation, the order may get distorted or lost as word is brought from the general to the commander. The following penalties apply to the commander's Warcraft check:

⊕ ORDER PENALTIES

Condition	Warcraft Penalty
Unit is engaged in combat	-4
Disruptions in chain of command	-2
Imp messengers available	+2
Screamer connection or sorcery available	+4

A unit can take 10 on a Warcraft check if it is not in combat, under fire or otherwise in danger. A commander can give its own orders, but does not benefit from the +4 bonus from its general winning the opposed Warcraft check. See pages 130-131 for the Order List table.

Aborting Orders

A unit may choose to abort to a Retreat or Attack order at any time up until the execution of its current order. A unit sent to Support another unit could Retreat if the target of its aid is destroyed before it moves to support.

Movement

A unit may move a distance equal its movement score. If the battle is being tracked on a conventional battlemat or grid using the normal scale, then one movement for a unit is equal to 50 feet. At chase scale, a move of 1 is one square. Alternatively, the Games Master may wish to keep the battle in the abstract and just work out roughly where units are in relation to each other.

Movement must be in straight lines; a turn of up to 45° degrees costs one movement.

Various features on the battlefield can slow movement. Some of these may also provide cover; a feature always slows movement, but only provides cover if the entire unit can fit within the

⊕ORDER LIST

Order	Warcraft DC to execute	Success	Failure
Advance	5	The unit moves its full movement.	No action this round.
Attack	5	The unit moves up to its full movement and engages another unit in melee.	No action this round.
Bomb (flyer only)	15	As Fire, but the attack comes from above and ignores cover and formation bonuses to Armour Class (except for Skirmish formation)	No action next round.
Charge	10	The unit moves up to twice its movement and engages another unit in melee. It gets a +1 bonus to its attacks, but its Armour Class is reduced by -1 this round.	As Attack, but the unit still suffers a -1 penalty to Armour Class.
Dive (ranged flyer only)	10	The flying unit returns to the ground and lands.	As a success, but the unit becomes a Mob.
Encircle (in melee only)	15	The unit encircles the foe it is in combat with. The unit must be in melee combat and be larger than the opposition.	The unit encircles the foe it is in combat with, but becomes a Mob.
Feint	15	The unit counters whatever an attacking unit does. Feinting gives a -1 penalty to the unit's attacks this round, but negates the bonuses (not the penalties) from Charge, Slaughter, Swoop and Harass. The unit may move up to its full movement, and may retreat from an engagement.	As Hold, but the unit still suffers a -1 penalty to attacks.
Fire (ranged only)	5	The unit stays still and fires its weapons at the enemy.	No action this round.
Formation Change	10	The unit makes a Warcraft check to change formation and moves its full movement.	The unit moves its full movement but becomes a Mob.
Harass (skirmishers only)	15	The unit snipes and attacks any stragglers in nearby units. The unit may make a melee attack for half damage against an enemy unit within its movement range without being attacked back.	The unit is considered to have Attacked the enemy and is now engaged in melee combat with them.
Hold	10	The unit does not move, but gets to resolve its attack first if attacked.	No action.
Intercept (flyer only)	15	The flyer moves into melee with an enemy flyer unit.	No action.
March	10	The unit moves twice its movement.	As Advance.
Moving Fire (ranged only)	15	The unit moves its movement and fires its weapons at the enemy.	As Advance.
Overwatch (ranged only)	15	The unit does nothing but hold its action to fire on the nearest enemy once they come into view.	No action.
Push (engaged only)	15	The enemy must make a Cohesion check at a DC equal to the damage inflicted or move back 1d4. The unit moves forward to stay engaged.	As attack, but the unit suffers a -2 to its Armour Class until its next action.
Rally (broken only)	20	The unit reforms into a Mob.	No action – the broken unit keeps fleeing.
Retreat	15	The unit breaks into a Mob and moves its full movement backwards.	The unit breaks into a Mob.
Run	15	The unit moves at three times its full movement in a straight line.	As Advance, but the unit breaks into a Mob.

Soar (flyer only)	5	The flying unit moves high above the battlefield, from where it can execute another flyer-only move like Bomb, Intercept or Swoop.	No action.
Slaughter (melee only)	15	The unit does double damage against a fleeing or retreating unit, but suffers a -4 penalty to Armour Class this round.	As Attack.
Special Action	5	The unit uses one of its special abilities. See below.	No action
Suppressive Fire (ranged only)	15	The unit fires at the nearest unit, trying to disrupt its action. The attack only does half damage, but the target must make a Will save at a DC equal to the damage inflicted or lose its next action.	As Fire.
Support	15	The unit holds its position, but charges to block any attempts to Charge or Encircle a neighbouring allied unit within its movement range.	As Attack.
Swoop	15	As Charge, but ignores cover and formation bonuses (except Skirmish formation).	No action.
Withdraw (engaged only)	15	The unit moves half its movement backwards, but stays engaged. The enemy unit can choose to break off the engagement.	As Retreat.

feature. If the unit is bigger than the feature, then it may ignore the movement penalty if it is willing to break into a Mob as stragglers are left behind.

Common battlefield features are:

Feature	Movement Penalty	Cover
Low wall or hedge	-1	Yes, +4 AC
Small forest	-2	Yes, +4 AC
Trench	-2	Yes, +4 AC
Rubble and broken ground	-1	Yes, +2 AC
Overgrown or difficult ground	-1	No

Flyers just above the battlefield move in the same way as ground-based troops. Flyers using the Soar order race to high above the battlefield, where they wheel at great speeds. They can be directed to swoop back down using orders like Bomb, Swoop or Dive.

Attack

Attacks between units are resolved in a similar way to attacks between characters. The major difference is that **an attack that misses by less than ten still deals half the normal amount of damage**. For example, an attack roll of 15 against AC 20 will still do half damage. This is because a unit attack roll represents dozens of separate slashes and blows, not a single thrust.

Units may take 10 on attacks in mass combat.

Ranged Attacks

Ranged Attacks have a range (see Weapons, below, or divide the normal character-scale range by 50'). To make a Ranged Attack, the unit executes an order like Fire and makes an attack roll. For every range increment beyond the first, the attacker suffers a -2 penalty to hit.

Ranged Attacks Against Flyers: A ground-based unit can attempt a ranged attack against a Soaring flyer, but suffers a -10 penalty to hit. Flyers suffer the same penalties when firing on each other; however, flyers can use ranged weapons in 'melee' with each other when using the Intercept action, as flying melee is really dog-fighting.

Siege Weapons and Artillery: Artillery uses the same fire orders, but is less accurate with its shots. See Siege Weapons below.

Remember that ranged attacks *subtract* the unit's size modifier to the damage inflicted by the unit.

A unit can only fire at targets that it is facing.

Melee Attacks

Some notes first:

- ⊗ **There are no attacks of opportunity.** The closest is the Feint order.
- ⊗ **Reach works differently:** Units adjacent to each other can attack each other. Units composed of





creatures with reach gain a +1 bonus to damage for every five feet of reach.

Melee attacks work just like a melee attack between characters.

Engaged: A unit in melee combat is considered to be Engaged. It cannot move except by making a Push or Withdraw order – unless it is engaged with a unit that is three or more size categories smaller than it, in which case it may push past by breaking into a Mob.

Note that units do not subtract their size modifier from the damage inflicted in melee unless they execute an Encircle order. If a unit executes an Encircle order and is one or more size categories larger than the opposition, it is now Flanking the target. If a unit executes an Encircle order and is two or more size categories larger, it is now also attacking the enemy in the rear.

Flanking: Attacking a unit in the flank doubles the damage inflicted by melee attacks.

Rear Attack: Attacking a unit in the rear triples the damage inflicted by melee attacks. Units in a Square formation have no rear.

Attacking Units that are already engaged: If a unit is engaged, it cannot move (except by executing a Push or Withdraw order). Its flanks are now exposed. If another enemy unit engages it in the side, then the damage inflicted by this enemy unit is doubled. Attacking an enemy in the rear inflicts triple damage. A unit in Square formation has no flanks.

Special Actions

Special Actions are actions that a unit can take that are not simple attacks or movement. They include:

- ⊗ Using a special ability like Confuse or Possess.
- ⊗ Reload a weapon like a crossbow or rocket launcher.
- ⊗ Doing something unusual on the battlefield, like switching weapons or gathering the bodies of fallen demons for the spawning pits.

- ⊗ A special action order may also be used to set up a particular heroic action for a special character in the unit – see below.

Resolution

After all orders have been executed, check for units that have crossed their damage thresholds and must make Cohesion checks. Optionally, Morale checks may also be called for by the Games Master in the following situations:

- ⊗ Commander killed: Morale check (DC 10)
- ⊗ General killed: Morale check (DC 15)
- ⊗ Multiple fleeing friendly units nearby: DC 0 +5 per fleeing unit.

If any of these checks are failed, the unit is Broken.

Results of Battle

After a battle, the field is left littered with corpses. The number of casualties per unit depends on how much damage it took during the fight, as follows:

Unit Was At	Wounded	Dead
¾ hit points	10%	10%
½ hit points	20%	20%
¼ hit points	30%	30%
0 hit points	50%	50%

Clearing Out the Chaff

These mass combat rules are designed to cope with units from small squads of demons all the way up to Colossal units containing tens of thousands of damned warriors. It is possible to end up in situations where units have hundreds or thousands of hit points and that wiping them out will take dozens of rounds. The increased damage for flanking and rear attacks can help, but slaughtering an army of 100,000 damned will still turn into an exercise in dice rolling.

Therefore, consider multiplying damage in battles that only contain big units. For example, if the smallest unit is Medium, multiply damage by two; for battles of Large and bigger units, multiply by five and so on.

Furthermore, if the army does not have possession of the battlefield at the end of the battle, half the wounded will have been captured by the enemy. Mortal dead become damned at the end of a battle and so mortal units count them as wounded, not dead.

After a battle, all demons will have expended 50 + (1d4x10)% of their iliaster reserves, and will need to feed. All characters will also be exhausted.

Personal Weapons

This section covers the rules for character-scale weapons in mass combat.

Notes on specific weapons

Lances: These still do double damage when used from a charging mount or vehicle. They also have reach, giving them a +2 bonus to damage in mass combat.

Memorials: Memorials are rarely used in mass combat. Assume the memorial is charged with the average level of the unit x 3 at the start of combat. Charging a memorial requires a Special Action

and can only be done when an adjacent unit is damaged.

Rocket Launchers: Work like siege weapons in mass combat; see below.

Shatterguns: A unit struck by a shattergun barrage must make a Fortitude save at a DC equal to the damage inflicted or suffer a -4 penalty on its next Warcraft check.

Stingers: A unit hit by a stinger attack suffers 1d4 points of damage and suffers a cumulative -1 penalty to all saving throws for the rest of the battle.

Throwing Skulls: If a throwing skull attack hits, it keeps doing 1d4 damage per round unless the target unit takes a Special Action to get rid of the skulls.

Siege Weapons

Siege Weapons are notoriously slow and inaccurate, but astonishingly powerful. These massive guns can blast holes in the strongest fortress or annihilate hundreds of troops with a single shot, but only

PERSONAL RANGED WEAPONS

Ranged Weapon	Range Increment	Max. Range	Special Properties
Bile Rifle	1	10	Ignore Armour
Crossbow, Heavy	2	10	Requires special action to reload
Crossbow, Light	2	10	
Hand Crossbow	1	5	
Hellcannon	1	5	Hellfire
Longbow	2	10	
Longbow, Composite	2	10	
Net	1	1	Enemy must make a Reflex save (DC 10, plus the attacking unit's Size modifier) or lose their next action
Pistol	1	2	
Revolver	1	3	
Rifle	2	10	
Rocket Launcher	3	15	Requires special action to reload
Shattergun	1	10	
Shotgun	1	5	
Shortbow	1	10	
Shortbow, Composite	1	10	
Shuriken	1	1	
Sling	1	5	
Spite	1	1	



when given time. The normal tactic for dealing with siege weapons is to have flyers attack their crew.

Siege Weapon Attacks: An attack with a siege weapon is made using the normal attack rules, with the following changes:

- ⊗ Each siege engine lists a rather large penalty to the attack roll.
- ⊗ Therefore, siege engines are normally fired by taking 10 or 20 on the attack roll.
- ⊗ Siege weapons use the operator's base attack bonus plus its Intelligence bonus.
- ⊗ A siege engine gets a +1 bonus to its attack roll for every subsequent attack on a stationary target, as long as the engine does not move either.

Siege Weapon Damage: Siege weapon attacks may be either area effects (in which case they allow characters a Reflex save to take half damage) or single shots (in which case they do more damage to structures and large single creatures than they do to units of creatures). Siege weapon damage is listed in structure points; multiply by ten for normal hit point damage.

Siege Weapon Sizes: Siege weapons are built according to the scale used for characters and vehicles; the smallest siege weapons are the size of a mortal (Medium size), while they go up to Colossal size (and bigger, for the rare and titanic siege weapons). Creatures capable of wielding massive weapons can conceivably use siege weapons as personal weapons, but the attack rolls listed above are the same.

Rocket launchers are fired like siege weapons in mass combat.

Siege weapons can be increased or decreased in size.

SIEGE WEAPON SIZES & CREW

Size	Crew	Damage Multiplier	Size Multiplier
Small	1	x½	x½
Medium	2	x1	x1
Large	5	x2	x4
Huge	20	x4	x16
Gargantuan	80	x8	x32
Colossal	160	x16	x64

For example, a heavy catapult is normally Large but it can be built for one-quarter the price to do half the damage by being made Medium. The maximum range of a siege weapon increases when the size of the weapon is increased, as does the damage. The reload time increases by one action per size increase.

Size: The size of the listed (and most common) version of the artillery piece.

Attack Penalty: Siege weapons are inaccurate; this lists the attack penalty for the first attack made with the weapon. The weapon gets a +1 bonus to subsequent attacks as long as the target does not move.

Maximum Range: Unlike normal ranged weapons, artillery does not have a range increment; it can fire at any target within this maximum range.

Again, this maximum range is expressed in 50 foot squares.

Damage: The damage inflicted by the attack, in structure points. For a creature unlucky enough to be hit by one of these weapons, multiply the damage by ten.

If an attack lists its damage as having an area effect, then assume that a Small weapon has a area of effect radius of five feet and that larger weapons have a proportionately larger area of effect.

Reload Time: The number of Special Action orders that must be executed to reload the weapon.

Hit Points: How many hit points the weapon has. As siege engines and artillery pieces have lots of delicate parts, they are assumed to have hardness 5.

ARTILLERY & SIEGE WEAPONS

Weapon	Size	Attack Penalty	Maximum Range	Damage	Reload Time	Hit Points	Cost	Ammunition Cost
Acid Hurler	Small	-5	5	1d6 acid area (DC 15)	3	25	100 cr	5 cr
Angel's Racks	Medium	-0	30	5 per point of iliaster; area (DC 20)	—	50	5,000 cr	Not generally available for sale.
Ballista	Medium	-10	20	1d8	1	50	10 cr	1 ho
Battering Ram	Large	—	—	1d10	1	100	5 cr	—
Blast Cannon	Gargantuan	-15	50	8d6+16	4	300	2,400 cr	20 cr
Cannon, Small	Medium	-10	20	2d6	4	100	100 cr	1 cr
Catapult	Large	-10	30	2d6	2	100	25 cr	1 cr
Corruption Lens	Large	-5	20	Varies	1	50	50 cr	—
Hellicannon	Huge	-5	10	2d6+20 fire	2	100	1,000 cr	50 cr
Iceplant Seeds	Small	—	—	1d4 cold	—	25	200 cr	—
Land Drill	Huge	—	—	3d6	3	200	500 cr	—
Lava Pump	Gargantuan	-15	10	8d6 fire area (DC 15)	—	300	2,000 cr	—
Lightning Gun	Huge	-10	50	8d4 electrical	2	200	1,200 cr	10 cr
Mortar	Small	-10	15	3d4 area (DC 12)	2	25	20 cr	2 ho
Ruinous Claw	Huge	—	—	8d10	4	200	1,600 cr	—
Skull Thrower	Medium	-5	10	2d4	1	50	20 cr	1 ho
Swarf Blaster	Large	—	10	4d6	1	50	500 cr	10 cr
Thunder Machine	Huge	—	30	10d6 sonic	—	200	1,600 cr	200 cr
Vomit Cannon	Huge	-10	30	6d6 acid area	4	200	3,000 cr	200 cr



Cost: The cost of the item.

Ammunition Cost: The cost of each shot from the weapon.

Acid Hurler: Acid hurlers are mechanical devices that hurl flasks of acid at the enemy. Commonly, the 'flasks' are bodies of spawn or mortals, who have been injected with alchemical compounds to turn their stomach acids and other bodily fluids into a lethal cocktail of corrosives.

Angel's Racks: The devices known as Angel's Racks are rarely seen; they are a recent development of the Astyanath. An Angel's Rack requires a singular form of ammunition – a living angel must be placed in the rack. When the device is activated, the angel's body-shell is cracked, releasing the holy fire of iliaster that composed the being. Focussing mirrors and lenses channel this burst of iliaster into a single terrible bolt of energy that deals five points of damage for every point of iliaster in the angel's reserve. Angel Racks do not increase in effectiveness if enlarged in size; they are only

available to the Astyanath and are still essentially House secrets. They are included in this list mainly because one was used to devastating effect in a clash between Haimon and Glabretch forces in 703 AF.

Ballista: An overlarge crossbow, ballistae are cheap and effective weapons.

Battering Ram: Battering rams can only be used to smash walls and other structures down. They are carried by spawn and drawn back by hulks or massive steam engines.

Blast Cannon: This weapon is something close to a conventional cannon used in the mortal realm, but is considerable more unstable and prone to explode. These ugly brass monsters spit out balls of red-hot iron, propelled by a toxic mix of chemicals. Smaller blast cannons are sometimes used by hulks with more appetite for destruction than sense.

Cannon, Small: These small pieces are often found on fortresses.

Catapult: This simple catapult hurls large stones at targets, smashing down walls and breaking skulls.

Corruption Lens: A curious invention, a corruption lens focuses the sinful nature of Hell. Under the terrible gaze of a corruption lens, flesh boils and twists, stone cracks and rots and that which is strong collapses in weakness. A corruption lens inflicts damage equal to the Sin Rating of the local area multiplied by the weapon's Size Multiplier. However, the lens is prone to cracking as the energy flows through it; if a 1 is rolled for a corruption lens attack, the item shatters. A corruption lens is blasphemous; each round of exposure to a corruption lens gives corruption points equal to the damage inflicted.

Hellicannon: A bigger version of the conventional hellcannon, the weapon is fired by drawing on the will of a mortal component installed in the brass guts of the firing mechanism. The weapon deals hellfire damage.

Iceplant Seeds: Iceplants are a curious form of siege weapon. They are large seeds, roughly the size of a melon. They are planted at the walls

Diseases in Battle

House Glabretch commonly uses catapults or bundles of disease spores, which have unpleasant effects on enemy units. A unit hit by a spore package must make a Fortitude save or suffer the effects of the disease. Furthermore, any unit in contact with an infected unit must also make a Fortitude save. Glabretchi units are immune to these diseases.

Common spore packages include:

Disease	Fortitude Save DC	Effect	Cost
Seeping Sanies	15	Reduce hit points by 10%	10 cr
Brain Froth	12	-4 to all saving throws and Warcraft checks	20 cr
Kickshanks	12	No actions for 2d6 rounds	30 cr
Claggy Vein	10	Reduce hit points by 1d4 x 10%	40 cr

of a fortress – either through subterfuge or using catapults – whereupon they begin to grow. As the iceplant grows, it starts to leech heat from the wall, dealing it 1d4 points of cold damage. Each minute, the iceplant grows, increasing in size and damage; it deals 2d4 damage on the second battle round, 3d4 on the third and so on. The iceplant grows for 3d6 rounds before dying and can deal a maximum of 6d4 cold damage per round.. The iceplant can be kept small by attacking it; each size increase increases the plant's hit points by +10, so dealing 10 points of damage to the iceplant shrinks it by one size category. The iceplant takes double damage from fire.

Land Drill: Land drills were originally used in mining, but have been adapted for smashing down structures. These devices are massive drills of sharpest hellglass. A land drill, like a battering ram, can only be used against a structure, but ignores hardness and hits automatically. The reload time is the time it takes the drill to spin up to full speed after making a cut.

Lava Pump: The alarming lava pump is exactly what it sounds like; a massive high-pressure pump that sucks molten rock up from the very core of Hell and spits it at the enemy. A Small lava pump requires one day of set-up and drilling to connect the valves and tubes of the weapon to the flow of magma; larger pumps require proportionately more set-up. Once set up and fired, a lava pump fires until it breaks down; it requires a Craft (engineering)

check each round to keep it functioning. The DC begins at DC 5 and increases by +5 each round.

Lightning Gun: Lightning guns convert Strain into a pulse of blasting electricity that arcs through the air to the target. They have an excellent range, making them ideal for defending locations.

Mortar: Mortars are small and portable cannons that shoot explosive projectiles.

Ruinous Claw: A ruinous claw is a massive mechanical device designed to rip buildings down, stone by stone. A ruinous claw can only affect structures. They are exceedingly expensive. They are also very hard to set up; the weapon does not make an attack roll, but requires a Craft (engineering) roll (DC 40) to activate.

Skull Thrower: These bony catapults throw bundles of throwing skulls (see *Book of the Damned*, page 173).

Swarf Blaster: A precursor of the shattergun, a swarf blaster consists of a swift-spinning jagged wheel; the user feeds an ingot of iron into the jaws of the machine, which spits the iron back out as a shower of shrapnel. Swarf blasters are often used as torture devices by bored guards, who feed damned souls in instead of iron. A unit hit by a swarf blaster must make a Fortitude save (DC equal to the damage inflicted) or lose its next action.

Thunder Machine: Thunder machines are the product of faustian sorcery. They fire a single directed wave of sound that affects everything between the machine and its target. However, a thunder machine can only be fired once before the heart of the machine – a resonating crystal of iliaster – shatters. It must be replaced at great cost before the device can be used again.

Vomit Cannon: Vomit cannons were originally created by the Glabretchi, but have been copied in biomechanical form by the Zethu. They spit jets of acid over a wide area.

Vehicles

These larger vehicles are generally used only in battle.

Dirigible, Titanic: This is a huge version of the common dirigible. It soars aloft on the updrafts, carrying troops into battle. It can also carry a single siege weapon.

Mobile Fortress: This is literally a mobile fortress; it must be made out of bronze and equipped with mighty tracks. Most of the fortresses' power comes from the legion of slaves dragging it; it must also be equipped with a Strain tank to fuel its engines. The fortress counts as a manor.

Siege Tower: Siege towers like this one are used to carry troops over walls; they allow troops to attack a fortress as if they were flying.

Characters & Battle

The jostling, random and chaotic nature of pitched battle does not allow for the little duels and brawls that make up normal *Infernum* combat (although the Games Master can certainly switch back to the

normal combat rules for special fights in the midst of battle). Each round in battle, a Player makes 1d6 attack rolls and suffers an equal number of attacks. If the character hits with its attacks, then each successful attack increases the damage dealt by the unit as a whole this round by +1. The attacks on the character use the attack bonus and damage of the enemy unit as if it was an individual.

For example, a character is in combat against the Haimon Legion described above. Each round of battle, the character would make 1d6 attacks against AC 18. He would suffer an equal number of attacks with a +8 attack bonus, each doing 1d8+6 damage. For each successful attack made by the character, the damage dealt by his unit this round is increased by +1.

Heroic Actions

Characters, no matter how low-level, and other special characters can have a disproportionate effect on battle. Each round, 1d4–1 characters can take heroic actions. These actions give characters a chance to affect a battle even if they are only lowly foot-soldiers.

To determine who takes heroic actions, each special character rolls 1d20. The characters with the highest results get to take heroic actions. Player characters may voluntarily risk bigger damage and reduce their Armour Class by –1 to get a +1 bonus to this roll – this represents the character pushing forward and hunting for danger and glory.

There are three sorts of heroic action – unengaged, offensive and defensive. Offensive actions can be taken when the character's unit is engaged and executing an order. Unengaged actions can be taken when the character's unit is not engaged but is executing an order. Finally, defensive actions are taken out of the normal sequence, when the character's unit is attacked.

VEHICLES

Type	Crew	Init.	Mnvr.	Top Speed	AC	Hdns.	Hit Points	Size	Pgrs.	Cargo Capacity	Fuel Con.	Fuel Tank	Cost
Dirigible, Titanic	10	–4	–6	50 ft.	5	10	500	Colossal	100	50,000 lbs.	20	400	500 cr
Mobile Fortress	200	–10	–10	20 ft.	10	15	1,500	Colossal	200	Massive	5	Varies	30,000 cr
Siege Tower	20	–4	–6	20 ft.	10	5	100	Gargantuan	100	Massive	0	0	100 cr

ENGAGED HEROIC ACTIONS

Roll	Action
1-2	Bloody Slaughter: The character may make an attack roll and deal damage as if it was a unit this round.
3-4	Sow Chaos: The character attacks the commanders of the enemy unit, driving them into disorder. The unit suffers a -4 penalty to its next Warcraft check.
5-6	Shatter Their Formation: The character must make a Strength check, opposed by the enemy unit's Fortitude save. If the character wins, the enemy unit becomes a Mob.
7-8	Terrify: The character may make an Intimidate check, opposed by the enemy's Will save. If successful, the enemy unit begins to waver, reducing its Will save by -2. If the enemy unit's Will save is reduced below zero, the unit is broken.
9-10	Heroic Leap: The character may make a Jump check at a DC of 20-the unit's size modifier. If successful, the unit is now considered to be flanked. If unsuccessful, the character suffers an attack from the enemy unit.
11-12	Capture Standard: The character has a chance to grab the standard of the opposing unit. The character suffers an attack from the unit and must make a successful Strength check (DC 20). If successful, the unit suffers a -4 penalty to Warcraft for the rest of the battle.
13-14	Sow Confusion: The character manages to disrupt the formation of the opposing unit. The character may make a Charisma check, opposed by the enemy unit's Warcraft. If the character wins, the opposing unit's Formation changes to anything other than Mob or Broken.
15-16	Assassinate Commander: The character may attack the enemy commander. In the initial round of combat, the commander is surprised and flatfooted. If the commander is killed, the unit must make a Will save (DC 15) or be Broken.
17-18	Challenge Commander: As above, but the commander does not start surprised or flatfooted, but the Will save DC increases to 20 if the commander is killed.
19-20	Use Mutation: The character may select one of his applicable mutations and apply its effects to the enemy unit for the next round.

DEFENSIVE HEROIC ACTIONS

Roll	Action
1-2	Feint: The character may immediately make a Warcraft check (DC 20). If successful, the unit acts as though it was executing a Feint order this turn.
3-4	Hold the Line: The unit cannot be Broken this turn, if the character accepts an attack from the enemy.
5-6	Scatter: The character may immediately make a Warcraft check (DC 20). If successful, the unit changes to Skirmish formation.
7-8	Dodge: The character may immediately make a Warcraft check (DC 20). If successful, the unit gains a +4 bonus to Reflex saves this turn. Furthermore, if it makes a successful Reflex saving throw against an area attack, the unit takes no damage this round.
9-10	Look out sir: The character may intercept any attack made against the commander of its unit.
11-12	Rally The Troops: The unit may add the character's Charisma modifier to its Will save for the rest of the battle.
13-14	Watch the Skies: The unit may add the character's Wisdom modifier to its Reflex save for the rest of the battle.
15-16	Keep Your Places: The unit may add the character's Strength modifier to its Fortitude save for the rest of the battle.
17-18	Use Mutation: The character may select one of his applicable mutations and apply its effects to his unit for the next round.
19-20	Use Mutation: The character may select one of his applicable mutations and apply its effects to the enemy unit for the next round.

UNENGAGED HEROIC ACTIONS

Roll	Action
1-2	Relay Commands: The messenger bringing the orders to the unit stumbles; the character can step in and relay the command (giving a +4 bonus to the unit's Warcraft this round) or give a false command
3-4	Correct the Mistake: The character spots some flaw in the unit's formation or tactics; the character may reroll a failed Warcraft check made by the unit, using his own Warcraft score instead of the unit score.
5-6	Rally The Troops: The unit may add the character's Charisma modifier to its Will save for the rest of the battle.
7-8	Watch the Skies: The unit may add the character's Wisdom modifier to its Reflex save for the rest of the battle.
9-10	Keep Your Places: The unit may add the character's Strength modifier to its Fortitude save for the rest of the battle.
11-12	Change Formation: The character may make a Warcraft check to change the unit's formation.
13-14	Spot their pattern: The character may target an enemy unit and make a Sense Motive check (opposed by the enemy's Warcraft). If successful, the character knows what the enemy's order is for this round.
15-16	On, you dogs: The character may make an Intimidate check (DC 15). If successful, the unit may increase its movement by 50% on its next movement. If the unit is Broken, it automatically rallies.
17-18	Tend to the Wounded: The character has an opportunity to get an injured member of the unit back on his feet. The character must make a Heal check (DC 15); if successful, the unit regains 2d6 hit points.
19-20	Use Mutation: The character may select one of his applicable mutations and apply its effects to the unit for the next round. The mutation must be a link in a common Chain and is limited by the average level of the unit; level 1-3 – I; level 4-6 – II; level 7-9 – III; level 10-12: IV and so on.

Normally, the Games Master rolls randomly or selects a heroic action from the table's on pages 141-142. However, the Special Action order allows a general to set up a heroic action. If the Special Action order is issued to a unit, then any special characters in the unit automatically get an extra heroic action and that heroic action may be selected from the tables below. This allows, say, a unit to be ordered to assassinate an enemy leader.

Running an Army

The armies of Hell ebb and flow like the tides of iliaster. Few demon lords keep standing armies – of the Houses, only Zethu's biomechanoids, Haimon's undead legions and the Bloody army of House Sturrach are constantly ready for battle. All the other Houses and lords prefer to raise their armies from the mass of common demons when the need arises, as the cost of having a standing army is very great.

The office of the captaincy stems from this custom; to become a Captain, the demon must prove it can raise a group of demon warriors. The constant

turnover of Captains ensures that the common demons are ready for war.

Raising Troops

A demon lord can raise troops from its domain. While theoretically part of a demon's feudal and Covenanted obligations are to fight for its master, it is usually necessary to bribe the demons to rise up and form an army. Each month in which the lord of the domain rallies troops from its domain, it must make a Charisma check; the result of the check determines how many of the demons respond.

RAISING TROOPS

Charisma Check Result	Demon troops
10 or less	1d6 x 10
11-15	1d6 x 100
16-20	3d6 x 100
21-25	3d6 x 200
26-30	3d6 x 300
31-35	3d6 x 500
36-40	3d6 x 1,000
41+	3d6 x 5,000

This Charisma check is modified as follows:

Condition	Modifier
Baron	+0
Viscount	+5
Earl	+10
Duke	+20
Grand Duke	+25
Head of House	+30
House Sturrach or Glabretch	+5
House Zethu	-5
Independent demon	-5
Extra pay (per horn per demon)	+1

Especially well organised lords have better mustering plans in place – for example, those who hold to the old tradition of the captaincy can call on fifty levels worth of demon from each Captain at all times, but most Houses rely on these virtual mobs of demons arriving at the nobles' fortresses.

Rallied demons have a largely random assortment of weapons and armour. Most lords are forced to either field ramshackle companies of mismatched warriors or pay the costs of outfitting their troops with matching weapons. Neither option is especially palatable.

Damned companies are easier to assemble, but the damned must be taken from the torture palaces and factories.

Hiring Troops

The mercenary business is booming with the current instability in the Pit. Mercenaries are more expensive than House troops, but tend to be better disciplined and more eager to fight.

According to the mercenary code, the minimum price for a mercenary is a crown per day, but can be higher. It normally works out to the mercenary's level *squared* in crowns per day, although the number of 20th level mercenary demons charging 400 crowns per day is limited. Most mercenary commanders negotiate a group rate for their company's services.

Standing Troops

Finally, a demon lord can just pay to have an army sitting around its domain. This is costly, as standing demon troops must be paid well (3 horns a day minimum) or they will cause trouble. Treachery

and bloody coups from bored armies are a leading cause of noble death.

Starting Troop Quality & Training Troops

A unit of damned souls fresh out of the torture palaces begin as Rabble; demon levies begin at Green. Most mercenaries are Average or Veteran. Training troops takes one month, at the end of which the unit may make a Warcraft check, modified as follows:

- ⊗ Per five ranks in Warcraft or Intimidate possessed by a character training the troops: +1
- ⊗ Demon unit: +2
- ⊗ Per battle fought as a unit: +5

The DCs to increase in rating are follows:

Increase To...	DC Required
Untrained	10
Green	15
Average	25
Veteran	40
Crack	60
Elite	80

The Army on the March

Armies on the march need iliaster, and lots of it. Each demon in the army uses 10% more iliaster per day than a normal demon. Battles are even more consuming (see Results of Battle, above). Transporting this much iliaster is difficult; demon armies need stockpiles of bottled iliaster or else are forced to attack the domains they pass through to replenish themselves.

Sample Armies

The units listed here are some of the more typical or more famous units of the Infernum.

Astyanath Joyous Legion

Medium Crack Malcubus Unit (250 demons)

Level 15 (4,000 hp)

Threshold: 3,000/2,000/1,000

Movement: 3

AC: 20

Attack: +20 melee (Claw 1d8+11) or Bile Rifle +21 ranged (1d4+6)

Saves: Fortitude +10, Reflex +16, Will+16

Warcraft: +24

Special Abilities: Confuse, Joyous – in any round when the unit is damaged, it gains a +2 bonus to attacks and damage until its next round).

The infamous Joyous Legion are trained to love pain, and become more dangerous when injured. The Astyanath regularly attack their own forces to prepare them for battle. The Joyous Legion are a terrifying foe, as the demons drag themselves across the battlefield to impale themselves ecstatically on pikes and barbed wire.

Bori Warriors

Small Elite Mortal Unit (100 mortals)

Level 10 (1,000 hp)

Threshold: 750/500/250

Movement: 3

AC: 21

Attack: +15 melee (Two-handed sword 2d6+10)

Saves: Fortitude +5, Reflex +9, Will+9

Warcraft: +16

Special Abilities: Boost, Rage

The mighty Sons of Bor are few in number, but every one of them is a magnificent fighter. Their war-cries strike fear even into the hearts of demons, for the Bori are trained to kill without mercy or hesitation.

Branded Raiders

Tiny Average Mortal Unit (25 mortals)

Level 3 (75 hp)

Threshold: 54/36/18

Movement: 3

AC: 16

Attack: +3 melee (Sword 1d8+1) or Shortbow +3 ranged (1d6+1)

Saves: Fortitude +1, Reflex +4, Will+4

Warcraft: +5

Special Abilities: Boost

Raiders like this trouble many demon domains. While they are not especially tough in battle, they melt away into the shadows of the Pit like ghosts after freeing slaves and damned from bondage.

Carthenay Guards

Medium Average Beast Unit (300 demons)

Level 5 (1,800 hp)

Threshold: 1,350/900/450

Movement: 2

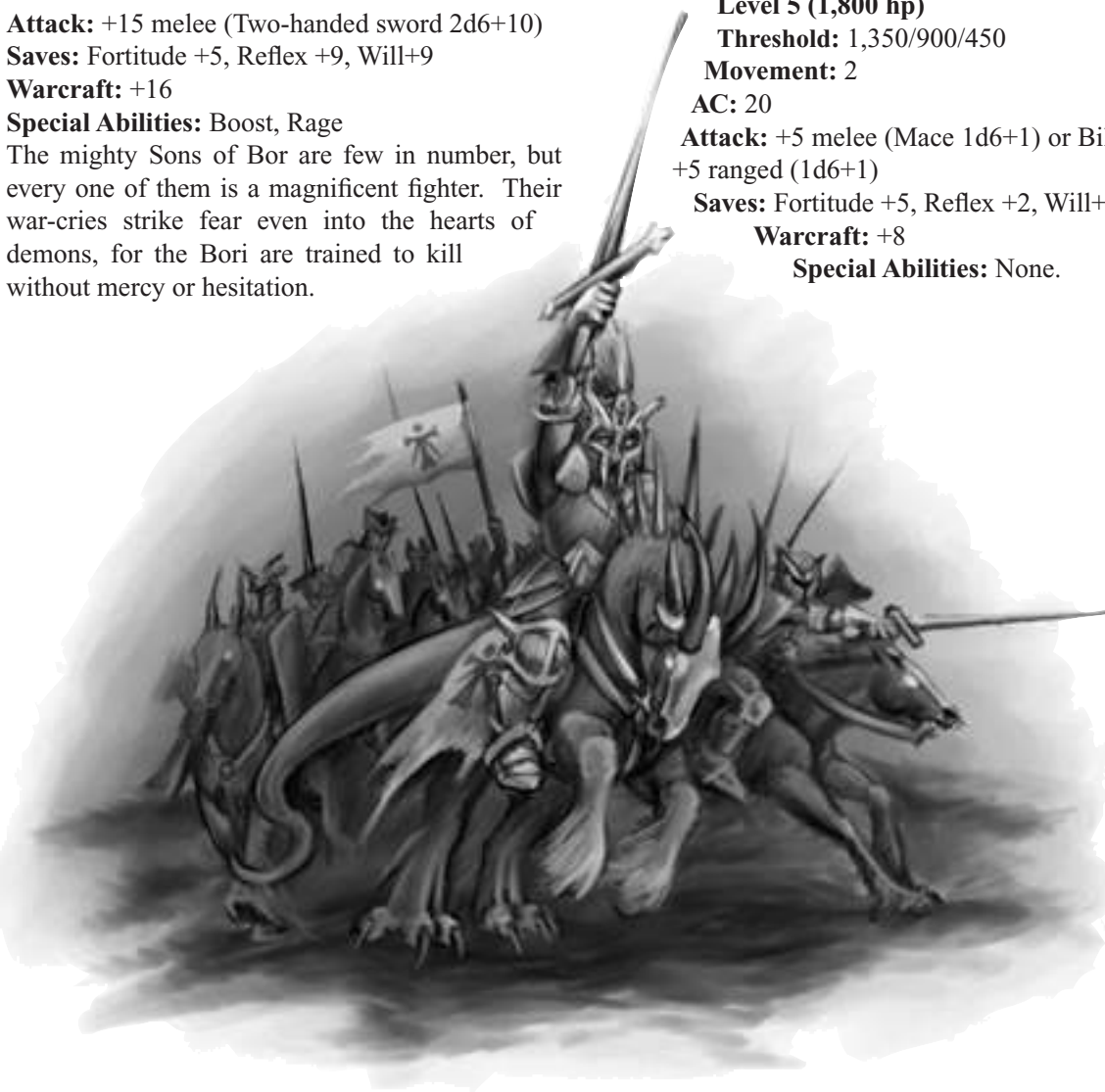
AC: 20

Attack: +5 melee (Mace 1d6+1) or Bile Rifle +5 ranged (1d6+1)

Saves: Fortitude +5, Reflex +2, Will+2

Warcraft: +8

Special Abilities: None.



These guards of House Carthenay protect the fortresses and vaults of the Miserly House. Despite the Carthenay's reputation for not spending money, these guards are well armed and armoured.

Damned Rabble

Gargantuan Rabble Damned Unit (5000 damned)

Level 1 (15,000 hp)

Threshold: 11,250/7,500/3,750

Movement: 2

AC: 6

Attack: +0 melee (Club 1d4)

Saves: Fortitude +2, Reflex +0, Will+0

Warcraft: +0

Special Abilities: None.

Massive units of damned like this are used as cannon fodder in the wars of the Infernum.

Free City Levy

Large Untrained Demon Unit (500 demons)

Level 2 (1,000 hp)

Threshold: 750/500/250

Movement: 3

AC: 13

Attack: +0 melee (Claw 1d8-1)

Saves: Fortitude -1, Reflex -3, Will -3

Warcraft: +0

Special Abilities: None.

Glabretchi Scorchers

Small Veteran Slaver Unit (100 demons)

Level 6 (600 hp)

Threshold: 450/300/150

Movement: 3

AC: 22

Attack: +9 melee (Claw 1d8+5) or hellcannon +8 (varies)

Saves: Fortitude +11, Reflex +6, Will+6

Warcraft: +11

Special Abilities: Hellfire, DR2/fire, Pestilence

The Glabretchi rely on aggressive troops like this when pushing outside their estates. A blast of hellfire from their cannons will deal with the most resilient foe – or with enemies immune to Putrid diseases.

Lictat Brigade

Small Green Stalker Unit (100 demons)

Level 2 (200 hp)

Threshold: 150/100/50

Movement: 3

AC: 14

Attack: +1 melee (Claw 1d8+1) or Bile Rifle +1 ranged (1d4+1)

Saves: Fortitude +2, Reflex +2, Will+0

Warcraft: +5

Special Abilities: None.

The Lictat estates are vulnerable, as they are defended by relatively weak and unarmed troops like these ones. Their main advantage is their knowledge of the terrain of the Second Circle.

Oblurott Cavalry

Medium Veteran Slaver Unit (250 demons)

Level 5 (1,750 hp)

Threshold: 1,320/880/440

Movement: 5

AC: 22

Attack: +8 melee (Lance 1d10+5)

Saves: Fortitude +7, Reflex +7, Will+4

Warcraft: +10

Special Abilities: Agile, DR5/Slashing

These fast-moving spawn-riders carry their bloated demon masters into battle. Cavalry like this shattered the Sturrach defenders in the Fourth Circle.

Sturrach Slaughterers

Medium Elite Hulk Unit (250 demons)

Level 15 (4,500 hp)

Threshold: 3,375/2,250/1,125

Movement: 2

AC: 28

Attack: +24 melee (Claw 2d6+14) or hellfire +24 ranged (varies)

Saves: Fortitude +13, Reflex +13, Will+9

Warcraft: +19

Special Abilities: Hellfire

One of the most feared units in the whole Pit, the Slaughterers of Count Zarov are unstoppable in battle.

CONQUESTS

The nine locations described in the following section are nine typical locations found on their respective Circles of the Pit. Each of them is a potential source of power and influence for a demon lord. Even a mortal or angel might be interested in such places since depriving the Infernum of a weapon means it cannot be used against the free humans who are trapped in Hell.

This is the iron rule of the Infernum – conquer or be conquered. Your enemies are *always* coming for you. Their hands are always reaching for your throat, even if you cannot see them. The only way for a creature – mortal or dead, angel or demon – to survive in the Infernum is to fight and conquer.

Any of these places could be the starting point of a new domain.

On the First Circle of Emptiness, there is the newly arrived building called the Lost Tower.

On the Second Circle of the Tempest, the mysterious Tomb of the Nameless holds ancient secrets.

On the Third Circle of Tears is the town of Meremouth, with its sorrowful lord.

On the Fourth Circle of Toil is the faustian school of Nimue's Tower.

On the Fifth Circle of Slaughter is the Cathedral of Cracked Bones.

On the Sixth Circle of Industry is the City of Dis.

On the Seventh Circle of Unholy Delights is the Duchy of Burning Lead.

On the Eighth Circle of the Malebolge is the Citadel of House Riethii, known as Riethii's Chalice.

On the Ninth Circle is the City of Pandemonium.

1772 Chalmer – first Circle Location

'I can't open the damn doors!'

'We're trapped in here! We're all going to die in here!'

'Just calm down. Calm down. You're scaring yourself, dear, and everyone else. It's just...'

'Just WHAT? The doors are stuck together with blood and we've been trapped in here for days! Exactly what should I be calm about?'

'er... guys?'

'What?'

'I can see out through this window...'

...the sky's on fire out there.'

The Brass Pillars of the First Circle have endured since before the founding of the Infernum. These weathered spires of hellwrought metal rise from the dusty plains around them and pierce the purple clouds overhead. When the wind blows – and the wind is always howling here – the Pillars make a strange and disturbing noise, a crackling static hiss.



Electricity crackles along the sides of the towers, grounding itself in the dust with little arcs and pops of lightning. The desert floor around the pillars is scored with tens of thousands of tiny glass pockets and scorch marks. When a storm or hellgout manifests, the Pillars hum with barely contained energy and explode in coruscating haloes of infernal power.

Three weeks ago, demons in the Lictat barony of Yarrow saw a great corona on the widdershins horizon, marking an opening hellgout. The baron of Yarrow, Daes, has sent out nine stalkers under the command of demon-captain Tnith to see if this hellgout has brought anything useful to the Infernum.

The stalkers have not found the lost tower yet. By chance, the hellgout was caught on one of the Brass Pillars and vomited out its contents in its shadow. The magical aura of the Pillar blocked *scrying* attempts, so the stalkers must search the whole area widdershins of Yarrow. What happens when they do is up to the denizens of the lost tower.

The Lost Tower

The history – or, more accurately, the Infernal history – of the lost tower begins with an artificer of House Zethu named Chaice. The artificer's master was slain during the panicked Zethu retreat from the Sixth Circle, so Chaice struck out on his own. The artificer has some knowledge of sorcery, which he augmented with stolen books of lore. He discovered a portal to the mortal world.

Now, it is rare for demons to risk travelling to the mortal world. Firstly, there are few sources of *iliaster* in the mortal world; magic is uncertain, souls vanish at the moment of the mortal's death instead of hanging around to be tortured and so on. However, Chaice was fascinated by tales of mortal technology and resolved to at least attempt to travel onwards. It slipped through the portal and was gone.

It emerged in the mortal realm, in a city. The artificer scurried through the streets, an urban nightmare that would be whispered of for generations to come. It murdered with its iron claws and its mutations, commanding the wondrous technology of the mortals to kill them. The passage of the demon was obvious yet oblique; if anyone had looked at the

pattern of deaths, the power surges and brownouts in the electricity grid and the pattern of nightmares and outbreaks of insanity, they might have been able to trace Chaice to its lair in the basement of one small housing block.

No one found the demon before the hellgout opened to draw it back to the Pit. The jail of Hell does not let its children go free. As the hellgout took hold, however, Chaice possessed the apartment building, merging itself with the heating ducts and the electrical cables and all the machinery of the place. The whole building was drawn into Hell, becoming the Lost Tower.

For the few mortal inhabitants of 1772 Chalmer St., the preceding weeks had been a bizarre and disturbing time. The city was alive with rumour of a serial killer, of industrial accidents, of madmen roaming the streets. The apartment block seemed to be in the very heart of this sudden supernatural darkness, leading many families to flee the place. The few that stayed did so because they were stubborn, or unusually brave, or simply had nowhere else to go.

The Hellgout

When the hellgout took the building, it took only the building. The doors and windows were sealed with an inter-dimensional phlogiston that resembled caked blood, and for a week the building tumbled through the ethers. Some quirk of the gout fused the demon Chaice to the building's machinery, rendering it incapable of leaving the structure. The demon's agonised screams as it was welded to the machinery in the basement echoed through the apartment block.

The inhabitants made their way to the basement, where they found the artificer demon melted to the wall, with pulsing tubes and cables running into its still-molten metal body. Quite understandably, they tried to kill it, which was less than effective. The demon was immobile, but its claws were still just as sharp. In a flash of metal, John Steadman was lying on the ground, his intestines spread over the basement floor.

Chaice explained the situation to the terrified mortals. Soon, they would arrive in the Infernum and the demons would hunt them down and destroy them. If they listened to Chaice, if they fed it *iliaster*

and protected its immobile form, then it would tell them what they needed to survive.

What choice did they have?

1772 Chalmer St.

The few mortals to remain in the building until the hellgout took it are now trapped in the Infernum. They have the advantage of having a deranged and immobile demon in the basement to advise them about survival. The downside is that the demon is demanding that they torture the ghost of their former neighbour immediately.

They did all pass through the Lethe Clouds relatively unscathed, presumably because the building was sealed throughout the hellgout.

George Keel (Mortal 3): A security guard, George Keel has become the de facto leader of the inhabitants since Steadman's death. Secretly, Keel was a gang member; he left the gang behind him years ago, but stayed in contact with his former friends. Two of them were killed by Chaice when the demon was rampaging through the city, and Keel vowed revenge. He stayed in 1772 because it seemed to be close to wherever the serial killer was, but he never dreamed that he would discover that the killer was a demon living in his basement, or that it would drag him into Hell.

Keel does realise that he needs Chaice's insight to survive, but as soon as the demon has told him all it knows, he is determined to find a way to kill or starve it.

Mr. and Mrs. Alder (Mortal 2): This elderly couple had retired on a meagre pension and had nowhere else to go when the nightmares struck Chalmer St. Mr. Alder was the building handyman, but he was sick for several weeks and so never noticed Chaice taking up residence in the basement. The shocks of the last few days have driven Alder to the brink of insanity; he and his wife are listening to the demon, whose instructions are coming to them through the heating ducts and the telephones and their dreams. Mr. Alder's creativity is coming to the fore; under Chaice's instruction, he is assembling a rather nasty torture device from the contents of their kitchen. The Alders are trapped in a nightmare and are taking the worst possible route out of it.



Toni Mahl (Mortal 2): Mahl is a young arts student who took the Chalmer St. apartment because it was the only one she could afford. She has few ties to the other inhabitants – she thought the Alders were boring and that Pollis was strange before they were all dragged into Hell – and plans to strike out on her own as soon as she can. The problem is getting the supplies she needs; only Mary O'Sullivan has anything in the way of extra food and bottled water.

John Steadman (Damned 3): John Steadman died about halfway through the Twisting of the hellgout. His body has been wrapped in trash-bin liners and lies in the basement. Once the hellgout opened, his soul pushed its way out of its mortal shell and found itself pinned by the hungry gaze of the demon in the wall. Steadman's soul has stayed at the apartment block out of fear and confusion. The other residents are unsettled by the presence of the ghost, but it is far from the most alarming thing to have happened to them in the last few days.

Before death, Steadman was an unemployed electrician with little in the way of personality. His

death is the most interesting thing to have happened to him.

Darren Pollis (Mortal 1): Another student, Pollis was unstable and depressive before entering into Hell. He is convinced that the inhabitants of the apartment complex are all utterly doomed. He has locked himself in his room, which he has bedecked in religious symbols. Pollis does have one potentially useful asset; one of the many pop-occult books stacked in his room contains formulae for sorcery. While the spells are far too fragmented and distorted to function in the mortal realm, they might work in Hell when boosted by the mortal ability to alter fate.

Pollis' roommate, another student called **Jay Cole**, vanished during the gout. He broke a window and threw himself out into the interdimensional chaos. The room in which he broke the window is on the fourth floor and appears largely unaffected by its exposure to the full force of the hellgout, although all the inhabitants of the building agree that the room now feels... wrong.

Mary O'Sullivan (Mortal 1): O'Sullivan was working in a convenience store before being dragged into Hell. She was always nervous, a hypochondriac and prone to taking whatever the latest dire news was and applying it to her own life. She is convinced that the hellgout and all the other weird events were caused by terrorists, and all they need to do is wait for the authorities to get here to save them. O'Sullivan does have a stockpile of food and bottled water (she started keeping such supplies from when she was a young girl listening to news about the imminence of nuclear war). Mary is actually even more unhinged than Pollis or the Alders; she will fight to stay in the building and to keep others from leaving.

Chaice, Former Demon of House Zethu (Artificer 7): Finally, there is the demon Chaice, welded to the machinery of the building. This functions just like the fifth link of the Artificer breed chain, but the demon is unable to stop its possession. Chaice was always an independently minded demon and the death of its master was the best thing that ever happened to it. Its current predicament is an ironic result of this independence; new demons risk throwing themselves into a portal, and if it had not travelled to the mortal world, it would not have gotten itself stuck to a crumbling apartment

complex currently located in the shadow of a Brass Pillar on the First Circle of Hell.

Chaice privately suspects that it is technically Dissolute, and cannot risk disconnecting itself from the building until it has consumed a great deal of iliaster. The only soul to hand is Steadman's, so the demon has been forced to cajole the mortals with information on how to survive in Hell. It has carefully avoided mentioning the Branded, but has mentioned the abandoned Zethu research centre (see below.)

The Lost Tower

Physically, 1772 Chalmer Street is a six-storey apartment block, built of concrete. It was decaying and dilapidated before it was taken by the hellgout; now every inch of its exterior surface is streaked with blood and scabs. The building emerged from the gout at an angle. The basement and ground floor are partially merged with the rocky foundation of the neighbouring Brass Pillar, which is all that keeps the building upright. It suffered severe structural damage – there are burst pipes and cracks in the walls all over the building, especially the upper floors. Obviously, the structure has no functioning water supplies any more, although it is somehow drawing some power from the static of the Brass Pillar. The lights flicker on and off and there is a constant static hiss resonating through the building.

It is still a relatively sturdy structure compared to the caves and hide tents that make up most dwellings on the First Circle. The ground floor contains a communal day room and abandoned offices. The apartments are on the upper floors; Pollis and Keel on the first, O'Sullivan on the second, Steadman and the Alders on the third and Mahl on the crazily angled fifth.

The building does have an elevator, but it has undergone a bizarre change. The doors open on an empty shaft most of the time and the one time the elevator car was present, it was warped and made of bone, with nine eyes for buttons. The eyes were scarred with the Roman numerals for I to IX.

Brass Pillar

The Brass Pillar next to the Lost Tower is just as cryptic and eerie as all the rest. It is a twisted spiral horn of metal that reaches up to the Lethe

Clouds. The only thing that might distinguish this tower from the rest are five tiny fingers of brass that have pushed out of the side facing the Lost Tower. Whether this feature appeared when the tower did, or if it was always there and was just revealed recently by the winds is a mystery to the hellkin. Certainly, while the time-warping powers of the Brass Pillars is connected to the hellgout phenomenon, it is rare for there to be any effect on the pillars themselves.

Surrounding Terrain

The Lost Power is in a little bowl-shaped depression, which contains both it and the Brass Pillar. The Pillar rises high above the lip of the bowl, but the building itself is largely hidden. The sheltered nature of the location means the bowl has filled with a thick layer of dry dust. Stepping out of the building means wading through powdery dust – unless it has rained, in which case the bowl turns into a lethally treacherous morass.

Out of the bowl, the lone and level sands of the Fourth Circle stretch far away. In the distance abmouth, another Brass Pillar can be seen. Pitwards, there is a low line of hills outlined against the hot sphere of the Morningstar. Widdershins there is nothing but empty desert and rolling barrens, while clockwise there is what looks like a forest.

The second Brass Pillar is ten miles away – the old Zethu research centre is located there. Pitwards, the White Hills are the current home of a group of Branded, but that is a 20 mile trek. Widdershins there is *nothing* for miles upon miles – the desert there is almost utterly bereft of features. It is a soul field, however, and stalkers and damned may be encountered there.

There is no water or food supplies within easy reach of the Lost Tower. The inhabitants have enough to keep them going for a week or so (Mary has enough for herself for two months).

The Barony of Yarrow

'Barony' is being generous – the Empty Circle is so empty that any demon can plant its banner and call itself a Baron here. With a few exceptions, like Harvest Keep, the nobility of the First Circle are a joke. Yarrow is a new domain, recently claimed by House Lictat. In centuries past, the domain was claimed by an independent demon lord named

Barony of Yarrow

Features: Forest, Soul Field, Empty Desert (3)

Demon Population: 2,500

Damned Population: 10,000

Daes' Fortress: Shrine with curtain wall and weapons mount with swarf blasters.

Crullick, but it was destroyed when it failed to provide iliaster for its subjects and they revolted. The demons Thinner and Morglass (see below) are former subjects of old Crullick.

Yarrow does have a few resources that make it worth settling. The Spinneedle Forest and the widdershins soul fields are marginally productive. The true value of Yarrow, however, lies in the future and the Infernum's endless hunger. One day, the hellkin will be forced to push out into this empty region, as not even the constant House wars can keep the demons' appetites in check. Perhaps one day Yarrow will be as wealthy and proud as any domain.

The heart of Yarrow is the fortress of Daes, formerly the ruins of the fortress of Crullick. At no point in its history was this fortress of any note; it is little more than a ring of stone around a Shrine. Still, it towers imposingly over the buildings of the little demon hamlet that clusters around it. The strength of Daes' rulership lies in the Torture Mill it controls.

The Spinneedle Forest: The trees in this forest grow iron needles from their branches. These are attracted to movement; when the trees sense vibrations nearby, dozens of sharp needles are hurled at the source of the movement. The spinning of the needles makes them bore deep into the victim. To gather these needles, the demons of Yarrow use damned or spawn on long chains. The sacrificial creature is sent into the forest, then dragged out when its carcass has gathered enough needles.

It is possible to pass through Spinneedle with sufficient caution. Chaise was here long ago and knows the secrets of Spinneedle.

Baron Daes

Daes has no intention of waiting in this backwater (or, given the bone dryness of the barrens here, this backdesert) for long. The Baron (Lictat Slaver 9) has ambitions far beyond the First Circle. It dreams of the pleasures of the Seventh Circle, and desperately desires some novelty or new delight that would secure its place in high society. Some mortal curiosity from a hellgout might be enough. In truth, Daes is such an ugly and uncouth creature that it is unlikely to ever achieve its goals.

The Stalkers & Tnith

The eight stalkers (all Lictat Stalker 2) sent out to find whatever emerged from the hellgout are under the command of a captain (Stalker 5) called Tnith. They travel slowly, using this assignment as an excuse to poach souls from the widdershins soul field as they search. However, they are drawing ever closer to the Lost Tower.

Tnith covets its masters' place and is secretly in contact with Morglass. The renegade Morglass has sworn to aid Tnith, if the stalker can get Morglass access to the old Zethu research centre. This problem dominates Tnith's thoughts as it lopes across the dusty plains – if it can capture any of the Lost Tower inhabitants alive, then it will trade the mortals to the imp.

Two renegade demons of some power dwell in or near the borders of Yarrow:

Morglass

Morglass (Independent Imp 7) is a shadowy figure in the barony. It has a lair somewhere quite close to the hamlet itself, as Morglass has crept into the abodes and hellholes of many demons to whisper to them. The imp appears to delight in sabotage and sowing dissent. It is a constant thorn in Daes' side, although Morglass does not seem to have any bigger goals than mocking and confusing the Baron.

Morglass was once the seneschal of Carrick, and suffered a great loss of prestige and influence when its lord fell. The imp has grown bored of the region and intends to travel onwards soon – once it has ensured that Daes suffers the same painful death and humiliation that Carrick did. Daes had absolutely nothing to do with Carrick's fall – the slaver had not

even been spawned when Carrick was overthrown – but Morglass is idle and malicious.

Oddly, Morglass is as close to a potential ally that the inhabitants of the Lost Tower have. The imp would certainly enjoy guiding a group of clueless mortals to their doom over a long period of time. If it could use them to doom or annoy Daes, so much the better.

Thinner

Another former servant of Carrick, Thinner (Beast 4) is simply insane. The demon lives in the heart of the dangerous Spinneedle forest. It is as stealthy and quiet as the night, so it can slip through the trees without fear of being impaled. Thinner is a constant danger to the denizens of Yarrow; the beast has killed dozens of demons and stolen many souls. There is a 100 crown bounty on its head.

The Branded

The White Hills pitwards of Yarrow are named because of the great snow-like drifts of white dust that choke the valleys between the hills. The hills are treacherous, dangerous terrain. An unwary demon can find itself drowning in a sinkhole or firmite nest with a single wrong step.

This makes the White Hills ideal as a Branded base. They are too close to demon-held territories to be anything other than a staging post for raids, but mortals rescued from slavery can be brought to the hills before being guided deeper into the Branded-held territory further widdershins. Currently, there are two dozen Branded warriors in the hills, under the command of a slave-born mortal called Silas (Branded Mortal 5). Silas' warriors are here to scout the barony of Daes. The domain is but newly established and the Branded need to know if it is just a marginal demon holding or represents a new and significant slaving threat.

The Branded arrived after the hellgout which brought the Lost Tower to Hell, but they may still run across it as they scout. They have found the trail of the stalkers under Tnith and Silas assumed that the stalkers were actually sent out after his warriors.

The Lost Tower would be very valuable to the Branded – not as a structure, as it is much too exposed and easy to find – but it contains a wealth

of comforts and goods from the mortal world. Blankets, bottles, tools, clothing, knives, six storeys of salvage to be claimed.

There is one complication of which Silas is unaware; his chief lieutenant, another Branded named Lo, is actually dead. Lo was killed when raiding a Haimon soul field some weeks previously. She was reanimated as an embodied dead by a Haimon demon, who Covenanted her and sent her to spy on the Branded. Lo knows that the demon will torture and bind her if she does not provide it with some intelligence soon and her fleshy shell is beginning to decay.

Zethu Research Centre

The final interesting feature near the Lost Tower is an old Zethu research centre. The Zethu accidentally triggered the Great Gout in 559 AF, but were not dissuaded from continuing their research by this disaster. The research centre is a low biomechanical dome built *around* a Brass Pillar. The Zethu abandoned their research efforts two centuries ago, as they ran out of iliaster to fuel their

sorcerers (indeed, they purchased a great amount of iliaster from the neighbouring independent lord Carrick, which led to its downfall). The dome is protected by a *warding* of strength 30.

The dome has continued to monitor the energy flux of the Pillar over the centuries. Bone plates are scrimshawed with readouts, and brazen heads embedded into the gelatinous walls silently chant a litany of numbers. The intelligence gathered by the centre might be of some use to a sorcerer or researcher, but the demons who placed the wards around it are long since dead.

Chaice knows about the centre and knows that the information inside could be useful to it. It never had a mortal capable of walking through the wards before, but now it has a whole building full of them. The imp Morglass is also aware of the existence of the research centre.

Adventure Ideas

The Lost Tower and its environs are a snapshot of the situation in the wake of a hellgout. Something new has come to the Pit, and all the usual suspects are moving to claim their share. The unfortunate mortals of 1772 Chalmer St. now have to work out how to survive in Hell – and need to do so quickly, as the stalkers and Tnith will be upon them soon...

- ⊗ The simplest adventure idea is for the characters to run across the Tower as they travel. Ideally, they should be enemies of House Lictat and be forced to ally with Chaice, the mortals, or both and defend the tower against an attack by the stalkers. The bizarre contrast of having demons fighting in a rather familiar environment makes for an interesting encounter. Indeed, this could be used as the starting encounter for campaign with mortal characters – they are other people living in 1772 Chalmer St. who are also dragged into Hell.
- ⊗ The Zethu research centre is another prize to be conquered. Those who know about it – Chaice and Morglass – need a mortal to bring down the wards. Baron Daes might also be able to break in by besieging it or by finding a soul who happens to be self-aware enough to make it inside.
- ⊗ Yarrow is a weak and vulnerable enough domain to be conquered through force of arms or through political trickery.



The Tomb of the Nameless – Second Circle Location

In the days before there were days, we lit corpse-candles to burn away the nothing and called for the discarded shells to skitter up from the not-divide and bring us thought and form and shape, for we are oblivion and chaos and unpurpose.

— from the 23rd Tooth Inscription.

There are created things older than man and demon alike. The spawn, for example, were in Hell for timeless aeons before Lucifer fell. The Brokenlanders predate Creation entirely. The fallen angels dimly remember creatures roaming the mortal realm before humanity was given reign over the earth.

Some of them found their way to Hell. In the timeless realm, they somehow built cities and fortresses and tombs. The angels found these ruins and worked them into their own edifices. The Tomb of the Nameless is one such hybrid structure. It lies on the Inferno Line, that monstrous fortification that encircles the entirety of the second level of the Pit. As House Lictat troops and other treasure seekers explore the ancient Inferno Line, they run across more and more strange devices and ancient secrets of Hell.

The Tomb of the Nameless is one of these ancient secrets. Buried deep below the Inferno Line, but connected by a long spiral staircase of bone to the surface, the Tomb of the Nameless has drawn many to its dark vaults. Few have ever found their way back up to the red light of the Morningstar.

The Inferno Line

The Inferno Line is a ring of walls, spires, fortresses and other defensive ramparts. According to demonic tradition, it was created as a defence against Heaven (although seeing as Heaven's army is presumably composed of winged angels, it is unclear how a mere wall around the Circle would have stopped them). The Inferno Line was ignored for much of the Infernum's history, but is now being explored, mainly by House Lictat.

The section of the Inferno Line directly above the Tomb of the Nameless was nicknamed Spine Castle by the demons who discovered it. A huge spike-covered spine arches from the central keep of the strangely-designed fortress. The fortress has only a handful of windows, all of which are unusually wide but located hundreds of feet up sheer walls and are plainly designed for the use of flying creatures. Its original doors were located in the walls where it connects to the rest of the Inferno Line on either side – there was no way to walk into the fortress, other than entering the Inferno Line through one of the open gateways some miles away, then travelling through the stone corridors and passageways to Spine Castle.

However, Spine Castle has undergone several forced renovations since its construction, the most obvious of which came in 312 AF. A demon lord blasted a large hole in the side of the castle and built a gatehouse over the breach. Spine Castle has been claimed by several demon lords over the centuries, although few have held it for long. It seems to draw episodes of slaughter and bloodshed.



Djara's Brigade

The rag-tag band of Independent demons and half-breeds that call themselves Djara's Brigade oppose the expansion of House Lictat. House control means losing ownership of their hard-won souls and being forced to pay at the communal trench like a slave. House Lictat may claim to be the House of the independent and young demon, but it is just as grasping and autocratic as the Carthenay or Sturrach.

House Lictat has been pushing along the Inferno Line. Plot the House's influence and the pattern becomes obvious – mark their estates in the mountains with a blotch of red, then trace a long narrow circular streak clockwise and widdershins to show their taking of the Line. Finally, sketch little tendrils and reddish shades on either side of the Line, as formerly independent demons are forced to bow to their new masters within the walls. Continue the arcing line until it meets itself and it is a noose drawn across the neck of the Pit.

Djara vowed to put an end to the Lictat's reckless expansion. The fortification of Spine Castle lay close to the advancing end of the Lictat occupation. By claiming and preparing Spine Castle, her brigade could block the Lictat. While Djara convinced her followers to do this is proclaiming that they would all be Covenanted chattels of the Lictat within the year if they did not make a stand, her true motive was less egalitarian. House Carthenay sponsored her little war, in an attempt to test the Lictat resolve.

Djara's Brigade consists of 50 demons and six heavily tainted mortals, with three dozen souls between them. They act as mercenaries on occasion, but in practice are little more than well-organised brigands. Djara – a free-spawned succubus with great personal magnetism – kept the brigade together through force of will alone. They regularly raid Oblurott and lately Lictat domains for iliaster and weaponry.

The Brigade arrived at the castle and cleared it of the spawn that had infested it, before preparing its defences. They laid traps along the approach from the clockwise Inferno Line. Here, they would make a stand against Lictat aggression. The Brigade sent imp and beast scouts down the tunnels, to warn them of the approach of Lictat troops.

The Brigade sat and waited for the Lictat to come. As they idled there, Djara and her chief lieutenants explored the deeper regions of the castle and found – as many had before them – the spiral staircase leading down into the Tomb. The mysteries of the deep tormented her until she could resist no longer, and Djara decided to explore the dungeon beneath Spine Castle.

She left one of her lieutenants, a former Astyanath fiend named Kirch, in charge of the defences and went down into the Tomb.

Kirch and the Surface Brigade

It has been a week since Djara went below. The scouts returned a day after she left, bringing word of a group of Lictat tunnel fighters approaching Spine Castle.

In Djara's absence, however, the Brigade began to crumble. Without her leadership, many of the less committed demons have begun to slip away. Faced with its troops vanishing before the Lictat even got to Spine Castle, Kirch (ex-Astyanath Fiend 3) sent two imps down to bring Djara back. They have not returned, and Kirch is loath to split its diminished forces further. It is currently trying to hold the Brigade together while preparing for the inevitable battle with the tunnel fighters, but privately Kirch suspects that the Brigade would be better served by abandoning Spine Castle and fleeing rimwards.

Unknown to both Kirch and Djara, one of the Brigade – a mortal called Calan (Slave Mortal 2) – is an agent and spy for House Carthenay, there to ensure that Djara lives up to her end of the deal. Calan's sister is held as insurance in the Carthenay vaults in Greybier. Calan's role was to watch Djara, but with her gone, he has decided to make sure the Brigade stays in position to slow the Lictat down.

The Lictat Tunnel Fighters

House Lictat's tunnel fighters are an equally motley assemblage of mercenaries, criminals, maniacs and grim killers, who have been hacking their way through the castles and catacombs of the Inferno Line for almost a decade. They are House Lictat's most skilled and experienced troops, although the House leadership is hardly aware of this fact – the Tunnel Fighters are believed to be nothing more than expendable rabble.

This particular unit of tunnel fighters consists of

The Brigade

Tiny Green Stalker Unit (40 demons)
Level 2 (80 hp)
Cohesion: 20/40/60
Movement: 3
AC: 16
Attack: +1 Claw (1d6+1)
Saves: Fortitude +3, Reflex +3, Will+1
Warcraft: +2
Special Abilities: Scatter

Tunnel Fighters

Diminutive Veteran Hulk Unit (6 demons)
Level 4 (42 hp)
Cohesion: 11/22/33
Movement: 2
AC: 22
Attack: +8 melee (Claw 1d8+7)
Saves: Fortitude +5, Reflex +5, Will+2
Warcraft: +8
Special Abilities: Rage

six hardened warriors – three hulks (all level 4), a pair of imps (Lictat Imp 3) and their commander, a beast called Sarnath (Lictat Beast 5). They are obviously outnumbered by the remaining Brigade, but the tunnel fighters are much more heavily armoured, are used to fighting as a group and can use the narrow spaces of the internal corridors to their advantage. Sarnath is a veteran of the tunnel wars and has become completely obsessed with clearing the Inferno Line. It drives the other Lictat demons on and on to feed its obsession.

The Tomb of the Nameless

The Tomb of the Nameless predates the Infernum. It is connected to Castle Spine by a spiral staircase within the bone spine that gives the castle its grisly name. Indeed, as a creature explores the Tomb, it soon becomes apparent that the tomb is constructed inside the skull of some cyclopean and ancient bestial carcass.

Characters who travel down the spiral staircase emerge in the throat room. They will then have to make their way through the mouth and up the passageway past the eye-sockets to get to the Tomb within the brain.

Characters within the Tomb of the Nameless risk succumbing to the Tomb's psychic malaise. Whatever was buried in the tomb – or perhaps the giant skeleton that makes up the tomb – exerts a psychic hunger on all those who pass nearby. The Nameless is starved of emotion; the more killing and pain that happens within Castle Spine or the tomb, the stronger it becomes.

In game terms, characters within the Tomb gain

a +4 bonus to Intimidate checks, but suffer a -2 penalty to Will saves. Any creature that kills another or makes an Intimidate check may become possessed by the Nameless – the Nameless can immediately make a Possession check at each death or Intimidation attempt. The Nameless grows stronger with each death – it began at Intelligence 2, Wisdom 2 and Charisma 2 and grows by +2 for every death. It is currently at Intelligence 12, Wisdom 12 and Charisma 12, giving it a +3 bonus to Control Check when possessing. It can reach a maximum of 18 in all three ability scores. The Nameless cannot maintain control outside of the Tomb and Spine Castle.

The Nameless seeks to feed for as long as possible, so it needs to prolong the carnage and suffering on the surface.

Djara and those who went beneath

When the succubus Djara went down the staircase, she brought her five most trusted bodyguards with her. All of these except Djara have fallen victim to the mind-warping effects of the tomb – three of the guards are dead, while two others have suffered severe mental strain and are quite unhinged. The two imps Kitch sent down have also been killed. Djara herself has been partially possessed by the Nameless; the ancient thing does not have full control, but it can influence her enough to keep her trapped down here.

The Throat Chamber

This chamber is obviously organic in origin, despite

being lined with marble. The entrance door from the spiral staircase is made of stone and once bore an angelic seal, but it was blasted into fragments. Inside, the floor is littered with corpses. Most of these are the decayed husks of long-dead demons, but there are four fresh bodies here – two imps, swatted to the floor by a large and powerful foe. The other two – both stalkers – obviously killed each other, as their bodies lie entwined with each other, chunks of each others' flesh lodged in their claws.

One of the two guards brought down by Djara is in this chamber, a third stalker called Acris (Independent Stalker 3). The demon is compelled by the Nameless to kill anyone entering the Tomb. Acris will wait until the characters have gone past

before dropping down and attacking them from behind.

There is little else of interest in this chamber, although characters digging through the decayed remains can find a few simple weapons and scraps of armour of antique design, including a soulbound mace (+1 to hit, +2 to damage).

The Mouth Room

The Mouth Room is a cavernous room, like the vaulted nave of a cathedral. It has been decorated beautifully by angelic hands; the walls are marble speckled with reflective shards of crystal, which glitter like the stars never seen in Hell when light is brought into the chamber. There are two exits – an archway back into the Throat Room and a hole in the ceiling some 30 feet above the floor.

The most notable feature of the Mouth Room are the teeth. There are roughly oval holes in the marble on either side of the room, to allow access to the teeth of the skull. Each tooth has been carved with angelic symbols and pictographs. The four canines are the largest of the teeth and are the easiest to interpret – a Knowledge (arcana) check (DC 10) reveals the intended meanings of the four symbols:

- ⊗ The first is the hardest to make out; it seems to show a network of two dozen or so caves, each marked with a bizarre and obviously demonic symbol.
- ⊗ The second pictograph presumably describes the Fall – tiny little winged figures fall into Hell, their bodies burning. The greatest is like a falling star; his impact shatters some of the caves of the first tooth.
- ⊗ The third pictograph has an angel speaking with one of the bizarre symbols from the first tooth. In the background, many more fallen angels can be seen; all are apparently asleep or dead.
- ⊗ The fourth and final canine is the most cryptic of all; the network of the first tooth is delicately traced on the tooth, but now the Enochian symbol for Lucifer surmounts them all.

A successful Decipher Script (DC 30) check reveals that all the other three dozen or so teeth contain what appears to be a treaty or a similar legal document, perhaps a will. It is written in a language unlike any in use in the Pit.

Acris

(3rd level Unaligned Stalker)

Medium Demon

Hit Dice: 3d8+6 (19 hp)

Initiative: +2

Speed: 30 ft.

Armour Class: 18 (+3 natural, +2 Dex, +2 armour, +1 helmet), touch 12, flat-footed 15

Base Attack/Grapple: +3/+5

Attack: Bite +6 melee (2d6+2)

Attack: Bite +6 melee (2d6+2) and Claw +0 melee (1d4+1)

Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.

Saves: Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +2

Abilities: Str 15, Dex 14, Con 15, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 8

Skills: Climb +6, Hide +6, Move Silently +4, Survival +4

Feats: Cleave, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (Bite)

Mutations:

- ⊗ **Stalker:** Scent
- ⊗ **Animal Aspect:** Face of the Beast (+2 Listen & Spot, increased bite damage)
- ⊗ **Devourer:** Monstrous Maw (increased bite damage)

Iliaster Reserve: 9

Challenge Rating: 3



The Passage

The steep passageway that leads up to the back of the tomb is narrow and dangerously steep. The walls are made of naked bone and there are hundreds of bone spikes and ridges along the floor. Characters must make Balance checks (DC 15) as they climb along the passageway and suffer 2d6 points of slashing damage if they fall.

Lurking in the passageway is the other guard brought by Djana, Thut the artificer (Independent artificer 3). The demon's right arm is merged with a shattergun, which it uses to blast any creatures climbing up the passageway.

Thut is more stable than Acris, and believes that it is protecting its mistress Djana. The Nameless has convinced it that any intruders in the Tomb are here to destroy Djana. Thut has given Djana all its iliaster supply and is facing Dissolution soon.

The Eyes

These two chambers can be reached from the passage. Both are empty spheres. The far wall of

both chamber is a hemisphere of blood-red crystal. Characters looking into the crystal can dimly make out the image of a brightly shining figure, flaming sword in hand. His features are very beautiful and proud and cruel.

The Tomb

The Tomb of the Nameless is in the brain cavity of the skull. It is a huge chamber, as big as the Mouth below. The walls are bone, but are covered in angelic symbols. The air trembles with sorcerous power.

The Tomb itself floats in the centre of the chamber. It looks very much like a shrivelled and blacked

Thut

(3rd level Unaligned Artificer)

Small Demon

Hit Dice: 3d6+3 (13 hp)

Initiative: +2

Speed: 20 ft.

Armour Class: 18 (+3 natural, +2 Dex, +2 armour, +1 helmet), touch 12, flat-footed 15

Base Attack/Grapple: +3/-2

Attack: Claw +2 melee (1d4-1) or Small shattergun +7 (1d10)

Full Attack: Claw +2 melee (1d4-1) or Small shattergun +7 (1d10)

Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.

Saves: Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +2

Abilities: Str 8, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 16, Wis 12, Cha 10

Skills: Appraise +9, Concentration +7, Craft (engineering) +9, Decipher Script +9, Disable Device +8, Grovel +6, Knowledge (architecture) +9, Spot +7, Torture +7.

Feats: Exotic Weapon Proficiency (shattergun), Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot

Mutations:

⊗ **Artificer:** Machine Empathy

⊗ **Bonded Weapons:** Bonded Shattergun, Flesh of my Flesh

Iliaster Reserve: 9

Challenge Rating: 3

to be made out of some greasy metal. It spins slowly in the air, suspended by some invisible force.

A *warding* circle of great age and power is inscribed on the floor around the Tomb. Characters examining the circle will notice that there is a tiny crack in the ward, perhaps caused when the walls of Spine Castle were blown open. Dozens of demon bodies lie scattered around the floor of the tomb, all bearing signs of hideous injury.

Djana (Independent Succubus 5) is curled up on the far side of the Tomb, her wings wrapped tightly around her. The Nameless is keeping her will in check. Any attempt to remove her from the chamber by force will result in her fighting back, but characters can get her out by getting the Nameless to jump into another body. If the characters coax Djana into talking, she can tell them what she knows of the mind – that it is a possessing entity that feeds on hate and pain, like an immaterial demon.

Another option is to reseal the ward (which requires a Sorcery check at DC 25) or opening it fully. If the ward is destroyed, then the tomb immediately falls

to the floor and shatters. *Something* old and dark rushes through the room, then the whole complex shakes as the spine writhes. Ancient buried bones twitch beneath the ground, causing an earthquake that sends the towers of Spine Castle tumbling down. Whatever the characters released from its tomb vanishes when the tomb is opened.

Adventure Ideas

The Tomb of the Nameless is one of the many cryptic locations throughout Hell which hint at ancient bargains and secrets older than the demons.

- ⊗ The characters could take the place of the Lictat tunnel fighters – they are assigned to clear a section of the Inferno Line for House Lictat, when they run into the fortified castle and Djana's Brigade. Starting a fight or sabotaging the defences could have dire consequences, as deaths make the possessor in the Tomb more powerful.
- ⊗ If the characters have ties to House Carthenay, then the mortal Calan could contact them and ask for their aid. He knows that without Djana's leadership, the Brigade will not hold the castle for long, so he wants them to go down and retrieve the succubus.
- ⊗ The *warding* in the tomb is one of the few examples of angelic sorcery. The Priests of the Morningstar and Houses Zethu and Haimon would be very interested in studying it.
- ⊗ If the characters rescue Djana, the succubus would be obviously grateful; perhaps they could help her in her battle against House Lictat. She might even cut them in on her deal with the Carthenay.
- ⊗ And just what is in the tomb anyway? The spirit of whatever the skeleton was? Biblical tales speak of the Grigori, the watcher-angels or half-angels, who were said to be of gigantic proportions. It could also be some demonic prototype, or an ur-spawn like Behemoth. What bargain did Lucifer make with it, back before the dawn of Hell?



Meremouth – Third

Circle Location

The anvils around his neck shifted with the currents. It seemed almost unfair that things so heavy should be so sensitive to such minor changes in water pressure, but each bow wave from a passing boat wracked his rack-stretched neck with new agonies.

Soon, the waters would close over his head and a new pain would begin. The drowning, which would last for endless hours. The damned cannot drown, but they can choke. Lungs made of phantasmal matter and ectoplasm can still flood with stagnant water. The panic and the darkness are real enough.

Just as bad, of course, was the boredom. When the tides were low, he hung inches above the muddy salt water, looking at the upside-down hulls of the boats floating by. Traffic through Meremouth was often slow and his field of vision might be blocked by the rust-covered hull of one ship for days at a time. He might pass the time by counting scuttling spawn or barnacles. Any attempt to twist to get a better view of the canals brought unimaginable pain.

Once, long ago, a demon had rowed out on a little boat and spoken to him.

'Are you familiar with the Hanged Man in the Tarot?' it hissed at him, its eyes glowing an unnatural green.

He had stayed silent. His throat was too stretched for speech and shaking his head was obviously impossible.

'Those who hang in pain are said to gain great wisdom. Odin on the World Ash brought back the runes, the mortals say. I wish to know your wisdom.'

The demon ended up getting frustrated by his refusal to answer and had pushed him. He had swung back and forth like a pendulum for what seemed like months, each swing bringing new pain.

Still, the demon's question had occupied his mind. He had, after all, little else to think on and many decades to think about it.

It had taken him centuries, but he finally had an answer for that demon.

The hanging town of Meremouth is built on great stone arches and pillars above the mud and canals of the Third Circle. Hooks and chains powered by steam engines hang down from the street and bridges, to drag cargo up from the canals below. These chains have a more grisly purpose too – damned souls are hung by their necks or guts from these chains, with lead weights tied to their feet. The agony is harvested for iliaster. The younger demons sometimes fish for the strange aquatic spawn using souls as bait.

Meremouth is an Oblurott town, but is relatively neutral. This open attitude is largely due to its current ruler – the mortal king, Samuel Horne. Horne holds the rank of Captain within House Oblurott, but his loyalty to the Bloated House is... questionable. Under his rulership, Meremouth has become a place where mortals fleeing slavery in the Oblurott and Glabretch estates can come and find their way onto the Branded underground railroad. Meremouth is a den of thieves, murderers and monsters, but it is also a beacon of hope.

History of Meremouth

Meremouth is some four hundred Hellish years old. The stones of the city were dragged from the Second Circle – some of the older, shallower canals are actually flooded ruts left by the passage of the stones. According to local legend, it was intended to be the fortress of an astonishingly rich but also astonishingly heavy Oblurott Duke. The Duke squandered so much of its wealth that its servants grew angry and hired an assassin to remove the problem. As the Duke was notoriously paranoid and had an army of bodyguards, the assassin charged a very high fee indeed. The servants grumbled, but paid the price.

The assassin waited until the duke was visiting the foundations of its new fortress, then pushed it into the mud. The duke's bodyguards tried to drag it out of the mire, but it took them down with it. The story is probably apocryphal – certainly, Oblurott records do not mention any such duke, but House records have been edited before.

The town grew as a trade city until Sturrach's War, when it became a marshalling point for the Oblurott forces. It was raided several times by Sturrach fiends, who set large sections of the city

on fire, but never fell to them. The moment the war ended, though, House Glabretch made one of its rare expansionary pushes and conquered the city. For almost a century, Meremouth was held by the Putrid House, although they failed to establish the moliare there and so handed rulership over to the Toshin.

The Toshin

The curious group called the Toshin are also known as the Ditchwater Demons. In these latter days, they are entirely Covenanted to the Oblurott, but for much of their history they were effectively an independent minor House that roamed the canals. The Toshin dredged the canals for souls that had drowned, as well as other debris and treasure washed out of the Haimon or Oblurott estates.

Meremouth was one of their trade centres, and they gladly took over control when the Glabretch offered it. With Glabretchi backing, the Toshin became their spies and pirates, acting for the Putrid House in the same way the Charonites serve the Haimon. Toshin barges secretly carried Glabretchi agents and plagues into the heart of the Oblurott estates.

The Toshin also fulfilled another vital role for the Glabretchi – they tracked the infected mortals who escaped the testing grounds. Whole districts of Meremouth became plague wards, where escapees were corralled and left to fester until Glabretchi surgeon-imps and beasts could dissect them. As the years dragged on, Meremouth became less of a trade town and more of an abattoir. The canals out of Meremouth ran red with blood and green with pus.

Samuel Horne

Samuel Horne was a mortal who thought he sold his soul for power. He was an adventurer and rake in the 17th century; his exploits were admired and despised throughout the British Empire. In secret, he had connections to various occult organisations, which led him down the path of sorcery. Horne never learned enough magic to summon any but the weakest demons, but he did attract the attention of a Zethu noble who offered Horne power and influence. Horne took the deal, counting his soul as being of no use to him.

Then, at the height of his power and infamy, Horne fell in love with a woman, Clarice. They married

and had a daughter together. Horne became a model citizen under Clarice's gentle instruction, putting aside both his wild ways and his dark arts. He knew he still owed the Zethu a debt, so he eventually summoned up the courage to go and confess to a priest and receive absolution. It took all of Horne's legendary bravery, bravery that permitted him to deal with the blackest magics and to face down pirates and corsairs, to go before a priest, but he managed it for love of Clarice.

He returned to his mansion to find wife and child dead, a demon's mark engraved on both their chests. The Zethu lord had taken them instead of Samuel's soul.

Horne, a man of passion and excess through all his life, did not shed a tear. His soul turned cold and stone-hard even as he set fire to his mansion, making it a pyre for Clarice and their daughter. He silently swore revenge on the Zethu and returned to his arcane studies until he found a way into Hell. He emerged through a portal into the Fifth Circle of Hell. His vendetta took him nearly 20 years to complete, but his life had been lengthened thanks to his deal with the devil. He tracked down the



Zethu lord and tortured it until it revealed that the souls of Clarice and their daughter had been sold to the Haimon.

Horne travelled Up along the Styx and Acheron until he reached the Third and began a hopeless search – finding two souls among millions seemed impossible. He eventually discovered, through trickery and force of will, that the Glabretchi had captured them from the Haimon. Up until now, Horne had worked through guile, allying himself with one demon or another and using them as tools for his vengeance and then in his search. House Glabretch, however, was a closed system – the Glabretchi rarely make deals with individual mortals and certainly not with ones so infamous and dangerous as Samuel Horne.

In the end, he was forced to ally with the Oblurott. They promised him aid if he could bring down the Toshin. Horne did better than that – in a series of brilliantly vicious stratagems and betrayals, he so broke the Toshin's power and their relationship with House Glabretch that by the end they were forced to accept a subservient position within the Oblurott just to survive. The Toshin have never forgotten this crime against them and hate Horne as much as any mortal has ever been hated in the Pit.

With this victory, the Oblurott gave Horne the title of Captain and the domain of Meremouth. Corruption had taken hold of Horne; the Covenants he had once broken flagrantly thanks to his mortal soul were now catching him more and more. His freedom was diminished, piece by piece, by the invisible bonds of demonic debt.

His fame grew even faster than his corruption – tales of the mortal who had defeated the Toshin and now ruled Meremouth spread across the Pit. These tales even reached the Glabretchi testing grounds and inspired a tortured soul that vaguely remembered being called Clarice to break free and run across the mud flats and swim the canals to Meremouth. She and her fellow escapees managed to mostly stay one step ahead of the stalkers and Toshin hunters, and made it to Meremouth.

Clarice's soul arrived before the Lightless district (see below) was formed. She managed to creep into Horne's palace – at the same time as Horne's liege lord, an Oblurott Viscount by name of Count

Jurgen, was present. Both Samuel and Clarice were greatly changed – he was wounded by long war, dressed in demonic finery and corrupted by the sinful vapours of the Pit; she was dead, dressed in rags and tainted with Putrid diseases – but they still recognised each other readily and embraced with as much passion and joy as they had on the day they were married. For Horne, it was the first time he had shown true feeling since her death; for Clarice, it was the first joy since her death.

Then Count Jurgen stepped forward and told Horne that this insolent damned was obviously diseased – and as a loyal vassal of the Oblurott, Horne must destroy it in the furnaces immediately. Horne tried to refuse, but the Covenants he had accepted to find Clarice were too strong. Horne incinerated the soul of his wife in a furnace of hellfire.

It is said that he keeps her wastrel soul in a jar in his palace.

The Lightless

The Lightless district was made by Horne soon after Clarice's second death. Due to the Toshin's dealing with the Glabretchi and the proximity of Meremouth to the disease testing grounds, many of the denizens of the city were hideously tainted by sickness and biological weapons. By Oblurott law, Horne should have had his demons put them all to death by fire, but the mortal chose to be merciful instead. Between the surface city and the arches and canals below, there was a middle zone of supports, access tunnels, sewers and water channels. The tainted were herded into these vaults and sealed there.

That district is now called the Lightless, a shadow quarter where there is no law, demonic or otherwise. The existence of the Lightless has made Meremouth a haven for crime and trade – but it has also drawn the Branded and other mortals to the city. Dis may have recently declared itself free, but for a hundred years Samuel Horne has ruled over a city where, in one part at least, damned, mortal, demon and angel are equally cursed.

The Branded use Lightless Meremouth as a base; they run what might be termed a canal-based underground railroad through the city. Whether Horne intended to help his fellow mortals, or if he

is playing some deeper game is unknown.

Meremouth

Meremouth is located a few dozen miles Pitwards and widdershins of the Free City of Gall. The town can be divided into three sections vertically – the Hanging Docks, Lightless Meremouth and Meremouth Above. The latter is by far the most populous section of the town.

The Hanging Docks

This section is so named because of the hooks and chains that hang from the surface city. Massive steam-powered engines and booms lift and move ships from one channel to another. The streets of the surface city are the ports and quays of Meremouth. Souls also hang down, although a soul-burning mill has recently been constructed.

Four major canals meet at Meremouth; the town now sits above what amounts to an artificial lake, as so many little branches and connections have been dug between the four. The docks are always crowded with traders and cargo barges, and – thanks to the proximity of Gall – Oblurott and even Haimon warships. The Houses are not besieging Gall, not yet, but conflict is believed to be inevitable.

The Hanging Docks are dominated by the Toshin, who do their best to ignore the city above them. They use the black markets of the Lightless whenever they can to avoid the port and lock fees. Clashes between the Toshin and the town watch are common.

The Wreck of the *Vacule*: The mighty *Vacule* was once part of the floating city of Allsorrows, but during the Glabretchi occupation, Allsorrows and Meremouth were at war for a time (and seeing as Allsorrows has joined Gall in the Heresy, war may come again). *Vacule* – a possessed vessel – was infected by a Glabretchi rust-bacteria that ate through its hull which the ship was firing on the hellish town. *Vacule* broke in two and sank at the mouth of the Canker Way Canal.

Since then, the *Vacule*'s still-intact cabins and holds have become home to a colony of demon shipwrights. For all their artistry, they cannot get the mighty ship back afloat, but the Vaculers make some of the best boats on the Third Circle.

They work night and day in their little shipyards, illuminated by soulcandles hung from the chains above. The Vaculers pay dues to both the Toshin and the city above.

Toshin Black Barges: The sinister Black Barges of the Toshin cut through the canals like sharks. In the rest of the Circle, the Toshin are seen as ditchwater-dull scavengers and merchants, but the Toshin of Meremouth remember the wound the mortal Horne did to them. They are pirates and slavers who take great joy in hunting down Branded and escapees. They do not prey on Oblurott or Glabretchi shipping if they can avoid it, as they remember their current and former allies, but Independent and Free City traders are targeted for theft. The Black Barges are drawn by swift skeletal horses who gallop along the muddy banks to catch their prey.

Hanging Gardens: For the arched city of Meremouth to build hanging gardens was perhaps inevitable. These gardens provide fresh food and supplies for the city above. The gardens hang between Lightless and the Docks below, although some of the more virulent plants have tendrils that



hang all the way down to the water. Some of the plants have been infected by Putrid diseases from Lightless, causing riotous mutations and cancerous growths.

Weighed Souls: The old weighed souls of Meremouth hang from the streets above. Extraction rig tubes run back to the city above, twining around the chains that suspend the souls. The souls are not only used to provide iliaster – they are also navigation buoys and depth markers. If the knees of the soul of Centurion Valerius Nessus can be seen, for example, then the Canker Way is running shallow and the weepheads need to be tortured some more to refill the channel.

Some of the souls have gotten used to this torture and can be useful sources of news and gossip about events in Meremouth.

Mudlarks: The mudlarks are mortal children and demon larvae who scour the canal banks for useful trash. They are lowered down from Lightless at dawn and work until witching and again for the whole false day. The material gathered by the mudlarks soon finds its way into the Lightless market. As the mudlarks are lowered from above, they also make excellent thieves when dropped onto barges.

Grasping Jehu: Grasping Jehu (Glabretch Stalker 9) is something of a legend in Meremouth; it is a demon far advanced along the Chain of the Seas and so able to remain hidden in the water of the canals indefinitely. Jehu is a serial killer; it has dragged many demons to their deaths by leaping out of the canal, grabbing its prey and pulling them down into the darkness. Despite this unsavoury behaviour, Jehu is something of a folk hero in Meremouth. The demons seem almost fond of the horror and Jehu is rumoured to have connections to various criminal syndicates including House Hand (see page 150 of *Book of the Tormentor*).

Lightless

Officially, the Lightless district does not exist. The lord of Meremouth, Samuel Horne, declared that all those held within the plague wards of the town as well as all those who came from the Putrid lands would be thrown into the tunnels and passageways within the foundations of the town. These tunnels would then be sealed and the tainted inhabitants

allowed to starve to death or die of the diseases they carried. However, there are so many hidden exits and secret passages within Lightless that the banished community has thrived in the darkness.

There is, as the name suggests, no light in the Lightless district. Any light source stronger than a candle is forbidden out of fear that it might attract an Oblurott execution squad. The denizens of the district live their short lives in pitch darkness. Disease runs rampant here; if the Glabretchi *wanted* to create a high-pressure incubator where every species and breed might be exposed to sicknesses, they could not have done a better job than Horne did. The denizens of Lightless are free, however – there is no law and souls can be held by the commonest of demons.

By definition, all who dwell within Lightless are diseased and are killed if they ever try to leave their underground prison. The only exit points that are actually patrolled, however, are the ones leading into the city above; it is easy to get in or out of Lightless by climbing along the arches or via the docking chains. Most traffic with the district is done using illegal lifts and chains.

The Puppeteers: The denizens of Lightless are officially forbidden from leaving their district, but they still sometimes need to trade with outsiders. They have adopted the use of the now-famous puppets of Lightless. These are weird marionettes made of bone that are lowered from Lightless down to the Hanging Docks. The puppeteers are incredibly skilled, able to convey any meaning or emotion they desire from far above by twitching the wires and strings. Tubes of waxed skin convey the puppeteer's voice down to the docks below.

Strangely, not all the puppets can be attributed to denizens within Lightless. There are several puppets, such as the Grinning Fool, the Patchwork Knight and Tom'Aborning, who appear to have independent existences. Tom'Aborning has even been seen in Meremouth Above.

The Underground Railroad: The Branded use the Lightless district as a safe house. Mortals who escaped from the Oblurott farms or the Glabretchi testing grounds are encouraged to flee to Lightless and hide there until the Branded contact them. Then, in the dead of night, the mortals are lowered onto barges and brought Up to the borders of

the Second Circle so they can make their way to safety.

This flow of slaves through Meremouth is of concern to both the Glabretchi and the Oblurott. The feud between Captain Horne and the Toshin, not to mention Horne's possible sympathies towards his fellow mortals has prevented anything being done about blocking the railroad. The Oblurotts intend to use their own spies to deal with the problem, but the threat of Gall has put this plan on hold.

The leader of the Branded here is a Broken Chainer called Harriet (Branded Mortal 5). She has contracted a Glabretchi disease that has rendered her much more vulnerable to Corruption and she has begun to mutate at an accelerated rate. She has hidden this taint from her superiors in the tribe, but news will eventually reach them through the former slaves she sends Up to the Pit.

The Heretics: Unsurprisingly, Meremouth is being targeted by Free City Heretics from the nearby city of Gall. As the canals out of Gall are patrolled by House vessel, the heretics had to sneak out by swimming. They carried with them the five iron markers needed for the *breaking of oaths* ritual, but one of the swimmers was caught and eaten by Grasping Jehu. The three markers it carried were lost somewhere in the muck of the Hanging Docks. The heretics are desperately trying to recover the lost markers – they might be able to forge more to complete the spell, but if an iron marker fell into the hands of the House authorities, it would be a clear sign that the Heresy is active in Meremouth.

The heretics intend to have Meremouth converted to a Free City within the year. What affect this would have on the terrible oaths sworn by Captain Horne is unknown.

Oblurott Execution Squads: The Oblurott tolerated Horne's decision to create Lightless, but only if he put execution squads into place to keep the denizens trapped in the tunnels. These demon squads patrol the exits from the undercity; anyone who tries to leave it is shot on sight with poisoned crossbows or shatterguns. The execution squads are well aware of the Lightless black market, so they are very susceptible to bribery.

Corbenic: One of the odder denizens of Lightless is an old blind mortal man called Corbenic (Mortal

12). He claims to be one of the famed Pilgrim Knights who were sent out by the Harrowers soon after they arrived in Hell. If this were so, he would be more than a century old. The mortal master of the city is that old, of course, but Horne has the excuse of having bargained with demons for longevity. Despite being one of the oldest of the Lightless, Corbenic does not appear to have any of the myriad diseases that run rife in the district. Indeed, there are tales of Corbenic healing the sick with the mere touch of his gnarled hands.

Meremouth Above

Meremouth Above is a progressive city of commerce and culture, which does its best to ignore the other districts below it. Meremouth tries to sell itself as an island of Seventh Circle breeding to the local scions of House Oblurott. While the higher-ranking nobles of House Oblurott can travel Down the Pit as a matter of course, mere Barons and other lowly nobles are tied to their manor farms and estates and are therefore starved for high culture.

Horne's Palace: The palace of Captain Horne is fairly typical for a demon's home, but the lord of the city is no demon. Most of the palace is, in fact, just for show and to impress the regular guests from House Oblurott. Horne himself dwells in a small and rather spartan tower above the palace.

Horne (Oblurott House Mortal 17) is one of the most powerful mortals in the Pit in terms of political influence – his word weighs as heavily as that of an Oblurott Viscount – but he rarely exerts his power. His lordship is always present in the Chamber of Delights on the opening night of an entertainment, but he always appears bored. To be *bored* in Hell is a terrible thing indeed to the demons. Some of them hate the mortal for his ennui, others consider it a challenge to break Horne through shock and excess.

It is unclear if Horne is actually immortal or if he is merely very long-lived. Time and ageing are difficult to reckon in Hell, even without the warping effects of the Clocks of Hell. After all, Horne (a man of the 17th century) entered Hell sometime around 650 AF, while the Knights of the Harrowing came from the 12th century and arrived in 668 AF. He dwells on the deaths of his beloved wife, but has seemingly forgotten about the fate of

his daughter.

Horne is a sorcerer of some power, although there are more skilled faustians. His true genius is in political manipulation and treachery, for which he has a special talent. No one could gull a demon Duke with the same brazen attitude as Horne at his best. To the Oblurott's frustration, he has rarely used this talent on their behalf, preferring to sit in Meremouth and rule it quietly.

Meremouth Chamber of Delights: The centre of the Meremouth entertainment industry, the Chamber of Delights brings the best of the Seventh Circle up to the Third. Sometimes, even *summoning* is used to get the best entertainments to this isolated city. Riethii actors and bed mates, Astyanath torture artistes, singers, soul sculptors and every other ghastly art has been performed in the Chamber of Delights.

The Playroom: While many Oblurott have the gift of Possession, it is not universal within the House. In the playroom, however, any demon can enjoy the flesh. The Playroom has puppets made from mortal bodies, which a demon can enter into and control using the room's cunning machinery. The Playroom is a unique attraction of Meremouth and draws visitors from across Upper Hell.

Plagueward Scars: During the Glabretchi occupation, whole sections of the town were given over to holding recaptured disease subjects. When Horne retook the city for the Oblurott, he had the subjects thrown into the new Lightless district and burnt the plague wards to the arches. Since then, most of the Plagueward Scars have been built on – space is, after all, at a premium in the hanging city. However, some of them have resisted reconstruction and are haunted by warghosts and other iliaster echoes. One of the strangest manifestations is a ghostly mortal mansion, constantly consumed by flames.

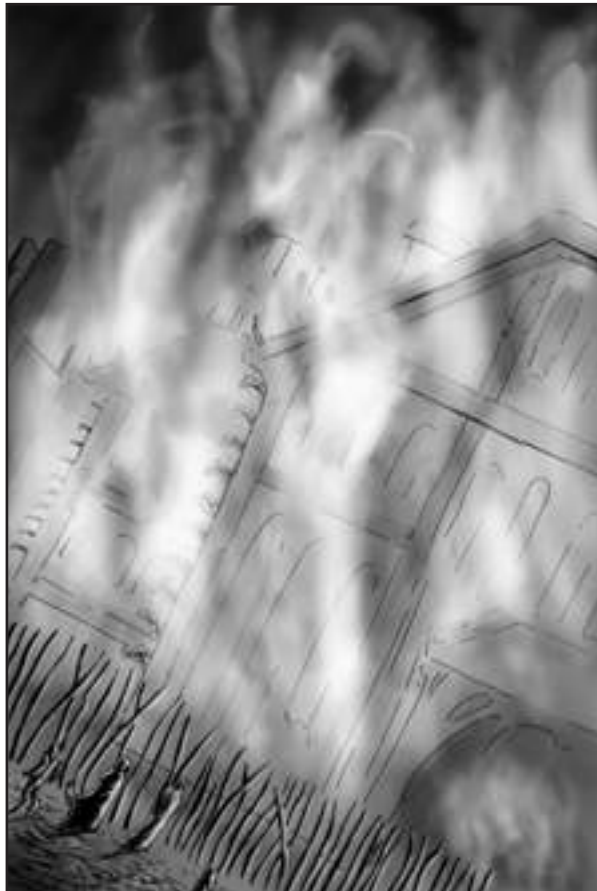
Claw Engine: The Claw Engine is the heart of the Hanging Docks; this massive engine provides motive power for all the chains and pulleys that drag trade goods up from below. The Claw Engine is controlled by an Oblurott Artificer named Flux. The demon is utterly terrified of Horne, having served with the mortal during Horne's war against the Glabretchi. However, if Horne does not deal with the problems of Meremouth, House Oblurott

will likely require Flux to overthrow the mortal. Flux lives in fear of such an order, and so frantically tries to ensure that Meremouth never comes to a crisis and so it never has to confront Horne.

In its worry, Flux has failed to notice that the constant activity of the Claw Engine has overstressed the supports of the city; unless repairs are made, all of Meremouth might tumble into the canals below.

Soulmarket Square: Soulmarket Square is the centre of commerce in the town. Indeed, it is one of the major trade hubs in the Third Circle; the Glabretchi come here to purchase souls brought down from Minos. Several major docks are located in the centre of the square, so trade ships can be hoisted up to the quayside and goods can be bought right out of the barge.

Bastion Ferox: A new addition to Meremouth, Bastion Ferox is a small fortress built by the Oblurott military to keep an eye on Gall. The neighbouring Free City is a worry to the Gluttonous House; if the Heresy is not dealt with, it could spread to Meremouth and beyond. The master of the Bastion Ferox is a demon named Ferox, a hulk



of uncommon intellect. It was spawned from a Toshin pit before being adopted by the Oblurott, though, and has some lingering loyalties to its former allegiance.

Adventure Ideas

Meremouth is an excellent place for mixed-group campaigns. The cryptic Captain Horne could be an excellent patron for low-level groups; he is friendly enough to engender loyalty, but enough of a danger to survive in Hell.

- ⊗ An Oblurott lord is murdered in the Playhouse and the characters are sent to investigate. It transpires that the artist who made the meat puppets is actually one of the Puppeteers from Lightless. How do the characters find someone who only interacts with others using a puppet from far above?
- ⊗ The Toshin capture a Branded barge and enslave the crew and passengers. However, because of the flow of the canal network, they have to pass through Meremouth. Branded in the town might try to free the slaves once more, while Horne might wish to punish his old rivals.
- ⊗ The characters are sent to Meremouth to purchase spawnmounts from the Oblurott. However, thieves raid their ship before they can make the trade and steal the characters' money. The characters must find the thief in the dark corridors of Lightness before their master finds out.
- ⊗ What would Captain Horne do if the characters found his daughter's soul? Why is he not looking for her just as he looked for Clarice?

Nimue's Tower – fourth Circle Location

By the end of your first year in the school, you have committed acts so black as to damn your soul to eternal torment.

By the end of the second, you have bargained with Infernal powers and sold yourself a dozen times over.

By the end of the third, you have learned how to torture souls for power, how to bind the hellkin and

how to wrench angels out of Heaven.

By the end of the fourth, you have either killed your remorse, your pity, your fear and your humanity or you have been killed.

By the end of the fifth, they promise you that you can be as a God.

The faustian sorcerers may dwell within the Infernographical boundaries of the Pit, but they are not truly a part of it. Their rivalries and politics transcend those of the Houses. To most common demons, the faustians are bizarrely powerful and arrogant mortals who have the temerity to sit in fine towers and order demons around instead of being terrified or dead like they should be. The faustians are a wild card in the politics of Hell; they have the power to tip the balance between the Houses, but are too caught up in their own affairs to act as a unified force.

The traditions of most of the faustian groups are handed down from master to apprentice. A single faustian takes a student from among the Early tribes, or from the mortal world, or even in rare cases from the hellkin and trains them in the art of sorcery. The faustians take apprentices out of loneliness or out of some desire to perpetuate sorcery. They also take apprentices for protection – immortality is a hard prize to find, so an ageing sorcerer needs young, strong spirits to guard his soul.

Nimue's Tower is a school of sorcerers in Hell. Most apprentices are found in the mortal world, but elder sorcerers cannot stay there for long before being drawn back into Hell by a gout. Nimue's Tower was designed to be a secure place to keep and train these potential faustians. While a skilled sorcerer is accounted the equal of any demon by Infernal law, an apprentice is just another mortal to be shelled (killed and turned into a damned soul) and enslaved.

A History of the Tower

The faustians claim Merlin as their quasi-historical ancestor. According to the tales, Merlin was a half-demon (presumably a half-beast or half-malcubus) who drew power from his hot demon blood until he was seduced and tricked by his apprentice

Nimue. In the tales, Nimue trapped Merlin in a cave beneath the earth. Modern faustians, who come from the 19th or 20th or even 21st centuries and have little time for myths when they have Hell to deal with do not believe these tales.

There are some legends, though, with truth at their core.

The cave is in fact far beyond the earth, for Merlin lies entombed in the Pit of Hell.

He was the first renegade faustian – while Sturrach's war was raging in the Pit, Merlin stole away to the mortal world and created legends. Nimue was dispatched by the Zethuian House Malthus to bring him back. The sorceress partly succeeded; she apprenticed herself to the half-demon and learned his magic, but became sympathetic to his cause. When they were gouged back into the Pit, she trapped him far from the Zethu estates here on the Fourth Circle.

Nimue's treachery, when coupled with the death of Zethu itself in 501 AF, lead to the break-up of House Malthus and the establishment of the Malthian League. Nimue was the first leader of the League, and built her tower atop Merlin's tomb. The first meetings of the League were held at the tower, where the assembled sorcerers agreed that the advancement of the art of magic must be their first and highest goal. Through sorcery available only in the Pit, they could transcend both Hell and mortality and become as gods. It should be noted that Nimue, despite being the founder of the Malthian League, voted against this agreement. Instead, she advocated that the Malthians search for a way to carry their sorcery back to the mortal world without triggering disastrous hellgouts.

Nimue died in 555 AF. Her soul was bound into the tower's walls as a warden ghost to prevent the still-furious lord of the Zethu from summoning her back and torturing her for eternity.

The Days of Summer Glory

The tower went undiscovered in the mountains of the Fourth Circle for centuries. Nimue's heirs maintained the fortress' libraries and defences, as well as erecting new protective wards. Summoned demons and conjured servants built new extensions

to the building. Some ambitious sorcerers even managed to travel to the mortal plane and waited for the hellgout to manifest around them to drag choice pieces of real estate back into the Pit. Nimue's Tower grew to become the pre-eminent centre for sorcery in the Malthian League.

The customs of the League became established during this era. Apprentices would be gathered and brought to the Tower for training. There, they would be taught The Three Keys (see *Book of the Damned*, page 232) and enough of the simple rituals for them to survive in Hell. After proving themselves, the new faustians would be encouraged to explore and advance their power. Those who were not yet too Corrupt would raise hellgouts back to the mortal world to bring more apprentices and new wonders. When a faustian's taint grew too great for them to travel to the mortal world without causing havoc, the sorcerer was expected to return to Nimue's Tower or another fortress of the League to study sorcery. Consorting with demons was supposed to be kept to a minimum; trading services for iliaster or souls was permitted, but more extensive dealings were frowned on.

At the height of its power, the Tower had a dozen faustian tutors and three times as many apprentices, mostly humans. Like the Early tribes, the faustians distrust the damned, although they also have the practical objection that damned souls cannot draw up their own iliaster from within and so have to sap the reserves of the tower. With a few exceptions, like Nimue, dead faustians were either bound to items or the tower itself, or else reduced to iliaster.

This practice of transmuting souls into iliaster sparked a further schism. Some of the sorcerers in the Tower objected to torturing souls, claiming that this was only furthering their corruption and dooming them to the same fate as their Covenanted brethren in House Malthus. The other faustians argued that without the rich harvest of iliaster from souls, they had little hope of ever mastering the more potent rituals. This argument eventually broke into open battle between the two factions. A sorcerer was caught preaching to the impressionable students about the dangers of corruption through torture and was attacked by a rival.

Wizards' War and the Fall of the

Tower

The Malthian League broke in two; the anti-torture faction called themselves the Goetic Order, which still exists to this day. The initial sorcerous battles were essentially formal duels – there are relatively few rituals that directly affect a foe in combat, and throwing *iliaster blasts* or *conjured hellfire* at another faustian is seen as somewhat gauche, tantamount to knifing an enemy in the gut. The sorcerers preferred to fight with summoned demons and *irresistible currents of will*.

The Goetics left Nimue's Tower, but soon after broke this gentleman's agreement by making a bargain with the Bori. The Goetics revealed the location of Nimue's Tower to the barbarians, as well as the secret of bypassing the defensive walls. If the Bori knew they were raiding a place of learning and sorcery, they did not care. Bori warriors and shamans crept into the Tower and slaughtered many of the sorcerers in their sleep.

The surviving Malthians fought back, even as the Goetics learned what was going on and tried to restrain the bloodthirsty Bori. The Malthians assumed the Goetics were behind the raid and were

aiding the Bori, so all restraint was abandoned. Blasting spells cut the air as the two factions of sorcerers fought. The Bori shamans began to raid the library, stealing the books of lore and sorcery.

However, a fourth faction interrupted the battle. The wizards' war broke the defensive *wardings* that blocked the tower from being *scryed* or found by demons. House Zethu had been searching for the tower for centuries, and now they had their chance. Using *swift dispatch of the agent* rituals and quick-flying fiends carrying artificers and sorcerers in their claws, a Zethu strike force arrived while the battle was in progress.

It was a disaster. Hellfire rained down on the faustians. The Bori – used to fighting superior demonic forces – fled, but both Malthians and Goetics were only used to dealing with demons who were trapped in summoning circles or who respected their power. To face a demon on the battlefield was another matter. Some of the greatest masters of the art of sorcery died that day. Their souls and the soul of Nimue were taken by the fiends back to the Zethu estates. Nimue's Tower was put to the torch.

All that remained of the school for sorcerers was a single damned, that of an apprentice whose soul was missed by the demons.

Reconstruction

The unfortunate soul, Eleanor Tailor, did her best to rebuild the school, but the growing industrial revolution in the Pit meant that the demons were expanding into the area near the school. The fragments of the defensive wards kept the Tower safe most of the time, but Tailor was unable to leave the confines of the Tower. Occasionally, Zethu fiends or imps would descend on the ruins to pick the bones.

The Great Gout brought many mortals to the Pit, some of whom learned sorcery and the traditions of the faustians. Legends of Nimue's Tower had been passed on to these apprentices and some of them banded together to locate and rebuild the tower. By the time they discovered it, the mountains surrounding it had been claimed by House Sturrach. Rather than confront the Bloody House directly, the sorcerers Covenanted with the lord of the domain, offering him their services in exchange for access



to the ruins. House Sturrach was in a weakened state and agreed.

The reconstruction of Nimue's Tower was done carefully. The grand days of old were gone; the sorcerers could no longer expand the fortress wildly, as too much activity would draw the attention of House Zethu. Slowly and subtly they drew their wards and rebuilt the walls. They used slave labour instead of summoned demons and hellgouts to maintain their secrecy.

It would have all been for naught – House Zethu discovered the tower's reconstruction and attacked – but the Sturrach were still holding a grudge. Sturrach demons defended the tower against Zethu aggression and the faustians survived. Within a century, Nimue's Tower was once again operating as a school for sorcery.

The Present Day

Currently, Nimue's Tower is but a shadow of its former self, but it is still a key site for the faustians, especially the Malthian League. After the disastrous Wizards' War between the Goetics and Malthians, the Tower has been declared neutral ground. Most of the major faustian factions, with the exception of the Black Thorns, have agreed to respect the Tower's neutrality.

Students of sorcery still come to the Tower to learn the art, but the loss of many of the books of lore and ghostly tutors means that there are few masters of sorcery. Those who seek after the highest and most powerful rituals must look elsewhere.

Physical Layout

Nimue's Tower is built in a rather improbable location – within a huge bite in the side of a mountain. The peak above it would collapse down on the open cave containing the Tower if it was in the mortal realm, but the varying gravity above the Pit keeps the mountain from falling. The rocky overhang above it protects the Tower from flyers and detection from overhead.

The other approaches to the Tower are all up narrow and steep paths. Climbing to the tower is a worthy challenge for most apprentices.

The ruins of the old Tower have been quarried and scavenged to provide building material for the new

structure. The buildings are obviously of Hellish design, although they do resemble a medieval university in some respects.

Outer Walls

The walls of Nimue's Tower are mainly there to keep the students in, not to keep demons out. The real protection is in the leaden warding sigils that run through the hollow core of the walls. The spell contained in the walls is a *warding IV* with a strength of 75. The walls have defensive battlements, but the Tower lacks the troops to man them.

Central Quadrivial

The Quadrivial is an open square of green grass – this requires a considerable amount of iliaster, but the masters of the Tower consider it worth the expense. Around the quadrivial on all four sides are gothic buildings of grey stone, where most of the teaching in the Tower is conducted. The Tower could cope with far more students than it actually has – the builders have dreams of an order of faustians of great size – but finding willing apprentices has always been hard.

The open space of the Quadrivial is also used for public meetings and duels between faustians.

Library Tower

The Library Tower is the tallest of the three towers. It is made of the same grey stone as the other structures, but a massive brass serpent winds all around it. Inside are kept the books and grimoires of the Malthian League. Some of the books are the fabled *books of the dead* – souls reshaped into tome of lore after the fashion of the Haimon libraries.

The Tower contains all the basic rituals of sorcery, up to those that require 15 ranks in Sorcery. Having access to this library gives a +4 bonus to Knowledge (arcane) checks. The tower also contains three brazen heads, although these are locked away to keep the students from listening to them. The heads have been known to encourage students to *summon* demons beyond their skill.

Old Tower

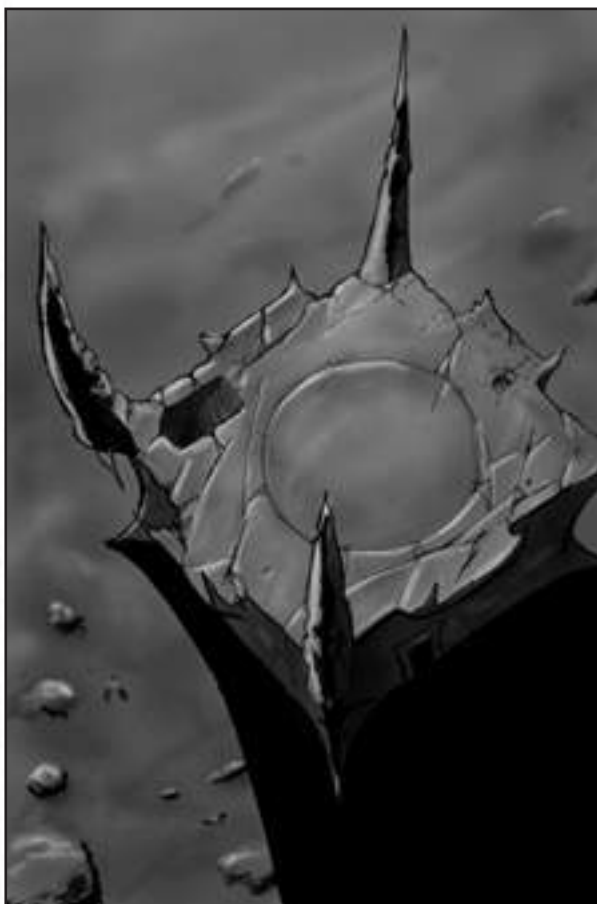
The Old Tower lies just within the walls of the

school. It is the ruin of Nimue's original home. It has been partially rebuilt, but still bears the marks of the Zethu assault. The upper three levels of the tower are destroyed, leaving only the bottom two. It is still used for examinations and ceremonies; a student must demonstrate his mastery of The Three Keys within the tower before completing the first stage of his studies.

Somewhere beneath this tower must be the entrance to Merlin's Cave, but the secret of accessing it was lost with Nimue's soul when it was taken by the Zethu. Various faustians have tried to find the spell to open the cave, but none have succeeded. Fortunately, the Zethu must have also failed to convince Nimue to give up the spell.

Summoning Tower

The summoning tower is a squat structure of hellforged iron. An ornate and potent circle is engraved on its roof, where the students of Nimue's Tower are taught how to call on demons. The tower's surface is scorched by hellfire and scratched by deep claw-marks, proving that the art of summoning is a rather hazardous one.



The circle is enchanted to give a +5 bonus to *summoning* rituals cast within it. Furthermore, when a *summoning* is cast from the tower, the *warding* built into the Outer Walls shuts down for just enough time for the summoned entity to materialise.

Dormitories

The dormitories of Nimue's Tower are for the students; they are sparse and cold rooms. The wind off the mountains of toil makes them unbearably warm or horribly cold, depending on the direction. They are choked by a constant smell of sulphur. The school still follows the dictates handed down by Nimue, which were inspired by 5th Century monastic systems of teaching.

Currently, the tower has 13 students, all mortals. Seven come from the mortal realm; four from the tribes and the last two are children of faustians. The students range in age from 10 years old to 49, but all are taught the same lessons of dark magic.

Masters' Abodes

The five abodes of the masters are of recent construction; the current master of the Tower had the old abodes destroyed. The abodes are five low, elegant houses that would not look out of place in any Georgian crescent or mews in London, but are built into the wall of the cave on the far side of the school from the dormitories.

Servants Quarters

The servants of the school are mostly damned – usually former students who failed one test or another – and minor bound demons of impish or artificer breed (although there are a few succubi and incubi for the entertainment of students and masters). These demons are so heavily bound and Covenanted to the Tower that they have almost no free will of their own.

The servants are also responsible for the Tower's supplies, which are bought through intermediaries from the Oblurott.

Prisons

The prisons of the school are another cave, with its entrance blocked by a door of solid iron. Unlike

Ritual of the Wracked Shade

Prerequisites: Sorcery 5 Ranks.

Components: None.

Cost: 4 iliaster

Casting Time: 10 rounds (one minute)

Sorcery DC (Int): 5 + level of the target soul.

Failure?: No effect.

Resist: Will save negates.

This spell can only be cast on an unresisting damned. It fills the target with incredible spiritual pain, which manifests as thousands of explosions of red light erupting throughout the victim's ectoplasmic form. The soul is instantly blasted into incoherence and suffers 1d6 points of damage to all its ability scores. The spell also functions as a Torture check result equal to half that of the Sorcery check, for the purposes of extracting iliaster from the ability damage dealt.

a demonic domain, the Tower's inhabitants have no need for iliaster except when casting the most expensive rituals. The damned here, then, are only tortured on rare occasions. Still, the faustians mostly dislike thinking of these damned as individuals, so the door is kept closed and locked.

The souls here are purchased or stolen from the hellkin – students and masters of the faustians are very rarely tormented for iliaster, although it is sometimes done as a punishment.

Iliaster Works

The Tower has a few old-fashioned and crude torture devices, like flaying tools and a crushing press, but an enterprising faustian developed the Ritual of the Wracked Shade, so this spell is normally used to extract iliaster. The works is a circular outhouse with a half-dozen extraction rigs attached to the walls.

Tombs

The tombs here are mostly ceremonial markers; the damned shades of the fallen faustians are

either bound to some item or face being tortured by a vengeful demon. It is possible for the dead to practice sorcery, but few damned are successful – their inability to alter fate makes any magic especially risky for them, as they cannot boost their chance of success.

Before the Zethu destruction of the Tower, some masters were bound here as Nimue was bound to the tower, but those wise souls were also taken by the demons and are now probably wastrels drifting on the hot fumes of the Sixth.

Denizens

The five masters of Nimue's Tower are all faustian sorcerers of good repute; they are not the best, but they are all of considerable skill.

Fothergill Canderly

The current headmaster of Nimue's Tower and chief lecturer in sorcery, Fothergill (Faustian Mortal 9) was a correspondent of Albert King (see

Defences of Nimue's Tower

In addition to the curtain wall around the Tower complex, the inaccessible location and the potent *warding* that surrounds the whole building, the school has several other defences.

- ⊗ Anyone trying to find the Tower is much more likely to get lost. Anyone on the mountain who is not looking for the tower will automatically fail to find it (but may make a Wisdom check (DC 20) to notice that something affected their path). Anyone searching for the path to the Tower must make three successful Search or Survival checks (DC 30) to find the way to the stairs.
- ⊗ The Tower's geometries allow it to function as a fortress for the purposes of blocking Sorcery; the Tower gives a –15 penalty to any spells cast on targets within the Tower.

page 45 of *Book of the Tormentor*). The two ended up damning themselves through their research into magic, although Fothergill learned enough to transport himself into the Pit before the hellgout came for him.

His initial experiences in Hell terrified him; the sorcerer was used to dealing with minor imps contained within circles, not with free demons rampaging across the battlefields of Hell. He sought out other faustians for protection as quickly as he could. In the mortal world, he was a professor in a university – that skill proved more useful in Hell than any ritual, as the Malthian League appointed him the head of Nimue's Tower.

Fothergill is a strict believer in discipline and order; he brooks no disrespect or insolence or failings on the part of his students. He may be the head of the school, but he is well aware that he is the weakest of the five masters and holds the position only at their sufferance.

Lucrezia

One of a crop of faustians corrupted by a brazen head that circulated through Italy for much of the middle ages and Renaissance, Lucrezia (Faustian Mortal 12) was originally a member of the Cult of the Beast. She was exiled from that sybaritic group for reasons she has not revealed to anyone, although rumours of a bastard half-demon child of an important Astyanath Duke abound. She fled to the Malthian League for protection and certainly the walls of Nimue's Tower have stopped two assassins she knows of. Lucrezia treats the Tower's denizens as her playthings, manipulating their petty rivalries to amuse herself and pass the time until the Astyanath have moved on. They do not hold grudges half as long as the Sturrach.

Vale

An ageing faustian, Vale's (Faustian Mortal 14) mind has begun to crumble. He is increasingly unstable, mistaking students and sorcerers for friends and enemies long dead. Vale's soul is Covenanted to several demons, so the only fate awaiting him is binding in one soul cage or another. In his more lucid moments, he considers trying to arrange for one of the other masters or faustians to deal with his debts by removing the demons, but his chances of winning his freedom before his approaching death are remote.

Vale is also trying to master the ritual of immortality, but it is far beyond his diminished capacities. He is popular with the few students in Nimue's Tower, as he is the easiest of the masters to influence.

Gunther Sune

One of the younger faustians, Gunther (Faustian Mortal 10) has ties to the Order of the Black Thorn, the Lictat-supported faustian group. The Black Thorns are outside the loose association of faustians who honour the neutrality of Nimue's Tower, so Sune's appointment here is an attempt by the Malthians to woo the Thorns. Breaking the Thorn/Lictat alliance is a key in Malthian attempts to retain their seat on the Assembly of Grand Hierarchs.

Lemure

The only member of the Goetic Order (Faustian Mortal 13), Lemure is an elderly woman who spends little time teaching. The Goetics are perhaps the most ethical of the factions, although



Life in Nimue's Tower

Nimue's Tower is a school for sorcerers. The feel of the place is something like a seminary crossed with a boarding school, mixed with black magic and foul sorcery. The rivalries between students are bitter and deaths and injuries are common.

Each day begins at dawn, with lessons and lectures in the Quadrivial. Students are expected to study the history of Hell and the mortal world, although bizarrely the information on Hellish history tends to be more accurate. Newcomers are often amazed by the misconceptions taught in the Tower. The main subject, of course, is the theory and practice of sorcery.

The witching is a free period for students; most sleep, but some have adapted to the 48-hour day of Hell and so use this time to study. Sorcery practice and summonings are restricted to the brief false dawn. Often, lectures continue long into the night by candlelight.

Students spend up to five years here before taking the test in the Old Tower. Any less preparation would be a death sentence.

they are known for their convoluted plans and their certainty that the end justifies the means. With the destruction and abandonment of the Zethu estates, Lemure plans to attempt to summon the souls of Nimue and the other faustian souls captured by the Zethu.

Eleanor Tailor

The insane damned (Faustian Damned 5) who kept Nimue's Tower during the long abandonment, Eleanor is too crazed to be a useful servant. Out of respect for her long service to the Order, she is permitted to roam the grounds of the Tower, whispering to herself. Most of the students are scared of the ghost, although the more malicious of them enjoy tormenting her.

Adventure Ideas

Nimue's Tower could be used as the venue for the start of a faustian-based campaign; many sorcerers begin their careers at this strange school.

- ⊗ The school exists beneath the notice of the other Houses; only Sturrach and Zethu are aware of it. Should the Astyanath or Haimon locate the school, however, they might consider it worth raiding.

- ⊗ The Tower still owes a debt to Sturrach. This debt might be called in, forcing the Tower to help with the Oblurott invasion. The school gets its food supplies from House Oblurott, however; taking sides in the war could result in starvation.
- ⊗ The Library Tower contains a considerable wealth of sorcerous lore, which might draw thieves. It also contains the secret to lowering the defensive ward using the Summoning Tower.
- ⊗ The legend of Merlin's Cave inspires many faustians. If the half-demon is truly buried beneath the mountain, he could be an incredibly powerful ally. Merlin was said to be the peer of any House Head, possibly even a House founder.

The Cathedral of Cracked Bones – fifth Circle

Location

'You must have faith.'

I do not want to die. I do not want to be one of them, one of the damned. I see their pale faces everywhere. Their eyes are filled with sorrow. It is always the eyes I see first, even in those damned so wounded and torn that they are just wisps of plasm. The eyes reform first, staring out of the white cloud.

The whip lashes out again. I feel a sudden chill in my side. The niche is covered in mirrors and I can see every welt and wound on my naked body. There is white bone exposed in my chest. I can count every one of my ribs and see the bare bone of two of them.

'You must have faith.'

I do not want to be one of them, either. To have my body warp itself into a demonic shape, to have the darkness of my soul boil up to the surface and cause hideous changes... to be forever inhuman is a defeat just as much as death would be. I will not let the demons win.

'You must have faith.'

Somewhere, a voice is singing. It is very beautiful and it sounds like a hymn. It must be a demon's voice, but oh, they can be perfect when they choose to be. I cannot tell the difference between a hymn sung by a choir in a holy church and this hellish mockery of a choir in a hellish mockery of a church.

The whip cracks in bloody counterpoint to the song.

'You must have faith.'

It is a hellish mockery of religion, too... and yet, would it be so bad to mouth an empty formula to free myself of the pain. The demon will stop whipping me if only I agree to worship the sphere of fire. It burns me through the stone wall. I can feel my exposed ribs blacken and burn.

'You must have faith.'

I would be giving up nothing. It would mean nothing. Just a few little words. Even just a nod. Make the demon. Stop. Killing. Me. Who would know. Or care. If. I. Bow. A forced. Confession. Is. No. Confession. At. All.

'You must have faith.'

And somehow I endure for another day.

Demons cannot weep, unless the very flesh of their faces reshapes itself to cry crocodile tears. It is only with experience and training that they can feel the pain of others as anything other than joy. It is their nature to be sadistic and cruel. However, demons are not irredeemably evil – their spirits are tainted from the moment of spawning and their emotions are all dark-hued, but they are capable of acts of good.

More often though, any attempts by a demon to advance themselves artistically or spiritually become twisted. So it is in the Cathedral of Cracked Bones.

It is a monument to pain and suffering, under the



guise of a house of healing. The Cathedral is located on the war-torn and bloody plains of the Fifth Circle. The agents of the Cathedral go out to the battlefields and drag back the bodies of those demons who have been left crippled and broken by the wars. In the Cathedral of Cracked Bones, their lives are prolonged by black sorceries and arcane surgery. The demons are encouraged to convert to the Church and abandon their previous allegiances, or else are sold to rivals who want to finally kill their foes or throw them into the spawning pit. The Cathedral of Cracked Bones preys on those demons that were defeated or wounded by the wars of the Circle of Slaughter.

The Cathedral

The Cathedral of Cracked Bones is located in the midst of a ruined city. The city was one of the earliest in the Pit and was sacked centuries ago. Few demons even remember its name. The Cathedral was built long after the city's fall by the devout Priests of the Morningstar. It is the only intact structure in the whole place, surrounded by the broken shells of hundreds of palaces and hellholes.

What a structure it is; its spiralling towers of hellglass and bronze shining brightly when the Morningstar rises through the haze, its flying buttresses arching elegantly out of the bloody mire to support its elephantine bulk. From a distance, the

of statues decorating its upper stories. On closer examination, these statues are actually demons and damned held in place by barbed wire and bone-hooks, connected to the throbbing organic mass of the inner Cathedral by cables and tubes pushed into every orifice.

The whole Cathedral is an organ of pain; the screams of the damned and indignant roars of the demons can be triggered in an unholy symphony from inside.

Outer Ruins

The city surrounding the Cathedral was called Millstone in centuries past; it was located quite near the Black Pit of Fellmar and some of the great engines of the city survive to this day, although most have been scavenged by the crows of Golgotha. The ruins of the city are still inhabited by a few renegade demons and deserter souls, preying on each other in pathetic microcosm of the greater order of the Pit.

The city is of some strategic importance to the hellkin; armies marching on the Glabretchi scar delta or heading for the Nightoak Forest must pass by Millstone. The arrival of the holy mountain of Outremer a few hundred miles widdershins of the city has also led to more than a few clashes. The ruined city is disturbed by minor skirmishes or larger battles at least a few times each year and it is rare for the Morningstar to set without it witnessing

Missionary Groups

The average missionary group consists of a half-dozen second level demon novices, a trio of 4th level guards, a 6th level surgeon, and a 7th level priest. Larger battles draw more powerful and larger groups of missionaries; the Cathedral has the resources to bring a full-grown hulk back for its sacraments of agony.

The missionaries are permitted to defend themselves when attacked but rarely deliberately provoke others into attacking them. However, many demons are disturbed by the sight of a dozen robed and hooded horrors stalking them and singing of the glories of pain, so violent incidents are common.

The missionaries are skilled healers and carry with them vials of plasmic iliaster and Agony. They are also very quick to spot demons who are breached, but have not yet died. Many a demon has been saved by these missionaries rushing to its side and healing some grievous wound before it expires. Many a demon has, of course, regretted being saved when it finds itself tortured in the Cathedral for decades like some common soul.

at least one murder in Millstone.

Missionaries from the Cathedral are a common sight in the city. The missionaries are groups of demons who search for casualties of war. They travel with spawn-drawn carts containing surgical tools and cages. The demons drag still-living bodies off the battlefields of the Fifth and imprison them in the cages. Missionaries follow the movement of armies at a distance, like land-bound vultures. As they travel and push the cart through the thick mud of the bloody plains, they chant eerie hymns to the Morningstar.

Cathedral Approach

The priests have cleared the approach road to the Cathedral of rubble and debris, making a wide and level highway up to the doors. The road is decorated with lampposts and statues that praise the light and glory of the Morningstar. Posters on these lampposts list the names of the demons currently incarcerated in the Cathedral.

Some of the statues contain spying lenses or entombed souls with speaking tubes connected



Fortress Statistics

The Cathedral is a Medium fortress of the Morningstar, with the following upgrades:

Geomantic Designs: Gargoyles, sacrificial altar, strain engine, Temple of the Morningstar

Structural Enhancements: Barbican, belltower, dungeons, sealed structure

Special Chambers: Guard posts, torture chamber, surgical laboratory, personal towers

Dungeons: Barracks, inner sanctum, treasure vault, strain tank

Sorcerous Defence: -15

Security: +28 (+23 outside, +31 in sanctum)

to the Cathedral, to provide early warning of approaching danger. On festival days or after battles, the approach road is thronged with hosts of maimed demons and damned. Bandages and limbs can be found scattered around the road like bloody confetti.

Great Doors

The doors of the Cathedral of Cracked Bones are one of the wonders of the Pit. They gave the Cathedral its name, for they are made from the bones of an angel. Harusiel fell in the six hundredth year after the First Fall, and lead a great crusade against the Church of the Morningstar. Unlike many of her fallen brethren, Harusiel clung to her faith in the Almighty, even if she could only remember the barest fragments of Heaven. She assembled a crusade of mortals, rescued damned and sacked unholy temples across the Fifth and Sixth Circles.

When Harusiel was brought down by Zofilch Angel-Breaker (see page 120 in *Book of the Tormentor*), she was brought before the Cardinal of Dis in chains. The Cardinal demanded that the angel abandon her belief and accept that the Morningstar was the only light in Hell. The angel refused to recant her belief, even as they removed every one of her bones, one by one. According to the traditions of the Church, Harusiel eventually submitted as they pulled her skull out.

The bones of the angel were cast in bronze and made into the doors of the Cathedral. Her wings are spread wide, her head is bowed in submission. The lock of the double doors is made from her spine; when the doors are locked, the vertebrae mesh together to form a virtually unbreakable seal.

The Knights of the Morningstar venerate Harusiel almost as much as they venerate Aoul and have vowed to retrieve the angel's bones and bury them with the proper honours.

Entryway

The entrance into the Cathedral of Cracked Bones contains two alcoves on either side, where faithful demons can leave tithes to the Church in small slots. The slots connect to the vaults underneath the Cathedral.

The entryway also contained inactive *wardings* spells, which can be enchanted when danger threatens, as well as more conventional murder-holes in the ceiling above. The exits into the cathedral proper are narrow and easy to defend, making the entryway a significant obstacle to an invading force. These doors are always guarded, but there is also a priest here on duty at most times. It is the duty of this priest to greet visitors to the Cathedral and explain to them that they may purchase any

of those demons currently being ministered to, so long as the demon has not yet sworn allegiance to the Church of the Morningstar.

Prices vary depending on the importance and strength of the demon being ministered to. A low-ranking demon or Housefellow can be bought for ten Crowns or so. A Daemon or Captain might cost hundreds of crowns, while a significant noble might have a ransom running into the thousands. The priest on duty will negotiate a price and is cheerfully open to bribery and collusion of all sorts.

Nave

A character stepping into the nave is struck by a wave of psychic fury and pain. On every side, there are wounded demons strapped to the walls or hanging from the ceiling. The priests tend to their wounds even as they cause them worse pain using implements of torture. The trapped demons are kept alive by the Unholy Engine of Prolonged Agony that dominates the far end of the Cathedral.

There are semi-circles of seats around each torture station, so onlookers can admire the victim being tortured or bid for especially choice prizes. There are also pulpits dotted throughout the nave, where priests extol the virtues of the Morningstar cult

Forced Conversions to the Church of the Morningstar

A demon lord is wounded in battle on the Fifth and its unconscious body is dragged into the Cathedral of Cracked Bones. Its injuries are healed, but it is tortured until it coverts and swears a Covenanted debt to the church. The lord is then freed from the Unholy Engine and escorted back to its domain with full honours.

However, the Covenant held by the Church will be used to ensure that the lord pays the full iliaster tithe each year and that it gains the lord's support in matters political and military. In this fashion, more and more key nobles and generals are being forced into the faith. House Sturrach is obviously vulnerable to the Cathedral's influence, but many of the fleeing Zethu nobles fell afoul of bandits and were rescued by the Cracked Bone missionaries.

Accusations that the Cathedral actually sponsors banditry and assassins to provide it with more subjects for conversion are of course wholly accurate.

allegiance to the faith. If a demon does convert, it is made to swear a strength 20 Covenant to the Priests of the Morningstar. Especially valuable demons may have their pleas to convert denied on some technical theological grounds, as the Church would prefer to sell these demons instead of accepting them into the faith.

The damned captured on the battlefields are also tortured here, but in a considerably more desultory way. Some are sold in bulk, others are brought Down to Pandemonium to the Church's torture palaces. The Cathedral is one of the few places in the Pit where the agonies of demons outweigh the pains inflicted on the damned.

Transept

The transept is the section of the Cathedral flanking the main altar. Here, away from the indignant roars of the demons, the Priests of the Morningstar carry out their religious duties. This is a place of quiet instruction in the theology of Hell. The transepts also contain hospital beds where the injured demons are brought to heal. Especially wounded demons are placed in baths of Agony or have healing rituals used on them.

Confessionals

The Priests of the Morningstar delight in mocking the forms and customs of mortal religions. Captured mortals are placed in the confessionals that line the edge of the transept. The confessionals are enchanted with illusion magic (using *deceit of the clouded eye* rituals; Wisdom check (DC 25) to see through the illusion) to make the mortal believe that he is in a Catholic church in the mortal realm and the demon priest encourages him to confess his sins to escape from Hell. The mortal may believe that his confession will be held in confidence, but his words are trumpeted out throughout the Cathedral. The priests can wheedle the most heart-felt and desperate confessions out of a prisoner, then merrily mock him with his confessed sins for years.

Office of Slaughter

The Office of Slaughter deals with the categorisation and inventory of the demons held within the Cathedral of Cracked Bones. When a demon is brought in off the battlefield, it is interrogated as to its name, rank and House. All these details are

recorded by the clerks in the Office of Slaughter. As demons lie as a matter of course, the Office has to cross-reference its interrogations with news of troop movements and political events across Middle Hell, making it one of the best-informed sources of military intelligence in the Pit.

Altar & Infernarium

The great altar of the Cathedral of Cracked Bones is used for sacrifices at the regular black masses held here. A massive crystal window of iliaster is built into the wall directly above it; at false noon, the light of the Morningstar shines directly through it, bathing the altar in phantasmal flames. The priests who have developed the Sun Priest mutation (see page 156, *Book of the Tormentor*) use the Infernarium here to renew themselves in the light of Lucifer.

The altar itself is a sacrificial altar which provides power to the Unholy Engine...

Unholy Engine of Prolonged Agony & Organ

The infamous Unholy Engine is located behind the main altar. The engine is modelled on the great engine of the Morningstar in the depths of Pandemonium; it is obviously of far lesser complexity and potency, but the overall design mirrors the machine in the Palace of the Morningstar. The Unholy Engine's cables and tubes run all over the Cathedral. It is effectively a demonic life support machine, designed to keep the demons trapped in the Cathedral alive with the minimum expenditure of iliaster possible. Being attached to the engine keeps the victims from falling into Dissolution, but also keeps them immobile and in constant pain as iliaster vapours are sprayed into their veins at high pressure.

The Organ is a more recent modification to the Engine – a demon can use the Organ of the Cathedral to modulate the flows of both iliaster and pain, to play the trapped damned and demons as instruments in a symphony of agony. The very walls of Cathedral of Cracked Bones cry out when the Organ is touched and the music of the Organ can be heard for tens of miles, echoing even off the flanks of Outremer.

Outer Walls

Especially stubborn damned and demons are

taken from their positions in the nave and placed on the outer surface of the Cathedral, hung amid the gargoyles and flying buttresses in little niches all along the sides and roof of the building. There are some who have hung here for decades in constant torment, looking out at the ruined city and constantly pouring blood rains.

It is possible to rescue victims from the outer walls, as security here is much less tight than it is on the inside of the Cathedral. Would-be liberators would have to climb or fly up the walls then crawl along the gutters to the right niche, avoiding the notice of the gargoyles and crazed demons trapped in other niches.

Catacombs

There is a veritable warren of tunnels beneath the Cathedral, which connect with the underground passages and sewers of Millstone, which in turn connect with the tunnels below. These catacombs contain the personal chambers of the priests, missionaries and initiates in the Cathedral, as well as guard barracks and torture chambers. The great vault of the Cathedral which contains the stored

iliaster taken as tithes is also located in these deep tunnels, defended by constantly wakeful guardian hellkin who are wired into the Unholy Engine and so never need to leave their posts.

For most of the year, the vault contains tens of thousands of crowns worth of crystallised iliaster. The vault is emptied on the last day of Carcis each year, to be carried Down to Pandemonium for the Renewal of the Flame on the 9th day of the month of Agony.

Denizens

Over two hundred demons of the Church of the Morningstar dwell within the Cathedral of Cracked Bones. Some of the most notable are described below.

Its Grace Nralc, Archbishop of Slaughter, Keeper of the Cracked Bones Relics.

Nralc (Morningstar Deceiver 23) is the most powerful Priest of the Morningstar on the whole of the Fifth Circle. The deceiver is a master manipulator, who spends much of its time triggering wars across the Slaughter Circle. It has many contacts and vassals within House Sturrach – it is said that where Carthenay failed to control the Bloody Army, Nralc will succeed. The demon is currently occupied with trying to gain the same amount of leverage over the Glabretchi in the Scar Delta. The Putrid House has traditionally resisted church influence and Nralc's normal tactic – hit them with Sturrach troops until they bleed, then gather up the remains for profit and/or forced conversions – has been stymied by the Sturrach's siege of Dis and war with the Oblurott.

Nralc is a feared figure in the mercenary city of Golgotha, but was recently banned from its streets by the mad angel Uriel. How Nralc offended the angel is unknown, but the Archbishop must now work through possessed bodies or intermediaries. A clash between the angel and the archbishop is rumoured to be inevitable.

This current situation leaves the Archbishop to deal with the day-to-day running of the Cathedral and free to manipulate Houses and travel to Pandemonium to consult with the Hierophant and other high officials of the Church. Nralc has been offered a Cardinal's hat, but refused it as it prefers



to use the Middle Hells as leverage over rivals in Pandemonium.

Elder Priest Chabbas

One of Nralc's two chief lieutenants, Chabbas (Morningstar Imp 18) is head of the missionaries. Chabbas was trained by Astyanath surgeons in the art of healing and surgery and is rumoured to have even travelled to the abhorei cities for study with their fleshworkers. When not out in the fields of battle, Chabbas has several pet projects – demons and damned who have never been purchased, but who have not converted to the faith of the Morningstar. Sir Scab is one of these (see below). Chabbas experiments with new tortures on these victims, but the imp is also a famously skilled debater and preacher.

As the duties of both Chabbas and Nralc take them away from the Cathedral, the other priest R'yth's influence is in ascendancy. Chabbas has taken steps to deal with any attacks from R'yth – several potent demons held in the Cathedral have had subliminal suggestions placed in their minds by the imp and it has rigged their connections to the Unholy Engine to shut down on command from Chabbas. With the flick of a switch, Chabbas can summon a score of defenders out of the walls of the Cathedral to defend him.

Elder Priest R'yth

There are none so zealous in their faith as a convert. R'yth (ex-Sturrach Hulk 15) was once a Captain in the armies of House Sturrach before an artillery blast from Mayhem left it bleeding and broken on the ground. It was rescued by the missionaries and brought to the Cathedral of Cracked Bones, where it was forcibly converted.

Now, most demons in the Cathedral convert because of the pain inflicted upon them, but R'yth truly believes. It is fanatically convinced that the Church is the only thing that keeps the Morningstar alight and that any who refuse to bow down to the Church are deliberately dooming Hell to eternal darkness. This fervent attitude makes R'yth an excellent guard for the Cathedral, but limits its use in diplomacy. In a church built on Corruption, R'yth is that rarest of things – a genuine believer. It is convinced Chabbas is weak and useless, but is still overawed by the power of the Archbishop.

If its faith in Nralc should ever waver, though, R'yth would attempt to take the Cathedral for the greater glory of the Morningstar.

Xil

Xil (Faustian Sorcerer 12) is Nralc's personal sorcerer, who *summons* it back and forth from Pandemonium. Xil looks like a human girl-child and has looked that way ever since she arrived at the Cathedral 30 years ago. She speaks little, but watches everything. Sometimes, she goes out with the missionaries and can be seen skipping through the corpse-fields.

Sir Scab

The oldest resident of the Cathedral, Sir Scab was brought back from some long-forgotten battlefield. The Cathedral was built during Sturrach's War, and it is likely Sir Scab was captured around that time. The demon is so maimed by torture that no one is even sure what breed or House it came from and the Office of Slaughter has no records of it. Sir Scab has resolutely refused to convert, but no demon has ever bothered purchasing it for murder or the spawning pits. Scab has been relegated to a forgotten torture niche on the north face of the Cathedral.

Surrounding Locations

The Cathedral of the Cracked Bones is well placed to take advantage of several key battlefields on the Fifth Circle.

Acheel Docks

A minor tributary of the River Acheron flows through the ruined city. Naval warfare is rare outside the canals of the Third and the Sunless Sea, but the Houses do use the rivers of Hell for troop transport. The great ruined docks of Millstone can handle the largest hellforged vessels. House Riethii looks at its traditional rivals the Glabretchi, looks at its mighty navy, looks at the Acheel Docks and sees great opportunity for revenge. The docks have also been used by the Zethu in the past.

The docks are so large that armies could fight on the quayside. Many bodies float down the Acheel past the Cathedral, so many that one group of missionaries consider themselves fishers for demons and souls and cast nets into the foul waters below.

District of Mezzogor

Mezzogor is a large ring of soul fields and extraction facilities owned by House Carthenay. Such a rich prize attracts the attention of many – especially the iliaster-starved rabble of Golgotha. Mezzogor's borders are regularly attacked and the survivors often end up in the Cathedral.

Mezzogor is known as the first casualty of the Knights of the Harrowing – they destroyed a primitive torture palace that was the pride and joy of the lord of the district. The priests have a rather antagonistic attitude towards the Harrowers and Nralc would dearly love to desecrate the cathedral atop Outremer.

Columns of Silent Fire

During the destruction of Millstone, the great Clock of Hell in the centre of the city was destroyed. Time within the ruins is even more mangled than it is elsewhere in Hell. This also gives rise to the Columns of Silent Fire, which erupt from the ground rimwards and clockwise of the city, towards Fellmar. The Columns are essentially explosions of timelessness – a creature caught in a column is frozen in time for a while, suspended in perfect agony, until the column collapses and time catches up with the victim. If the victim is a demon, then it normally enters Dissolution as the accumulated iliaster debt catches up with it.

Missionaries patrol the outskirts of the Columns, looking for starving victims of time.

Black Pit of Fellmar

The infamous natural spawning pit of Fellmar is located quite close to the Cathedral, so many of the demons who purchase carcasses from the priests end up throwing their prizes into the Pit. To maintain good relations with Golgotha, a dozen demons are thrown for free each year.

Adventure Ideas

- ⊗ The characters are sent to retrieve a demon noble from incarceration in the Cathedral. They are given some money with which to buy its ransom but a rival lord has also arrived at the Cathedral and has more money than they do.

How do they avoid a bidding war and complete their mission?

- ⊗ The Knights of the Morningstar capture the demonic characters and tell them that the Knights are going to rescue the bones of Harusiel from the doors of the Cathedral. The characters will be mortally wounded and left for dead, where they will be found by the Priests of the Morningstar. Then, in the dead of night, the Knights will attack the Cathedral. The characters must free themselves from the Unholy Engine and attack the Cathedral from within at that time. If they refuse, they will be killed.
- ⊗ A thief insists that it knows a way into the treasure vault of the Cathedral, through the ruins of Millstone. Can the characters make their way through the sewers and past the guards of the Cathedral?

The City of Dis – Sixth Circle Location

'City of Industry', they call it. Nonsense. That is like calling it the city of roads or city of buildings. It is a meaningless description that does not capture the heart of my city.

I take flight into the burning skies and circle on the ever-present thermals. Even if all the furnaces burned out and the factories ran to a halt, there would still be hot air rising from the city to support me. The streets are crammed with hot-blooded demons and terrified souls.

City of machines? No; that's Dis' shadow in brass and clockwork, Cacaphractus across the circle. The two are mirrors of each other, but Dis is far more self-aware than the machine city.

City of torture? Ah, you're getting close. We built this city on pain. We took what remained to us of Heaven and melted it all down. There are silver rivers in the depths, you know, the slagged remains of the silver city. When we ran out of Heaven, we turned on ourselves. I was their executioner. I remember Tumaël's tears as we wrapped him in chains and lowered him into the fire.

City of chains? That's it. It's been about chains from the beginning, ever since Lucifer said 'non serviam'. Only he was a lot less polite about it, if I remember correctly. Milton said it rather better – 'it is better to rule in Hell than serve in Heaven'. We left our shining chains of love and replaced them with heavier ones of iron and pain and magic.

The whole goddamn Pit is chained to Dis. The demons can't help it, it's in their blood. They chain the dead and they chain each other and they chain the angry land. I look at Dis from above, with the Minotaur lines running off into the distance like a manacle and the city looking like the lock on a prison door.

They've broken their chains now. Oh, I saw that look, and yes, I know they're making new ones to replace those they lost. 'You're free, o brother citizen damned, now get back in the rack for the good of your fellow brother citizens' and I laughed too.

But the rules have changed. The lock's opening.

Who turned the key? Who said 'non serviam' again?

Are you out there, my king? Or do you still forsake us?

Stand in the heart of Dis, atop one of the smokestacks or the towers of some burnt-out and looted Zethu palace and look around you. You will not see the edges of the city through the smog. Strain your ears and all you will hear is the grinding of the factories, the moaning of the damned in the extractors, the cries of the market hawkers and barkers and the endless susurrus of the demon city. For most of the folk of Dis, their city is the world. The streets of Dis are said by some to be infinite.

Even now, when Dis is the city of rebels, of heretics, of pariahs and is besieged by half the Infernum, the affairs of the city still dominate the thoughts and lives of its denizens. The Breaking of Oaths changed the rules of the gang warfare and back-alley treacheries that are life in Dis, but the city carries on. Dis always endures; if the streets of Dis are infinite, they are also eternal.

A History of Dis

'A' history, not 'the' history, for Dis has a million histories. It has been *the* city in Hell since the revolt against the angels. Pandemonium may be the seat of the Council of Hierarchs and the playground of the nobility, but when a demon spoke of 'the city', they invariably meant Dis. It has been the most populous city in the Pit – some eight million demons dwell within the city according to the best (but still wildly inaccurate) estimates, while the number of damned souls within Dis' furnaces and torture palaces may actually be uncountable.

Still, a history of the greatest of Hellish cities can be drawn in broad strokes.

The Echoing Halls

Dis began with death. In the earliest days of Hell, the demons were starving for want of iliaster. The angels built a great furnace in a black pit to melt down the shards of Heaven that had fallen with them. Thousands of demon slaves laboured to construct a factory of black iron capable of holding the massive shards and drawing off the fiery iliaster released as the Heaven-shards sublimed. When the shards ran out, the angels turned on their own kind. The pulleys and chains used to lower the shards into the furnace were replaced with manacles and prison cells to hold the condemned. The slaver Carthenay was placed in charge of the rapidly growing factory.

The demons crowded to the Echoing Halls, creating a shanty town around the only source of iliaster in the Pit. When Lucifer brought the first damned back from the wilderness, he brought it here to the Halls. Zethu and Astyanath discovered the principle of the extraction rig and within days the Echoing Halls were torturing hundreds of damned souls each day. The shanty town around the Echoing Halls became a town, then a city, then one of the two greatest cities in the Pit.

The revolt against the angels had little effect on Dis. Carthenay continued to rule over the city, even if it now called itself the lord of House Carthenay. The folk of Dis were more concerned with their rival city of Cacaphractus. Astyanath's engineering genius had gone to that city, and now Cacaphractus was growing even faster than Dis. The rivalry between the two cities drove the Infernum forward even as the wars of the Houses threatened to tear

it apart.

Pre-eminence

Demons can live almost anywhere, as long as they have iliaster to feed on. Go down into the deepest tunnels, to the lightless places choked with poison and sulphur and so far from the clocks that time is drawn out to agonising thinness, and you will find some stalker doing unspeakable things to a damned. The rude health and adaptive nature of the hellkin has allowed them to thrive almost everywhere in Hell.

What was potentially the greatest city in Hell had to be abandoned within a decade, because the demons could not endure it. Cacaphractus awoke and machines sprang up like weeds throughout the metropolis. There were few violent clashes between the demons and the constructs (at least, not until the Night of Blades towards the very end of demonic residence in the machine city), but the artificial will of Cacaphractus grew exponentially and forced the hellkin out.

It should be noted that while the self-awareness



of Cacaphractus was first discovered in 192 AF, it took more than another century before the demons finally abandoned the machine city. For the intervening decades, they tried to contain the city's mad growth or harness its power for their own ends. They failed.

Most of those who left the machine city fled to Dis. With its rival gone, Dis became the de facto capital of Hell. The House Lords still looked to Pandemonium as the prize, but Dis was the city the common demons dreamed of. The expansion of Dis during this era outraced that of even Cacaphractus in its heyday. Many of the great edifices of the city were built during the early years of the third century of Hell.

The Unveiling

In 330 AF, House Zethu's most audacious strike took Dis away from House Carthenay and sent the Miser Lord fleeing for the security of the Vaults of Mammon. In every other place that the Zethu took on the Unveiling using sorcery, they attacked fortresses that were already infiltrated by spies, or marginal domains without strong loyalty to their current lords and Houses. Dis, however, they just stole outright and the citizens of Dis accepted this. It was a sign of how cosmopolitan Dis had become – the city's denizens had come to identify themselves as demons of Dis more than as servants of the Carthenay. The transfer of power to House Zethu was remarkably smooth, with only a handful of riots, demonic battles and bloody purges. For the hellkin, this was an astonishing act of maturity and compromise.

With the Zethu in charge, Dis was able to take over much of the lost technologies and industries of Cacaphractus. The city was not only the centre of Infernal trade and torture thanks to its Carthenay founders, it was now also the centre of heavy industry and research. The Zethu failed, however, to establish Dis as the heart of sorcery in the Pit; the most skilled faustians preferred their isolated towers and fortresses. Sorcery did swiftly become part of the back alley culture of Dis; the summoning circles used to destroy the Carthenay were not even cool before half-horn sorcerers were selling rituals from street corners.

Every one of the Great Houses has suffered a period of challenges and assaults after declaring its

claim for power and the Zethu were no exception. The furious Carthenay threw legions of House and mercenary troops against the defences of Dis, although their wrath was tempered by their greedy desire not to damage the city too much. The Zethu responded by building the great walls of Dis from solid soulstone. The construction of a massive soulstone wall around the entire city is still the single most expensive engineering project ever undertaken in the Pit, outstripping even the Grand Canal or the biomechanicals. Some have suggested that Zethu's offer at the Bileflot Conclave to protect the Pit from the Brokenlanders using sorcery was actually a bluff designed to get enough iliaster to pay for the walls of Dis. Still, despite their crippling cost, the defences have proved insurmountable and the walls of Dis have never been breached by any invading army.

With the construction of the walls, the outward expansion of Dis was limited, so the demons began to build *up*. There were towers and skyscrapers in Dis long before the mortals conceived of such things.

Crime and Corruption

The wealth of Dis brought more crime to the city. A port was constructed in 370 AF, linking Dis with the Sunless Sea and Port Despair. Soon, the criminal House Hand was operating within the great city. The Zethu have never been the best at maintaining order within their domains – having a leadership caste composed of scholars and mad scientists leads to a combination of laissez-faire economics and mind control instead of a workable government.

Dis endured, the denizens creating their own solutions to the problems that Zethu could not deal with. The City Council of Dis was formed to deal with crime, and dealt with it by taking vast bribes and ensuring that House Hand preyed on the right targets instead of the councillors and their allies. The city proved able to weather any change, to incorporate Zethu ingenuity and House greed and criminal treachery into its own urban fabric. It is said that at the height of the Carthenay attacks on Dis, the weapons factories of the city offered to sell better siege engines to the enemy.

Lictat the Preacher & Dis

With the Free City Heresy being rooted in Dis, and given the Heresy's seeming similarity to the preachings of Lictat during the war, many young demons have asked if Lictat ever visited Dis. The answer appears to be 'no' – while Lictat's preachings were certainly avidly read in Dis, the demon itself never came to the City of Industry. Lictat lived and died on the Fifth Circle.

They tell things differently on the streets of Dis, of course, but if you believe everything you hear in Dis' taverns and alleyways, you will believe that Lucifer still hides in Pandemonium, that Mount Zeberrok is actually a giant sword and that the Clocks of Hell run backwards.

Sturrach's War

The Grasping War passed Dis by without affecting the city greatly. There were more raw materials and souls flowing through the foundries and factories of Dis, but the battles over who owned which far-off soul field or Circle went unnoticed on the streets.

The Riethii/Carthenay/Sturrach war, however, did alarm the denizens. Armies from the Sturrach holdings had to pass by or even through the city and the whole Infernum knew that war was coming. The wealth and power of Dis made it an obvious target even if the Carthenay had failed to wrest it back from the Unveilers. The defensive emplacements were reinforced and enlarged and stocks of iliaster and other supplies were laid in to make ready for a siege.

The threat finally came in 451 AF. House Sturrach attacked the Zethu mines on the Fourth Circle and choked off the trade routes to Dis from the Fifth and Seventh. The city was dismissed by Sturrach as being too hard to take by force of arms (although Dis was repeatedly bombed by fiend flights), but he was convinced that it could easily be starved into

submission. The Bloody Lord reckoned without the resourcefulness and determination of the folk of Dis, however, and the city endured.

The factories ran down to almost nothing, the foundries grew dark and cold and the torture mills ground wastrels for a few pathetic drops of thin plasm, but the city endured. During this time, some enterprising demons with the power to soulshape thought of quarrying the soulstone walls of the city for sustenance, but as this would undermine the chief defences of the city, the practice was banned on penalty of death. The prohibition against damaging the city walls is one of the strongest and most respected laws in Dis – even House Hand rarely attempts to steal souls from the walls.

Sturrach's War was the grimmest period in Dis' history. The long siege lasted for decades. Dissolution and disease stalked the streets and the Zethu leadership mostly fled the city for the relative safety of Citadel Zethu on the Eighth Circle. Again, the common demons looked to the City Council for leadership, not the Zethu nobility.

The Century of Chains

It was, however, the Zethu nobility who delivered Dis from the threat of Sturrach invasion. Zethu bound Sturrach in a spell and the clash between the two demons was interrupted by Glabretchi assassins, resulting in the partial destruction of Citadel Zethu and the deaths of the two founders. The Zethu nobility returned to their city en masse and were horrified to find out how independent and unruly the denizens had become.

It has been said that the Zethu either ignore their subjects, or seek to bind them utterly to the will of the nobility. House Zethu had done the former in Dis, now they switched tactic. The most powerful and influential common demons in Dis were forced into strong Covenanted debts with the nobility. The City Councillors were assassinated and their replacements forced to swear allegiance to House Zethu. A bloody purge of House Hand and other criminal elements within Dis caused as many deaths in a few weeks as the long siege did in three decades.

With the security of 'their' city apparently ensured, Zethu invested more and more of their power in Dis. The city had proved unassailable even by the mightiest army of the Sturrach, unlike the

other Zethu estates and fortresses which had been smashed by the Bloody forces. Therefore, House Zethu crammed everything they could into Dis. New torture palaces, new fortresses, new factories, the biomechanical experiments, new spawning pits – if it could be built within the walls of Dis, it was built there.

The demons of the city refused to be pushed out by the sudden burgeoning of industry and fortresses. True, many were forced to dwell in a growing slum town outside the walls themselves, but most managed to find themselves tenements and hellholes in the city proper. The architecture of Dis became even more bizarre as buildings and houses were put up wherever they would fit; factory roofs were crowded with hellholes and tenement blocks *hung* from fortress spires. A deranged spidersweb of walkways and bridges connected the disparate sections of the city.

In a desperate attempt to give organisation to the city, House Zethu created a rail network for Dis, which ran both above ground and underground. This really just led to another crazed expansion of the city, this time downwards. House Zethu put a stop to the underground activity when the foundations of the city were threatened, but the catacombs and dungeons of Dis are still incredibly extensive.

The City Council was reformed several times; often, there were two councils, a Zethu-approved puppet council and a council-in-exile in the slums outside the walls. The Zethu sometimes struck against the council using *summonings*, but once the city was running relatively smoothly, they gave up these attempts at civil authority and went back to their pleasure-gardens and laboratories.

The Age of Chaos

Meanwhile, the rest of the Pit was in decline. Lawless bandits and hellcycle gangs roamed the Middle Hell. House Zethu might have enforced order on Dis proper and the invisible City Council and its House Hand allies protected the slums, but the undercity of Dis was vulnerable to gang raids and warfare. Dis survived the Age of Chaos better than most cities, but it still suffered from the weakness of the Infernum.

The construction of the Minotaur Line from Dis to

The City Council of Dis

The City Council of Dis is one of the oldest institutions in the Infernum and has undergone many changes. Originally, it was simply composed of the most powerful demons in the city. During Dis' first period of expansion, any demon who owned a factory, a torture mill or had sufficient wealth or power to force its way onto the council could be a councillor.

The Zethu purges after the war forced the council underground. It now meets in secret. All the councillors wear black iron masks and encompassing robes to hide their identities. New members are chosen by the council when the need arises or when a councillor is killed. The council's decisions and proclamations are nailed to doors and notice boards throughout the city in the dead of night.

The council receives reports through a massive network of spies and agents. A clerk in Dis might write a report on iliaster usage, then leave that report in a crack in a wall. Some lamplighter would collect that report and leave it in the lamplighter's workshop, where it would be collected by a thief, who would pass it to a fence, who leaves it in a beggar's basket and so on. Any link in this chain could actually be the councillor for whom the report is destined.

There are actually multiple City Councils in Dis. Some believe themselves to be the real council, but they are only fronts for the actual rulers of the city and are there to be sacrificed if the need arises. Others are responsible for a particular district of Dis, or are composed of a particular clique or faction in the city. Conspiracy is the true mistress of the City.

the First Circle was partially an attempt to quell the violence in the undercity. The Dis trains had proved the usefulness of rail travel in Hell, so the Carthenay/Zethu alliance extended the railway across the Pit. Like an ever-hungry machine, the city gulped down all the souls shipped Down to it and asked for more, and yet more. House Carthenay had repeatedly failed to take Dis by force, but now they managed to gain great influence in the city through commerce and investment. A few Carthenay lords even speculated about just buying Dis outright from the Zethu.

House Lictat & the Beginnings of the Heresy

The appearance of House Lictat alarmed the Zethu rulers of Dis. The new House was calling on the independent demon lords to join it, and the Zethu lord of Dis, a demon named Luac, speculated that the ever-troublesome merchant lords and City Councillors might feel that Lictat would be a more agreeable liege lord than the Zethu. Luac responded in the now-traditional way for lords of Dis to deal with civil problems – he had the City Council assassinated and various important demons personally Covenanted to him. Satisfied, he turned back to his personal affairs.

A new City Council emerged, composed of radicals and heretics. House Lictat did make overtures to the demons of the city, but these were ignored. Something much stranger was brewing in the crowded streets of Dis, in the very shadow of the factories and the fortresses.

748 AF

For the whole of that fateful year, a strange hot malaise hung over Dis. The damned felt it as a leaden weight in their dead limbs as they toiled in the factories. The spawn felt it, becoming even more vicious and unruly in their pens. The mortals felt it as a sickening sense of impending change, as if Hell itself were pregnant with some rough beast. The demons turned on each other; violent clashes erupted across Dis, and the undercity was a no-go area for months as gangs clashed in bloody brawls.

If the few angels resident in Dis felt it, they showed no sign of discomfort on their perfect features of pure iliaster.

On 25th Vincere, Lord Luac announced that the celebration of the Feast of Fools was cancelled this year due to the current unrest and criminal activity in the city. Many of the common demons were

outraged by this and took to rioting. Luac met the riots with biomechanical combat squads and forced Covenanting of the ringleaders.

On the 26th, the riots grew larger. Luac refused to serve iliaster from the torture palaces, and the common troughs in the districts of Usury and Despair went dry that night. The riots stopped. For three days, the city was deathly quiet.

The Morningstar rose on the Feast of Fools. Luac was woken when it became clear that many demon workers were celebrating the holiday despite his orders. Furious, the lord ordered that the guards have the dissenters thrown into the spawning pits by the biomechanicals. Many of the guards were looking forward to the feast-day as much as the next demon, and looked for any loophole in their lord's orders.

They found none... but the Covenants that would normally have driven them on had no force anymore. This realisation swiftly rippled across the city. All the Covenants were broken.

By nightfall, notices could be found on doors across the city, proclaiming the Breaking of Oaths and describing the sorcerous ritual used to accomplish that – but by that time, half the Zethu nobles in the city would be dead or thrown into the spawning pits themselves.

The Reign of Terror & the Freeing of the Dead

The Zethu fled the city – and the Sixth Circle – in a panic. Word reached the city that Mayhem was also free (true), and that half the other cities in the Infernum had also rebelled (mostly false). The meaning of the Breaking of Oaths was hotly debated. The gangs boiled up out of the undercity and used the chaos to their advantage, killing their rivals and looting the wealth of the city. Fires burned out of control. Factories were destroyed or left empty as chaos ruled the city.

The City Council was called upon to restore order. The council was still influential in the slums of Despair, but the other districts had not been represented by the council for centuries. A new city-wide council was formed and overthrown on the same day. Over the next three months, over a dozen groups would proclaim themselves the

council and issue some bizarre and contradictory set of commands, only to be overthrown by the next council or random gangs of demons.

The dictate in the original proclamation that the damned must be freed was the most confusing and controversial statement of all. Some demons laughed at it, thinking it to be nothing more than a joke. Others refused to countenance the idea at all, believing that it would be impossible. Still others feared that if the damned were not freed, then the Covenants would come back and they would all be enslaved and tortured for all eternity.

A new council, the sixteenth (or twentieth, depending on which count one uses) was formed and this one managed to gain control of the biomechanoids. The council's edicts were backed up by force of arms. This new council declared that the damned of the city were free and deserving of rights equal to any demon, as were the mortals. It also declared that any who refused to obey this edict would be thrown to the spawning pits or rendered down for iliaster in the Echoing Halls, depending on the needs of the city.

'The needs of the city' became the watchwords of the nascent new order in Dis. Any atrocity or punishment was accompanied by those words. The newly-freed damned were tortured for the needs of the city. The walls were manned with conscript troops to fight the besieging armies for the needs of the city. Factories were seized and forced to turn out weapons for the needs of the city.

The freeing of the damned did actually help the city in many ways – the emancipated dead were obviously much more enthusiastic about the Breaking of Oaths than any other group, once their minds had reconstituted themselves sufficiently to think about the situation. The city was able to field an army of loyal and brave souls, and damned workers willingly returned to the factories and even in some cases to the torture palaces.

House Hand also supported the Free City, using the Port of Dis and the factories to produce and smuggle goods out and onto the black economy of the Pit.

The Second Siege & the Present Day

The oaths were broken in 748 AF, although it

was 749 before the true nature of the chaos in Dis was realised. House Zethu tried to retake the city almost immediately. The citizens of Dis under the fifth council managed to spread the Heresy to several other cities like Allsorrows and Abyssus, which only served to increase the pressure on the city. Dis had easily repelled confused and clumsy attacks from the retreating Zethu, but now it faced a rejuvenated and Carthenay-supplied Bloody Army intent on wiping out the Heresy.

The threat of outside enemies (more specifically, outside enemies intent on killing every mortal, demon and angel inside the city and re-enslaving all the damned) reunited the denizens of Dis, and once again the city adapted to endure. The 'rules' of the current clash quickly became evident – while the Sturrach just want to slaughter the city, the Carthenay and the Zethu besiegers want to keep Dis' industries intact as much as possible. The siege attacks are therefore mostly concentrated on the slums of Despair and the Malice district.

Meanwhile, inside the city, loyalty to the council and the cause of the Free Cities is paramount. With the free damned being enthusiastic and loyal supporters of the cause, any dissent or weakness on the part of the demons is immediately reported to the City Council – and those who do not serve the council are traitors to the cause and are rendered down for iliaster. The city is in terrible and constant danger of starvation, so iliaster is at a premium in the city, selling for two or even three or four horns at times. House Hand smugglers and cycle gang slavers are both vital sources of fresh iliaster for the city.

The City Council know they are facing a losing battle. Even with the Sturrach forces divided between the siege and the war with the Oblurrott and even with the virtually impenetrable defences and massive weapons production of the city, they cannot hope to win or even break the siege for long. It is only by spreading the Heresy to the rest of the Pit and overthrowing the whole Infernum that they can survive.

A new order in Hell is their only hope.

Guide to Dis

A guide to Dis costs three horns to a newcomer. The city is so vast, but more importantly so complex

that there is a thriving trade in messenger-imps and guides. There are enough visitors, even with the city under siege, that these imps can make their living from bringing demons out from Terminus Dis up to the Shadow Garden or Gladhand.

Dis is divided into five districts, although these divisions are mostly rather arbitrary. With the massive expansion upwards, tower and bridges from the Malice District can cross over into Torment and so on. There is almost no organisation to the city. A wide boulevard could lead to nothing but a narrow spiral staircase going up to a single hellhole. There are alleyways and tunnels that see more traffic in an hour than some much wider streets see in a month. Those who know Dis can get from place to place far quicker than newcomers.

The air of Dis is crowded with flyers. There are great numbers of imps and fiends and other winged demons among the city's denizens and many landbound demons have gauntflyers or other methods of flight. Clouds of dirigibles, some of prodigious size, float above the twisted streets. The aerial city is just as complex as the city below, with flyers darting from thermal to thermal and flitting down to bridges and walkways high above the streets. Guides warn their employees to watch for falling droppings – and occasionally, falling bodies. Newcomers who disdain guides get no such warning.

There are no true maps of Dis. The best cartographers can only approximate the chaos of the city.

The Walls of Dis

The mighty soulstone walls of Dis are one of the few useful landmarks in the city. They encompass just under two-thirds of the city within their protective aegis. A spur of the walls protects the Port of Dis. The walls are made of soulstone, so they glimmer in the witching and night with enough eerie light to see by. They are exceedingly well fortified, with watchtowers and weapons platforms every five hundred feet. The weapons of Dis are highly advanced; most are stationary swarf blasters, hellcannons or rotating cannon. The troop levies manning them may be largely untrained, but they make up for their lack of skill with enthusiastic firepower.

As the walls are the mainstay of the city's defences, any tampering or soul-stealing is punishable by death. All citizens are expected to take a turn manning the walls (see Lotteries, below).

The Railways

The Dis Railway runs through the city. There are lines connecting each of the five districts with Terminus Dis, but there are also dozens of smaller stations along the way, as well as smaller branch lines. Riding the railway costs 2 fangs – but the railway demons give no guarantees of safety, as the Undercity lines are sometimes attacked by cycle gangs, who race alongside the rattling carriages and use spiked chains to drag passengers off into the darkness.

The trains are smaller and less efficient versions of the Minotaur engines, powered by a boiling concoction of Strain and Agony. Newer trains are automated; older models have a bonded artificer perched in an enclosed cockpit at the front. For the 'protection' of the passengers, the train company has a few hulk guards that randomly patrol the trains, but they are more interested in extracting bribes from ticketless passengers than stopping the cycle gangs.

Line	Name
Terminus to Torment	Black
Terminus to Usury	Gold
Terminus to Malice	Grimjoy
Terminus to Damnation	Whisperer
Terminus to Despair	Scum
Torment to Despair	Toildawn
Torment to Usury	Grinder
Torment to Malice	Port

Walking the Streets

A traveller in Dis will immediately notice the filthiness of the air and the grime of the city. The factories belch out black clouds of smoke every day, which settles on the city below. The city stinks like a freshly opened grave when the weather is hot and it is always hot this deep in Hell. It is always dark in most streets of Dis, even when the Morningstar is directly overhead – the overhanging buildings and towers block out the light. There are gas-powered lampposts everywhere in the city, but many are broken or unlit, so the folk of Dis carry torches with them.

The cyclopean architecture of Dis is oppressively huge. The city was built first and foremost as a series of factories and torture palaces; spaces for the demons were an afterthought. The streets slink between the massive stone edifices around them. The oldest buildings are built in the 'classical' style of Hell – deliberately ugly and ornate, to contrast them with the elegant structures left by the angels. The factories, however, were built for pure functionality and efficiency. The third style of design in Dis might be termed desperation – many buildings were thrown together from debris and crammed into wherever they would fit. Sections of Dis look more like nests than a city.

Spiralling out from the central industrial district of Torment, the other districts are the alleyways and parks of Malice, the fortresses and courts of Damnation, the markets of Usury, and – outside the walls – the slums of Despair. Despair is the largest district, Damnation the smallest.

Torment

Torment rises like a mountain of black iron from the slums and lesser districts around it. This is the heart of Dis, a monument to suffering in stone and metal. Where the other districts are made up of tenements and markets built haphazardly on top of factories, Torment is industry built on industry. There are occasional gulfs in the mountain of machinery; at the base of each gulf is a fortress or other important structure whose master refused to let it be built over. An observer can trace the fortunes of the noble demons of Torment by the state of their fortresses – those who are in decline have their homes entombed by a growing webwork of walkways and bridges, while nouveau riche industrialist lords built their fortresses atop the pile and ancient demons who have never lost their might have fortresses at the bottom of sheer and unimpeded chasms.

With the Breaking of Oaths, there are few of these latter fortresses left.

Every day, tens of thousands march up the ramps and stairwells to the factories. The dead labourers sleep where they can – the emancipation of the damned emptied the prisons of Dis, but filled its streets and alleyways with an underclass of the dead. Some damned just rest in the factories

where they work, or go back to the prisons, or do not bother sleeping and keep on working, earning another fang or two at the cost of their sanity.

Even though Dis is besieged, the factories have kept on working. House Zethu was the engine that drove the Infernal industry, and Zethu packed as much of its wealth as it could into the city. The Infernum could choose to choke Dis' industry off by blocking its supplies or refusing to purchase its tainted products, but the Hellish economy is greatly dependent on Dis. Similarly, the Free City could shut down its factories and let the Infernum grind to a halt, but the city desperately needs the iliaster. While much of Torment's output is now channelled into House Hand and the black market, there is still a measure of trade between Dis and the rest of the Infernum, especially House Carthenay.

Echoing Halls

The Echoing Halls are at the very centre of Dis, in the lowest level of Torment. A deep shaft, the Well of Echoes, dives right down from the top of Torment to the Halls. The Echoing Halls are ancient in the extreme, built when angels ruled over Hell. Physically, the Halls are arranged around five pits filled with molten lava. Titanic chains hang over each pit to lower prisoners into the fires. Around the pits are rune-covered slabs of marble, which can be dragged into place to form a secure seal. When a prisoner demon or angel is melted in the Pit, the explosion of iliaster from their death condenses on the sealed marble chamber and can be gathered.

The Echoing Halls were silent for centuries. The shards of Heaven were all exhausted and the few angels in the Pit were tortured for sport instead of rendered down for their iliaster. The Echoing Halls were abandoned and almost forgotten about, although some demons came to taste the darkness where angels had been murdered by their peers.

With the freeing of the dead, the city desperately needed iliaster to feed its massive population of demons. The City Council ordered that the Echoing Halls be reopened to render demon criminals down for their iliaster. Now the Halls operate night and day – almost every crime is punishable by rendering, trying to make up for the massive shortfall. The master of the Echoing Halls is a fiend named Lamorth, a notorious sadist even for a demon. It wears an executioner's hood and

carries a ceremonial axe.

Terminus Dis

Terminus Dis was the end of the line for many thousands of souls. Unfortunate damned were gathered in the soul fields of Upper Hell and chained up in the stockcars of the Minotaur Line or in the prisons of Harvest Keep before being shipped down to Terminus Dis. They would then be brought to one of the torture palaces or factories. The platforms of Terminus Dis were thronged with soul-brokers and slavers. Deeper in the great station lie the local Dis lines, like the Black Line and Grimjoy.

The railway out of Dis was destroyed by retreating Zethu forces early in 749, leaving the bulk of Terminus Dis useless. No more Minotaurs come down from Harvest Keep and the great stockyards and cargo containers lie vacant and rusting. The upper section of the station has been claimed by the damned; many thousands of them now dwell in the silent concourses and platforms. The lower sections of Terminus Dis are still in full operation – indeed, the underground tunnels of the railway have provided much-needed shelter from the siege.

Terminus Dis is one of the best-known locations in the whole Pit and has more than its share of legends and rumours. There are tales of a huge Strain engine in the bowels of the station that was built to power the train network, but was touched by Cacaphractus' constructs and became self-aware, or of a rail route that leads into the mortal realm. Others speak of Springheeled Jack, a partially mechanical demon who is said to lurk in the rooftops and walkways above the Terminus, who has been to the mortal world and back many times.

Deathshead

The Deathshead Weapons Works is the largest manufacturer of cannons and other heavy weapons in the whole Pit. The company owns nearly a quarter of Torment, and the main Deathshead Works jut out of the heart of Dis like an ugly piece of lethal shrapnel. The weapons bearing the DH brand have killed from the alleys of Pandemonium to the deserts of the First and beyond. There are places in the mortal world which stink of blood and hot brass, battlefields and minefields and killing fields, where the agents of Deathshead walk in

human skin but speak in demon voices.

The Breaking of Oaths nearly broke Deathshead, but the city's need for weapons kept the company intact. In exchange for supplying and maintaining weapons on the walls of Dis, the masters of Deathshead are allowed to keep the damned slaves working on the production lines. The works are the only place in Dis where the damned are still officially enslaved. This makes the company even more unpopular than it used to be, but its wealth and influence makes Deathshead the second most important power centre after the City Council in Dis.

The masters of Deathshead are mostly former Carthenay and Zethu nobles, who have accepted the Heresy. It is almost certain that they are all playing their former House masters and the Heretics for fools and have no true loyalty to anything except profit. A low-grade street war rages between spies for the City Council and spies for the lords of Deathshead.

The current master of the Deathshead is Citizen Ferragous Varacus, formerly Carthenay Duke Varacus of the Duchy of the Serrogaj and one of the richest demons in the Pit. For Varacus to embrace the Heresy has been taken by some as proof of the virtues of the Breaking of Oaths and by others as a sign that Varacus just wants as many lives as possible to be snuffed out by its weapons.

Grand Torture Palace of Dis

The Grand Torture Palace of Dis is not quite as large or advanced as the pristine wonder of Nethergore (see page 76 in *Book of the Tormentor*), but then, this palace never had the luxury of shutting down to upgrade its torture machines. Like the other major factories of Dis, the Grand Torture Palace ran night and day for decades, mercilessly churning millions of souls into iliaster. The machine of Dis ground on and on, spitting out wastrels and plasmic iliaster at the cost of unimaginable pain.

The damned who survived the day's processing were hurled into prison cells to recuperate before going through the same torture again the next day. Every stone of the place was stained with tears. The demon torturers have their own sign language and cant which can be used in the screaming din of

the agonies of the damned.

Now, with the damned of Dis made free, the Grand Torture Palace has changed. The prisons hold just as many demons as damned; these hellkin prisoners wait for their time in the Echoing Halls instead of the torturer's racks. There are long lines outside the doors of the palace of damned bearing cursed lottery tickets that denote they must spend the day there. Those who refuse to offer up their pain for the cause of freedom are thrown into prison and tortured daily for years.

The former master of the palace, a slaver named Berrengrode, was captured by the free damned and broken on its own racks. The new operator is a damned who calls herself Atropos, as she cannot recall her true name. She presents herself as just a humble servant of the City Council, who performs a necessary civic duty. She is hated more than Varacus of the Deathshead.

Sevenmills

The Sevenmills region lies below and Pitwards of the Grand Torture Palace. Long before the Grand Torture Palace was built, the seven torture mills here provided iliaster for the hungry city. Sevenmills has been torturing the damned since the first days of the Pit. There are more wastrels – the thin and broken shades of over-tortured damned – than there are anywhere else in Hell. If there is anywhere in the Pit that could be... haunted, it is the dark vaults of Sevenmills.

The demons find bodies here sometimes, drained utterly of iliaster. Such deaths are blamed on the gangs of the undercity, or a hidden Brokenlander dwelling somewhere in Torment.

Malice

When Dis was ruled by the Houses, the district of Malice was the noble district. Dis' entertainments and pleasure gardens were very much secondary to the exquisite decadences of the Seventh, but Malice was still quite diverting. The fortresses of the rulers of Dis under Luac were mostly located in Malice District.

Malice is the Pitmost of the five districts, lying as it does on the very shores of the Styx. The Stygian Wall can be seen from the towers of Malice and the bridges cross from the walls of Dis to the far side

of the river. Malice is also the Port of Dis, where ships sailing on both the Styx and the flooded tunnels that connect to the Sunless Sea and Port Despair can pass through the Drowned Gates, dock and take on goods from the City of Industry.

Of the five districts, Malice has suffered the least from the siege. It is on the far side of the vast city from the siege and the war, far from the fires and bombardments that have shattered so much of Usury and Despair. If the Riethii ever stir themselves to join the siege, then their navy could sweep in through Malice and take the city with relative ease. The City Council is aware of this threat but has as yet no defence against invasion from the river.

The true power in Malice District is not the council, anyway – it is the demons of the criminal House Hand. With the nobles gone, these thieves and assassins have taken over their fortresses and now enjoy their pleasures. They do not have the force of Covenants or noble mutations to back up their rule, but with House Hand's access to black-market iliaster, the criminals can rule Malice just as well as the nobles ever did.

Bridge of the Skinless

The ancient Bridge of the Skinless arcs across the bloody River Styx. Souls were marched across this bridge from the markets of Usury Down to the Seventh Circle. The wars of the Infernum began here, back in 201 AF, when demons loyal to Jelac clashed with the progenitors of House Charon and hurled many of them into the fast-flowing blood tides below.

The bridge has been the site of many other battles since then. To ensure that an army cannot just march across the Skinless Bridge from the Seventh, the City Council had the Deathshead Works attach explosives to the ancient bones of the structure. The bridge still stands, but at a word from the council, it could be destroyed and collapsed into the Styx.

Given the lack of living space within Dis, many thousands of damned souls have taken up residence amid the struts and cables of the bridge.

The Port of Dis

The great Port of Dis is controlled by House Hand. The port is divided into two sections – one serves the bloody waters of the Styx, while the

other surrounds a whirlpool of lava that connects to a flooded tunnel. The sinew-wood ships of the demons can endure the lava, sailing down to the Sunless Sea and the tunnels beyond. A large cradle can hoist vessels from one set of docks to the other.

Most of the traffic in the docks these days is made up of small, fast ships that can slip by any blockades. Crime in the Infernum is defined as 'anything that the House nobles object to' and House Hand is used to being very objectionable. The port is one of the most violent regions in the city, second only to the tunnels below.

Dreadnought Yards

The warship *Dreadnought* was constructed in Dis to defeat the abhorei armada. The ship had been under construction for over a decade, but when the armada attacked the shores of the Infernum, the whole production capacity of the city was given over to building the ultimate weapon. By the time the ship was finished, it was too large to be launched on either the Styx or the lava tunnels. A section of the walls of Dis had to be demolished to create a gap and the ship was dragged out through the gap to a wider stretch of the Bloody River. The gap in the walls was filled in with a stone barricade, but the Dreadnought Yards are another significant weakness in the Pitwards defences of Dis.

The defensive Bastion (see below) blocks the common, ugly side of the docks and shipyards off from the refined sight of the Shadow Garden.

Shadow Garden

The Shadow Garden was the Seventh Circle in microcosm. It was the only green space in the grimy City of Industry, but that greenery was fed with blood. In the Shadow Garden, the aristocracy of Dis could enjoy the delights of malcubi, fine drugs, elegant tortures and other such charming practises. The nobles have mostly fled and the Shadow Garden has plummeted downmarket. The succubi are still here, but they sell themselves to buy iliaster instead of being the pampered playthings of nobles. The drugs are supplied by House Hand and are cut with plasm, while the nightmare gardens are crowded with homeless damned.

The Gardens are a useful clearinghouse for

rumours and secrets. The courtiers trapped behind Heretic lines have to use their political cunning for something, so now they spy on thieves and heretics instead of the greatest nobles of the Sixth.

Twistways

The Twistways are a maze of narrow tunnels and alleyways located behind the Shadow Gardens. The shops along the Twistways sell curios and sorcery talismans, as well as stolen goods from all over the Pit. Anything can be obtained in the Twistways for the right price. The siege has significantly reduced the ability of the Twistway brokers to obtain the unobtainable; indeed, many were far happier and more powerful when they were supplying the illicit desires of the Shadow Garden nobles and many now supply intelligence on the state of Dis to the Houses.

Luac's Tower

The fortress of Lord Luac was the first target of the rioters and revolutionaries when the Breaking of Oaths manifested itself. It was set alight using alchemical fire, which burnt wood and stone alike. The ashen ruins of the fortress have been declared an eternal monument to the folly of the Houses of the Infernum, and the denizens of the city have been ordered by the council not to trespass within the still-smouldering remains.

Before being destroyed, Luac's Tower was a Lesser Citadel.

The Bastion

The Bastion was the headquarters of Lord Luac's secret police when Lord Luac ruled Dis. Now Luac is gone, but the secret police are still here – the Zethu-loyal agents have mostly been purged and in their place is a legion of informants, spies, correspondents and thugs. The City Council exists in the shadows, anonymously, communicating with the citizens through proclamations and rumours. For most of the denizens of Dis, the secret police of the Bastion are the true rulers of the city; they are the only lords to be obeyed.

The secret police of the Bastion can be divided into several groups. Firstly, there are the masters of the Bastion themselves, who are formerly Captains in the forces of Luac and other nobles of the city. The masters believe they should rule the city; they are

utterly corrupt and contemptuous of the denizens. However, the City Council has enough influence and power to keep the masters of the Bastion in check.

Secondly, there are the inspectors; spies and agents who investigate treachery and disloyalty within the city.

Thirdly, there is the virtual legion of informants and gossipers who pass information back to the police; with iliaster going at such a high cost in the city, getting a few fangs for reporting that your neighbour is consorting with the Houses might make the difference between survival and Dissolution.

Fourthly, there is the city watch of Dis, who patrol the streets. They enforce the council's edicts and proclamations and also act as a second line of defence after the wall levies.

Fifthly, there is the legion of biomechanical warriors and hired thugs who drag lottery victims off to the prisons and Echoing Halls.

Dis Institute of High Sorcery

House Zethu has never had a strong tradition of sorcery in Dis, but it did attempt to foster magical learning by building this institute. Like Luac's Tower, the institute was attacked by the mob during the revolution; while the place was severely damaged, it held out long enough for the Zethu-loyal sorcerers to flee and for others to join the Heretics. The City Council considers the Institute one of its greatest assets for spreading the Breaking of Oaths to other cities.

Usury

The Usury District sprawls out from the shadow of Torment, heading for the distant shimmering walls. Usury was the heart of the Infernal economy; even the Carthenay recognised the merchants and soul-brokers of Usury as their peers. Usury is also the district of flyers – it is the home of imps and fiends and angels in Dis.

Since the Breaking of Oaths, Usury has descended into chaos. While all the city has suffered, Usury has been the most reduced by the lack of Covenants and the freeing of the damned. Street warfare and secret police investigations are a daily occurrence.

The district has suffered almost as much damage from battles between Free City demons as it has from the siege outside. Usury has been very badly hit by the siege weapons, which use the Tower of Birds to sight their attacks. The open spaces of the markets provide no shelter from filth bombs and hellfire bursts.

Market of Dis

The market of Dis connects to the Twistways out of Malice; between the two regions, a canny demon can find anything it wants, from Agony out of the Astyanath gardens to the greatest of damned generals or artists to angel-feathers to weapons from the mortal world. The only equal is the roaming Tattered Market on the Seventh Circle.

Iliaster is the most sought-after item in the market. Souls are still traded, sometimes, when shaped into coins or other easily portable forms. The trade in souls may be banned, but the police can be bribed to turn a blind eye for a handful of crowns.

Chainery

The Chainery was the heart of the soul trade in Dis – damned were taken off the train at the Terminus, sold in the market, then branded with the sigil of their new owner here in the Chainery. The best soulshapers outside House Haimon were found here. Massive forges constantly turned out manacles to hold the crowds of souls.

The damned are free in Dis now. While Terminus Dis has been claimed by the dead, the Chainery has been abandoned – at least, so the official records state. In truth, the Chainery has become the base of operations for the street slavers of Dis, who captured damned and secretly torture them for power. It is easy to slip illegal iliaster into the markets of Usury, and wastrel souls cannot bring accusations against their torturers. The trick is finding dead that no-one will miss and there are thousands of those in Dis.

Tower of Birds

The tallest structure in Dis is the Tower of Birds. It is quite beautiful, resembling a horn of ivory and silver that spirals out of the grim decay around it. The Tower contains hundreds of small chambers,

none of which are connected to each other – the only way to move around the Tower of Birds is by flying. The original purpose of the Tower has been lost; it was built around the same time as the Echoing Halls by the angels, but has far more chambers than there ever were angels in the Pit. Perhaps it was intended for the use of fiends and imps and certainly the Tower has been claimed by those breeds almost exclusively. Two angels still dwell within the Tower of Birds, the corrupt Angel of Living Night and Kuriel, self-appointed Champion of Dis. The two angels are diametrically opposed morally, but have been forced to band together to protect themselves at times.

Despite the name, there are no birds in the Tower. There are no birds anywhere in Dis, not even the eyebiter crows and carrion-eaters that live everywhere else in Hell. The skies here are too poisonous for them.

Mudside

The ugly monstrosity that is Mudside leans against the walls of Dis for support. The Tower of Birds may be taller, but Mudside bloats far bigger. This vast tenement was built as a last-ditch attempt to keep Dis' growing population within the walls. The building grew far beyond its original size, throwing out new wings and new hellhole labyrinths in a desperate race to hold all the demons of Dis. Mudside failed, and the population spread outside the walls to form Despair. Still, Mudside is the single largest habitation of demons anywhere in the Pit. It is also one of the most notorious mazes; there are no plans or maps of the torturous building in existence. Mudside rivals the labyrinths of the Riethii or the undercity of Dis in leading lost travellers to their doom.

Damnation

The smallest of the five districts, Damnation nestles in a valley beneath Torment. It is also the least populated of the five; Damnation contains the great civic buildings of Dis, the courthouses and the cathedrals. It is also the seat of the Oathbreaker's bureaucracy, where the lotteries and edicts are administered. Damnation has suffered relatively little during the war thanks to the protective edifice of Geryon Gate, but the City Council has still carefully fortified the towering palaces and courts of Damnation.

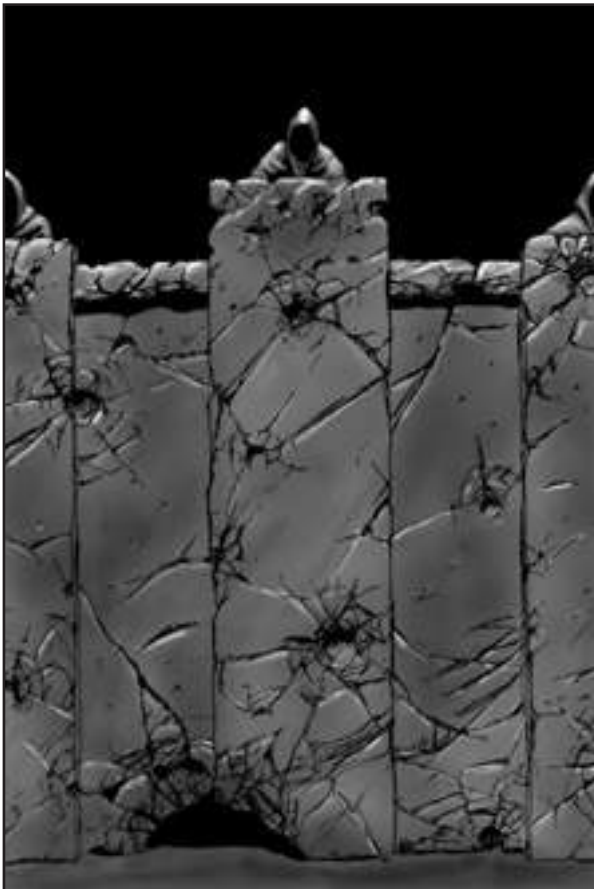
House of Justice

The House of Justice was originally the House of Injustice; the lords of the Infernum like their little jokes and find the idea of dragging mortals into courts which clearly proclaim their bias and cruelty absolutely hilarious. With the revolution and the arrival of equality and fairness and a new order in Hell, the courts have been renamed. Indeed, now there are lawyers and judges who look for evidence in their cases. However, the justice of Hell is far crueller than its injustice. Previously, a convicted demon could look forward to paying a bribe or at worst being Covenanted to a judge. Now, the most common sentence is execution in the rendering plants of the Echoing Halls.

There is a huge backlog of cases; there are many in Dis whose loyalty failed them.

Geryon Gate

Geryon Gate is the end of the old Iron Road, which brought the riches of the Fourth into the City of Industry. The Gate is the equal and twin to the far-off fortress of Barbican (see page 67, *Book of the Tormentor*), but has been heavily fortified and



enlarged over the centuries, making it one of the strongest defensive structures in the Pit. Many travellers making their way along the Iron Road see the Geryon Gate in the distance and mistake it for the whole of Dis.

The Gate bears a mighty array of weapons from the Deathshead Works – only the city walls of Mayhem can deliver an equally devastating barrage of fire and they lack the Strain reserves of the Geryon Gate. The gate has kept even the Sturrach besiegers back, making the Iron Road the safest approach to Dis for travellers on foot. The master of the Geryon Gate is also the master of the defence of Dis as a whole, the damned general Stethorius.

One thing that Barbican has that the Geryon Gate lacks is the Zethu-designed pulse wave generators that are designed to blast the Iron Road clear of attackers. The engines within the Geryon Gate were sabotaged by fleeing Zethu troops and the artificers of Dis have not yet managed to repair them.

Cathedral of Grinding Wheels

The main centre for Morningstar worship in Dis (and formerly in the Sixth Circle as a whole), the Cathedral of Grinding Wheels especially venerates the mysterious Clocks of Hell. The entire structure is a giant clockwork, powered by the labour of hundreds of slaves – the City Council desires to maintain good relations with the Priests of the Morningstar, so the priests are permitted to maintain slaves within the city. This gives the Church immense influence with the common folk, as they can get cheap iliaster. The City Council has issued several edicts to diminish the Church's power, but must balance these edicts with keeping their one official communication channel to the Houses open. If there is ever to be a settlement between the Heresy and the Houses, it will come through the Church.

There is a faction within the Oathbreakers who believe that the Church of the Morningstar must be swept away just like the Houses. They care nothing for the threats that destruction of the Church means the end of the Morningstar and the coming of eternal night to the Pit. Indeed, the faction calls itself the Sun-Eaters. They have murdered many priests and notable members of the faithful, and

practise their own mocking religion.

Grand Cardinal Asabula of Dis was grievously wounded in a Sun-Eater attack and has not yet resumed its role as keeper of the Cathedral of Grinding Wheels. In its absence, it is Cardinal Seroche who rules; Seroche's spies are everywhere in the city, passing information back to his allies in House Haimon.

Screaming Tower

The Screaming Tower has a two-fold purpose – it is a prison for those condemned to be thrown into the spawning pits, but it is also the heart of the city's telecommunications. A massive tower was built atop the original prison to be the nexus of the screamer network. Dis has the most advanced and comprehensive screamer network in the Pit, but it is also the most controversial. After all, every wire in the network is actually a soul, drawn out to hairs-breadth thickness and tortured to transmit messages. The damned are free in Dis, so – it is argued – the wires should be taken down and soulshaped back to their true forms. The loss of the screamers would severely reduce the City Council's ability to co-ordinate the city, so they have settled for sending the occasional apology out to all the wires.

The fact that the walls of Dis are also made up of soulshaped damned is never mentioned. Even the most liberal of the free dead knows that the walls are all that keeps the city free.

Spawning Pits of Dis

The Pits of Dis are almost dry; the city has no iliaster to spare for them. Once, half the demons of House Zethu sprang from these vast pits, but now they are empty. The Pits have been alchemically altered to create Free demons instead of Zethu-ichored ones, but the acid baths and larvae tunnels are too dry to support any more than a few dozen new demons at a time.

The city has a plan, however – the Black Pit of Fellmar on the Fifth Circle is a natural spawning pit, which needs no iliaster to maintain itself. If the secret of the Black Pit were to be uncovered, then the Pits of Dis could be renewed. Agents have crept out along the Iron Road to investigate Fellmar and replicate it in Dis.

Cacophony

The building now called Cacophony was originally constructed to block off the fumes and unsightly vista of the spawning pit from the Shadow Garden. Now, it has a new purpose – it is a place of celebration and revelry. The City of Dis is most likely doomed. The forces arranged against it are vast and powerful, its allies are uncertain, and starvation looms ever more likely. Still, the citizens of Dis are free, and they celebrate that freedom. Cacophony is the wildest, most desperate party in Hell. House Hand supplies the Agony, Sorrow and other drugs to keep the celebrants intoxicated. The City Council frowns on Cacophony, considering it an unacceptable waste of resources, but the party is the one thing in Dis they cannot control.

The master of Cacophony is the Angel of the Living Night.

Despair

Despair is the only district outside the walls. It is – or rather, was – a massive slum where the low-ranking demons of Dis made their holes. It was the criminal-controlled sector of Dis, an embarrassment to the Zethu.

Now, Despair is a war zone. Without the protection of the walls, the Sturrach forces swept in and slaughtered many of the denizens with ease. Most of the demons fled to the other districts, which were already incredibly overcrowded with newly-freed dead. The Sturrach army's siege lines run through Despair; mighty catapults and cannons have been placed on the roofs of tenements.

Despair can be divided into three – the Sturrach occupation zone, the contested zone and the still-Free zone closest to the walls. All three zones have suffered terrible damage; there are no buildings in Despair that have not been blasted at least once, and the bodies are stacked knee-high in every street.

The Sturrach Zone

The Bloody House is not the only force besieging Dis – there are Carthenay, Lictat and Zethu troops here too – but the folk of Dis refer to their enemies as the Sturrach, harkening back to the old siege during Sturrach's War. Most of the buildings have been razed, leaving only a few to be used as barracks by the occupying forces or those that

provide cover from the city's guns.

The general of the Sturrach forces occupying the outskirts of Dis is Earl Cuergart, a beast with great experience in siegecraft. Cuergart worries about the state of its holdings in its long absence and has resolved to break Dis by any means necessary as soon as possible. Originally, its tactics were constrained by the Carthenay's desire to preserve the infrastructure of Dis, but now Cuergart would happily annihilate the city if it could.

The Warzone

The Warzone is a wilderness of shattered buildings and small-scale firefights. Free City fighters and besiegers both stalk the Warzone, hoping to sabotage the other side's artillery or push the boundaries of the war forwards or back slightly. The Warzone is almost totally uninhabited apart from the combatants, although there are a few madmen who remain, as well as those forced to garrison key industrial sites like the Acheron channels.

The Shadow of the Walls

This third zone is what most demons in the city now consider to be Despair; it is the area that lies within the protective range of the walls' weapons, and so is clear of Sturrach troops. Despair is horribly overcrowded with both damned and demons. Furthermore, it is outside the walls, so Covenants can still hold sway here. Many of the minor servants of House Zethu remain in Despair, spying on the city and carefully keeping their time within the city below the year-and-a-day proscribed by the *breaking of oaths* ritual.

Gladhand

Gladhand was the heart of criminal activity in Dis for decades, before the current troubles. If you wanted something done, according to common wisdom, you went to the shadowy halls of the Gladhand neighbourhood. The criminals here were proudly independent of both House Hand and the other syndicates; the old renegade City Councils of Dis were based out of Gladhand.

Now, the City Council rules from behind the walls and House Hand controls all the newly-legalised crime in Dis. Gladhand is forgotten by most, a haunt of former crime bosses and civic

patriots of the City of Industry. The old demons of Dis remember the power of Gladhand and its shadowy rulers and there is still power here outside the walls. The rulers of Gladhand are all that maintains order in the remains of Despair, using their Covenants to keep the more unruly elements in check and deploying their surviving servants to counter Sturrach aggression. They have an... understanding with the City Council, but there are some in Gladhand who dream of the old days, when they ran the streets and the Zethu ran the factories and everyone respected them.

The Undercity

The 'sixth district' is by far the most unruly, violent and dangerous of all the areas within Dis. There is a warren of tunnels beneath the city. Railway tunnels weave between sewers. The Acheron and the Styx meet in brick-lined waterways hundreds of feet below the city streets. The burning whirlpool of the dock tunnels is used to provide heat for thousands of steam generators, fed with water from the Acheron. Basements and storage vaults belonging to the factories of Torment, hidden labyrinths, passageways and treasure vaults below Malice, dungeons under Damnation and smugglers' tunnels out of Usury, fresh-dug hellholes and bomb shelters under Despair – every district has its hidden underside.

The Undercity is controlled by gangs of demons. Many of these are cycle gangs, who roam the Fifth and Sixth Circles by day and return to the Undercity via hidden tunnels at night to refuel. They tap the Strain tanks of the factories overhead to feed their hellcycle mounts. Other gangs are criminals connected to House Hand, or deserters fleeing the lotteries above. The Undercity is out of the control even of the City Council, so those wishing to enter Dis in secret can try to navigate its tunnels to avoid both registration at the gates and the lotteries. Those who are willing to enter Dis openly can use the Geryon Gate with comparative safety.

The Undercity is infested with monsters. Many of these are prototype biomechanicals or mutants produced by Torment's wastes being dumped into the sewer lines. Others come up from the deep tunnels beyond the Pit.

Currently, the Undercity is dominated by a coalition between the biker gangs of the Ratskins and the

mercenary Grash's Guardians. The Guardians have been hired by Stethorius to help lift the siege of Dis and harass the Sturrach forces besieging the city.

Life and Death in Dis

Life in the city has changed almost beyond recognition for most of its inhabitants. The freeing of the dead is the most obvious sign of this change; while the dead are a common sight throughout the Infernum, the damned in other places are broken, ephemeral creatures, bald, androgynous, sightless and anonymous. Given time to heal, the soul looks more and more like it did in life – and the dead of Dis have had years to renew themselves. The demons of the city look hungrily at the banquet of souls around them, but must grit their teeth and call the dead 'brothers'.

Commitment to the cause of the Free Cities is all-important in Dis. Those who are not loyal to the cause must be traitors in the service of the hated Houses. The citizens of Dis have been under siege for a generation, so they have banded together against a common foe.

This commitment is reinforced by the City Council and its police dogs, who execute those who betray the cause. As execution in the Echoing Halls yields iliaster, such punishments happen on a daily basis. Some whisper that the council will only be satisfied when every demon in the city has suffered in the same way the damned suffered for centuries.

Lotteries

When a damned soul is freed from chains within the city of Dis, a number (called an Index of the Role of Free Citizens, or IRFC) is soulshaped into its arm. When a demon buys iliaster from the common trough for the first time, a number is branded into its flesh. When a traveller enters Dis, it is likewise marked. Not having one of these numbers is a crime in Dis, with rich rewards offered to anyone who reports an unnumbered intruder. Only those marked with a number are considered citizens.

Every week, the City Council and its bureaucracy choose random numbers and post them up around the city. Those citizens whose numbers are drawn must report for civic duty – those who refuse are hunted down (again, the rewards for turning in a shirker or deserter are lavish and most citizens have memorised the numbers of their friends and neighbours). The nature of the civic duty varies.

False Numbers

It is possible to purchase a false number – one which looks real, and will allow a character to deal with others in Dis, but one which will never appear on the official roles of the City Council and so will never come up in auction. This costs 50 crowns or so.

It is also possible to buy a used number, belonging to a demon who is dead or who has left the city. Used numbers provide their bearer with an official identity in the city, but can come with uncompleted civic duty. Used numbers generally go for five crowns each.

For damned, it is normally a stint in the torture palaces to provide iliaster. For demons, it may be an assignment to the walls to guard the city against the besiegers. Whatever the city needs, it takes through the lottery.

The amount of numbers drawn each week depends on the city's needs; a push from the Sturrach or an increase in industrial production means greater need and so more numbers are posted on walls and lampposts around the Free City.

The City Council

The mysterious City Council of Dis is the subject of more fevered rumour and speculation than anything else in Dis. Listen in any inn or street market and you will hear a dozen rumours every minute. The councillors are angels, or free damned, or Brokenlanders. They are agents of House Lictat, or the faustians or the Church. The council is a false front created by Commissioner Desahj, by Deathshead, by Uriel, by the ghost of Bor or Lucifer himself.

The council, according to the folk on the streets, consists of a dozen or so members, who rule all of Dis. They meet in secret once a week, but receive a constant stream of reports from all their spies and informants. They wear black masks to disguise their identities from each other.

While everyone from Stethorius to the mad

Newspapers in Dis and Beyond

Artificers invented the printing press in Hell during Sturrach's War, but the invention was little used for decades. Most demon lords, after all, had rooms full of scribe-souls who could copy documents when needed. It was in Dis that the printing press came into its own in the underground. The first newspaper in the Pit, *The Dis City Cryer*, appeared here, as well as soon-banned books containing the Luciferine Heresy, the Preachings of Lictat, and so on.

The *Cryer* is still going strong, as are its rivals the almost-as-venerable *Circle & Black* and the brand-new *Free City Press*. Elsewhere, the demons of House Riethii amuse themselves by producing several newspapers which are mostly little more than scandal rags; these include the salacious *What the Imp Saw*, the satirical *Read in Fang and Claw*, the politically-minded *Auditorium Gazette*, the duel-obsessed *Drenched Obituaries* and the common newspaper *Shadowlight*. House Carthenay also publishes the painfully-sober *Register of Damned & Industries*.

beggars at the Geryon Gate has at some point been accused of membership in the council, there are a few obvious front runners. Almost everyone in Dis believes that at least one of Varacus, Lamorth and Atropos is on the council, probably all three. Commissioner Desahj is another likely candidate. The Angel of the Living Night and the notorious incubus rake Casan both smile knowingly when talk of the council comes up, but claiming to be on the anonymous council is an old trick.

The Guard

The City Council may be mysterious, but the red badges of the guard are known everywhere in Dis. They operate out of the formidable Bastion and are backed up by a legion of biomechanical warriors. It is their informants that give the Guard their true power, however – almost nothing happens in the city that they do not know about.

The guard are also trained to be the city's second line of defence after the citizens that man the walls.

Demons

The demons of the city are in a word, confused. They have no Covenants, which is good. They also have no iliaster, which is very bad. They have to treat damned as equals, which is bad, but souls who are free and coherent are much better allies than enslaved and mindless damned. The Breaking of Oaths is a huge gamble for the hellkin – it will be

a new order in Hell, or it will kill them. There can be no middle ground.

The Free Dead

The dead of Dis are the only free damned souls outside the Hadean Kingdoms beyond the First Circle. As such, they are faced with a blank slate. They must cobble a culture together after centuries of being tortured by their new allies. Few of the dead have any memories at all of their mortal lives – they are now creatures of Hell as much as any demon.

They have seized on the Breaking of Oaths as their foremost belief. 'Non serviam' is on the lips of every soul in Dis. They are far more enthusiastic supporters of the Heresy than the demons of Dis are; the Heresy may be carried to other cities by demons, but it is maintained and enforced by the dead.

Despite their freedom, the dead are an underclass in Dis. Few have any property or shelter; many are forced to prostitute themselves in torture chambers to survive. They band together in sorry gangs or groups and try to find their way in a strange new world.

Mortals

Dis always had a high population of mortals; it is the most cosmopolitan of the cities of Hell and the most accepting of the living. The Breaking of

Oaths has hardly affected them at all. They still find places for themselves in the society of Hell, like rats in the pantry.

Notable Citizens of Dis the Great

The most notable citizens, of course, are the City Council of Dis, whoever they are.

Desahj

Desahj (Free City Deceiver 18) is the spymaster of the secret police and the right hand of the council. Every thief and spy in the city knows and fears Desahj. The demon was formerly Luac's chief agent and spy – indeed, some rumours in the city insist that Luac was just Desahj's puppet. He has since sworn allegiance to the cause of the Free Cities. The current reign of terror, with its paranoia and its daily executions, was created and driven by Desahj.

He controls the biomechanical shock troops that are the iron fist of the police, but Desahj prefers to work through more Machiavellian schemes. The



demon has a claw in every pie in Dis, manipulating events in the city for its own nefarious ends. Some claim that Desahj is a lord or even Head of House Hand, or that he controls most of the crime in the city. He is known to absolutely despise the gangs of the Undercity and considers them vermin who must be wiped out.

Stethorious

The mortal name and life of the damned who calls himself Stethorious is lost. Perhaps the Haimon could bring it back with their alchemy of Lethe-water, but the Deathly House is far from Dis. Stethorious' past must remain a mystery; his unlife effectively began when his chains were broken and he was set free.

Long centuries of being tortured had destroyed both his ectoplasmic body and his mind. He wandered the streets of Dis for weeks before being caught and herded into a damned levy being sent out to the walls. Something about being out on the battlefield re-awoke his willpower and his sense of self. When the slaver herder of the levy was killed by a bile rifle barrage, Stethorious took charge. He pushed his way out of the moaning ranks of the levy and took over, leading them to victory. The damned shot up the ranks of Dis as he proved himself an excellent and inspiring general.

Today, Stethorious is the Citizen-General of the Free Army of Dis – a loose gang of hungry demons and press ganged souls, armed with the best weapons the Infernum has to offer. Under his command, Dis has survived and even prospered. The Sturrach have not come any closer to Dis' walls in the last ten years, which must be counted a victory against the Bloody Army. To the citizens, Stethorious is a legend and a hero. He is easily the most popular and well-loved of the damned in the city; indeed, most of the dead consider him their leader, not the City Council.

Stethorious (Free City Damned 14) has shown no political ambitions. He does not sleep or rest, or consider anything except the war. He found himself again on the battlefield and will not leave the field until he has won.

Two-A-Fang

Demons are naturally immortal, so it is possible that Two-A-Fang (Free City Imp 8) really is older than Dis. Certainly, for as long as anyone in the

Desahj (18th level Free City Deceiver)**Medium Demon****Hit Dice:** 18d8+18 (99 hp)**Initiative:** +0**Speed:** 30 ft.**Armour Class:** 12 (+2 natural), touch 10, flat-footed 12**Base Attack/Grapple:** +18/+19**Attack:** Claw +19 melee (1d4+1)**Full Attack:** Claw +19 melee (1d4+1)**Space/Reach:** 5 ft./5 ft.**Saves:** Fort +9, Ref +8, Will +16**Abilities:** Str 12, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 18, Wis 16, Cha 16**Skills:** Bluff +19, Concentration +15, Diplomacy +23, Disguise +17, Gather Information +20, Hide +14, Intimidate +17, Knowledge (law) +18, Knowledge (local) +18, Listen +17, Move Silently +14, Search +25, Sense Motive +21, Spot +24, Torture +17.**Feats:** Combat Expertise, Great Fortitude, Improved Disarm, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Point-Blank Shot, Skill Focus (Gather Information).**Mutations:**

- ⊗ **Deceiver:** Fell Insight (+4 Diplomacy & Sense Motive), Possession (5 iliaster), Mesmeric Glance (3 iliaster/Will save to avoid daze), Hellfire (3 iliaster/10 foot cone), Claim (transform possession into Covenants)
- ⊗ **Weeping:** Crocodile Tears (3 iliaster/-4 to resist Grovelling & Seduction), Burning Eyes (1 iliaster per round/-2 to all attacks, Reflex saves and skills to one target within 60)
- ⊗ **Darkness:** Demon Sight (1 iliaster/darkvision)
- ⊗ **Flies:** Buzzing Voice (+2 Diplomacy, Bluff/-2 Seduction, Perform), Cloak of Vermin (DR2/fire, Fort save to avoid being sickened), Fly Spy (1 iliaster/control a fly and see through its eyes), Infinite Eyes (+5 Spot and Search), Body of Flies (3 iliaster/fly swarm)
- ⊗ **Hungry Mind:** Devouring Thoughts (1 iliaster/Will save or read surface thoughts for 1d6 rounds), Telepathy (1 iliaster/communication within line of sight), Enhanced Telepathy (3 iliaster/infinite range)
- ⊗ **Wandering Eyes:** Extra Eye (on back of head, +2 Spot & Search)
- ⊗ **Possessor:** Preparation of the Mind (+4 to control checks)

Iliaster Reserve: 26**Challenge Rating:** 18**Equipment:** When expecting trouble, Desahj has access to a suit of soulbound soulshaped armour (+14 AC), a soulbound shortsword (+3 to hit, flaming) and a soulbound revolver (+4 to hit, +3 to damage).

city can remember, there has been an imp called Two-A-Fang flapping around Usury and offering the dodgiest deals imaginable to passers-by. Two-A-Fang knows everyone in Dis and can put a newcomer in touch with an assassin or a malcubus or an iliaster seller or an IRFC thief. While other demons offer deals to claim your soul or your sworn services for a hundred years, Two-A-Fang just wants your cash.

The imp has innumerable enemies, but has better luck than a whole Early tribe full of fate-weavers. Whenever the imp angers or double-crosses some

more powerful demon, the other always seems to suffer some accident or setback that takes killing Two-A-Fang off the agenda – or so the stories say, and Two-A-Fang is an expert gossip who could easily have planted urban legends of its incredible fortune.

At the last check, Two-A-Fang was an informant for the secret police, Deathshead, Houses Hand, Riethii and Zethu, and the Church of the Morningstar. The imp's hellhole in the Tower of Birds is doubtless packed full of interesting treasures and secrets, but it is guarded by a particular nasty and powerful

tentacled horror spawn (see page 233 in *Book of the Tormentor*). How Two-A-Fang got a three-ton spawn up the four hundred feet to the hellhole is another mystery in the imp's chequered past.

Rossi

The damned soul who now calls herself Rossi is just one of the millions of souls freed by the Breaking of Oaths. She haunts the crowded streets of Dis. The damned do not need to sleep, but fatigue wears them down until they must stare sleeplessly through the night. She curls up on the hard stone floor of Terminus Dis or in some sheltered doorway and dreams of even a moment of true sleep. The damned do not need to eat, but they still hunger. When the pain grows too great, Rossi risks stealing a few scraps from a spawn-butcher in Usury or sells herself to a back street torturer in Malice for a few drops of iliaster.

There are millions like her, drifting through the soot-stained roofs and waste-choked alleyways and waiting – dreading – the daily posting of the lotteries. Nine times in as many weeks, she has been forced to report to the Grand Torture Palace for a day of agony that leaves her broken and sore for weeks afterwards. She could refuse and hide in the crowds of anonymous damned, but her number is branded into her left arm and the digits regenerate no matter how much she claws at her phantasmal flesh – and if you refuse and they catch you, they never let you out of the Torture Palace again.

What distinguishes Rossi from the millions of her wretched peers is a memory. She was alive, and in Hell, in a dark room lit only by hellfire. There were demons around her, powerful ones, and they screamed questions at her. And they were *terrified* of her and what she had done.

Sometimes, in the sleepless nights, Rossi looks at her scarred hands and wonders who she was before the pain.

Demon Hunter

The Demon Hunter (20 HD Biomechanical) was a prototype weapon under development in the laboratories of Dis when the revolution struck. It was created as an assassin, a living weapon to equal the best assassins the Sturrach or Astyanath could offer. Unlike the simpler biomechanicals, the Demon Hunter was given a brain – a mortal brain, transplanted into the vat-grown body and

augmented with clockwork engines.

When the City Council seized control of the biomechanicals, the Demon Hunter was activated by accident. Since then, it has lurked in the Undercity. Sometimes, its cogs and decaying brain interlock, and it identifies a passing demon as a target. They never live longer than a few days once the Demon Hunter targets them. The biomechanical is the perfect killing machine.

It was built to destroy enemies of House Zethu and the City Council are enemies of House Zethu. Finding them will take all the Demon Hunter's intellect and skill, but it has never encountered a foe it cannot defeat.

Adventure Ideas

Dis has a million adventures and dangers.

- ⊗ For characters who are members of or temporarily allied to the Free City Heresy, Dis is the one place that must not fall to the Houses. The Sturrach armies and the other besiegers must be stopped, the city's internal enemies must be rooted out.
- ⊗ Similarly, House characters might be sent in to sabotage the city's defences.
- ⊗ Characters intent on looting the wealth of the Zethu should realise that most of the treasures ended up in Dis. Smuggling weapons and sorcery out of the city under the noses of both House Hand and Desahj is a worthy challenge.
- ⊗ The lottery is an excellent way to hand adventures to characters – the provosts of the lottery will look at the characters and assign them duties that fit their skills. Adventuring demons and damned would be given suitably challenging missions.
- ⊗ Characters might be hired by a Zethu lord to sneak into Dis and retrieve some treasure or soul left behind when the lord fled the city.

The Duchy of Burning Lead – Seventh Circle Location

'There's no easy way to say this' said the demon captain. 'One of you has had your brain scooped out and replaced by a clockwork machine.'

One of the hulks shifted in obvious confusion. 'How know, master?'

The captain held up a tangled, bloody mass of brains and ganglia. A spinal cord dragged along the floor. The hulk peered at the gory mess uncomprehendingly, but the other dozen demons realised the significance of the discovery.

R'gath the stalker was the first to speak. 'If the machines have replaced one of us...they're planning something. Either a spying mission, or an attack.'

'We should return to Bloaster. Have the surgeons find out which of us is... compromised' suggested another.

'We can't leave this post unoccupied' snapped the captain. 'The machines would sweep through such a breach in our defences.'

'So half of us go back?'

'So the machine can kill those who remain in their sleep.'

The air in the tower began to crackle, as iliaster surged into demonic mutations. R'gath's claws began to drip with venom. Hellfire danced around the captain's horns.

'Send a messenger to Bloaster, get them to send someone who can identify the changeling' suggested one, in a half-hearted tone that acknowledged that the battle was already lost.

'Who goes? What if it's the changeling?'

'You seem eager to admit defeat, traitor!'

'Half-breed!'

'Heretic!'

It hardly mattered who attacked first or who first let their pent-up venom loose. The dozen demons had been isolated in the tower for months; they all hated each other passionately.

The brawl was short, bloody and vicious.

The survivor – R'gath, as it happens – had just enough time to glory in its victory before the hulk

smashed it into the ground. The hulk now moved with surety and perfect precision, its feigned confusion now abandoned.

It found the captain's breached form and carefully sealed the wounds, then began to saw away at the skull. The will of Cacaphractus was moving, expressed in the subtle movement of the hulk's claws and the advance of vast armies alike.

And the whole of that vast machine mind was focussed on the Duchy of Burning Lead.

The Duchy of Burning Lead lies clockwise of the Grand Hellish Highway, on the edges of the Blasted Desert. It is a holding of House Carthenay, on the fringes of their Seventh Circle estates. While the Blasted Desert is generally considered to be a less than desirable region of the Seventh, the wealth and influence of the duchy more than compensates for any problems with its location.

This far Down the Pit, open war between the Houses is almost unknown. Here, the political game is played to its fullest and the Carthenay are old hands at that game. They may lack the charms of the Riethii or the cunning cruelty of the Astyanath, but the Carthenay can buy and sell the world. To counter the Carthenay financial advantage, the other two Houses of Lower Hell must sow discord and sabotage the Hoarder's domains. The Duchy of Burning Lead is their latest target.

The pools of boiling lead that give the duchy its name are a natural phenomenon. The whole domain rests on a massive lump of lead dozens of miles across. On the widdershins side of the domain, this gives rise to ugly mountains of metal that jut from the ground and stare balefully down at travellers along the Grand Hellish Highway. Head clockwise and the domain subsides into a rolling green plain of soft earth. Sometimes, when underground lava flows melt the underlying lead, massive sinkholes suddenly appear and drag whole districts down. This middle region ends at the city of Bloaster on the cliffs of Jagad.

The clockwards section begins at these great cliffs, which plunge down to a sea of boiling lead. The heat from subterranean lava flows and the Blasted Desert conspires to melt the lead. There are islands and marshes of harder stone and metal floating or rising and it is possible for a brave and clever

traveller to walk or sail from the cliffs all the way to the lead-cruled shores of the Blasted Desert.

History of the Duchy

The duchy was originally founded by House Astyanath. It lies relatively close to the machine city of Cacaphractus, which back then was under the control of the Cruel House. The Duchy of Burning Lead supplied iliaster and slaves to the city and received a wealth of trade in exchange. The lords of Burning Lead became more and more tied to the bankers of House Carthenay. With a seemingly inexhaustible source of wealth just over the Styx, they were able to borrow more and more iliaster from the Vaults of Mammon. When Cacaphractus became self-aware and the demons were forced to flee the city, the Duke of Burning Lead failed to repay his debts.

That Duke may still be alive in the Debtor's Prison on the Eighth, but it is infinitely more likely that he has long since been thrown into a Carthenay spawning pit. The Hoarder's House claimed the domain as payment for the extensive debts and the Astyanath were unable to mount an objection. It was a bloodless takeover – at first. The Carthenay methodically slaughtered any demons with a misplaced loyalty to the old Duke.

The Rise and Fall of Bloaster

As the Carthenay claimed more and more of the Seventh, their cities grew larger and more powerful. Wealth poured down the Pit to the gardens and was caught in places like Bloaster. The Carthenay cemented their place on the Circle by becoming indispensable to the other Houses. Goods from Dis and the slave workshops of the Sixth were brought across the Styx and sold in the markets of Bloaster. Souls learned to dread the name of the city almost as much as they feared that of Minos.

In 300 AF, amid the specially-intense Founding celebrations (the doctrine of the Luciferine Heresy was now in place, so the House lords launched a lavish festival to remind their servants that the lords had always ruled Hell and were the kin of angels), Carthenay artificers detected alarming rumblings beneath Bloaster. They sent scouts into the tunnels below, who discovered that a huge bubble of magma was rising through the stone of Hell and would soon impact on the leaden strata

that the domain rests on. The artificers warned the Duke of Burning Lead that something would have to be done, and that it would undoubtedly be astronomically costly.

The duke laughed and ignored the advice of its artificers.

In 305 AF, there was a massive volcanic eruption and earthquake a few miles clockwise of Bloaster. The lead cap exploded and melted for miles around, creating the cliffs of Jagad and plunging half the city into the pools of boiling lead. Local legend insists that the artificer was heard screaming 'I told you so!' to the Duke as the pair burned to death.

Bloaster was too valuable to House Carthenay to be left in ruins, so the city was rebuilt. The edge of the sea of boiling lead had moved from ten miles away to the doorstep of the city and whole sections of the city would sometimes break off into the hot liquid, like chunks of a glacier tumbling into the ocean. The resourceful demons chained these sections to the cliffs above, keeping the city together.

The Rule of Jale

A new Duke of Burning Lead was also needed. With the domain in disarray, few of the existing Earls of the House were willing to risk claiming it, so the duchy fell to the ambitious Viscount Jale, a succubus. Her reign proved to be a wise one. Not only did Jale have the ruthless necessary to succeed in House Carthenay, she also had the social instincts to deal with the Riethii on their own terms.

Indeed, she so impressed the Riethii that they twice offered her the title of Grand Duchess if only she would betray the Carthenay. She was too heavily bound by Covenants to Carthenay himself to accept this offer, but he did permit her to marry a Grand Duke of the Jelac. Demonic marriages are literally alliances of convenience, designed to temporarily strengthen the link between two Houses. This marriage, however, proved to be Jale's downfall. She supported her husband following Jelac's death at the hands of the Glabretchi, and committed her troops to his defence in the chaos that followed with House Jelac. While her armies were still away, the Unveiling of House Zethu and the theft of Dis plunged the Carthenay into an even bigger crisis. The domain of Burning Lead was conquered

by the armies of Duke Duroder, formerly master of a domain on the Sixth.

House Riethii was amused by this turn of events. If only Jale had accepted their offer, they could have taught her to control her lust and she would never have thrown troops out in support of her mate. In truth, Jale's heart was as cold as that of any other Carthenay and she had gambled that her husband could gain control of House Jelac. When Isani Jelacs' daughter won the contest, Jale's hopes were dashed. Both she and her husband ended up being thrown into the spawning pits of their respective Houses.

The Rule of Duroder

Duroder was a great warrior of the Carthenay; it had served with Sturrach when the Bloody Lord rode with the Carthenay armies as a mercenary. It was not, however, a diplomat and utterly failed to place Jale in the courts of the Astyanath, Riethii and Jelac. Much of the Carthenay's present reputation as the most boring demons imaginable stems from the early stumbles and faux pas committed by Duroder.

Fortunately, a military crisis struck the Seventh before Duroder could suffer the same fate as Jale. The Brokenlanders invaded for the first time in 340 AF. Three angels of great power led the invasion force and they were served by legions of Brokenlander warriors. The portal opened in the midst of the Blasted Desert, and while most of the army headed clockwise towards the Riethii territories, a third of the Brokenlanders headed widdershins – straight towards Burning Lead.

The defence of the domain was a long and bitter one. The heat from the boiling pools seemed to confuse the Brokenlander foot soldiers slightly, slowing them down and making them vulnerable to ambush. In a straight fight, however, the demons were no match for the Brokenlanders. Duroder ordered his troops to retreat to their fortified positions in the mountains, leaving two-thirds of Burning Lead in Brokenlander hands.

The Brokenlanders used this respite to carve massive magical symbols into the lead using beams of searing light. These symbols opened new portals to the Broken Cosmos, allowing them to bring in more and more reinforcements. Among these

reinforcements were sciages and feld swarms; the latter were especially numerous and damaging. The fortresses that the Carthenay troops were hiding in were not airtight, so the feld swarms just drifted in on the breeze, driving the fortress' defenders into Dissolution.

The presence of allied assassins who could walk through walls did not help Duroder's position. The domain seemed lost to the alien invaders. On the far side of the Circle, however, the Astyanath/Riethii/Zethu alliance was proving much more effective. Riethii killed the angel who led the Brokenlander army, and the alliance managed to overwhelm the Brokenlanders through sheer weight of numbers. The troops occupying Burning Lead were called back across the Blasted Desert.

Duroder led a brave charge across the lead fields to catch the retreating Brokenlanders in the rear. Their angel commander flew down and neatly chopped the demon in two with insolent ease. There was not enough left of Duroder to throw into the spawning pits.

Division and Sturrach's War

For the next three centuries, the Duchy of Burning Lead would be divided into three districts, as Duroder's strongest Earls and Viscounts tore the domain apart. Duroder had died without an heir and none of the potential candidates for the dukedom had a completely compelling claim. With the growing distraction of the Riethii war and the ensuing Pit-wide conflict, the rulers of House Carthenay were happy to just increase the tithes for the duchy and leave the local nobles to fight it out.

The clockwards region became the Slothblood Viscounty, under the rule of a beast called Sern. The viscounty tried to survive on trade and taxes from the Grand Hellish Highway, but suffered from bandit attacks and a constant feld infestation. In desperation, Sern attempted to infiltrate the defensive line around Cacaphractus to turn the weapons that keep the machine city in check on its enemies in the Sixth. It was caught and executed by the Zethu and the viscounty collapsed.

The middle region, including the city of Bloaster, became the Earldom of Bloaster. The Earl, a slaver called Kolobri, kept its three heads down for the entirety of Sturrach's War and concentrated on

building torture palaces and other iliaster mills throughout its domain. Souls were dipped into the pools of boiling lead by demon washer-women and wrung out for iliaster.

The third section of the domain became the Earldom of Burning Lead. The Earl, the fiend Lisash, learned to use the liquid nature of her domain to the utmost. Little steel currachs and boats slipped between the melting lead islands. Her demons became expert shipwrights and she eventually launched an armada out onto the Styx through gates in the Stygian Wall. Lisash's ships raided the Sturrach camps on the far bank of the Styx for most of the war, before she got into a brutal and ultimately fruitless war with House Charon.

Divided and diminished, the two earldoms managed to survive the remainder of the war and Lisash even managed to conquer some territory on the Sixth as House Sturrach's holdings collapsed. She held it for a little more than four years before Haimon assassins killed her for her attacks on House Charon.

The Rule of Kolobri

The duchy was reunited after Lisash's death – Kolobri just sent its armies down the cliffs of Jagad and conquered the islands of the Boiling Pools, one by one, while blocking any attempts to appoint a new Earl in court. Reclaiming the other third of the domain, the Slothblood Viscounty took considerably longer, and to this day that region is plagued by both bandits and Brokenlanders.

Kolobri's wise investments in torture palaces and iliaster mills during the war paid off; the chaos and destruction across the Pit in the final bloody days of the war destroyed much of the Upwards industry. Millions of souls were either accidentally set free or burnt to wastrels, but the mills of Burning Lead were able to provide for much of the hunger of the Seventh Circle.

The years after the war were relatively free of conflict, save for the occasional border skirmish or benandanti raid. However, with the threat of military action lifted, Houses Astyanath and Riethii began a political campaign against Kolobri. Their spies crept into the duchy and soon knew more of its inner workings than the Carthenay did. They also began to sabotage Kolobri in the courts,

undermining its standing and ruining its influence.

House Carthenay responded by promoting Kolobri, first to Grand Duke of Burning Lead, then by moving it to the Grand Duchy of the Vaults of Mammon on the Sixth, beyond easy reach of the courtiers of the Seventh. Instead, rulership of the duchy was given to one of the few nobles of House Carthenay who could conceivably beat the Houses of the Rose Accord at their own game – a mortal.

The Rule of Madame Scowl

The faustian Scowl's association with House Carthenay began long before she came to the Duchy of Burning Lead. In the mortal realm, she had been the head of the one of the Carthenay mortal cults, a corrupt conspiracy of demonologists and sorcerers that stretched across the world and brought many thousands of souls into the coffers of the Hoarders. A schism within her cult resulted in Scowl being assassinated by 12 of her servants, but she was able to open a portal to the Pit and be rescued by her demonic allies before she died.

Her resourcefulness, sorcery and political acumen made her very valuable to House Carthenay; that she was unable to return to the mortal world without dying sealed the deal for them. She underwent the sorcerous ritual of *change species* to turn herself into a demon, before taking over firstly a minor barony on the Fifth and then the Duchy of Burning Lead.

To the jaded Riethii and Astyanath, Scowl was a fascinating novelty. Most faustians deliberately try to keep themselves aloof from the temptations and corruptions of the Seventh Circle, fearing their all-important willpower might be overcome by seduction and taint. Scowl, in contrast, could hardly become more corrupt so she was able to fully enter into the raucous celebrations of the Circle. Under her leadership, the domain thrived. She instituted the same purges that she had dreamed of enforcing in her mortal cult, eliminating the spies that had troubled Kolobri, and used her sorcery to drive the feld infestation in Slothblood underground for over a century.

It was her desire for revenge that led to Scowl's downfall. Despite her power in Hell, she still hungered to punish those who had betrayed her in life. When the souls of the traitors fell through the

Lethe Clouds into the Pit, Scowl had her agents scour the marketplaces and prisons for them. Word of her search was carried by gossip and rumour and spy network to every slaver. Soon, Scowl found herself having to purchase the souls she sought at vastly inflated prices. The Riethii mocked her, stealing three of the damned traitors and giving them the most luxurious pleasure-palaces to dwell in as a reward for their crimes. Scowl virtually bankrupted her domain in secret to pay for her revenge.

Grand Duke Kolobri stepped in; it still had many loyal agents within the Boiling Pools domain. It threatened Scowl with exposure and utter destruction unless the former mortal became Kolobri's servant. It forced her to offer an astonishingly potent Covenant in exchange for Kolobri's silence and financial aid. Still, she now had nine of the twelve souls she sought.

The Heresy, House Charon & the Cacaphractoi

In 705 AF, House Charon agents planted explosives along the Stygian wall leading to the Pools of Boiling Lead. The resulting devastation opened the way into the Pools from the river Styx. The Charonite fleet was then able to sail into the docks of Lashani and attack. They conquered the docks swiftly and stole the sinew-hulled vessels resting there. With these heat-resistant vessels, they could now sail onto the molten pools themselves and threaten the economic heart of the domain at Bloaster.

The Heresy and the crisis in Dis went almost unnoticed as Scowl's forces fought for every island floating in the lead. When it transpired that one of the Charonite commanders was the soul of the tenth betrayer (in truth, this was just a false rumour spread to discomfort Scowl), the war redoubled in intensity. She eventually won by convincing the Riethii that the Charonites were actually allied with House Lictat, then suspected of being behind the Free City Heresy. The Riethii sent their fleet to crush House Charon.

To complete the deception, Scowl captured a cell of Free City Heretics in Coalmere on the Sixth and planted them among the wreckage of a Charonite vessel. The Riethii accepted this planted evidence and chased House Charon's fleets back to the

tunnels beyond.

Meanwhile, the Heresy was about to have a much more significant effect on the fortunes of the domain - the guard on the machine city of Cacaphractus had been maintained by House Zethu, who had now fled the Sixth. The machine city was unwatched, the guns keeping it in check were silent. Constructs began to creep across or under the Styx into the Duchy of Burning Lead. First, these were nothing more than tiny clockwork drones, then dangerous enemies like armatures and stalwards appeared in the troubled region of Slothblood. Like a nest of hornets stirred up by the invasion, the long-dormant feld swarms also reappeared.

Both these enemies cannot be defeated by political stratagem like the Charonites. Scowl must obtain or hire a bigger army to reclaim the most troublesome section of her domain.

The Duchy of Burning Lead

The duchy had been formally divided into three sections ever since the fall of Duroder, but it was always a land of contrasts.

Slothblood

The mountains of Slothblood were haunted by dangers even before the revolt against the angels. The jutting leaden hills give rise to twisted mutant spawn who hunger for flesh. There are also weird metal worms living in the valleys whose origin and nature has never been fully investigated. The lower sections of the hills are densely forested, although the heavy metals leached up from the soil turn the trees alarming and unhealthy colours.

The Grand Hellish Highway marks the far border of the domain. Most of the demons of Slothblood live along the fringes of the highway, running wayhouses or merchants or iliaster troughs or engaging in banditry. The chief town is called, unimaginatively, Halfway (although it is sometimes nicknamed Good Intentions by mortal wits). Even the demons of Slothblood are troublesome; there is little contact between them and their rulers in Bloaster, so they push for independence and the re-establishment of the Slothblood Viscounty. There is always some ambitious demonling fomenting revolution in the shadow of the hills.

The hills are still infested with dangers. The spawn



were wiped out in the days of Jale, but the new threats are the Cacaphractoi and the feld. The feld just hide in the forests and sap iliaster from the hungry demons of Slothblood, but the Cacaphractoi are far more organised and dangerous. They appear intent on holding their bridgehead here on the Seventh, so they are digging in and building machine-nests in the mountains. Stalwart raiding parties attack the Slothblood towns and carry demons off for conversion into armatures.

Bloaster

The central district, the former Earldom of Bloaster, is the largest and richest section of the domain. Near the mountains, it is dominated by lead mines worked by slaves. The lead is carried to Carthenay factories on the Sixth by black barges on the Styx. These overloaded vessels sit very low in the cold waters of the Styx, making them very vulnerable to bad weather.

The rolling plains of the domain are thickly inhabited by Carthenay hellkin who work the many torture palaces and prisons. The region has few soul fields, so the souls must be brought from further up

the Pit, along the new iron road. Madame Scowl is assembling a mercenary army to deal with the infestations in Slothblood and that army is slowly marshalling here on the plains.

Fortress Scowl: Fortress Scowl sits in the centre of the plains, a day's ride from the city of Bloaster. The fortress is surrounded by ornamental gardens, as well as artificial pools of boiling lead. The feature that gives the domain its name is not within sight of the fortress, but noble visitors to the domain demanded to see the pools, so Jale had these pits dug and filled with molten metal. They stagnated and cooled during the time of the Earls, but have since been repaired and refilled. Hundreds of slaves are employed to stir the lead and prevent it from congealing.

The building itself is only a fortress, not the lesser citadel customary for a domain of this size. It is designed as a sorcerous bastion and pleasure-palace, not as a defensive structure, so Scowl has added a large dungeon complex beneath to which she can retreat if threatened. A specially secure room in the depths contains the nine souls of traitors that she has collected.

Brokenlander Marks: The Brokenlander Marks are one of the curiosities of the domain. These are huge sigils, more than five miles across, that were incised into the ground using beams of shining light. They appear to be connected to the portals used by the invaders. Fiends and sorcerers sometimes fly above these marks and try to fathom their meaning. While no full-scale Brokenlander incursion has ever been launched through the duchy, the marks are constantly patrolled.

High Bloaster: The city of Bloaster is divided into two sections – High and Low Bloaster. High Bloaster contains the majority of the populace. It is an industrial city for the most part, crowded with torture palaces and factories. It is also a centre for trade, supplying components and finished goods to the industries of the Seventh Circle. It has a reputation for being a 'Carthenay town' and therefore intolerably dull, but the more hip Astyanath keep an eye on Bloaster, as amusements from Up the Pit sometimes arrive here early along the trade routes.

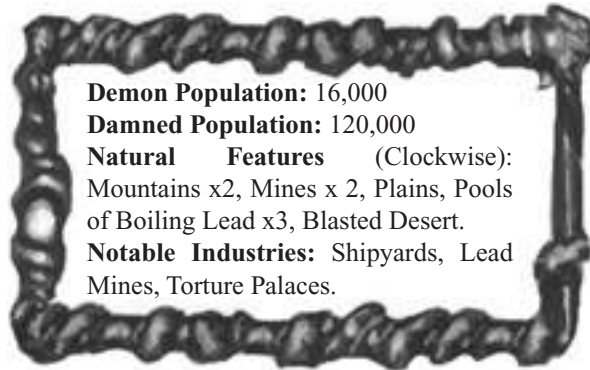
Bloaster, however, is a city in literal decline – it is built atop the lead cliffs of Jagad. When the

metal below the cliff melts, huge sections of land break off and fall into the boiling liquid below. The artificers of Bloaster have learned to control this process; they can carefully collapse a section of cliff to essentially lower a chunk of lead bearing a building down to the molten metal. When an important structure is in danger of falling into the burning seas, the artificers set charges so that it collapses down in the right way to become part of Lower Bloaster for a few centuries.

The city is in retreat; all new buildings are added on the far side from the cliffs. As the cliffs continue to fall in the sea, and more of High Bloaster becomes Low Bloaster, the city slowly migrates across the plains.

The Pools of Boiling Lead

The section of the domain from the cliffs of Jagad to the shores of the Blasted Desert is called the Pools of Boiling Lead. In truth, it is more like a sea of burning lead, although it is a shallow one crowded with lagoons and islands. The islands are mostly of stone or harder metal that rise out of



Demon Population: 16,000

Damned Population: 120,000

Natural Features (Clockwise): Mountains x2, Mines x 2, Plains, Pools of Boiling Lead x3, Blasted Desert.

Notable Industries: Shipyards, Lead Mines, Torture Palaces.

that are slowly melting into the sea around them. The demons of the Pools sail between these little floating outcroppings in boats of sinew-wood and iron.

Low Bloaster: The city of Low Bloaster consists of chunks of the cliffs of Jagad that have collapsed down into the boiling ocean while carrying important buildings from High Bloaster. These chunks of metal are chained together so they do not float off. Bridges are strung from one island to the next, and demons walk across gulfs filled with molten metal.

Low Bloaster is the shadow of High Bloaster; it is ruled by criminal elements and decaying factories. Most of the damned of the city are imprisoned in Low Bloaster, on special islands which can only be reached by flying demons. Any soul trying to escape would be burnt by the molten metal.

One of the most audacious crimes in the history of the Infernum happened at the height of the war with the Charonites. A fleet of sinew-wood ships sailed in, broke the chains connecting an island to the rest of the city and sailed off again with the island in tow. Atop the island was the dilapidated but still functional torture palace of Fumescar, as well as several thousand damned souls. The Charonite thieves brought the palace to some corner of the sea. No-one has ever found Fumescar again, and it is likely that the island has melted. However, the palace contained a sealed iliaster vault containing thousands of bottles of Agony, which was made out of hellforged steel and would certainly have survived immersion in mere boiling lead.

The Docks of Lashani: These docks are on a narrow reef that divides the boiling pools from the waters of the Styx. They are very similar to, but much smaller than the docks of Dis. Sinew-wood

is imported from the Riethii estates and carved into small ships. The docks are considered a threat by the Charonites, who have attacked and sabotaged them several times.

The Shores of the Blasted Desert: The shores of the Blasted Desert are as dangerous and eerie as the hills of Slothblood. The Blasted Desert has always been the strangest region of the Seventh Circle; between the alien pyramids that rise from the sands like the fins of cyclopean sharks and the incredibly forceful thunderstorms that boil up out of nowhere, the desert seems deliberately hostile towards the hellkin.

The shores may be far from the shifting sands of the inner desert, but they have their share of bizarre phenomena. Words appear in the cooling lead on the sand, spelling out prophecies in Enochian. Invisible creatures sometimes wade out of the lead pools and leave carved black stones that resemble the pyramids in miniature. Most alarming of all, the town of Gire vanished in 730 AF, leaving nothing behind but a circle of burnt glass.

Notable Characters

The Duchy of Burning Lead contains some 16,000 demons, each of which would call itself notable. There are, of course, a few who stand out and make themselves... targets.

Scowl

Madame Scowl (Carthenay Succubus 23) is the ruler of a duchy in Hell, with thousands of demons bowing to her every whim. She has wealth beyond her wildest dreams. She is immortal, her body transfigured from that of a dying old woman into a beautiful succubus while retaining all her knowledge and experience. The souls of nine of the twelve cultists who betrayed her are held in her prison; boiling lead is poured into every one of their veins and orifices each day, then once the lead has set, their ectoplasmic flesh is flayed from the leaden sculpture and the torture begins again. She sits high in the councils of House Carthenay, controlling a world-spanning cult in the mortal realm that brings her millions more souls and servants.

Not bad for a girl born in the slums of Byzantium in 1420.

Scowl has ambitions beyond a mere duchy. She may be the one of the highest-placed former mortals in the Pit, but she desires to rule a whole House. Should she ever make a play to control House Carthenay, she would have the support of the Riethii and their Astyanath allies. As the Upper and Middle Hells descend back into war, an alliance of the three Houses of Lower Hell to hold the Stygian Wall against invasion could prove very powerful.

First, of course, Madame Scowl has to deal with the invaders in Slothblood. Secondly, she has to somehow escape her horribly powerful and confining Covenant with old Kolobri.

Her other weakness – and obsession – is with the other three traitors. All of the twelve ended up in Hell on their deaths, but she has recovered only nine of their souls. The other three must be somewhere in the Pit, but they could be in any of the prisons in any of the Circles – or wastrels, or hiding in some cave, or in the Haimon Legions, or even roaming free and plotting against her. Scowl arrived in the Pit dying, and has risen to rule a duchy; any of the



traitors could have done the same...

Commander Corven

The commander of the mercenary troops brought in by Scowl to deal with the Cacaphractoi and feld, Corven is a showy and flamboyant deceiver (Mercenary Deceiver 10). Few deceivers dare to take to the battlefield, but Corven leads her troops, Corven's Cavaliers, from the front. She wears armour that she took from the body of a Harrower and rides a nightmare.

Corven is looking forward to the campaign. The destruction of the constructs in Slothblood will be seen by all the wealthiest employers in the Seventh – if she performs well, she will have her pick of contracts, possibly even the offer of a barony or better. As soon as another few troops have been assembled, she will be able to sweep through the wooded hills and drive the machines into the Styx.

What Corven does not know is that the brains of two of her company commanders have been replaced by clockwork machines when they were on scouting missions in the hills. The Cacaphractoi are a far more cunning foe than she believes them to be. The war for Slothblood will be very costly.

Stirgarth

While Scowl and Corven assemble their troops, the stalker Stirgarth (Carthenay Stalker 3) travels through the way-houses and villages on the edge of the Grand Hellish Highway. Slothblood has always been a hotbed of revolutionaries and rebels; the region has little in common with the rulers in Bloaster, and many demons look back to the days of Viscounty with longing. Stirgarth, however, is not just another petty demagogue trying to assemble a few troops; it plans to bring the Free City Heresy across the Styx.

Rotgrub

The torture-master Rotgrub (Carthenay Slaver 12) is the effective ruler of the city of Bloaster, both High and Low. Madame Scowl dwells in her fortress far from the cliffs, leaving the slaver in charge. It treats the city as its own personal playground. Rotgrub carries lengths of rope over its shoulders at all times; when a demon or soul offends it, it immediately ties a rope around the offender's foot and lowers it into the boiling lead

below for a while.

Adventure Ideas

- ⊗ Madame Scowl still has some Free City demons in her dungeon from when she used them to trick the Riethii into defeating the Charonites. She also has a massive debt to her master Kolobri. If Bloaster or one of the lesser cities of her domain were to become free... she could break her chains in secret.
- ⊗ Mercenary characters could be hired as part of Corven's campaign in Slothblood. There, they would have to deal with the plague of feld and the entrenched constructs. They might also be drawn into Stirgarth's plot to bring the heresy to Slothblood.
- ⊗ Both Houses Riethii and Astyanath support Scowl, but would not be above, say, dooming her to a ghastly fate by sabotaging the domain's iliaster production. Blowing up High Bloaster and sending the whole city plunging into the boiling lake below would do...

Riethii's Chalice – Eighth Circle Location

ANNOTATED TRANSCRIPT OF A CONVERSATION OVERHEARD IN THE INN OF THE HANGED MAN, ELECHI STREET, CITY OF OVERLOOK, SEVENTH CIRCLE OF THE INFERNUM, AS RECORDED IN THE RIETHII ARCHIVES. 14TH VINCERE, 737 AF.

'Theft of the century, I tell you. The Fingers 'll' be telling tales of us 'til the crows² come back.'

'You're sure? I mean, this is the bloody Sucks³ you're talking about.'

'Yeh, but they throw open their doors just as fast they throw open their legs. I met this nibsimp⁴ in a slash-house⁵ and he told me that once you've got an invite to a knees-up⁶, you just need to slip downstairs and you're in the vaults, right quick-like.'

'And we get the loot out how?'

'That's the trick of it. The nibsimp has a Covvie⁷ in there called Corduce who's a Jack Faust⁸. He'll

'port us out, clutching our bags.'

'Sounds too good to be true.'

'Feh. Probably some big backstab upstairs. You in or not?'

Footnotes:

¹Colloquial term for House Hand.

²Crows=angels. Literal trans.: when the fallen angels come back, i.e. never.

³Sucks=succubi. Colloquial term for House Riethii.

⁴Nibs=noble. A 'nibsimp' is a noble.

⁵Slash-house: Back street torturer; used for procuring iliaster for illegal purposes.

⁶Knees-up=party.

⁷Covvie=covenanted ally or servant.

⁸Jack Faust=Faustian. Loosely, any practitioner of sorcery.

Commentary:

Thieves captured in the downstairs linen closet. Their contact, if it was Corduce himself, never showed up to transport them out, although they failed to acquire anything of value. The thieves were thrown into the spawning pits later that week;



investigations into the imp contact are recorded in folder #532532.

The very air changes when a traveller passes through the border between the Seventh and the Eighth. It is not merely the increasing heat (although the air here is often hot enough to sear human flesh) or, paradoxically, the rising cold (a shift in the flow of Cocytus sends waves of soul-chilling frost through the Circle). It is not the rising taint (even if the foulness is a palpable force here, like slimy fingerprints of invisible hands marking you as *theirs forever*). It is not the impending shadow of the Mountains of Silence.

It is the sense of *legend*. The Malebolge are the unbeating heart of the Infernum.

Angels ruled here, once.

Angels died here.

Nine citadels stare out of the chasms of the Malebolge. They are the Nine Houses transformed into stone and metal, watching each other warily across the prize of Pandemonium. Each citadel reflects the House that rules from it.

What, then, does their Malebolge say about House Riethii? The fortress is the most beautiful of the nine, with glittering towers of glass and steel rising from a stone rose. It is the largest of the nine too, and the doors of the Citadel never close – there are always entertainments and diversions in full flight within the ballrooms and bedrooms. This is no mere house of pleasure either, with the maze of defensive emplacements around it and labyrinthine dungeons beneath.

Everyone in the citadel – save one – wears a mask except when alone or with one other. Everyone in the citadel – save one – is engaged in an ever more chaotic and lustful dance of consumption; more drugs, more sex, more pain, more pleasure, more power.

And everyone in the citadel – save one – goes away from the overflowing Chalice feeling unsatisfied and empty.

History

The citadel was built by the angels centuries ago.

The Siege of Citadel Jelac

Wars on the Eighth Circle are very different to sieges elsewhere. Each of the Houses guards the precise borders of its Malebolge and any trespass is met with lethal force. Similarly, going too close to the Cocytus or Pandemonium draws the wrath of the Pandemonium Guard. Armies must be careful not to stray off the Folly Road as they march to their target. This limited set of approaches to an enemy citadel makes war on the Eighth very difficult. The Riethii were able to attack and besiege House Jelac by making a lightning assault; the Sturrach by having a virtually unstoppable army that was able to break through any defences along the Folly Way.

Some Houses, notably the Zethu, have installed heavy artillery on their citadels. This is very much frowned upon, as any shooting war might damage the city of Pandemonium below the Eighth Circle. The first House to launch a shell or hellfire blast had better be sure of winning...

Each of the nine citadels was the palace for a branch of the order of Thrones. According to the Haimon libraries, the fortress claimed by House Riethii was originally home to that set of angels set over mortal affairs – Lucifer's plan for the counter-attack on Heaven must have included a plot to open a second front in the mortal realm. Most of the records in the fortress were destroyed by fleeing angels.

The citadel sat empty until 215 AF, when Riethii claimed it as her new home. Before that, she dwelt in the city of Port Despair (where Soline visited her in 209 AF, giving her certain secrets that propelled Riethii to the status of House lord in a few short years). Unlike the other three Houses active at that point – the Haimon, Oblurott and Jelac – Riethii was seen as essentially non-threatening. She was known as a courtesan and an angel's bed mate, not a conqueror, so many demons who would otherwise have refused to follow a powerful lord joined her House, believing that they could manipulate the succubus and use her as a puppet. Instead it was she that used them.

The citadel grew and grew; Riethii's trading network out of Port Despair and its holdings on the Seventh Circle brought the House great wealth. The grand opening gala was held in 233 AF – the formation of House Astyanath was announced during the celebrations – and was the largest celebration in the history of the Infernum, paving the way for a century of excess.

The Chalice Overflows

The middle of the third century was perhaps the climax of House Riethii's activities in the Pit. It began with the rescue/capture of the angel Purity from a battleground on the Third Circle. Riethii herself took the angel and the pair vanished for years, leaving the citadel in the care of a seneschal called Iole. Wild and lurid speculation consumed the citadel, claiming that the two had left Hell, or were conceiving half-angel, half-demon children, or that she was torturing the angel to death feather by feather.

In 361 AF, a faustian of House Malthus called Ishu was seduced by a malcubus and joined House Riethii. She was given apartments and laboratories within the citadel and, in Riethii's absence, Ishu became the belle of every demonic ball. The demons avidly studied the principles of sorcery Ishu revealed to them; intoxicated on Agony and sweet-smelling fumes, Ishu forgot one of the four principles of magic (Learn to Keep Silent) and spilled out the hard-won lore of Zethu.

Riethii returned in 365 AF. Armed with the twin weapons of sorcery and Purity, she attacked House Jelac. It was a devastating blow, combining magic and force of demonic arms. The Jelac estates were swiftly conquered, forcing the lords to retreat back to their citadel on the Eighth. In a dangerous escalation of the stakes of war, the Riethii besieged the Jelac citadel, signifying that the Houses were willing to wipe each other out.

The other Houses frantically searched for the secrets of sorcery so they could build defensive structures,

while the Riethii armies under Purity marched ever on.

The Interruption

The period from 449 AF to 455 AF is known to the Riethii as the Interruption. The war had turned on them; their mercenary troops were broken. Even their new allies, the Astyanath, were unable to stem the Bloody advance. The Sturrach forces marched down the Folly Way and besieged the Chalice.

The troops left besieging the Jelac citadel were trapped behind the Sturrach lines, but were supplied by the Astyanath and so were able to keep the last of Isani's followers trapped. The Sturrach armies set up on the Mountains of Silence overlooking the citadel and had their fiends bombard it from above – they lacked the numbers to directly attack the chalice due to the surrounding labyrinths.

Inside, the parties continued in a rather subdued fashion. They had sufficient supplies to wait out a long siege, and with Purity's strength and Ishu's sorcery, the senior demons of the House could make their way out by air or spell when necessary. The Interruption was politely ignored by most of the courtiers, but a pall did hang over the citadel.

At some point during this period, the parties turned into a wake. Everyone somehow knew that Riethii was gone, but how and where they could not say. The succubus queen had been seen increasingly little ever since she had taken Purity off the battlefield; as the years swept by, the angel had issued more and more commands in her name until he took the throne entirely.

The Chalice endured the Interruption until the Sturrach armies were withdrawn to deal with crises higher in the Pit. The invaders never breached the angel-built walls – just as the Riethii never breached the walls of the Jelac citadel – but the sanctity of the Malebolge had now been broken by two Houses.

Reconstruction in Glass and Stone

The period after Sturrach's War was a time for reconstruction – and retrenchment. All of the Houses realised that their Citadels were now valid targets for war. From the perspective of, say, Pandemonium, it was amusing to watch all eight

surviving Houses carefully but frantically building new defensive lines on the mountains between the citadels. Riethii had an advantage in this, as it shared one border with its ally House Astyanath, so it was able to devote all its energies to building a strong wall against its other neighbour, the hated and feared Glabretchi.

It was during this period that the Riethii dug down into the mountains, creating a massive network of dungeons and vaults below the Chalice. The Agony stores and wineries were refilled and the parties started up again. The custom of the masks began, inspired by Purity's demon-skin mask (accusations that his mask bore a strange resemblance to the batwings of Riethii are generally disbelieved).

The Citadel Today

Just as it was before Sturrach's War, the Citadel of Riethii is the heart of the social scene on the Eighth Circle. The parties in certain Seventh Circle estates may be more exclusive and delightful, but the grand balls at the Chalice are the events that every demon who is any demon *must* attend. The Riethii can doom a demon lord to obscurity or elevate it to fame with a word.

The Chalice is still perhaps the most vulnerable of the Nine Citadels – while no outsider has ever gone deep into the homes of the Zethu or Haimon, the inner chambers of most of the Citadel Riethii have been penetrated many times by guests and drunken revellers. However, the true strength of the fortress' defences is underground. In a second Interruption or true emergency, the upper citadel could be abandoned and the lords of the House would retreat to the sanctums below.

Features of the Citadel Riethii

Each of the Nine Great Citadels is the size of a mountain, honeycombed with chambers and secret ways. Immortal demons have dwelt within these ancient, alien structures for centuries and still have not fathomed all their secrets – nor will they ever, for each of the Citadels is constantly being expanded and renovated. Perhaps the tutelary intellect of the Zethu can stretch its memory-tendrils out over every stone and cog in that brass monstrosity, but no-one knows all the corridors of Riethii's Chalice.

The features listed below, then, are just the ones

that are commonly known. Anything – perhaps even the succubus queen herself – could be waiting just around the next corner. After all, the Riethii do love surprises.

The Grounds

Somehow, the Riethii have managed to make ornamental gardens grow around their Citadel. This would not be remarkable even on the Seventh Circle, but the harsh environment and leaping flames of the Eighth normally scours any life from the ground. These gardens are maintained using a great expenditure of iliaster, after the manner of the Oblurott farms.

The gardens include a defensive labyrinth – the Sturrach armies charging to the attack in 449 AF found themselves forced to walk along the winding paths and unable to come any closer to the citadel no matter how far they travelled – and several small shrines and out-fortresses that are connected using geomantic nodes to the main Citadel.

There are innumerable hidden entrances to the tunnels below in the gardens, as well as concealed guard posts and pleasure-bowers.

The Halls of Pleasure

The Halls of Pleasure are the lower section of the Citadel and are essentially public; while they are guarded, demons of every House wander in and out. The celebrations never stop here, continuing night and day and witching.

The huge agony vaults and sorroweries of the Chalice are located here in the Halls of Pleasure, as well as innumerable ballrooms and private chambers. Privacy is actually unknown here; not only are there plenty of opportunities for voyeurs, but every part of the palace contains surveillance screamers and other intelligence-gathering devices. The Riethii watch everything.

The fortress itself was reinforced following the Interruption (see above). Most of the old secret passages were sealed during this reconstruction, but twice as many new ones were added. It is possible to go from the Tunnels Below to the topmost spire of the Chalice without ever being seen.

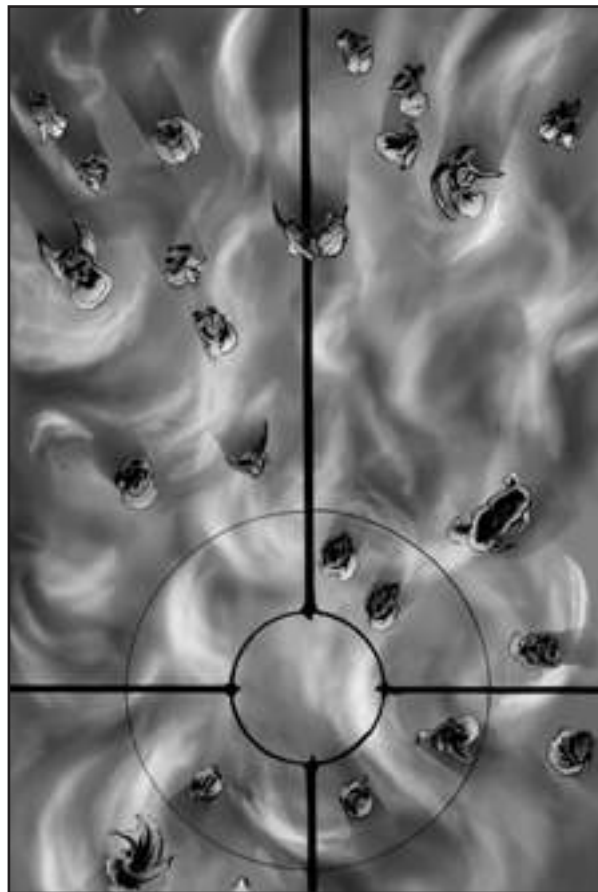
The Cup

The great ballroom and throne room of the Citadel is known colloquially as the Cup (or Riethii's Lap in lower circles). The room is made of the rarest translucent hellglass and is located directly above a massive volcanic vent that runs up through the core of the fortress. Those who dance in the Cup dance amid flames. Beams of scarlet light are refracted through the crystal floors and walls and diffract out as hellish coronas of fire. The roof of the arching chamber is lost amid smoke and darkness and malcubi wings.

A second labyrinth divides the Cup from the Residences beyond. While this labyrinth is officially the boundary between the public and private sections of the Citadel, its real purpose is just to ward off idle thieves.

The Residences

This warren of chambers and apartments takes up the bulk of the upper fortress. Here is where the nobles of House Riethii stay when attending balls and other function. Every Earl or Duke has a suite



The Chalice's Upgrades

All of these are Colossal in size:

- ⊗ Aerial Defences
- ⊗ Agony Vault
- ⊗ Ballroom
- ⊗ Barracks x 2
- ⊗ Battlements
- ⊗ Bedchambers
- ⊗ Dungeon x 2
- ⊗ Flyer Perch
- ⊗ Guard Posts x 2
- ⊗ Inner Sanctum
- ⊗ Laboratories
- ⊗ Labyrinth x3
- ⊗ Libraries
- ⊗ Ostentatious Décor
- ⊗ Reinforced Keep
- ⊗ Screamer Network
- ⊗ Soul Cage
- ⊗ Projection Tower
- ⊗ Secrets x2
- ⊗ Seneschal Rig
- ⊗ Sorcery Bastion x 2
- ⊗ Sorrowery
- ⊗ Theatre
- ⊗ Torture Chambers
- ⊗ Weapon Mounts x 2

Sorcery Defence: -60 (-50 Citadel, -10 Sorcery Bastions)
Security: +30

of rooms here – Viscounts and Barons must beg and bribe for the remaining chambers. Somewhere in this maze of luxury is the heart of the Riethii intelligence network.

The Lower Towers

The Lower Towers are primarily defensive in purpose; here, there are weapon mounts and sorcery bastions as well as battlements and plenty of aerial defences, a legacy of the Sturrach bombing runs during the Interruption. One notable feature is the Gate of the Clouds, a golden tower where flyers can land with full ceremony. As House Riethii has a great number of winged malcubi, the Gate of the Clouds is used as much as the main gates

far below.

The Lower Towers also contain various administrative offices of House Riethii, although most of the Seducers find such matters far too boring and hand them over to Carthenay accountants. One office, however, is the province of the Riethii alone – the House is allied with the Church of the Morningstar and collects church tithes from its nobles.

The Upper Towers

The Upper Towers are generally perceived as being the true secret sanctum of House Riethii. Again, this is largely to draw spies away from the dungeons below the fortress. The highest spire is the home of the angel Purity, who rules the House – but any spy who has attempted to spy on the angel's affairs has been blinded at the very least by a flash of holy light. The Upper Towers are one place in Hell where angels can be regularly seen. Purity is not only Head of House Riethii, he is also the master of the angelic Heirs of the Fallen (see *Book of the Damned*, page 70).

Purity has a soul cage and a projection tower, but these have never been used to the knowledge of any of the attendants of the Citadel – none of them even recall any souls being placed in the cage. Some speculate that Riethii is held there.

The Catacombs

The Catacombs beneath the Chalice are incredibly extensive, stretching far beyond the Malebolge itself. Directly below the fortress is a volcanic vent, which is used to provide power and is drawn on using *iliaster tap* rituals to power sorceries performed in the ritual chamber of Ishu. Some of the dungeons contain comparative mundane things, like a theatre, innumerable iliaster vaults and torture chambers and so on. More hidden dungeons have the Riethii Archive (a library of secrets gathered over the last seven centuries), laboratories (while the Oblurott breed new forms of spawn, the Riethii seek to perfect the demonic form) and more hidden supply vaults.

A third labyrinth, the greatest of the three, surrounds this hidden dungeon. Those who make their way through this lightless maze find themselves in the secret tunnels of the Riethii that run to all of the other Malebolge. Some tunnels even run down

below Pandemonium, but these were sealed at Purity's command before they reach the Cocytus border.

Customs & Cultures of the Citadel Riethii

The demonic capacity for self-obsession is infinite. As far as the Seventh Circle is concerned, the whole purpose of the rest of the Pit is to keep pouring iliaster down to keep it satisfied. As far as the demons of the Citadels are concerned, the rest of the Pit is wholly secondary to the affairs and courtly politics of the Citadels. Lucifer could return and would be ignored until he turned up in the Eighth – and even then, only if he was at the right party.

Celebrations

The celebrations never stop in the Chalice, and the iliaster never stops flowing. Dawn to dawn and witching to witching, there are always parties going on in the Halls of Pleasure. Many of the lesser malcubi are employed in entertaining the guests here; a lucky demon can win the favour of a powerful lord and so climb the political ladder on its back, so to speak.

Some celebrations are obviously far more important, like the Founding of House Riethii or the Renewal of the Flame. Thousands of demons gather in the Cup for these events, when even the humblest guest can expect the rarest of entertainments and more Sorrow than it can stomach.

Behind the scenes, of course, there are fierce backstage wars. The low-ranking Riethii see the celebrations in the same way an up-and-coming Sturrach hulk sees the battlefield – a place to prove itself and win influence and respect within the House. There are as many murders and betrayals on the back stairs of the Citadel as there are in any war.

Politics

Politics in House Riethii and the Chalice resembles what politics must have been like in the court of Lucifer. The angel Purity is the unstoppable force and the immovable object around which the courtiers must manoeuvre. If the angel stirs himself from silence and makes a decision, then no-one within House Riethii can gainsay him. However,

Purity rarely acts, so the various factions within the Citadel normally have free reign.

These factions come and go, as the Riethii are vulnerable to the cult of personality – a rising young Earl can find itself the rallying point for one faction or another, and be executed for some opinion it expressed as a whim. Some factions are practically eternal – the Hedonists, for example, are the largest group and just want the celebrations to continue forever. Lady Barbellion is as close as the hedonists have to a leader. The more politically active groups include the Expansionists under Duke Radamanthus, the Rose Accord Keepers who follow Corduce and the Isolationists (or Onanists) of Foldred.

Montfort has never committed to any of the factions, which often makes her the deciding factor in Riethii politics.

Spying

The Citadel is the heart of the Riethii spy network. The efforts of the spies are co-ordinated through lesser House Naji, almost all of whom dwell within the fortress. The spies report using the Noble Chain of Whispers (see page 138, *Book of the Tormentor*) or sorcery.

There is nothing that happens in Lower Hell that the Riethii do not know about. Many of their agents were spying on the Zethu and so were lost or turned during the Free City Heresy, but they still have an excellent network in Middle Hell. It is only in the Upper Hells that they are effectively blind.

The current head of the spy network is the mysterious Montfort de Naji.

Masks

The custom of wearing masks arose when Purity began sporting a demon-hide mask. Now, not wearing a mask is the ultimate faux pas. The best masks are ornate creations of Zethu biomechanics, or are made from soulstone.

Masks give bonuses or penalties to Influencing attempts within the Citadel, as follows:

MASK MODIFIERS

Mask Type	Cost	Modifier
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Cheap	1 horn	–20
Inexpensive	1 crown	–10
Moderately Expensive	10 crowns	–5
Average	100 crowns	+0
Ornate Mask	200 crowns	+2
Impressive Mask	300 crowns	+4
Soulstone Mask	400 crowns	+6
Biomechanical Mask	600 crowns	+10

Notable Characters

Some of the current stars in the Riethii firmament are...

Purity

The angel Purity (Fallen Angel 28) dwells in the topmost tower of the Chalice. He sometimes attends balls and other celebrations within the Cup, but never partakes. He speaks rarely. This combination of silence and mystery makes every appearance of the angel incredibly significant; other courtiers obsess and endlessly speculate about his intentions and plots.

Foldred

Foldred (Riethii Deceiver 15) is the seneschal of the Chalice. He offended Riethii in the early days of the House and was castrated and chained into a seneschal rig. Foldred the eunuch has survived almost five hundred years of court politics and is now one of the most experienced politicians within the House.

Corduce

This is the infamous incubus (Riethii Incubus 20) who seduced the long-dead Ishu away from House Malthus. Corduce has essentially survived on this one great accomplishment since then, having traded it into an earldom and a lifetime sinecure within the Chalice. He keeps dabbling in House politics, always skirting the edge of scandal and disaster.

Montfort

Montfort may be a mortal, or a deceiver, or a succubus, or even a flesh-cloaked soul. She appeared on the scene following the *summoning* of the previous spymaster by a Haimon sorcerer. Montfort seems to have little interest in the



entertainments of House Riethii – her truest pleasure is in the game of spies and politics, and she plays that very well indeed.

Adventure Ideas

- ⊗ One of the tunnels below House Riethii breaks through into a cave containing a previously unknown and highly dangerous form of spawn. The House must somehow get enough troops down into the tunnels to deal with the spawn without alarming the other Citadels.
- ⊗ A valuable mask is stolen and planted on one of the characters. Who is attempting to frame them and why? Do the characters return the mask or compound the situation by selling it?

The City of Pandemonium –

ninth circle location

The stones of the Last Bridge were slick with frost, but the heat from his burning hooves melted the ice; his steps were sure and unflinching.

He walked along the Street of Tears. Skulls were crushed into bone fragments and dust with every step. The street was thronged fifty deep on either side with demons of power and might and the skies were choked with imps and fiends. Still, every one of them knelt as he passed. There was no cheering, no celebration – just whispers and gasps of terror. Behind him, an army of slaves dragged the ten million corpses of his enemies along in chains.

At the wall of the inner city, the Hierophant of the Morningstar knelt before him. He looked into her still-young eyes and she silently pleaded for mercy. With the merest twitch of a horn, he annihilated the ancient demoness and left her crumbling to dust.

He strode into the Palace of the Morningstar. The Nine Lords of the Houses were waiting for him there. Without a conscious thought, his sword was in his hand, then it was cutting an arc of fire through each of them and the ichor was spraying then his claws were digging into flesh and bone...

The red haze faded and they were all dead. Idly, he licked their blood from his blade and marvelled at the collision of tastes.

He advanced into the heart of the palace. The throne room was empty, waiting to receive him. He walked towards the throne...

... it was always the same dream, in this alleyway. He awoke, coughing, as a grinding noise echoed from the walls around him. The city's sleep was equally troubled, it seemed. He watched as the alleyway twisted around him and the paths through Pandemonium changed again. When the noise had stopped he curled up once more and tried to sleep.

If this was still the same alleyway, then he would have the same dream, and the dream was all he had.

The great and terrible city of Pandemonium is the deepest circle of Hell and the great prize of the war. All the demon Houses know in their hearts that the one which takes Pandemonium will also

take Lucifer's Throne and rule in the Infernum for all eternity. Their Nine Citadels surround the city, watching and waiting for the stratagem or treachery that will open the city to them.

What most of the Houses cannot admit to themselves is that the city has already been conquered and they let it happen. The Church of the Morningstar claims the city as its own and is the supreme authority within the circle of the frozen Cocytus. As far as the Church is concerned, the Nine Houses can keep squabbling and killing each other until the sun goes dark.

That said, while the Church is the supreme authority within the city, it is not the only power in the city. Pandemonium's eerie alleyways contain multitudes of strange beings – and not even the Church knows every street in the city.

Pandemonium is a city of chaos; it is not a city in chaos. It is more civilised and law-abiding than most of the cities higher in the Pit, it even has its own city watch. No, the streets and buildings of Pandemonium *change*. There are a few landmarks in the city that are relatively static, but the lesser streets and alleyways wheel around the hub of the Morningstar like a whirlpool of stone.

Pandemonium was not built as a city. Its original and truest purpose is to maintain Hell. The Infernum could not exist without the support of the ancient sorceries placed on every stone. It is a spell written in streets and alleyways.

And everywhere the clocks are ticking.

History

Lucifer fell.

When talking about this, the most ancient of cities in the Pit, it is best to dispense entirely with the Luciferine Heresy and the lies demons tell themselves.

He and his fellow rebels lay in a perfect moment of eternal agony. There was no time in Hell, no transition from one second to the next. There was just that one moment of utter pain. Through a supreme act of willpower and defiance, Lucifer somehow dragged himself from his grave of burning fire and pierced the boundary between Hell and the

mortal realm. Time rushed in like water through a breached dam.

This infusion of time was just a temporary measure (so to speak). It allowed Lucifer and his angels to recover their strength and move around the Pit, but as it ran out, Hell slipped towards static entropy once more, becoming changeless again. Azazel built the Brass Pillars, which replicated the original breach in a more controlled fashion. This stolen time was channelled down the Pit to Lucifer's resting place, where the archangel built a spell to contain and control it. The angels placed clocks throughout their new domain, in the fortresses that would become the homes of the Dominions in years to come (now that there would be years to come). However, as Azazel had to hide its work from Heaven, the flow of time was inconstant and fragmented. This rippled back into Lucifer's spell, creating the bizarre nature of Pandemonium's streets.

The Dawn of the Demons

This flaw did have one great advantage – the warped space-time of the streets partially occluded Pandemonium from the sight of Heaven. Until the creation of the Lethe Clouds, this was a vitally important protection for the fallen angels, so they crowded into the spell's precincts and built a city there. They built palaces and castles to defend themselves against the assault they believed was inevitable.

When the angels of the Host of Heaven did not immediately descend into Hell, the fallen turned their attention towards building an army to continue the war... and so the first demons were sired on the bodies of spawn. The first demons were clumsy and almost as mindless as their spawn parents; they were therefore banned from the city to ensure they did not damage the artefacts of the angels. The hellkin were swiftly bred into more intelligent and pleasing forms; there were malcubi harems within 30 years of the first hellkin being created.

The iliaster crisis began to grow. The demons gathered outside the city to receive their ration of iliaster from the angels each day. The hellkin were unaware of the growing paranoia and fear within the city, as the angels under Arikiba began to sacrifice criminal and renegade fallen to provide iliaster. Initially, this was done to preserve certain

choice shards of Heaven, but as the supply of shards ran out, the sacrifice of angels became even more important.

Lucifer left the city, leaving it in the charge of Azazel. It was during this time that Azazel began the construction of the Palace of the Morningstar, wishing to bring light to Hell. Some whispered that it was Azazel, not Lucifer, who was the most jealous of the power of the divine and wished to reproduce the acts of creation in Hell, beginning with *fiat lux* ('let there be light'). By the time Lucifer returned with the first souls, the construction of the palace was well underway.

The Great Acts

The first century of the Infernum brought many great wonders into being. The Lethe Clouds were made by Lucifer in 103 AF.; a mere seven years later, a new sun rose into the skies of Hell as the Morningstar dawned for the first time. The creation of the Morningstar and the bringing of light into the darkness of Hell was a challenge to Heaven and a declaration of the Pit's independence; of course, hiding this light under the impenetrable Lethe Clouds implies that Lucifer was not yet ready to challenge Heaven. The creation of the Morningstar was met with great celebrations in Pandemonium.

It would be another 90 years before Lucifer would even consider launching the war anew, and during this time the city and its inhabitants succumbed to Corruption. The massive energies used in the daily creation of the Morningstar played even greater havoc with the spell-warped streets of the city. The lesser buildings were swept away in the tide of chaos, leaving the palaces of the Archangels and Thrones as the only safe havens in the city. Trapped within their own city, the angels became more distracted with other matters. The Thrones became obsessed with controlling the whole Infernum from afar, while the Archangels enjoyed themselves with duels and malcubi lovers. As the Thrones descended into minutiae and bureaucracy and the Archangels delved into Corruption, the great angels of the rebellion were hardly to be seen. Lucifer was locked away inside his palace, Azazel in his laboratories. Only Arikiba the taskmaster was commonly seen in the Pit.

The Second Rebellion

The demons rebelled on the Plain of Skulls outside

the gates of Pandemonium. There, they defeated the angels. Some of the angels fled back into the city, hiding within their palaces. Others left the Pit entirely, or were not present at all when the rebellion happened.

Those who stayed and hid would not last long.

In 207 AF, the succubus Soline was sent with a small army to scout Pandemonium. She was a former companion of Archangels, so she knew her way through the twisted streets. The hiding angels – all mere Thrones – were uncovered and slaughtered or imprisoned. Greatly daring, the demons entered the forbidden Palace of the Morningstar. There, the Church was founded in a single day (see page 153 in *Book of the Tormentor*).

The Church claimed the central palace and the buildings immediately surrounding it. They also sent troops out to the walls of Pandemonium – a largely futile gesture, as the Cocytus guarded the city far better than any demon could. They would remain hidden in the city, feeding off the stockpiled iliaster and the few angels and damned left in the city, for around a century.

As the Houses arose and claimed the Eighth Circle Citadels, the city shut its gates to its new neighbours. It would not be until 307 AF that Pandemonium would open to the outside world again and then mainly because the Church was running out of

demons flocked to its streets. Pandemonium had become a place of legend to the hellkin – if the Houses could not conquer the city, then the demons could at least live there.

The Growing City

Pandemonium swiftly became the capital of the Infernum. The Auditorium was constructed in 352 AF – just too late to be the host of the Conclave instead of Bileflot. Perhaps if the demons had met in Pandemonium, then Sturrach would not have killed Astyanath and the course of Infernal history might be very different indeed. The creation of the Auditorium and the two common councils – the Assembly of Hierarchs and the Assembly of the Estates – meant that more and more demons came to the city. Each lord brought its entourage of bodyguards, advisors, assistants and entertainers; each Hierarch had all these and more, not to mention the host of spies, courtesans, assassins, lickspittles, sycophants, madmen and faustians that were drawn to the courts.

As more and more took up residence within the city, the bizarre nature of the ever-changing streets became a problem. When there were only a handful of demons living in the city, they could all comfortably hide in the ‘stable’ palaces of the angels. Now, with thousands and then millions living in Pandemonium, demons were directly exposed to the shifting environment. Some built towers that were connected to the stable palaces,

How Big Is Pandemonium?

Physically, the Ninth Circle of Hell is around 30 miles across. Even counting the wasteland around the city and the wide river of Grinding Ice, this still makes the city extend almost 15 miles from palace to Gate in every direction.

Most visitors report the walk from the Last Bridge to the centre of the city to be considerably shorter though; no more than five miles at most. Others have been found starved to death in the alleyways, bearing all the signs of having wandered the streets for months. The population is equally uncertain; officially, there are around two million demons living in the city, but many streets are utterly, utterly deserted and never seem to have been occupied at all, and there are always strange faces in the crowds.

Perhaps the best answer is that Pandemonium is as large as it needs to be. The city of chaos encompasses all the hellkin’s dreams and desires.

sharing their solidity. Others simply embraced the chaos; not all of them went mad.

As the palaces grew with tower after tower being tacked onto them, the spell of Pandemonium was disrupted still more. Some streets vanished entirely as the words of the spell changed; hellgouts exploded across the Pit with greater frequency.

The War

Pandemonium was not directly affected by the war; the city had more than enough souls to weather any disruption in its iliaster supply, and even the armies that dared profane the Eighth Circle with violence never dared cross the last bridge. However, as the ascendancy of House Sturrach became more apparent, many in the city assumed that the rest of the war was little more than a formality and they would soon be kneeling to Sturrach as it marched down the Street of Tears.

The city became divided; some believed that Pandemonium should resist conquest by House Sturrach, while others believed that any resistance would result in a bloody purge when the Sturrachs took over. A war was fought on the streets of Pandemonium, in advance of a conquest that never came.

Pandemonium Today

It is strange to think that the three centuries since the Battle of Ash Ghosts has hardly affected the city, but Pandemonium is relatively unchanged since those days. The political games continue, and their importance has only increased since the Houses realised that no one of them can hope to defeat the other eight. Seductive courtesans and shadowy assassins and spies still make up the bulk of Pandemonium's population and the priests still smile mockingly from within the Church Quarter.

This is the capital of Hell, the prize for which all the wars are fought, and it will fight to keep itself an unattainable prize for as long as it can.

Locations

Discussing locations within Pandemonium is fraught with difficulties. There are permanent landmarks, like the Palace of the Morningstar or the Auditorium – any large tower or fortress, essentially – but any smaller building is vulnerable

to the shifting streets. Think of the spatial fabric of Pandemonium as a sea wracked by waves. The large landmarks are islands. Smaller buildings float on this sea, and are swept into new configurations by the flowing water. These changes are normally too small and too slow to be perceivable to the naked eye, but hellgouts higher in the Pit, as well as energy discharges (such as the dawning of the Morningstar) can cause the city's streets to 'jump' to a new configuration.

There are other, stranger effects in this churning warp. Some alleyways have been lost for decades or centuries, inaccessible from anywhere in the city. Buildings, ancient and alien, have been thrown out for short periods. A demon who dwells in Pandemonium might find itself living next to a bizarre mausoleum of bone or a black pyramid one day and be living next to the walls the next.

Time within the city is equally uncertain. If a traveller keeps to the large buildings and main streets, he is safe enough, but straying from the path can be as dangerous as going into the tunnels beneath the Pit. There, a traveller is out of reach of the Clocks of Hell; here in Pandemonium, the traveller is subject to the contradictory effects of many clocks at



once.

The inhabitants of the city have learned to ignore these effects. They are adept at threading their way through the changing streets. Flying chariots borne by fiends or gauntflyers are common, as it is easier to fly than walk through the alleyways.

The city is centred on the Palace of the Morningstar. This colossal structure is dominated by its central golden spike, but it sprawls out for miles around in a warren of palaces, libraries, vaults and battlements. The palace is the heart of the Church Quarter, which occupies the central fifth of the city. Four main streets run out from the palace. The Street of Tears connects the palace to the Last Bridge, and is the most travelled road in the city. Mephistopheles Street (officially known as the Street of Lies runs from the far side of the palace to the far wall; this is essentially the commercial district of the city. The Street of Whispers runs from the palace to the Auditorium, while opposite it, the Street of Chains goes to the Courts of Bountiful Injustice.

The other four quarters of the city lie between these four main streets. Between Tears and Whispers is the Noble District; between Whispers and Mephistopheles, the Trade District. The Chillwater District is between Mephistopheles and Chains, while between Chains and Tears lies the Silver Spires.

The Walls of Pandemonium

The walls of the city are low, old and crumbling, and would offer little resistance to an invading army. Of course, there is only one way into the city by land – across the Last Bridge – so the walls are little more than a decoration. Any army capable of marching across the miles of icy darkness between the city and the Eighth Circle would not be stopped by any walls.

The walls of the city are decorated with carvings of the history of Hell, glorifying the Houses of the Infernum.

The Pandemonium Guard

The Guard are the official army of the Infernum and are theoretically answerable to the Council of Hierarchs alone. Their duties are:

- ⊗ Keeping the peace in Pandemonium and protecting the city until the throne is claimed by the last House.
- ⊗ Serving the Courts of Bountiful Injustice
- ⊗ Protecting the Auditorium
- ⊗ Keeping both these institutions free of corruption and treachery
- ⊗ Patrolling the Grand Hellish Highway

The Guard is funded by House Carthenay and made up of demons from all the Houses. In practice, the Guard is used as a dumping ground for troublesome demons and an easy way to get spies into Pandemonium. More than half the Guards are also double agents for the Church of the Morningstar at the very least. As for their duties, an army of saints could not keep the Courts or the Auditorium honest, so the Guards' duties are mostly investigating crimes and murders inside the city (and, occasionally, other crimes committed anywhere in Lower Hell) and trying to eke the most advantage to themselves and their patron out of each crisis.

The Guards are highly skilled (level 5 on average) and well equipped. The current master of the Pandemonium Guard is Jerebule, a former stalker of the Haimon (Haimon Stalker 18), who is that rarest of things – an honest demon. It has rejected even its former House and is trying to reform the Guard to be an actual force for order in Pandemonium.

If it lasts another month, it will be miracle.

Silver Spires District

Silver Spires is named for the many towers and high archways found here; it is the first sight of Pandemonium travellers see as they approach. It is also one of the most dangerous; with few 'anchor' buildings, the churn in the streets is especially noticeable here. The sections of the district closest to the Church Quarter and the Street of Tears are patrolled by the Pandemonium Guard; the rest of the area is a dangerous warren of unknowable alleyways. Rumours insist that House Hand has a presence here, under the very noses of the Guard.

Last Bridge

The Last Bridge is the only path across the icy river Cocytus. It was built by the angels, as were many of the buildings in the city. However, all the other buildings have had demonic towers and bulbous additions tacked onto them, while the Last Bridge still stands alone. The structure was built to echo the design of Heaven, but was built with the materials of Hell. From certain angles, it is heartbreakingly beautiful, seeming to leap across all the miles of ice with consummate grace. From others, it looks broken and wrong.

The stone of the bridge does not wholly protect travellers from the freezing cold of the Cocytus. Those passing along the bridge sometimes find themselves frozen to the ground, or have their life leeches from them. Fur-wearing demons and practitioners of the Chain of the Ice Waste stalk the Last Bridge, rescuing trapped victims for a handsome ransom.

Travellers are sometimes surprised to see great numbers of flying demons using the bridge to enter the city. It is possible to fly into Pandemonium, but it is difficult. Fly too low, and the demon's wings freeze and break. Those who have the strength to fly above the influence of the ice must time their flights carefully, lest they be burnt up by the heat of the Morningstar. Flight is impossible in Pandemonium in the first two hours of the day and during the 45th and 46th hours, as the sun is too close to the buildings.

The fortress of the Pandemonium Guard stands astride the bridge. This barbican is in excellent condition and is manned at all times.

Kingsblood Arena

The Kingsblood Arena is the only official arena in Pandemonium, although back street duels happen on a daily basis. Official duels to decide political matters are becoming more common, so the Kingsblood is often thronged with courtiers and diplomats watching policy being thrashed out with claws.

There is a secret spawning pit beneath the sands of Kingsblood; as demons from every House have fought and died here, the operators (secret servants of the Church) can produce any breed or House mutation on order.

Street of Tears

The grand Street of Tears leads from the Last Bridge to the Plaza of Renewal. It is a wide street cobbled in skulls; most are the skulls of disobedient demons, but others were taken from criminal angels. The street is always crowded with newcomers to the city; tourists crane their necks to see the great towers of the Church District, while those who know the city force their way through to the smaller streets beyond.

Noble District

The Noble District is the most heavily populated section of the city; it is so crowded with the towers of the nobility and the massive palaces of the Infernal government that the churn of the streets is reduced to almost nothing. The doorfinders ignore the Noble District; you can buy maps of it in the Trade Quarter that actually bear some resemblance to the layout of the streets.

Auditorium

The Auditorium is the most obvious demonic addition to this district, in that it is by far the ugliest. Few demons have any sense of style, so building a gigantic black monstrosity decorated with spikes, skulls, gushing blood gutters and burning gas vents was as close as they could come to a distinguished and respectable civic capital. The Auditorium is where the three councils of the Infernum meet – although the Grand Conclave meets about once a century and the Assembly of Estates is little more than an excuse for duels and brawls.

The rules of the Auditorium permit each noble to

Doorfinders

These are a sect of imps who are employed to find small hellholes and other buildings swept away by the changing streets. The doorfinders throng Fleshmarket Square, trading gossip about which street is where today. Finding an address costs a crown; the doorfinders are also the best source of rumours in the city.

bring bodyguards with it; the number of guards varies depending on the noble's rank. Having the strongest bodyguards is a sign of prosperity and influence, so duels to prove one warrior's superiority over another are common. The Pandemonium Guard are often called in to deal with mass brawls between bodyguards.

Visitors are permitted to bring problems before the Assembly of Estates, but must wait until their case is called – which can take months unless judicious bribes are applied. The Estates can bring a case up to the powerful Assembly of Hierarchs, but this requires getting a majority of the lords to vote for such a measure. The dungeons of the Auditorium contain various witnesses and criminals – demonic law draws little difference between the two – who are waiting to be called before the lords.

Towers of the Estates

The towers surround the Auditorium. These are luxurious dwellings suitable for demon lords; every House has a few towers in the Noble District, and many of the wealthiest nobles maintain their own personal fortresses in this area. The streets around the towers are crowded with bodyguards, servants and the other retainers brought by the nobles.

The concentration of wealth here makes the Towers a very tempting target for thieves. The security systems installed on some of the towers are quite absurdly lethal.

Guild of Assassins

Brazenly, the Guild of Assassins in Pandemonium operates and advertises quite openly. The Pandemonium Guard have tried to shut it down

many times, but the Guild actually has more support in the Auditorium than the Guard does. The Assassin's Guild is aimed towards low-ranking nobles – a truly skilled assassin disdains the crass commercialism of the guild. It is really a handy service for the denizens of the Noble's District for use in their petty power plays.

The staff at the Assassin's Guild do not actually know the assassins – the job is transmitted along a secure screamer line and payment is made through deposits at the Carthenay-managed bank – and the Hoarders are just bloody-minded enough to keep confidential about assassinations, even those that target their own members.

Palace of Azazel

The ancient Palace of Azazel was once the second most magnificent building in Pandemonium, after the Palace of the Morningstar.

Sometimes, it still is. The palace became unstuck during the initial attack by the rebellious demons. It now shifts with the streets around it. Azazel's home has been seen about once a decade since then, manifesting for a few hours in some out-of-the-way section of Pandemonium, then sinking back down into the chaos. Some insist they have seen lights inside the vanishing tower, suggesting it is still inhabited.

The faustians and House Zethu are especially interested in the palace, as Azazel was known as a great sorcerer and artificer. The ambassador from the Broken Cosmos also has some strange connection to the palace – in the two decades since As Silver Wakes Forty-One (see *Book of the Tormentor*, page 139) arrived in Hell, it has thrice been present when the Palace of Azazel was spotted.

Street of Whispers

The Street of Whispers runs from the Palace of Lucifer to the Auditorium. It is thronged by beggars hoping to find charity from passing nobles, from gossip-mongers and doorfinders, and with would-be assassins and thieves. Merchants and clothiers and entertainers also fill the street; all those who are drawn to power come here.

Victory parades after major battles take place on

the Street of Whispers, but all the demons know that the only parade that really counts is the one down the Street of Tears when the Infernum is conquered.

Half-way along the Street is Soline's Arch – by tradition, all negotiation between the Assembly of Hierarchs (or a Grand Conclave) and the Church must take place under this arch, which is neutral territory for the two. The arch sees little use in most years, as contact with the Church is usually an affair of the shadows.

Trade District

The Trade District is a parasite on the Noble District. Most of the city is taken up with the needs and entertainments of the nobility who attend the auditorium, so most of the trade going through this district flows into the parties and towers of the nobility. The Church quarter has its own supplies of souls and sweetmeats, which it keeps hidden from the Houses to disguise its numbers and needs.

Fleshmarket

The Fleshmarket is one of the stranger markets of the Pit. Here, demons sell themselves. While it is possible to purchase souls or slaves or weapons and all the normal accoutrements of the hellkin, the chief attractions of the Fleshmarket are the Covenants. Demons who are sufficiently desperate or insane put their free wills up for auction. Normally, this is done only to stave off Dissolution or massive debts, but some demons who have powerful enemies throw themselves into the Fleshmarket, hoping to have their Covenant purchased by an even more powerful patron who will then protect their investment.

Of late, the Fleshmarket has become even more mercenary. Demons who hold powerful Covenants have been forcing their debtors to sell themselves and hand over the money. Some demons have been sold over and over, having a dozen or so masters who each hold an unbreakable Covenant over them. The Fleshmarket may in fact be experiencing a 'Covenant bubble' and when that bursts, it could lead to civil war on the streets of Pandemonium.

Prices for a Covenant depend on the seller's level and the strength of the debt.

Unlight

The entertainments of Unlight are the strangest and most desirable in the city of Pandemonium, because no-one is quite sure what they are.

The Unlight is an underground complex in the heart of the Trade District. It offers all the normal distractions – malcubi and mortal sex-slaves, drugs, voyeuristic tortures, Agony and Sorrow and so on – but the deeper reaches of Unlight hold the true charms of the place. A demon of sufficient wealth can buy its way through the Shadow Door and enter the lightless tunnels under the city. Not even creatures with the Demon Sight light of the Chain of Darkness can see what exactly is done to them under there, nor can any demon quite recall the experience of Unlight. It is known to be extremely pleasurable, even to the jaded palates of the most degenerate Riethii.

Some suggest that the Unlight is a new hellbroth, a further refinement of Sorrow. Others believe that the club is a front for the faustian Cult of the Beast, who have developed a sorcerous ritual of pleasure. Certainly, Unlight is the new delight for the nobility, and every demon who is any demon has passed through the Shadow Door at least once.

House of Clocks

The bizarre House of Clocks predates the Infernum. The tower was built by the angels, but unlike the other surviving structures from that era, it has begun to crumble and decay. The tower is crammed with clocks of every shape and size. Many resemble the eldritch Clocks of Hell found in every city and Circle of the Pit, but others are made from bone or hair or scrap metal or whatever else came to hand.

It is obviously the domain of a madman. In fact, the House of Clocks is the domain of a succession of madmen – the House has always had a keeper, and when one keeper dies, another is called by some ancient sorcery. The current keeper is a mortal named Cornelius. The tower is protected by a potent defensive *warding*, but the strength of this *warding* varies depending on the energy flow through the Brass Pillars, so it is possible for invaders to enter the House of Clocks.

The House is a control mechanism for the temporal engine that preserves the Pit. The Zethu have some

understanding of this vast engine – the Brass Pillars create sorcerous breaches between the dimensions and steal time from the mortal world. This time is somehow stored and transmitted to the Clocks of Hell. There is a Clock hidden somewhere in every major city in the Pit, as well as in locations dotted throughout the Pit. Each tick of these magical clocks is another second in Hell.

As every demon knows, time in Hell is broken. The tunnels below are progressively more timeless the deeper a traveller goes, but there are also inconsistencies and anomalies throughout Hell. Some domains see the Morningstar rise once while others experience a week; damned toil for subjective millennia while the brief lives of mortals ebb away swiftly. These anomalies would be far greater and far more common if it were not for the regulating effect of the House of Clocks. It keeps the stolen time of Hell moving forward at roughly the same rate, ensuring that the Pit never falls back into the perfect, eternal moment of pain that it was created to be.

While many sages and scholars among the Houses, especially in Zethu, Haimon and the Priests of the Morningstar, are aware of how important the Brass Pillars are and how the house relates to them, they dare not risk tampering with it. If Hell returned to

timelessness, then every demon loses the war for the throne. That said... control of time would be the ultimate weapon...

Embassy of the Brokenlanders

The Embassy of the Brokenlanders is a bulbous deposit of some nacre-like substance that hangs from the side of a tenement block. It was grown by a swarm of feld sent through a portal from the Broken Cosmos in advance of the arrival of As Silver Wakes Forty-One. Few demons have ever visited the embassy, which alters its internal shape to greet visitors in a suitable fashion.

The embassy is under constant watch by the Pandemonium Guard, as well as agents from half the Houses. By terms of the agreement with the Hierarchs under which the Brokenlanders are allowed to have an embassy in Hell, As Silver Wakes Forty-One is allowed a pair of bodyguards, a single servant and attaché. All its companions seem to be previously unknown forms of Brokenlander.

House Malthus Towers

These Towers are designed for human habitation, so they are sealed to filter out the foulness and contamination in the air. Greenhouses provide edible mortal food and great tanks hold drinkable water brought at great expense from higher in the Pit.

The House Malthus name is a legacy; these days, the towers are under the control of the faustian groups as a whole. Any mortal with skill in sorcery can ask for shelter in the towers. Normally, these towers are largely empty, as Pandemonium is not a pleasant place for mortals; even the most corrupted of the faustians finds the city of chaos eerie. During the elections and sorcerous duels for the faustian's seat on the Assembly of Hierarchs, however, the towers are crowded with wizards.

Mephistopheles Street

The demon Mephistopheles is a legend among the hellkin; the tales speak of an immensely powerful and cunning demon who tricked mortals out of their souls. It is generally accepted that this tale began with Zethu giving sorcery to the mortals,

Madness in Pandemonium

It is an unacknowledged fact that the city of chaos breeds madness. The shifting streets and flow of magical energy has a deleterious effect on sanity. It is most prevalent amongst the demons and souls forced to dwell on the streets of the city, but can affect anyone who lives in Pandemonium for too long.

The effects of this insanity are subtle at first – a mounting sense of paranoia and the conviction that all other beings are tools to be manipulated are actually perfectly normal reactions to life in the demon capital. It is the full-blown megalomania and desire to conquer all the worlds that are the true flowering of the insanity engendered by the city. The dreams of conquerors slumber in the changing streets and every beggar here dreams of being king of Hell.

but that does not stop half the rakes of Hell from claiming to be Mephistopheles himself. There is even a minor House in the Zethu that have adopted the name.

It is perhaps appropriate then that the Street of Lies bears a nickname that may itself be a lie. The Street of Lies is the most infamous and elegant place in the Pit. The Riethii and Astyanath consider the street to be the heart of Infernal fashion; all the best tortures are here.

Chillwater

Chillwater district is on a rise overlooking the walls; the icy coldness from the Cocytus penetrates into the city here. It is the forgotten district; it has the lowest population and the least traffic. The only building of note here is the Court of Bountiful Injustice, a squat and ugly building of grey stone. Thousands of bodies hang from gibbets on the walls of the court. Beyond the court, a long stretch of anonymous prisons reach down to the walls.

Courts of Bountiful Injustice

The courts are endlessly corrupt; they are essentially just a tool with which the Council of Hierarchs legally strikes its foes. Formal duels and arguments over who owns a particular soul are the other common cases heard within the echoing walls. Houses Carthenay and Haimon are the two powers in court.

Theoretically, any crime against Infernal law committed in the Pit could be tried in the court; in practice, a case is only brought when the demon believes it can win. There are no defendants in the courts, only victims.

Traitor's Gate

Traitor's Gate is the main torture palace of Pandemonium. Like the Echoing Halls in Dis, it is capable of grinding demons down to iliaster; demons sentenced to death by the Courts are brought to Traitor's Gate for execution.

Pandemonium consumes far more iliaster than it generates; the ratio of demons to souls is far too high for the city to last more than a day without iliaster shipments from the Seventh. The only section of the city that could survive even a short siege is the Church quarter, thanks to the massive

iliaster vaults held by the priests.

Discord

A noisy nightclub, Discord is considerably more low-brow than the refined entertainments of Unlight. It is popular among younger demons and their retinues, who cannot afford all the exquisite delights of the Trade and Noble Districts.

The Street of Chains

The Street of Chains is the shadow of the Street of Whispers; victors parade down the far street in glory, while the defeated are dragged along the hellglass cobbles of the Street of Chains in disgrace. The street is notable for being draped in Debtor's Chains (see page 44), making Covenants more potent there.

Church Quarter

The Church Quarter is a mystery to most in the city. The priests are everywhere in Pandemonium; there is a church or a cathedral or a shrine on every corner and the chants and hymns echo from every wall. However, the inner mysteries of Pandemonium are reserved only for those high in the Church. A *warded* wall runs around the central district of the city.

Those who pass through this wall on Church business are perhaps surprised to discover that the city is little different within this inner circle. There are just as many taverns, brothels, torture palaces and other lurid entertainments with the precincts as there are outside. The Church does put its customary religious gloss on such places out of mockery (much of the architecture of the region, for example, is directly based on that of Rome), but corruption runs just as strongly here as it does outside.

Tower of the Church Militant

The second tallest structure in the city, the tower of the Church Militant is the heart of the defences and assassins of the priests. The church has a very small army, but it is probably the best trained and equipped in all of the Pit. The tower is a mighty fortress, big enough to hold the entire Church Militant. Its weapons are connected directly to the massive iliaster vaults within the palace, allowing its blasting towers to strike at any target within the Eighth or Ninth circles.

The current Head of the Church Militant is a hulk named Cardinal Abandon (Church Hulk 25).

Plaza of Renewal

The Plaza is the one section of the Church Quarter that is open to visitors from outside. Once a year, the faithful gather here to see the vast fortune in crystallised iliaster gathered from tithes be poured into the furnaces of the Morningstar. There are great pits in the floor of the plaza which are said to lead into the Morningstar itself.

In truth, most of the iliaster to keep the sun burning is stored elsewhere and only a tiny amount is brought out for show on the Renewal of the Flame. The Hierophant makes her only public appearance each year at the plaza, although she sometimes permits Cardinal Rourath (see page 156, *Book of the Tormentor*) or another servant to masquerade in her place.

Library of Pandemonium

The Library of Pandemonium is the largest centre for learning in the whole Infernum. It is controlled by the Church, but scholars from other Houses may use it so long as they bring research of equal value – in this way, the Church gains access to the advances and discoveries of the other Houses. Books in the library are mostly conventional in nature, although there are soulbound books and sorcerous grimoires here too. These are also vast records detailing the proceedings of the Assemblies and the courts.

The Church discreetly edits or removes books that it deems dangerous or harmful, although copies are kept within the Church vaults.

Palace of the Morningstar

Lucifer's home is as he left it, more or less. The Church has tacked on a sprawling mess of palaces and cathedrals to the outside of the palace itself, but the inner halls are utterly unchanged. The palace was never sacked or attacked, not even at the height of the rebellion. This is where the demons fear to tread.

The Outer Palace: The Outer Palace is the domain of the church; take all the wealth and politics of the sprawling Noble District and cram it up against the unyielding walls of the Inner Palace. This is a maze of Cardinals, Grand Cardinals and lesser



functionaries, set against a backdrop of lurid soulstone and gaudy excess. The Church's habit of playacting at being a religion is especially strong here; there are some doddering old priests who have even forgotten that the Church is a scam and take it seriously.

The Inner Palace: The Inner Palace is the exclusive domain of Soline and her current paramours. The eldest and perhaps the most powerful of the hellkin alive today, Soline knows that she is trespassing in Lucifer's domain and so has made few changes to the Inner Palace. No assassin or spy since Zethu has ever entered these chambers.

Soline is playing a waiting game; the skull in the vault of the machine charged her and her Church to wait and observe until Lucifer returned. Soline's obsession, then, is finding out if this prophecy is true and, if it is, discovering when the King of Hell will return to his domain.

The Tower of the Sun: The Tower of the Sun glitters even at night. It is made of a golden substance that is somewhere between crystal and metal; this is akin to the matter of the shards of Heaven, but is of an entirely different origin and order. The Morningstar rises from this tower each

day, forming from the flames that rush up the hollow core. Any creature within the Tower of the Sun would be destroyed when the sun forms. It is possible to climb or fly down the Tower, but this requires excellent timing – most of the day, the Tower is much too hot to enter, and there is only a short window between the tower cooling and the falling sun entering the Tower once more.

The Vault of the Machine: The Vault of the Machine lies directly below the Tower of the Sun – indeed, a creature climbing down the Tower would emerge in the heart of the machine. The machine is an inconceivably huge and complex device of brass and bone and Enochian runes, resembling more a living being or biomechanical structure than a mere device. It was built by Lucifer and Azazel.

The Church has been studying the machine for centuries and still has not fathomed even a fraction of its secrets. It seems to rely on sorcery that should not function in the Pit, and perhaps that is why the machine consumes such a vast amount of iliaster each year – it must push against the very laws of Hell to maintain its existence. It may also have some connection to the Clocks of Hell; if the House of Clocks regulates the flow of time, then the machine may be that which draws time from the pillars and redistributes it throughout the Pit.

The Tenth Circle of Hell: There is a second vault, directly below the Vault of the Machine. The only way into this vault is through a sealed door in the depths. The seal on the door is changing slowly, almost imperceptibly, over the years... counting down towards the opening of the seal.

Soline watches it change sometimes, in the night.

Life and Death in Pandemonium

Pandemonium's 'day' is mostly spent in the half-light of the witching time, when the Morningstar is somewhere overhead in the choking vapours of the Pit. There are lampposts and candles everywhere to light the city, but these flicker in and out as the streets change. There are also strange greenish corpse-lights of no known origin.

There are five distinct sorts of denizens in the demon capital.

Firstly, there are the priests. The Church of the



Morningstar controls about half the city, directly or indirectly, and there are Church outposts and fortresses everywhere. The Cardinals and Grand Cardinals of the Church are constantly coming and going, receiving their commands from Soline and passing back their reports. The followers of the Morningstar keep watch on the relative strengths of the Houses and their spies eventually worm into every secret.

Second and third are the nobles and their retinues – entertainers, servants, minor functionaries, bureaucrats, assassins, bodyguards and so on. The hierarchs and their servants are the constant here, while most other nobles follow a seasonal path through the Pit. They travel down to Pandemonium for the opening of the Auditorium and the attendant celebrations, then slowly travel back up through the Seventh on the party spiral before eventually returning to their estates and gathering the taxes to pay for the next year's debaucheries.

The fourth group might be termed the outsiders, and comprises the Pandemonium Guard, the faustians, the city's functionaries and the few demons who are

in Pandemonium for reasons other than power and pleasure. This group is by far the smallest – those who come to the demon city are almost invariably after power, pleasure or secrets.

The fifth group is the insane; both those driven mad by the shifting streets and those who believe that they can discover the secrets of the city. Pandemonium has been filled with demon treasure hunters and Luciferologists (those who are obsessed with the Luciferine Heresy and believe that the angels left some great treasure or weapon behind) ever since the Church opened the gates of the city.

Getting Around Pandemonium

The shifting streets make travel in the city difficult. The long-term residents have adapted to the strangeness of the city, however.

The larger buildings and major streets do not move – it is always the same distance and direction from the Street of Tears to the Street of Chains, or from the Tower of the Church Militant to the Courts. Going ‘across alley’ is still dangerous, due to the myriad opportunities for wrong turnings, but an experienced demon can judge how much the streets have changed and find its way in the same way a sailor on the Sunless Sea judges lava currents. This requires a Knowledge (local) check (DC15 to 30 depending on the obscurity of the destination).

Flying is a safer option, as it avoids the alleyway maze. Demons with wings can fly under their own power; aerial taxis can be hired for as little as a horn. Enterprising Zethu demons even use gauntflyers and dirigibles to carry large dignitaries (prices are tripled for Glabretchi who do not provide their own enclosed carriages).

The problem with flight is the proximity of the sun, which restricts aerial movement at times. The Morningstar is 30 miles across at dawn, occupying the entire sky of the city.

Notable Citizens of Pandemonium

Listing all the notables of the city is virtually impossible – half the Grand Dukes of the Infernum can be in the city at any time. The Hierarchs are the chief nobility of the city. These are –

- ⊗ **Grand Duke Cajia (Astyanath Succubus 23):** A succubus of House Astyanath, Cajia is bored by her position, and passes the time she spends

in the Auditorium by needling the Haimon, Oblurott and Lictat representatives. She is rumoured to be involved with Grand Duke Radamanthus, but this may be just because the two must spend so much time together due to the Rose Accord. She is more often encountered in the Trade District or Unlight.

- ⊗ **Grand Duke Dismay (Carthenay Deceiver 26):** The most powerful of the Nine Hierarchs, Dismay could push itself to be the leader of the council, but instead lets the Glabretchi take it. Dismay prefers to manoeuvre events from behind the scenes; he is generally referred to as the Grey Eminence of Pandemonium. Normally, the role of hierarch is a death sentence in terms of future advancement, but he has enough influence on the Carthenay Board of Directors to swing his election as Von Berrengarth's replacement.

- ⊗ **Grand Duke Jibberlin (Glabretch Something 23):** The Head of the Council of Hierarchs and therefore the single greatest power in the Infernum short of a Grand Conclave is a mess of mouths and tentacles that probably was a slaver or stalker at some point in the distant past. Jibberlin knows it holds its position because it is in disfavour in the Third Circle and because Grand Duke Dismay permits it, so it is determined to wring every coin and favour out of the Council that it can.

- ⊗ **Grand Duke Gnomos, the Prince of Bone (Haimon Artificer 22):** Gnomos is a rather odd choice for a Hierarch, as it has little interest in politics. Still, it has shown an uncanny ability to be in the right place at the right time to profit from the problems of other Houses.

- ⊗ **Grand Duke Feral (Lictat Beast 18):** The weakest of the Nine House Hierarchs, Feral more than makes up for this with its arrogance and cruelty. It has won the respect of both Radamanthus and the Sturrach representative Mikel with its brazen and mercilessly attitude.

- ⊗ **Grand Duke Moraglut (Oblurott Slaver 27):** With House Oblurott in the ascendancy, Moraglut has been throwing its (considerably vast) weight around, trying to push Jibberlin off the highest throne and claim the leadership of the council. As the Oblurotts know that the Sturrach are trying to use the council to garner support, they have given Moraglut a great deal of cash for bribery. The Hierarch has already spent a king's ransom in the Trade quarter.

⊗ **Grand Duke Radamanthus (Riethii Incubus 25):** A notorious seducer and tempter, Radamanthus was famed for travelling to the mortal world via hellgouts and bringing back a wealth of tainted souls. His appointment as Hierarch was a surprise, although seeing as Purity is by far the most secure of the House lords, it may be that House Riethii is redefining the role of the Hierarch.

⊗ **Grand Duke Mikel (Sturrach Fiend 22):** Mikel faces an uphill battle – the fiend has been tasked with winning support in the Auditorium for the Sturrach as they fight a two-front war with Dis and the Oblurott. Mikel is an excellent general, but the political battlefield is beyond it. It has taken to working out its frustration on the duelling field; the Pandemonium Guard receives a report about some demon being killed by Mikel about once a week.

⊗ **Grand Duke Rale (Zethu Stalker 21):** Driven from its domain by the Free City revolt, Rale was severely injured by the activation of the Mayhem weapons systems. These two events, combined with the maddening effects of the city of Pandemonium, have driven Rale utterly insane. It is obsessed with destroying the Free Cities and launches into lengthy paranoid rants about Free City traitors with the slightest provocation.

⊗ **Captain Jerebule (Pandemonium Guard Stalker 23):** The Captain of the Guard has also temporarily taken over the Pandemonium seat, following the disappearance of the previous incumbent. Normally, that is a code for ‘assassinated the previous holder and stole their power’, but Jerebule is genuinely searching for the demon D’Car who was the elected representative of the city. D’Car vanished two months ago, *summoned* away in the middle of the Street of Whispers.

⊗ **Jerome (Faustian (Malthian) Mortal 19):** The representative of the faustians has his eyes and mouth sewn shut; the result of a political compromise between the Malthian League and the Black Thorns. The sorcerer is not without his methods for making his desires known and communicating his opinions; if anything, he has become a more effective diplomat since his mutilation.

The seat of the Independents is currently unoccupied.

Adventure Ideas

⊗ A Church messenger-imp is shot down over the alleyways. The imp was bearing an important but mysterious package. Now, agents from every House are searching the shifting streets for the courier – who will find it first and what is it carrying?

⊗ The Feast of the Renewal is approaching and as always, thieves from all over the Pit gather to try to steal the church’s iliaster. Captain Jerebule hires the characters as temporary help for the Pandemonium Guard; can they keep the peace in the demon city?

⊗ An assassin is hunting a noble; the characters are ordered to preserve the noble’s life. As they watch, however, they discover the noble is in league with traitors. They cannot contact their employer – but if they keep the noble alive, they may end up doing more damage to their House. Does the noble live or die?

FREEDOM IN CHAINS

F*reedom in Chains* is an adventure for 1st or 2nd level characters. It can be adapted for demon, mortal or angel characters.

Synopsis

Baron Surcis has lost a war with another demon lord and has been forced to pay reparations in the form of souls. Hundreds of damned from Surcis' domain are being transported in slave caravans across the wilderness to the domain of the victor, Baron Riaz. One of Surcis' servants, the imp Cruzef, accidentally grabbed the wrong soul out of a prison cell and threw it into the caravan. Instead of just taking another anonymous damned, Cruzef accidentally took the soul of an old faustian rival of Surcis – the soul of a man named Frederick Carstairs.

Surcis is *already* angry about losing the war, and will soon be coming to take out its frustration by torturing Carstairs. If Cruzef does not get the soul back soon, the imp is doomed.

The imp cannot just go to the slave caravan to retrieve the soul – the caravan has already left Surcis' domain and is manned by Riaz's troops anyway. Enter the characters. Cruzef decides to use them to get the

soul back. They will be shipped out as part of the slave caravan, but given tools to escape when the opportunity arises. They must then steal Carstairs' soul and make it back to Cruzef.

The complication with all this is that one of the slavers on the caravan discovers the power of Carstairs' soul and realises that can make more profit by selling the soul in the market instead of delivering it to Baron Riaz. The characters have to track the slaver down before it sells Carstairs and get the soul back to Cruzef before Baron Surcis arrives.

What could be easier?

Location

As written, the adventure takes place on the Third Circle. Both Surcis and Riaz are nobles of House Oblurott and their domains are wallwards of the Grand Canal. It can easily be transplanted elsewhere in the Pit, of course – they could be Lictat lords on the Second, Zethus on the Fourth and so on. The Games Master will need to change the physical description of the land the caravan passes over of course, but nothing in the scenario is especially tied to the terrain.



Getting the Characters Involved

The easiest way to get the characters involved is just having them wake up in Surcis' jail cells. This works quite well for the start of an *Infernum* campaign and lets the Games Master bring all sorts of different characters together. They have all been captured and need to escape.

When dealing with established characters, the option of railroading them into the cells exists – just have them overwhelmed by superior enemies, and they wake up in the cells. Alternatively, if the characters are looking for work, then the imp Cruzef might contact them out of desperation.

Part I – Chains

This assumes the characters are waking up in the cells, having been captured by Surcis' forces. If the characters are being hired by Cruzef instead, then just skip to the conversation with Cruzef, below.

The Prisons of Surcis

The prison cell is a small and almost lightless chamber. The floor is covered with some sort of slimy filth, and there is a hole in the centre of the room that stinks of excrement. A heavy iron grille over the hole prevents characters from escaping that way. There is a single entrance: a stout wooden door on one wall. A small viewport in the door, allows the guards outside to

watch events within.

There are two guards outside at all times – a stalker and a hulk, both 3rd level and quite heavily armed. They will ignore any attempts to communicate from the prisoners, although they will throw a flask of plasmic iliaster or hunk of spawn-meat into the cell once a day (there are as many points of iliaster in the flask as there are demons in the cell, minus one).

Let the characters argue/get to know each other/come up with crazed escape attempts for a few minutes, then bring in Cruzef. Ideally, the imp arrives during the night. Cruzef sends the two guards away for a moment, claiming that it must interrogate the prisoners privately for a minute. The imp then opens the viewport and squeaks 'you in there? You want out?'

CONVERSATIONS WITH CRUZEF

The imp swiftly outlines the deal – it can arrange for the characters to be put on a slave caravan and shipped out instead of languishing in prison. They will never escape the prison cell and the only fates awaiting them in there are torture, death and then more torture (if mortal) and the spawning pits (if demons). If they listen to Cruzef, however, it will ensure their freedom.

All they need to do is rescue one other soul. There is a soul called Carstairs that Cruzef wants back, but it



Cruzef (3rd level Oblurott Imp)

Small Demon

Hit Dice: 3d6-3 (7 hp)

Initiative: +3

Speed: 20 ft., Fly 40 ft. (average)

Armour Class: 23 (+6 natural, +3 Dex, +1 helmet, +1 size), touch 14, flat-footed 20

Base Attack/Grapple: +3/-3

Attack: Claw +7 melee (1d4-2)

Full Attack: Claw +7 melee (1d4-2)

Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.

Saves: Fort +0, Ref +6, Will +6

Abilities: Str 6, Dex 16, Con 8, Int 13, Wis 16, Cha 13

Skills: Bluff +7, Diplomacy +9, Grovel +9, Hide +9, Move Silently +9

Feats: Dodge, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (bite)

Mutations:

⊗ **Imp:** Wings

⊗ **Usury:** Brand of Ownership

⊗ **Insect Aspect:** Chitin Armour (+4 natural armour bonus)

Iliaster Reserve: 9

Challenge Rating: 3

Playing Cruzef: Nervous and jumpy, but trying to bluff that it is in a position of power.

has already been shipped out. The plan is as follows – Cruzef will put the characters on a caravan. It will also hide their weapons in a bag hidden under the caravan. They wait until their caravan meets up with the main convoy of slavers, then they escape, rescue the soul (who it describes as having a distinctive red beard) and run back to Cruzef.

To ensure the characters' loyalty, Cruzef asks them for a Covenant. Obviously, this will only hold if the imprisoned characters are heavily Corrupted mortals or demons; it will ask for strength 10 Covenant, modified by the result of a Diplomacy check, and will then apply the full strength of the Covenant towards a task – *'retrieve the soul and bring it back to Cruzef as soon as possible'*.

If the characters are demons being hired by Cruzef, then instead it offers them four crowns each for the job. Hired characters may also be somewhat wary about being imprisoned; Cruzef will insist that the only way to infiltrate the slave caravan is to arrive in one of the prison carts.

Cruzef will tell the characters to meet it at an obscure watchtower on the borders of the domain – it will check the tower each day for signs of them.

The Journey Begins

Once the characters accept Cruzef's offer, the imp will flutter off. A few hours later, guards enter the cell and drag the characters out of the prison cell. They are pulled down the stone corridors of the outpost and out into a courtyard. Two large spawn-drawn carts with barred cages stand waiting there. A successful Spot check (DC 20) shows that there is indeed a bag slung underneath one of the caravans – it would only be noticed if one was looking for it. There is also a tiny file hidden in the straw on the floor of the cart. It is too small to be an effective weapon, but can be used to weaken the iron bars of the cage for an escape attempt.

The characters are thrown into the cage, while about a dozen souls are lead out to the other cage. As they watch, the damned are torn to shreds by hellhounds before being loaded onto the cart – by keeping the damned shredded, the slavers ensure there are no escape attempts.

Six slavers tend to the riding spawn that drag the carts and keep an eye on the characters. All of the slavers have the same ability scores, but one is of special note. This is the slaver Morath, who will soon become the characters' chief foe for the rest of the scenario. It is important for the third part of the scenario that the players absolutely *hate* Morath, so make the slaver as obnoxious and nasty as possible. From the moment the characters are placed in the cage, have the slaver start tormenting them and mocking them. Ideas for the this torture include –

- ⊗ Describing in great detail what Baron Riaz will do to them when they arrive at their destination
- ⊗ Giving favourable treatment or pretending to conspire with one of the prisoners, just to make the others violent and jealous
- ⊗ Mocking them for their weakness and starving them of iliaster.

Morath carries a big and ornate brass-handled knife, which it will use to threaten the characters. This

Morath**(3rd level Unaligned Slaver)****Medium Demon****Hit Dice:** 3d6+3 (20 hp)**Initiative:** -1**Speed:** 30 ft.**Armour Class:** 20 (+3 natural, -1 Dex, +4 armour, +2 helmet, +2 shield), touch 9, flat-footed 20**Base Attack/Grapple:** +3/+6**Attack:** Claw +6 melee (1d6+3)**Full Attack:** Claw +6 melee (1d6+3)**Space/Reach:** 5 ft./5 ft.**Saves:** Fort +4, Ref +0, Will +3**Abilities:** Str 16, Dex 8, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 15, Cha 10**Skills:** Handle Spawn +4, Intimidate +6, Ride +3, Survival +6, Torture +10**Feats:** Cleave, Power Attack, Sneak Attack**Mutations:**

- ⊗ **Slaver:** Soulshape
- ⊗ **Living Armour:** Armoured Carapace, Reinforced Armour (1 iliaster/+1 AC)

Iliaster Reserve: 9**Challenge Rating:** 3

Playing Morath: It is a cruel and nasty slaver, even by the measures of its kind. It is disliked even by other slavers, so it tortures the slaves unnecessarily out of boredom. It carries a knife to hurt souls, but also has massive claws.

knife will prove to be an important clue later on – see below.

Once the characters and the souls are all imprisoned, the slavers whip the spawn and the two carts move jerkily off across the plains.

It takes the carts the better part of two days to cross the muddy fields to rendezvous with the rest of the

slave caravan. The roads between the two baronies are dangerous and troubled by bandits, so the caravan is waiting at another outpost for all the carts and guards to arrive. As the characters travel, they see the battlefields where the war between Riaz and Surcis was fought. The ground is scorched and scarred by acid; broken weapons and piles of dismembered limbs are everywhere. In the distance, they can see the burnt-out shells of war machines and demon tanks.

The Third Cart

About a day into the journey, another cart containing more prisoners joins the convoy via another side road. Like the character's cart, this cart is guarded by three slavers, but this one contains demons – former soldiers of Surcis who offended Riaz during the war and have therefore been doomed to death. The two demons held in the new cart are a hulk and a deceiver. These two characters are potential allies and contacts for the characters. Over the next day, as the carts

Abroath**(1st level Oblurott Hulk)****Large Demon****Hit Dice:** 1d12+4 (10 hp)**Initiative:** +0**Speed:** 30 ft.**Armour Class:** 13 (+4 natural, -1 size), touch 9, flat-footed 13**Base Attack/Grapple:** +1/+9**Attack:** Claw +4 melee (1d8+4)**Full Attack:** Claw +4 melee (1d8+4) and bite +0 melee (1d10+2)**Space/Reach:** 10 ft./10 ft.**Saves:** Fort +6, Ref +0, Will -1**Abilities:** Str 18, Dex 10, Con 19, Int 9, Wis 8, Cha 8**Skills:** Intimidate +3, Spot +3, Warcraft +3.**Feats:** Power Attack, Weapon Focus (bite)**Mutations:**

- ⊗ **Hulk:** Rage
- Iliaster Reserve:** 6
Challenge Rating: 1

Playing Abroath: Brutish and brooding, but very focused and alert on tactical matters. Hates Valis.

Valis**(1st level Unaligned Deceiver)****Medium Demon****Hit Dice:** 1d8 (4 hp)**Initiative:** +1**Speed:** 30 ft.**Armour Class:** 13 (+1 Dex, +2 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 12**Base Attack/Grapple:** +1/+0**Attack:** Claw +0 melee (1d4-1)**Full Attack:** Claw +0 melee (1d4-1)**Space/Reach:** 5 ft./5 ft.**Saves:** Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +4**Abilities:** Str 8, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 15**Skills:** Bluff +9, Concentration +4, Diplomacy +10, Disguise +6, Gather Information +6, Hide +5, Sense Motive +13**Feats:** Skill Focus (Bluff), Skill Focus (Sense Motive)**Mutations:**⊗ **Deceiver:** Fell Insight**Iliaster Reserve:** 6**Challenge Rating:** 1

Playing Valis: With her high Sense Motive, she can quickly discern the personalities of the characters and will try to manipulate them. She is unnervingly perky for a demoness, but is just as ruthless as the rest of her kind when the need arises.

slowly lurch along the muddy roads, the characters have a chance to talk to these other demons.

The hulk, Abroath, is sullen and angry. It speaks little, and is insulting when it does. It absolutely loathes its fellow prisoner; Abroath's hide bears the scars from whips and spears where the slavers restrained it from attacking the deceiver. Abroath will largely ignore the characters initially, but if they mention they have a method for escape, it will question them closely and do its utmost to ensure the attempt succeeds – Abroath wants revenge on both Surcis and Riaz for the war.

The other prisoner is a deceiver called Valis; she was a spy in Riaz's employ who defected to Surcis' army.

Valis knows that Riaz will have her subjected to the most painful torments imaginable, so she is planning a second escape attempt – her first was a dismal failure and resulted only in the guards chaining her to the cage wall and whipping her for eight hours. Her demeanour is one of irrepressible cheerfulness, though; this façade is very good at keep enemies off-balance.

The two demons in the third cart are tools for the Games Master – if the characters get into trouble, then Abroath can break free and help them, or Valis can be a mouthpiece to give them advice.

Remember to have Morath torment the characters throughout the journey.

Part II – freedom

The characters arrive at the slave caravan. As the caravan moves into the wilderness, it is attacked by bandits, giving the characters a chance to escape. However, they discover that Morath has stolen Carstairs and they must chase it down.

The Slave Caravan

The caravan consists of 30 carts like the one the characters are trapped in, accompanied by two larger carts containing supplies, weapons, iliaster and so on. There are 20 or so souls in each cart, with three slavers per cart for a total of some 600 damned and 90 slavers. There are also 60 guards, divided evenly between hulks, mounted stalkers and fiends. Some of these are servants of Baron Riaz; others are mercenaries.

The master of the caravan is an elderly slaver named Goyul (Unaligned Slaver 5); it has been dragging slaves around the Circles for decades and it knows all the tricks of the Branded and the Broken Chainers. Use Goyul to terrify the characters; the old slaver will spot any damage to their cage and might even find the bag of equipment hidden under the cart.

Fortunately for the characters, Goyul has a rival – another slaver called Ascarl (Unaligned Slaver 3), who has laboured in Goyul's shadow for far too long. Ascarl intends for Goyul to have an accident during this caravan trip to the domain of Riaz.

The third potentially significant leader in the slave caravan is the captain of the guards, a mercenary hulk called Redclaw (Sturrach Hulk 4). The hulk wants to start the war between the two baronies up once again

The characters will not get into a fight with either Goyul or Ascarl, as both have plenty of guards with them who do their fighting for them. They may be manipulated through Influence, however:

Character	Bluff	Conc.	Dip.	Int.
Goyul	+4	+4	+2	+4
Ascarl	+5	+2	+0	+4

Playing Goyul: Canny and experienced, it is almost amused by the slaves' attempts to escape, as it has seen them all before. It is something of a cynic.

Playing Ascarl: Hungry and vicious, a mean demon.

Redclaw

(4th level Sturrach Hulk)

Large Demon

Hit Dice: 4d12+12 (50 hp)

Initiative: -1

Speed: 30 ft.

Armour Class: 20 (+6 natural, -1 Dex, -1 size, +2 helmet, +2 shield, +2 armour), touch 8, flat-footed 20

Base Attack/Grapple: +4/+13

Attack: Claw +8 melee (1d8+5)

Full Attack: Claw +8 melee (1d8+5) or Small Shattergun +3 (1d10)

Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.

Saves: Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +2

Abilities: Str 20, Dex 8, Con 17, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8

Skills: Handle Spawn +4, Intimidate +4, Listen +4, Ride +3, Spot +4, Survival +4, Warcraft +4.

Feats: Exotic Weapons Proficiency (shattergun), Power Attack, Sunder

Mutations:

⊗ **Hulk:** Rage

⊗ **Sturrach:** Warrior's Horns (+2 AC)

⊗ **Ice Waste:** Cold Resistance 10

⊗ **Hellfire Mastery:** Create Hellfire (5 iliaster/gout)

Iliaster Reserve: 10

Challenge Rating: 4

Playing Redclaw: As brutish and arrogant as most hulks, but secretly manipulative.

Guards

(1st level Oblurott Stalkers)

Medium Demon

Hit Dice: 1d8+3 (7 hp)

Initiative: +2

Speed: 30 ft.

Armour Class: 15 (+3 natural, +2 Dex), touch 12, flat-footed 13

Base Attack/Grapple: +1/+2

Attack: Bite +3 melee (1d6+1)

Full Attack: Bite +3 melee (1d6+1) and claw -3 melee (1d4)

Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.

Saves: Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +1

Abilities: Str 13, Dex 15, Con 16, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 8

Skills: Intimidate +3, Spot +5, Survival +5.

Feats: Track, Weapon Focus (bite)

Mutations:

⊗ **Stalker:** Scent

Iliaster Reserve: 6

Challenge Rating: 1

Playing the Guards: Barely above animals; hunting hounds that walk erect.

– it believes that Baron Surcis gave in far too easily and that both domains could keep grinding at each other for another season, providing more iliaster for the mercenaries.

All three of these leaders will pass by the cage containing the characters at various times; clever characters can manipulate them into starting a brawl, providing a big distraction to cover their escape. If

the characters manage to do this, then skip right past the Wilderness and Bandit Attack sections entirely – Morath will still take Carstairs' soul in the confusion, but the characters will not have to fight their way out past a host of bandits and guards and will not have Redclaw chasing them.

The Wilderness

Assuming the characters do not manage to trigger a brawl soon after arriving at the caravan, the slave convoy proceeds out of the domain of Surcis and into the wilderness between the two baronies. The land around the road is a fetid swamp, pock-marked with pools of yellow water and the occasional jet of foul-smelling explosive gas. Huge spider-things stalk the landscape; these entities are much too fragile to be a threat to even a damned soul, but their legs snap in a horribly unpleasant fashion and their pitiful chitters echo out into the night.

During the trip through the wilderness, which lasts another day, the characters get a chance to see the hundreds of damned in the other cages. The damned are all kept shredded (below zero hit points, averaging -25 hit points), so it is very hard to distinguish one from another. Characters are allowed one spot check each every eight hours (DC 20 Spot and they get six checks each). If successful, they spy one particular damned soul in a corner of a cage with a red beard, who seems more aware than the other shredded victims. They also notice that damned catch Morath's eye; the cruel slaver seems almost worried and pre-occupied after it encounters Carstairs.

The Bandit Attack

The bandits attack just before dawn on the second day of the wilderness trek; a band of around a hundred bandits, a mix of demons and mortals, are hiding in the rushes near one of the fetid pools. The attack is a sudden and brutal one, with demon gunners firing

Bandit

(1st level Unaligned Beast)

Medium Demon

Hit Dice: 1d8+3 (7 hp)

Initiative: +1

Speed: 30 ft.

Armour Class: 17 (+4 natural, +1 Dex, +2 shield), touch 11, flat-footed 16

Base Attack/Grapple: +1/+2

Attack: Bite +3 melee (1d10+1)

Full Attack: Bite +3 (1d10+1)

Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.

Saves: Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +1

Abilities: Str 13, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 8

Skills: Hide +5, Listen +5, Move Silently +5, Survival +5.

Feats: Power Attack, Weapon Focus (bite)

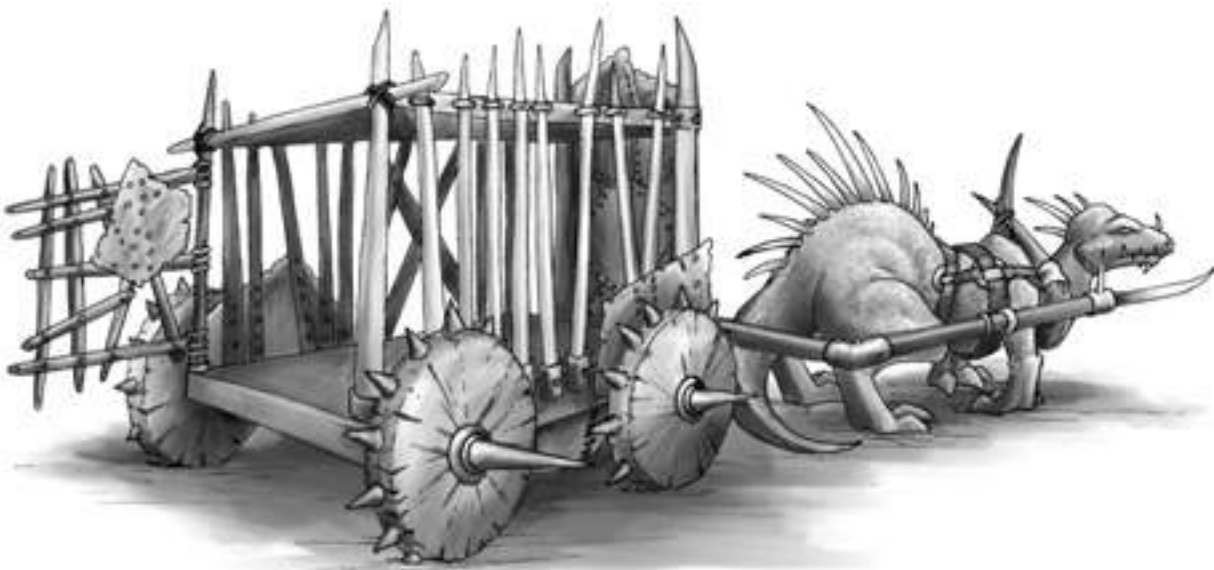
Mutations:

⊗ **Beast:** Scent

Illuster Reserve: 6

Challenge Rating: 1

shatterguns and bile rifles into the caravan. Redclaw tries to rally its troops, but the whole encounter descends into chaos almost immediately.



This is obviously the best opportunity the characters have to escape and get Carstairs. If they do not, then the caravan wins, Guyal rechecks the cages' security in the aftermath of the attack, they never get to escape and get thrown into Riaz's spawning pit a week later. Breaking out of the cage requires a Strength check (DC 30); if the characters have been using the file left by their employer, the DC is reduced by five for each day spent filing. Alternatively, a character could pick the lock. Their equipment is in a bag slung under the cart.

Once the characters escape, they find themselves in the midst of a huge brawl between bandits and caravan guards. Sensible characters will just weave through the fights and head straight for the caravan containing Carstairs. They may still run into random adversaries (roll 1d10; on a 1-3, the characters run into that many bandits; on a 4-6, they run into that many -3 guards, on a 7-10, they have an uninterrupted race to the caravan.)

If they failed to spot Carstairs earlier, they must search for him. Searching each caravan draws attacks as above from bandits or guards. The characters will have to search 1d4+1 cart before they find the right cage.

When they do they will find it empty, and the riding spawn that drew the cart is gone. The lock on the cage was forced from the outside, but the weapon used to do this broke in the attempt. Characters will recognise the remains of the broken weapon as being the knife carried by their slaver tormentor Morath.

Stealing Souls

Characters may wish to make extra cash by stealing souls from the cages in the chaos of the bandit raid. The problem is that all these souls are branded with the mark of Baron Surcis. Unless the characters can find a soulshaper who can remove the marks, they will be unable to sell the souls at anything close to their true value. The Houses frown on soul thieves, anyway, and the characters may be hunted down for this crime.

Morath took Carstairs' soul because the faustian is especially Corrupt and so will yield more iliaster and command a much, much higher price.

It is obvious that the slaver has stolen the soul of Carstairs and the riding spawn, and fled the caravan.

A successful Search or Survival roll (DC 10) shows tracks running across the mud flats towards the town of Meremouth (see page 159), which is about three days travel away. If Morath is travelling across the mud flats, it will not be going much faster on the back of a spawn than it would on foot, so the characters have a good chance of catching the slaver.

The Chase

By this point in the scenario, the characters should have escaped the slave caravan and be in hot pursuit of Morath and the damned soul of Carstairs. To retrieve the soul, all they need to do is chase the slaver to Meremouth, across 50 miles of Third Circle wilderness.

There are three complications to this:

- ⊗ Firstly, there is the 50 miles of wilderness to cover. Fortunately, the recent war has driven many of the more dangerous creatures underground, so they have a fairly clear run. The Games Master may wish to call for Survival checks to avoid becoming lost or to track Morath's path, or to roll on the random encounter table – but as the characters are low-level and are probably not in the best of shape after the bandit raid, this may wipe most of them out if they are not very lucky.
- ⊗ Secondly, Redclaw sends guards (one per character, see above for statistics) after the characters and Morath. These guards should be a constant source of pressure, driving the characters onwards. If the Players want, they can ambush the guards, or the encounter with the guards can wait until the final climax of the adventure in Meremouth.
- ⊗ The third complication is Carstairs; the slaver Morath had no idea who the soul was, it just sensed that that particular soul was more powerful and corrupt than the common muck surrounding it in the cage. As the pair travel to Meremouth, however, Carstairs begins to recover from its shredded state and reawakens. The damned was a faustian in life and knows how to survive in Hell. It is likely that Carstairs will only become a factor during the third section of the scenario, but if the characters somehow catch up with Morath early, then the dead faustian may play a role in that encounter.

THIRD CIRCLE RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

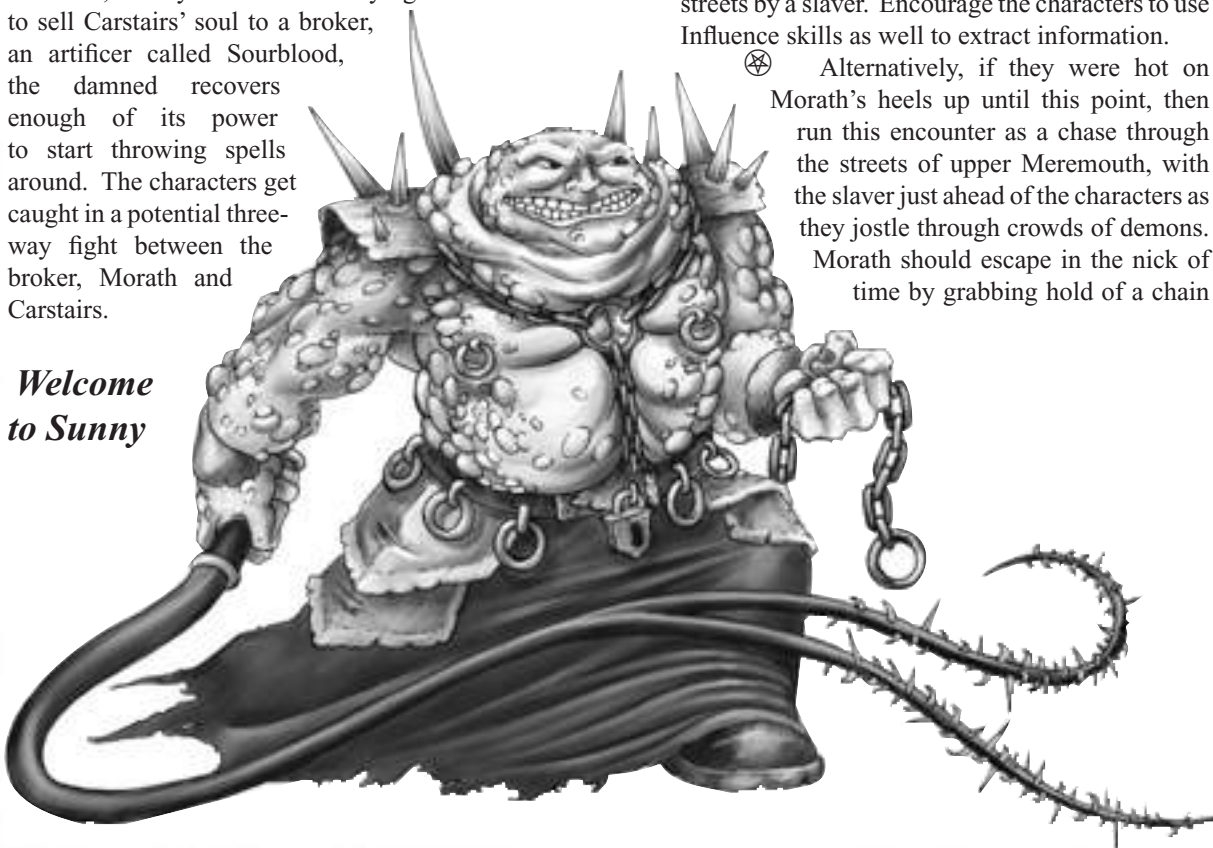
Roll	Encounter	CR
1-5	No encounter	—
6-8	Mud; slows travel	—
9-10	Swamp	—
11	Gas Jet (see page 56 of <i>Book of the Tormentor</i>)	1
12-14	Wandering spawn – 2d4+2 lesser spawn	½ each
15-16	Canal (must be swum or crossed)	—
17	Occupied canal, with a trade barge or slaver vessel	Varies
18	Bandit attack – 1d4+1 bandits	1 each
19	Dangerous spawn – hellhound	2
20	Escaped mortal from Oblurott farms	1

If running this scenario on another Circle of Hell, replace Meremouth with a similar small trade down with a reputation for lawlessness.

Part III – The Wages of Sin

The characters arrive in Meremouth – or the other lawless city of your choice – and track down Morath. However, as they find the slaver trying to sell Carstairs' soul to a broker, an artificer called Sourblood, the damned recovers enough of its power to start throwing spells around. The characters get caught in a potential three-way fight between the broker, Morath and Carstairs.

Welcome to Sunny



Meremouth

The city of Meremouth is described on page 159. Most traffic comes in by boat, but there is a winding staircase running up one of the support legs to allow travellers climb to into the upper city. Near the entrance to these stairs is the corpse of Morath's riding spawn, driven to exhaustion. Its body is already beginning to stir, as new lesser spawn grow inside it.

The city guards will question the characters as they enter the city, but Meremouth has a reputation as a centre for villainy and any half-convincing story will be accepted ('we're running across the Third Circle... for exercise').

Once inside Meremouth, finding Morath will be the character's priority. There are two ways to run this:

- ⊗ If the characters were far behind Morath, due to getting lost on the way, resting after injuries, and so on, then they need to use detective work and Gather Information to find their quarry. A successful Knowledge (local) check (DC 10) reveals that there are illegal soul brokers in the Lightless district, but there are also travelling brokers who move around by barge. A Gather Information check (DC 15) uncovers demons who saw a red bearded soul being dragged through the streets by a slaver. Encourage the characters to use Influence skills as well to extract information.

- ⊗ Alternatively, if they were hot on Morath's heels up until this point, then run this encounter as a chase through the streets of upper Meremouth, with the slaver just ahead of the characters as they jostle through crowds of demons. Morath should escape in the nick of time by grabbing hold of a chain

and lowering itself down onto a barge far below.

The Barge of Lost Souls

The broker that Morath has found is an ex-Haimon artificer called Sourblood. The artificer has a barge that criss-crosses the Third Circle, collecting rogue souls and selling them on. The barge is made from blackened bones held together with a foul-smelling resin. There are four sections to the boat.

Sourblood

(4th level Haimon Artificer)

Small Demon

Hit Dice: 4d6 (14 hp)

Initiative: +3

Speed: 20 ft.

Armour Class: 19 (+5 natural, +3 Dex, +1 size), touch 14, flat-footed 16

Base Attack/Grapple: +4/-2

Attack: Claw +3 melee (1d4-1) or Small Shattergun +8 (1d10)

Full Attack: Claw +3 melee (1d4-1) or Small Shattergun +8 (1d10)

Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.

Saves: Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +5

Abilities: Str 6, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 13, Cha 14

Skills: Appraise +9, Concentration +7, Diplomacy +9, Handle Spawn +8, Knowledge (local) +9, Move Silently +10, Spot +8, Torture +9,

Feats: Dodge, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (shattergun), Skill Focus (diplomacy)

Mutations:

- ⊗ **Artificer:** Machine Empathy
- ⊗ **Haimon:** Cold as the Dead (+4 bonus to resist Influencing)
- ⊗ **Charisma:** Dangerous Beauty (1 iliaster/+2 to Diplomacy or Seduction)
- ⊗ **Sea:** Sea-beast (+2 AC, +4 Swim, breathe underwater)

Iliaster Reserve: 10

Challenge Rating: 4

A: The Deck. The barge is normally drawn by labour spawn, but these are shackled to a post outside the city. The danger here is the pair of hellhounds who guard the barge. Characters may have to sneak into the barge if they do not want to fight the hellhounds – although those who are chasing Morath down the chain will obviously be landing right on the deck and will be attacked by the hounds. See *Book of the Tormentor*, page 230 for hellhounds.

Carstairs (5th level Damned)

Medium Damned

Progressions: Good Skills and Feats, Average Hit Points and Base Attack, Poor Saves

Hit Dice: 5d8+5 (31 hp – actually only 18, due to injuries)

Initiative: +0

Speed: 30 ft.

Armour Class: 10, touch 10, flat-footed 10

Base Attack/Grapple: +3/+2

Attack: Burning torch +2 melee (1d4-1)

Full Attack: Burning torch +2 melee (1d4-1)

Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.

Saves: Fort +2, Ref +1, Will +6

Abilities: Str 8, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 15, Wis 14, Cha 14

Skills: Bluff +10, Concentration +9, Diplomacy +12, Knowledge (arcana) +10, Survival +10, Sorcery +13, Seduction +10.

Feats: Ghost, Plasmic Body, Flowing Combat, Selfshape, Simple Weapons Proficiency, Skill Focus (sorcery)

Corruption: 19

Challenge Rating: 3 (due to lack of preparation and armour)

Rituals: *Binding I, deceit of the clouded eye, conjure hellfire, invisibility shroud, iliaster burst, iliaster drain, summoning I, warding I*

Carstairs has 30 points of iliaster in the jug, but can only drink 2d6 of these a round. He has no iliaster reserve, so he loses one point of iliaster from his pool each round. His only useful rituals in this case are *conjure hellfire* and *iliaster burst*, which he uses on any demons in range. If he has time, he also draws a *warding* around himself. If threatened, he tries to use his Ghost feat to escape.

The hellhounds will not attack Morath, as it has dealt with Sourblood before.

B: The Brokerage. This is just inside the barge and is where the finale of the game takes place. It is a surprisingly high-ceilinged cabin, richly decorated, with plenty of chains and cages along the walls. There is a table with a pitcher full of iliaster (30 points), as well as a writing desk and other items of furniture. There is also an open trapdoor in the floor, leading to...

C: The Bilges of the barge and also where the souls are kept.



D: Sourblood's Cabin; it contains more minor items, torture devices, 20 crowns in cash, a bottle of plasmic iliaster containing 30 points and a vial of Strain.

The events on the barge run as follows:

- ⊗ Morath arrives and presents the still-reforming soul of Carstairs for sale. Sourblood examines the soul and agrees that it is wonderfully Corrupt and therefore worth more. The two start haggling over the price.
- ⊗ The characters arrive on the boat. Either they are discovered by the hellhounds, in which case Carstairs uses the distraction to start his escape attempt, or else they wait until Carstairs tries to escape and use that as their distraction.
- ⊗ Either way, Carstairs grabs the pitcher of iliaster off the table and jumps down into the bilge. He then starts throwing rituals at the two demons.
- ⊗ Sourblood assumes that Morath and Carstairs are trying to murder him, so he starts fighting. During the fight, the boat catches fire and starts burning.

Ideally, the two demons and the damned soul weaken each other enough for the characters to sweep in and kill them all. As a further complication, the guards sent by Redclaw can turn up to make the situation even more nightmarish.

If the characters do not act, then Carstairs manages to kill both demons and escapes with the barge, sailing off towards the Free City of Gall.

Wrapping Up

Assuming the characters manage to recapture Carstairs, they can shred the soul once more. They might even be able to steal Sourblood's barge and sail that back down towards the domain of Surcis. Cruzef will be so grateful to have the soul back in custody that it will pay them the agreed-upon fee or arrange for their freedom, depending on what bargains they made with it. The imp will also get rid of the guards chasing them, if any.

Of course, the characters have still technically stolen a soul from the domain of Baron Riaz, who may not be so forgiving...

DESIGNER'S NOTES & BIBLIOGRAPHY

I'll get the obligatory oscar-style thank-yous out of the way first. *Infernum* is a direct product of Adrian Bott's stellar work on *Classic Play: The Book of Hell*; he's the sick one, not me. Richard Ford did an amazing job keeping this whole mad trilogy on course and assembled a crack team of artists and playtesters (especially Sam Vail and Mark Gedak). Thanks also go to the whole support network of friends and family who kept me sane as I ranted about demons and deadlines and filled the house with second-hand dusty tomes of dodgy occult lore. Brian Nisbet paid to become a lord of Hell at the Compulsion '04 charity auction, which proves you should never sell your soul while drunk.

Oh, and thanks to you for buying this. You rock and are totally not going to Hell for this.



Infernum is a game about Hell. Originally, the conception of Hell for the game was a traditional one, all brimstone and fire and suffering. While that's obviously still true, the nature of Evil in the game has shifted. The demons of *Infernum* are not evil like 'classic' demons are; they are not inherent evil, nor is evil some outside force that pervades and dominates them. They are evil like humans are, causing pain out of malice or greed or hatred or simply to survive in the easiest way possible.

This change is partly to make them more comprehensible as player characters, but also because *Infernum* is designed not to judge characters by labelling them with an alignment. There is Corruption, but that is as much a physical effect as a spiritual one. *Infernum* is designed to be a 'sandbox' game – the characters have the whole Pit to explore and manipulate as they wish. If the players want to be evil for once and do all the horrible nasty things they've thought of but couldn't do in other roleplaying games, then *Infernum* will support a game of torture and backstabbing. However if they want to be heroes fighting against Hell, or just trying to find their way out of the Pit, the game will support that too.

To put it simply, if the players want their characters to be good or evil, they should express it through the

characters' actions, not by writing an alignment or picking a side.



The obfuscation of both Heaven and the mortal world was done to give Games Masters as much freedom as possible. Mortal characters can come from anywhere in history, even the future, while making the nature of the fallen angels mysterious and keeping all references to Heaven second-hand lets the game concentrate on Hell instead of being about a putative war between the two poles of Creation. Although if the *Schism* project that preceded *Infernum* ever gets completed, things will get... interesting.



Mechanically, *Infernum* is obviously based on all the OGL games, cherry-picking elements from them. I also took the opportunity to grab some of my favourite 'fun' mechanics, like the Influencing rules, the random nature of mutations and the use of domain rulership and highly influential characters. Giving the characters something to build and rule over can tie a campaign together much better than an endless series of things to kill.

Game balance is deliberately skewed; characters tend to be very good at certain things and cripplingly bad at others. Attacking one's enemies where they are weakest is a key part of *Infernum* play; characters who solve everything through combat are missing the social/political/intrigue/sorcery avenues, which are all just as powerful. The game is not a level playing field; it is a field balanced on a point and if you move to the right place, things will tip towards you.

The Straight style of *Paranoia XP* play was very much on my mind while writing sections of *Infernum*.

Covenants and iliaster are the two pillars on which the whole setting is based, and most *Infernum* games will centre on manipulating these two elements. Covenants are essentially a form of 'social hit points' – a resource that can be spent and controlled in political play, while iliaster is the ultimate McGuffin, a resource to be captured and fought over.



Reference Books:

A Dictionary of Angels Including the Fallen Angels by Gustav Davidson is a massively comprehensive list of angels from mythology and literature and is a great source for names and ideas. *The Goetia* by Samuel Liddell Mathers (or Solomon, depending on who you ask) was the primary 'non-fiction' source for the faustians. The quasi-Victorian feel of some of the Pit's society and engineering was inspired by books like Mike Jay's *The Air Loom Gang* and Deborah Cadbury's *Seven Wonders of the Industrial World*.

Fiction:

Dante's *Inferno* was the obvious source for the geography of Hell. Milton's *Paradise Lost* and the poems of Blake were also major sources for the fallen angels. Jonny Nexus lent me a copy of Stephen Brust's *To Reign in Hell*, which is actually about Heaven. It did point me in the direction of the alchemical term 'iliaster', which was a godsend (otherwise, you'd have sat through seven hundred pages of demons fighting over Soul Power).

Turning to graphic novels, I'd recommend Alan Moore's *Promethia* (actually, I'd recommend anything he's ever written), as well as his *Swamp Thing* run, *From Hell* and much of *Hellblazer*. Neil Gaiman's *Sandman* is an unsurprising entry here (go and read *Season of Mists* now). Mike Carey's *Lucifer* series is also pretty much required reading.

Mike Carey's *Inferno* deserves a section on its own, because no-one will ever believe that I only encountered it halfway through writing Book III. It is, pretty much bang on, what an *Infernum* adventure should be. It's got damned souls, faustians, imps, fallen angels, treacheries, tortures and nightmare cities.

Frank Herbert's *Dune* was a big influence on the Branded; the Bori draw from Robert Howard's *Conan* and the *Slaine* comics, while Mervyn Peake's *Gormenghast* has already been mentioned as a source for the Houses. China Mieville's *Perdido Street Station* gave Dis much of its character. Kim Stanley Robinson's *Mars* trilogy is an unlikely influence, but the early 'colonisation drama' of Hell was partly inspired by that. The Harrowers wouldn't be in the game if it weren't for the ultimate gamer novel by Umberto Eco, *Foucault's Pendulum*.

Movies:

Hellraiser is more suited for the visuals than the story. *Event Horizon* is pretty much 'hellgouts in space', while almost any modern occult movie (*the Ring*, *the Dumas Club*, *the Sin Eater*, *Hellboy*) can be watched for *Infernum* inspiration. Whatever else this game is, it is not designed to be subtle in its nastiness.

Games:

You'd never guess we played *Doom*. A lot.

As impressionable kids.



For those who take it too seriously, and for those who take those who take it too seriously too seriously, remember that it's just a game. It's an imaginary space you control and shape, but has no meaning or power other than what you give to it. Hell is yours to play with and conquer.

Have fun,

Gar

September 2004 — March 2005



DOMAIN RULERSHIP

Name of Domain:

Name of Ruler (Rank):

()

Liege Lord:

House:

Traits

Trait

POPULOUS/EMPTY

RICH/POOR

ILIAS-TER-RICH/ILIAS-TER-POOR

FORTIFIED/UNFORTIFIED

LAWFUL/CHAOTIC

INDUSTRIALISED/UNDEVELOPED

SECURE/DANGEROUS

Value

{ }

{ }

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{ }

Demon

Soul

Current Population: _____

Domain Size

Size Mod.

Size Mult.

Current

Dissent

Natural Features

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

- _____
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- _____

Industries

Name:

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Workforce	Iliaster Needed	Profit	Cost	Garrison?

Description:

Name:

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Workforce	Iliaster Needed	Profit	Cost	Garrison?

Description:

Name:

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Workforce	Iliaster Needed	Profit	Cost	Garrison?

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Description:

Name:

Size	Structure Points	Hardness	Design DC	Craft DC	Labour Required	Workforce	Iliaster Needed	Profit	Cost	Garrison?

Description:

FORTRESS RECORD SHEET

Name of fortress:

Owner of fortress:

Fortress Type:

Size:

Hardness:

Security DC:

Sorcerous Defence:

Upgrades

GEOMANTIC DESIGNS

Component	Size	Material	SP	Hardness	Cost	Notes

STRUCTURAL ENHANCEMENTS

Component	Size	Material	SP	Hardness	Cost	Notes

SPECIAL CHARITERS

Component	Size	Material	SP	Hardness	Cost	Notes

WEAPONS

Type	Attack	Range	Damage

ARMY ROSTER SHEET

Name of General:

House:

Unit:

COMMANDER:

SIZE:

UNIT RATING:

HIT POINTS:

THRESHOLD:

MOVEMENT:

AC:

ATTACK:

DAMAGE:

SAVES: FORT:

REF:

WILL:

MUTATIONS & SPECIAL ABILITIES:

Unit:

COMMANDER:

SIZE:

UNIT RATING:

HIT POINTS:

THRESHOLD:

MOVEMENT:

AC:

ATTACK:

DAMAGE:

SAVES: FORT:

REF:

WILL:

MUTATIONS & SPECIAL ABILITIES:

Unit:

COMMANDER:

SIZE:

UNIT RATING:

HIT POINTS:

THRESHOLD:

MOVEMENT:

AC:

ATTACK:

DAMAGE:

SAVES: FORT:

REF:

WILL:

MUTATIONS & SPECIAL ABILITIES:

Unit:

COMMANDER:

SIZE:

UNIT RATING:

HIT POINTS:

THRESHOLD:

MOVEMENT:

AC:

ATTACK:

DAMAGE:

SAVES: FORT:

REF:

WILL:

MUTATIONS & SPECIAL ABILITIES:

Unit:

COMMANDER:

SIZE:

UNIT RATING:

HIT POINTS:

THRESHOLD:

MOVEMENT:

AC:

ATTACK:

DAMAGE:

SAVES: FORT:

REF:

WILL:

MUTATIONS & SPECIAL ABILITIES:

Unit:

COMMANDER:

SIZE:

UNIT RATING:

HIT POINTS:

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REF:

WILL:

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BOOK OF THE CONQUEROR

IF THERE EVER WAS A GOD, THEN HE HAS TURNED HIS FACE FROM THIS PLACE. I HAVE DONE SUCH THINGS THAT YOU WOULD CONSIDER IRREDEEMABLY VILE AND DEPRAVED AND I PROFITED FROM THEM ALL. MORALITY IS AN ILLUSION; WHAT IS RIGHT IS DEFINED BY THE STRONG AND THE CUNNING.

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