

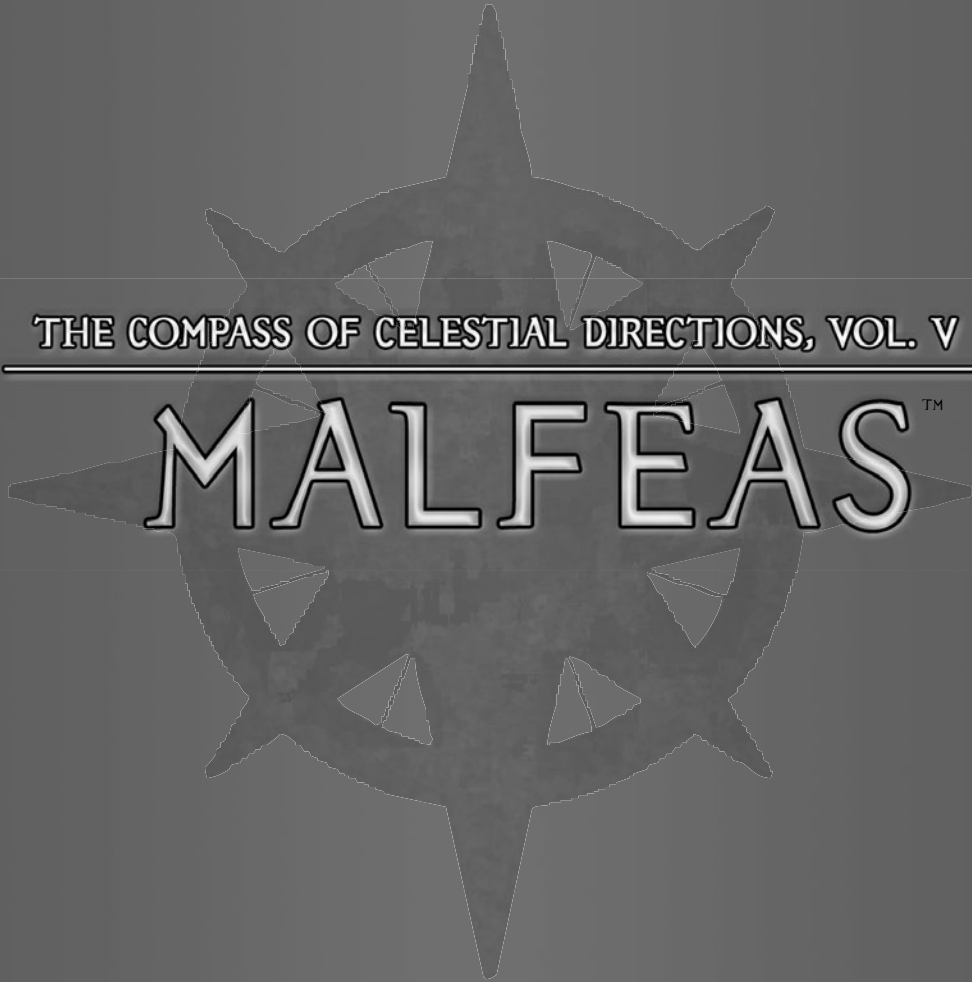
THE COMPASS OF CELESTIAL DIRECTIONS, VOL. V

MALFEAS™



A SETTING
BOOK FOR





THE COMPASS OF CELESTIAL DIRECTIONS, VOL. V

MALFEASTM

By ERIC MINTON, JACK NORRIS AND DEAN SHOMSHAK

CREDITS

Authors: Eric Minton, Jack Norris and Dean Shomshak

Comic Scripter: Carl Bowen

Additional Material: John Chambers, Conrad Hubbard and Lydia Laurenson

Developer: John Chambers

Editor: Carl Bowen

Creative Director: Rich Thomas

Art Direction and Layout: Brian Glass

Artists: Tazio Bettin, Anna Borowiecka, Ross Campbell, Sandeson Gonzaga, Groundbreakers Studio (with Paolo Aguasin, Kevin Libranda, Jezreel Rojas, Kriss Sison and Brian Valeza), Tariq Hassan, Priscilla Kim, Saana 'Kiyo' Lappalainen, Franklin Ouano, Mark Anthony Taturan, Timothy Terrenal, UDON (with Steven Cummings and Chris Stevens) and Melissa Uran

Cover Art: Samuel Gelua and Brian Valeza of Groundbreakers Studios

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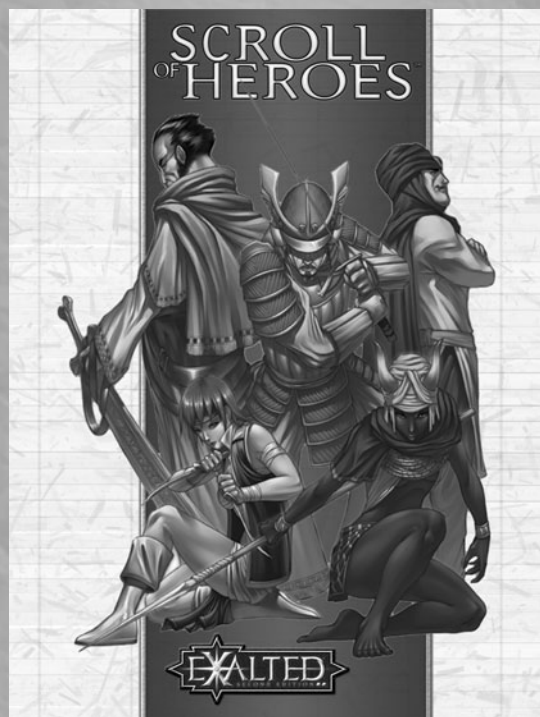
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Creation is lorded over by the mighty Exalted, but even the numerous Dragon-Blooded are as but a drop of water in the teeming sea of humanity. Most of these folk live simple lives, endeavoring to stay beneath the notice of the various supernatural beings who threaten to end or at least complicate their lives. Some few, however, rise above the masses that surround them to confront the dangers of their world head. These are mankind's heroes.

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This book uses the supernatural for settings, characters and themes. All mystical and super-

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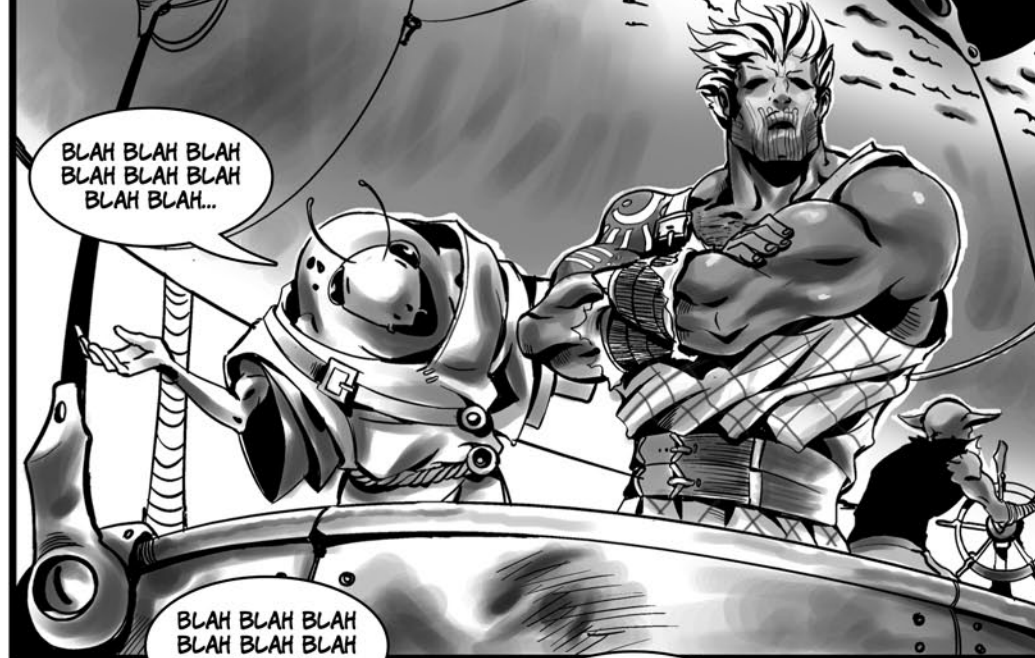
THE COMPASS OF CELESTIAL DIRECTIONS, VOL. V

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INTRODUCTION

*Here we may reign secure; and in my choice
To reign is worth ambition, though in hell:
Better to reign in hell than serve in heaven.
—John Milton, Paradise Lost*

At the end of the Primordial War, the victorious gods and their Chosen, moved by the words of the Primordial Gaia—their ally and the progenitor of the Dragon-Blooded—took “mercy” on those Primordial who chose to surrender rather than fight to the death. Instead of executing these architects of Creation, the victors crippled them and caused them to swear terrible oaths on their own names, transforming them into something less than they once were, the Yozis.

The victors then turned the infinite form of Malfeas, the fallen King of the Primordials, inside out and herded the other Yozis within, making his very body their prison and banishing them from Creation for all time. And there the Yozis and their subsidiary souls have dwelled since, seething in impotent rage at the injustice done them and plotting their return to power.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

The Compass of Celestial Directions, Vol. V—Malfeas presents the Demon City as a fully playable setting for **Exalted** series. Whether as a home base for games revolving around Infernal Exalts or Demon-Bloods or as a strange world for Creation’s Exalts to invade if they dare, the prison of the Yozis offers a dangerous new realm for players and Storytellers to explore.

Chapter One: A History of Hell

This section focuses on snippets of Malfean history, from the time of the Primordial War to the present day, and what the Yozis have learned from their own and others’ past mistakes.

Chapter Two: Life in Hell

This chapter explores what it’s like to live (and die) in the Demon City of Brass.

Chapter Three: To Rule in Hell

The focus of this chapter is on the infernal society that has been forged over the millennia within Malfeas, from its institutions to its businesses, and from its gangs to its armies.

Chapter Four: The Demon City

This chapter focuses on the important locales and edifices of the Demon City, many of which are powerful demons in their own right.

Chapter Five: The Damned

Like most prisons, the realm of Malfeas is a place of constant threat, and a number of those threats are outlined here. Demons of all three circles, as well as expatriate Exalts, behemoths, ghosts and even humans, all call the Demon City home. Examples of all are described in this chapter to serve as antagonists or allies in your series.





CHAPTER ONE

A HISTORY OF HELL

The history of Malfeas and its inhabitants is long and chaotic. Minor wars, power struggles and great epics of romance and heroism have played out within the Demon City. Each Yozi and demon of the Third Circle has influenced the fate of many. Some of their plots and plans are so twisted and intricate that even the gods can only guess at their full scope. The efforts of the denizens of Malfeas have often spread to Creation, carried by demons or cults devoted to the worship of the Yozis. The following events are far from a complete history of Malfeas, as such an account could easily fill all the libraries of the Realm. They are, however, a good sampling of the million dramas that unfold under the Green Sun and how the Yozis react to the events of Creation.

THE WAR FOR CREATION

After the gods tired of their enslavement and created the Exalted to battle their Primordial masters, a

war unlike any other began. Countless mortals died, and the race of the Dragon Kings was all but wiped out. The King of the Primordials led his kind against the gods' Chosen in battles that shook Heaven and Earth. In the end, several Primordials lay dead. The Black Boar That Twists the Skies—Isidoros, who had never known defeat—now lay half dead, his blood drowning the armies of his conquerors. Oramus, indefinable and terrible, now was held fast, bound in his own wings. The fetich souls of Adrián and the Primordials' king were killed in battle or soon after, thus changing their very natures. The other surviving Primordials looked at their devastated armies and the terrible wounds they had been dealt and surrendered. Along with the Primordials, various behemoths and those things that would become demons were rounded up. Many were slaughtered by the Exalted, but others were kept prisoner—their final



fate to be decided when the gods passed judgment on their masters. And so, with the curses of the slain Primordials still echoing in their ears, the Chosen ended the war victorious.

THE DEFEAT OF THE PRIMORDIALS AND THE BIRTH OF THE YOZIS

The beings known as the Yozis were born at the instant the surviving Primordials surrendered to the gods. Before this act of contrition and acquiescence, the Primordials were still the proud and all-powerful first beings. They and the gods who stood against them still saw within the Primordials echoes of the architects of Creation and eternal forces beyond comprehension.

When these beings looked upon their slain brothers and sisters, feeling the twinges of hatred and fear at the realization that even that which was not born could die, everything changed. Worse, they could not even claim losing to the gods themselves. Instead, the key to their defeat lay with the gods' bastard creations, the Chosen. It was then that the Primordial king's fetich was ritualistically slaughtered, turning the king inside out and causing him to change from monarch to living

prison. It was in this moment that the great monarch of the Primordials became Malfeas, the Demon City. Even those Primordials who saw their fetiches survive were never quite the same thereafter. Transformed by defeat, shock and the murders of their component souls, they were cast into the mutilated body of their king and sealed inside. As the brass and black stone walls of Malfeas closed around them, She Who Lives in Her Name shattered three of her component spheres against Malfeas' bones, burning much of the world outside and leaving Creation as it is now. Beings that once defined and made the world now found themselves driven from Creation and bound. They seethed with impotent hatred and rage, and changed from lords and masters of all to inmates plotting to defy their captors.

Thus, the beings that ruled and fought as Primordials surrendered and were imprisoned as Yozis. There they were to stay forever, alive but unable to return to Creation or storm the palaces of Yu-Shan. It is not a change as profound as the death that came to the Neverborn, but it nevertheless altered the Yozis' outlook and goals. Where once they ruled all Creation, they now rule a prison of their king's own flesh. It is a state of affairs that has persisted for thousands of years.

Mostly.





THE FALL OF THE LINTHA

During the Primordial War, the mortal spawn of Kimberly ruled a vast empire. These green-skinned Demon-Bloods drew inspiration and power from the Sea That Marched Against the Flame and lent their war machines and magic to their mistress's defense.

After the Primordials were defeated, the gods and Chosen turned to deal with those who had sided with their enemies. Behemoths were slain and locked away, while demons were swept up in the Yozis' wake and cast into Malfeas to rot with their masters.

The Lintha suffered worse than most. The honeyed lies and plots of the Eclipse Caste and the No Moons turned the Lintha nation upon itself. Warriors led by the Dawn Caste and priests of the Zenith shattered Lintha armies. Exalted sorcerers countered the Lintha spells and vanquished the demons they drew freshly spawned from Malfeas. The assault on the Lintha empire was short and brutal. The Lintha fought fiercely, but without their Yozi mother-goddess to aid them, the outcome was never in doubt. Within a year, the great Lintha empire lay in ruins. In the end, Kimberly and her fellow Yozis could only watch as the greatest of their surviving mortal worshipers and children were driven to near extinction. Although they survive as pirates, raiders and castrato cannibal cultists worshiping trapped Kimberly, the modern Lintha Family is a pale imitation of the mighty empire the Solar Deliberative crushed. Its artifacts and libraries of summoning lore are largely gone, cast into the sea or burned as blasphemies by the Chosen.

The fall of the Lintha taught the denizens of Malfeas two things. First, it cautioned them that any mortal creation of theirs could be destroyed. Prior to their defeat by the Chosen, the Primordials had never considered there were things they could make that could be destroyed beyond repair. The Yozis, however, know this all too well. Second, the Lintha's defeat illustrated to the Yozis how even against wars, exile and active attempts to exterminate them, mortals can still survive, even if in diminished or altered states. This lesson was lost on many Yozis, who saw the destruction of the Lintha as a mere footnote to their ultimate defeat. Yet, those Yozis who learned this lesson never forgot it.

THRICE-DAMNED GOROL AND THE GREAT SILENCE

Even though the Exalted were long foes of the Yozis, the might and cunning of the once-Primordials bent even some of the stalwart Chosen to their will. This ultimately led to the creation of the Green Sun

Princes, independent Infernal Exalted. The story began, however, with Gorol, the Thrice-Damned.

Before the Yozis seduced the powerful First Age Solar Gorol, they had succeeded in corrupting only a few young and minor Terrestrials. These agents were mostly rooted out and destroyed by the Solars, Lunars and Sidereals. Some were also discovered by their own Gentes and executed or turned over to the authorities.

Gorol was different. He was a hero among the Solars, and his seduction and destruction was such a terrible blow to the Exalted that they covered it up for as long as they could. Even afterward, when news of the akuma's betrayal leaked, Solar ministers colored the accounts with so much propaganda that the true account of Gorol's damnation and fall from Night Caste Solar to slave of the Yozis never came to light. (A full version of the tale of Gorol is found in **The Manual of Exalted Power—The Infernals**, pp. 49-51.)

Unfortunately for Malfeas, he made an error in the seduction of Gorol. After convincing the Solar to act as his spy, the Yozi called him to Malfeas after he believed he had learned all he needed to free himself. Thus armed, Malfeas began to work to construct the machines and power the rituals he needed to turn himself back right-side out without sundering his very nature, thus freeing himself and the other Yozis.

With his anger at imprisonment still fresh, Malfeas called his fellow Yozis to a meeting. He announced that his machinations had secured their release and that he would soon rule as their king over all once more. He spoke of returning to Creation as conquerors and crushing all who had wronged them. When Szoreny questioned if his plan was ready after such a short time, he assured all present that he knew all he needed.

He was wrong. Gorol's understanding of the Yozis' prison, which that agent had acquired and then passed along to his Yozi masters was not complete. The gods and their Exalted reality-engineers intentionally kept some aspects of the process used to bind and imprison the Yozis out of all official records. Even in their secret diaries and files, the chief architects of the prison left misleading and intentionally inaccurate information. Neither gods nor Chosen could have ever predicted the betrayal and fall of someone like Gorol, but they did fear that some spy might secure the secrets of the Yozis' prison if they were ever recorded. So, instead, they recorded false secrets and calculations that seemed complete but lacked key elements.

Therefore, when Malfeas put his great plan of escape into play mere centuries after he and his kind were imprisoned, nothing happened. Malfeas waited



for the great changes that would free the Yozis and doom Creation to their vengeful rule, but there was nothing. No great opening of the sky occurred. No triumphant return to Creation was realized. Not even a catastrophe or explosion signaling the deception. Instead, the Demon King's plans simply failed. For several moments, there was a silence so great that it is said Adorjan nearly laughed with joy. In response, Malfeas raged and howled, dropping two of his largest levels into Kimberly, but the cunning architects of the prison answered simply with silence.

Malfeas ordered all records of this event stricken from the official records. Demons were ordered to forget the matter completely, and those that would not or could not were destroyed or had the event cut from their minds. Only the Yozis remember clearly, and they do not speak of it. The reason for this is simple: They all were taken in by Malfeas' plan, and none wish to be reminded of their false hopes or the horrible sense of helplessness they felt in those moments of silence. Still, none of them have forgotten that time, and some learned much from the failure and embarrassment of their king.

MILLENNIA OF LITTLE WARS

Major wars are unheard of in Malfeas. The Yozis don't always get along—they even plot against one another from time to time—but they don't fight one another. Such struggles are dangerous and wasteful. That's not to say that battles and wars don't occur. On the contrary, some part of Malfeas is always at war with another. Ever since the prison came to be, demons of the Second and First Circle have sought to carve out little kingdoms within the Demon City for themselves. As long as the demons did not try to overthrow the unquestionable or the Yozis, their masters did nothing to discourage these struggles. War strengthened the strong and crushed the weak. It allowed the wisest and most powerful of the lesser demons to be identified. It even tempered the powers of the demons of the Third Circle as their component souls gained power and experience through one conflict or another.

No, the Demon City is in a perpetual state of war. Not every level or area is always engaged in an armed conflict, though. Most are engaged in cold wars of spies and secrets, trade wars or other conflicts. These clashes never involve the Yozis or unquestionable directly. To do so would invite certain doom or, at the very least, a loss of power and citizenship. Regardless of the exact form they take, wars are everywhere, and true peace is so rare in Malfeas it is nearly a myth.

THE TRIUMPHS AND TRAGEDY OF THE QUARTER PRINCE

It took the demon Octavian 2,000 years to carve out the empire he now rules in Malfeas. The Living Tower has managed to cast his shadow wide across a full quarter of one of Malfeas' largest and most populous levels. His empire is now equal to any in Creation, and he dreams of it growing greater still.

The demon is not the mightiest being in Malfeas, but he is one of the mightiest beings in the Demon City concerned with matters of territory and empire. The Yozis and their souls already exist as the city itself and, as such, care little for expansion and conquest. They instead prefer to focus on escape and the corruption of Creation. As a demon of the Second Circle, Octavian had just the right mix of lust for territory and desire to write his name in blood across history. Whatever he lacks in craft and subtlety, he makes up for in battle experience and ferocity.

Before he ruled in Malfeas as the Quarter Prince, Octavian was already a terror in battle. He faced countless foes. Demons and heroes fell before him. The bodies of the vanquished lay pulped and broken as the ground trembled beneath his feet. And through the years, Octavian reveled in the slaughter. His last two millennia spent as an empire builder have only strengthened him. He draws worshipers and foot soldiers from Malfeas and Creation. He leads from the front of his armies. Octavian has been summoned to fight in Creation in the past, both by sorcerers and by the challenges of heroes. It was in one of these battles that he ripped the head of the Dawn Caste general Twelve-Crested Eagle from its owner's shoulders. That same trophy still adorns the demon's belt, and after the battle was over, Octavian took Twelve-Crested Eagle's skin to record the Living Tower's victories.

On only two occasions has Octavian met a foe he could not defeat. Both times were in Creation at the hands of the same two foes. This fact is not lost on any demon who considers challenging the Living Tower. Octavian will not tolerate any mention of his defeat, though when he broods over it in private, he consoles himself that it took both the fabled No Key, the Mushroom King, and the river god Lord of Nine Falls working together both times to drive him back to Malfeas. Still, these defeats weigh heavily on the demon, and it is these two incidents that drive him more than his countless victories. He wishes to crush, kill and conquer to show all that these failures were mere flukes. He would welcome a chance to take revenge



upon the Mushroom King and Lord of Nine Falls, but he is also reluctant to press the issue until he can find a way to defeat No Key's demon-vanquishing weapon.

Octavian wants to push his empire as far as his masters will allow within the Demon City, and he dreams of marching his war host across Creation. He is a plague on heroes from ancient times, showing no signs of weakening.

THE FALL OF THE SOLARS

Although it did not free them from their prison, the Yozis took delight at the betrayal and death of the Solars at the hands of their Dragon-Blooded soldiers and attendants. The Solars had been some of their most hated foes, and to see them brought down by those less powerful than they seemed like poetic justice. Also, with the loss of the main beings capable of summoning the more powerful demons from Malfeas, these beings had more time to plot and plan new methods of escape with their Yozi masters.

Like all things with the Yozis, however, this celebration was bittersweet. The Solars' fall did not free the Yozis from Malfeas, and the Dragon-Blooded rebels killed several akuma hidden among the Celestial Exalted. The loss of so many powerful summoners also meant that many demons of the Third Circle (and even some demons of the Second Circle) found it more difficult to reach Creation. This resulted in even fewer akuma, as the Demon City's most powerful and adept citizens were largely confined to Hell.

Therefore, during the rise of the Realm and through much of its existence, many demons worked and bided their time within the confines of the Demon City.

THE GREAT CONTAGION

Much like the fall of the Solars, the Great Contagion engendered a mixed reaction among the Yozis. Many delighted in seeing such death and destruction weakening Creation. These Yozis and their demons looked with envy on the creation of the Deathlords. Locked in their twisted Primordial thinking, the Yozis themselves would not have conceived of such a plan. Certain Yozis such as the Ebon Dragon began to consider the inadequacies of akuma in many plots and plans once more.

Despite a certain vengeful glee, other Yozis felt the event was not entirely cause for celebration. So much death empowered their slain brethren far more than it helped the Yozis. Like everything else in Creation, many infernal cults were devastated as their members succumbed to the disease. With humans and Creation so weakened, the Fair Folk and the Wyld came. While they hated the Chosen and cared little for mortals, the

Yozis knew that their old enemies the raksha would do nothing to break the Yozis' prison. If the Wyld consumed Creation, it was likely that Malfeas and its inhabitants would wait out eternity in a cage.

Therefore, the Yozis secretly cheered for the triumph of the Dragon-Blooded. They even assisted the Realm in some secret ways. Any specifics of these plans were of the utmost secrecy, and the official records were kept hidden. While the Yozis and their demons did not want the Terrestrials to fail, their pride and hatred refused to let them ever admit it.

Several Dragon-Blooded akuma died at raksha hands or succumbed to the Great Contagion during this time, but a handful remained. Directed by their masters, these corrupted Exalts managed to gain some measure of fame and recognition for their defense of Creation. As long as they hid their true nature, they were war heroes. Most of these akuma became great ministers and generals of the early Scarlet Empire. There was little they could do to free their masters, but they provided valuable information about this new Realm for the Yozis to exploit.

It is also worth noting that the Ebon Dragon noticed once more the failings of the akuma. While some managed to infiltrate and plot, they proved far inferior to the Deathlords servants of the Neverborn. They required constant supervision lest their lack of free will become a hindrance. Also, their creation was unreliable, dependent on too many external factors. Again, the Shadow of All Things considered a new and better way.

THE SEDUCTION OF THE SCARLET EMPRESS

Although demons of the Third Circle rarely came to Creation during her reign, many took great interest in the Realm's ruler. As arguably the most powerful being in Creation since the fall of the Solar Deliberative, the Scarlet Empress seemed to various demons to be the ultimate prize. If a demon could control her, it could corrupt the Realm and more easily move in Creation.

As a result, those demons that could contact the Empress and her court did so. Many demons of the Third Circle, such as Ligier, were even able to receive invitations allowing them to enter Creation for an audience. These meetings were not made public to the citizens of the Realm or many outside the Imperial Court, but the Scarlet Empress met with several demons during her reign. Some were minor demons, but others were among the most powerful in Malfeas. Each tried, in its own way, to seduce and corrupt her.





All failed. Sometimes, minor deals were made, exchanging slaves or certain materials for an important artifact or piece of information lost to Creation. Mostly, these attempts were interesting but ultimately fruitless negotiations and social events. Eventually, most of the mightier demons gave up, allowing their subordinates to continue attempting what they were coming to see as a pointless task. For whatever reasons, the Scarlet Empress did not succumb to the seductive promises of any demon while she sat on the Scarlet Throne.

While most Yozis found the Scarlet Empress's resistance to temptation at the hands of lesser demons annoying, others were intrigued. These few Yozis saw the will and ingenuity of the Scarlet Empress and others like her as a powerful tool to be acquired. Thus was one more link in a long chain of events formed.

THE TRAGIC TALE OF GERVESIN

Most demons eschew the idea of love as mortals understand the concept. Because they are unable to feel it, they fail to understand it or they fear its effects, some of the most powerful demons avoid love like mortals avoid a plague. Until 200 years ago, the demon Gervesin was like this.

Two centuries ago, Gervesin came to the city of Chiaroscuro. At the time, he was riding within the half-dead body of a famed Dragon-Blooded warrior who had thought he could tame Gervesin's green spear-body and turn the demon to his will. As with so many others before, it was the demon who ultimately emerged victorious. He claimed the Exalt's body and began to cut a terrible swath across the South.

This rampage ended when the demon arrived in Chiaroscuro. Devastating the city's defenders, Gervesin strode confidently down the streets of the city, planning to twist and destroy it as a message to Creation about the unstoppable power of the Yozis and the inevitability of their victory.

None could stand against the demon, but one brave mortal tried. A retired soldier, lame in one leg, Kinnojo was never the best of warriors or even the bravest of men. Still, he loved his city and those in it as fiercely as anyone. So when he saw Gervesin walking down the streets of his city, he could not stand by. Rather than let the demon continue to spread corruption, murder and disease throughout his beloved home, Kinnojo grabbed his flame piece and old officer's sword and walked out into the street to face the demon.

Gervesin barely paused to leer derisively at the mortal before he struck him down. Yet, as his spear

tore into Kinnojo's heart, he drank in the love and purity of the old soldier's soul rather than terror or fear. Gervesin felt the love and warmth the mortal held for the city he called home. And in that moment, Gervesin fell in love. The power of this new emotion began to grow even as Kinnojo's flesh burned and turned to ash from the power of the demon's strike. A moment later, Kinnojo's soul faded into Lethe and was beyond the demon's grasp. Reeling from the shock of finding and losing love so suddenly, the demon fled with tears of grief trailing in his wake.

Since that day, Gervesin has devoted himself to the love he so briefly had. His actions have earned him the title of the Grieving Lord. He protects Chiaroscuro as his love would wish him to, and he hopes that Kinnojo might somehow return to him one day. The demon writes poems that his love will never hear and carries the story of his great romance tattooed across his body. Kinnojo's bones have been scattered across Creation, taken by scavengers and relic-hunters. The demon has collected much of his love's remains and would offer much to collect the rest so he can return them to rest in Chiaroscuro.

THE ARRIVAL OF GEMSTONE OCEAN HERO

Roughly two centuries ago, the Dragon-Blooded Gemstone Ocean Hero arrived in the Demon City. He was accepted as most strangers are, neither greeted warmly nor killed outright. After several years, however, the Terrestrial Exalt won both the support of the demon Lypothymie and notice from the powerful in Malfeas. A strong warrior with a keen intellect, Gemstone Ocean Hero soon proved very useful to his demonic patrons. In particular, his ability to read the azure-edged legal documents that most in Malfeas are not allowed even to look at was treasured by many. Almost as valuable is his exploitation of Cecelyne's priests' lack of claim over him. Not demon, but still resident, Gemstone Ocean Hero profits from making binding contracts between parties in defiance of Cecelyne's laws. The Exalt is careful not to flaunt or abuse his value. In return, he enjoys the quiet support of many powerful demons who hope to someday use him to their own advantage.

Many demons and several Yozis have courted Gemstone Ocean Hero to join the ranks of the akuma. Thus far, the Dragon-Blood has resisted all such efforts. He remains in Malfeas, the ultimate outcaste in one of the most dangerous places imaginable.



THE RECLAMATION AND THE BREAKING OF THE JADE PRISON

All who know the Ebon Dragon know that he, perhaps more than any other Yozi, seeks escape from the Demon City. While he cannot match Malfeas' rage and did not display the defiance of She Who Lives in Her Name, he labors constantly, devising his plan to escape and cast his shadow across all Creation. He had learned many lessons from the talents and resourcefulness of the Exalted and the inadequacies of the akuma. The history of Creation had showed him the Deathlords could be powerful if untrustworthy allies. All of these realizations nestled in the Yozi's dark places and became the beginnings of the plan. The plan was so grand it would give him not only escape, but victory in Creation. All that the Shadow of All Things needed was the right tools, and he could shatter the walls that held him from his destiny.

When the Shadow of All Things discovered the Jade Prison, a power core that contained the secrets to the Solar Exaltations, he saw a chance to score a major victory for himself and serve his ultimate goals. He made secret deals with the Neverborn and their Deathlord servants. He gained half-hearted support from four of his brothers and sisters: Malfeas, Cecelyne, She Who Lives in Her Name and Adorjan. These Yozis did not necessarily think the Ebon Dragon's plan would work, but they were willing to try. Trading technology and knowledge for part of the prize, the Ebon Dragon's assistance enabled his Neverborn allies to break open the Jade Prison and capture 150 of the Exaltations contained within. To the Dragon and four of his Yozi brethren were tithed a third of these.

This coup gave the Yozis the ability to craft true Infernal Exalted. Previously, the Yozis had been limited to seducing, enslaving and breaking the will of existing Exalted. The process was effective, but it usually left the subject lacking the power and ingenuity of a fully realized Solar possessing a will wholly her own. Now, the four Yozis who conspired with the Ebon Dragon had two score and ten servants whose powers could match the mightiest of the gods' Chosen. These Exalted would form the cornerstone of the Yozis' plans to sun-der their prison and reclaim Creation for themselves. These Infernal Exalted, or Green Sun Princes as they are often called, were ready to work across all realms to enable their lords' return.

The creation of the Green Sun Princes has brought about a subtle change in at least some of the Yozis. These new powerful Exalted servants possess their own

will and could theoretically betray the Yozis as the gods once turned against their Primordial lords. The relatively small number of these beings makes this unlikely, but nevertheless, the Yozis have discovered they must deal with these new creations differently. Before the genesis of the Infernal Exalted, the Yozis stood above all as masters over slaves. Even the demons of the Third Circle, while unquestionable to all below them, were the eternal servants to their masters' will. Yet the Yozis must deal with the Infernals as lords over vassals.

This subtle change has been noticed by some, and more than a few demons have come to envy that status. These malcontents cannot stand against the Yozis or their loyal servants, but they occasionally raise disparate voices among the thousands of demons offering prayers of love and fealty to the Yozis. Also, movements have begun in some areas of the Demon City to learn to accept and enjoy their prison as a true home. This idea rarely causes rebellion or noticeable strife, but it suggests that some of the lesser demons are gradually evolving opinions of their existence separate from the Yozis' constant push for escape and conquest.

THE WEDDING OF THE EBON DRAGON

In addition to his plots and plans involving the creation of the Green Sun Princes, the Ebon Dragon is getting married. This announcement came as a shock to all who heard. The Ebon Dragon has no need of a mate for procreation, and he has never publicly expressed mortal sentiments of loneliness or a desire for companionship. Nevertheless, his wedding is very real, and it is happening soon.

The Ebon Dragon jealously guards the identity of his bride to be. He protects her from Yozi and god alike with this secrecy. All he will reveal is that his bride is a human. Most who hear this agree that she must be a woman of exceptional power and beauty, though no one can say for sure. He has already assigned several of his Exalted to protect this woman, and they will form the core of her honor guard when the ceremony is complete.

The rest of the details about the upcoming nuptials of the Shadow of All Things is pure speculation. Those who know the Ebon Dragon well are certain this wedding plays an important part in the breaking of the Yozis' prison and their conquest of Creation. Most assume that it also aids the Ebon Dragon more in this regard than it does his fellow Yozis. Yet, exactly how this all works is a mystery and will likely remain so until the day the Ebon Dragon is married and his plans are revealed.

That day is coming very soon.



MY WINGS! I CAN'T
KEEP THIS UP!

THIS IS FAR
ENOUGH! THERE
THEY ARE!



COME ON, BOYS!
KIMBERY'S PISSED!

WHERE'S
EVERYBODY
ELSE?

HOW'D YOU GET
OUT?

WE KNOW,
BOSS!

THEY'RE GONE!
UGLY QUARTER'S
COMPLETELY
FLOODED ALREADY!

THE SEWERS, BOSS!
BUT SHE'S BACKING
THOSE UP TOO!

WE ALMOST
DIDN'T MAKE
IT!

COME ON! THIS
WAY!

BUT WHY DIDN'T
THE EVACUATION
HORNS GO OFF,
BOSS?

LIGHTNING! KIMBERY
DESTROYED ALL THE
HORN TOWERS!

SHIT...

WE'RE
SCREWED,
AREN'T WE,
BOSS?

YEP. LOOKS
LIKE IT'S OUR
TURN FOR IT.





CHAPTER TWO

LIFE IN HELL

When the Incarnae maimed, bound and expelled the Yozis from Creation, the defeated former Primordials shaped a new world—a prison made from their own bodies. The world of Malfeas became a place vastly unlike Creation. Malfeas has no elemental poles to structure and define its substance. Instead, the bodies of the Yozis are tangled together in a twisted, knotted quilt of bizarre environments: here a cityscape of black stone and brass, there an endless desert; metallic forest and acidic sea; temples of leathery wings and storms of liquid dreams.

Most of all, Malfeas lacks the stable structure of Creation. The Yozis twitch and squirm about each other in their imprisonment, changing the shape of Hell. Vast provinces sink beneath Kimberly's waves or split to reveal new territories. Many regions remain locally stable for long periods, but any large-scale atlas of Malfeas would become worthless in a few centuries.

The strangeness of Malfeas goes beyond the geography as well. Demons are not mortal creatures; they do not think quite as mortals do. They live in ways as alien as their world.

THE DESCENDING HIERARCHY

Perhaps the single greatest difference between demons and humans is that demons know their place in their world. Even in the most rigid, caste-bound societies in Creation, humans can imagine how their lives could be different. They can envy those greater, richer or happier than themselves in the knowledge that only an accident of birth separates the peasant from the prince. Likewise, humans can pity those who are weaker, poorer or more miserable, for bad luck could strike down anyone at any time.

Demons, however, know they were made to be exactly who and what they are. Many demons exist to



perform specific tasks or fill specific roles: neomah as concubines, erymanthoi as brutal warriors, angyalkae as musicians, sesseljae as eaters of filth. Demons who lack such an obvious function nevertheless know they were created by entities of greater power, the Second Circle demons. There was no accident of birth, and nothing they do can ever turn them into Second Circle demons. Second Circle demons exist as emanations of the mighty Third Circle demons, whose will no one can question. Third Circle demons emanate from the Yozis themselves, who define the demon realm by their very existence.

In the parlance of Hell, Third Circle demons are the unquestionable. Lesser demons simply try to avoid or endure whatever a Third Circle demon does, because they have no power to change a Demon Prince's actions. Second Circle demons are all citizens. They cannot gainsay the Yozis or the unquestionable, but they can wield power in domains of their own choosing. First Circle demons all begin as serfs, if not outright slaves. They serve at the pleasure of those with greater power. A few of them manage to become citizens through unusual talent, hard work and a bit of luck, but they remain clearly subordinate to the Second Circle demons.

Demons call this arrangement the Descending Hierarchy. In it, power and authority flow downward, like water, from the rulers to their vassals—never upward, for the greater owe nothing to their inferiors.

A PLACE TO LIVE AND DIE

The people of Creation know that they live surrounded by gods. Nevertheless, the supreme powers of Creation—the Incarnae—seldom intervene in the daily workings of the world they oversee. Not so in Malfeas. Demons live on and in their Yozi overlords, and the whims of the Yozis and their Third Circle avatars shape their world. Many aspects of demonic culture developed in response to their enigmatic masters.

The greatest influence is Malfeas himself. His body consists of numerous shells of black stone and metal, covered in streets and buildings. Other Yozis form smaller (though still vast) locations within him, or move through his expanses. Adorjan, the Silent Wind, blows through his streets, and Cecelyne, the Endless Desert, forms the boundary for each and every layer of Hell. The acid sea Kimberly washes over sections of some shells. The forest Szoreny grows along one of Kimberly's shores. The demon realm also has pockets of swamp and mountain, endless catacombs and many other diverse landscape features, but none of them are quite like their counterparts in Creation. Most signifi-

cant features exist as, or as part of, a Yozi, a Third Circle demon or a behemoth of a Yozi's creation.

DAYS OF TERROR, NIGHTS OF WOE

Even the simplest, most basic phenomena that Creation's folk take for granted become strange and terrible in Malfeas. Consider, for instance, the passage of time. Creation's folk know an orderly passage of days, months, seasons and years. The Unconquered Sun passes across the sky without fail. In all the centuries since he first rose into the heavens, he has not been early or late by so much as a minute. Folk call Luna the Changing Lady, but she too adheres strictly to her own cycles. The seasonal flows of heat and cold, growth and decay proceed in order from the elemental poles. The five moonless, starless nights of Calibration announce the end and beginning of the years.

But in Malfeas?

In Malfeas, an emerald sun glares always overhead, never moving or fading. Wherever one goes in the Demon City, the Demon King's burning heart stays ever at the zenith. Tunnel through a layer of Hell to the other side, and the Green Sun shines there too.

Darkness falls only when the Ebon Dragon flies between Ligier and the ground—a brief night that comes without warning. Prudent demons then hide and stop their ears. Where the Ebon Dragon's shadow falls, the Yozi's soul Erembour, That Which Calls to the Shadows, winds her horn. Those who hear her eerie music must follow, and many of them are changed. They can no longer abide the Green Sun's light and must seek refuge underground, until the next time the Yozi's shadow falls and the horn of Erembour calls them forth once more.

No demon except sleeping Sacheverell knows where or when the Ebon Dragon's shadow falls, so this ersatz night is useless for telling time. Instead, demons know the days and nights of Creation through the tomescu. Foreknowledge of their deaths curses these demon warriors. At Creation's dawn and dusk, they scream in horror at their predestined end. Clever demon artisans know how to build hourglasses, water clocks and other devices for measuring time, but Cecelyne forbids them. The screams of the tomescu are Malfeas' only timepiece.

THE REVELS OF EREMBOUR

Most sentient demons have the strength of will to resist Erembour's horn. Nevertheless, they take no chances. When the Ebon Dragon's shadow falls, most demons leave the streets. They distract themselves from the call to the shadows by clapping and dancing the farandole of the Ebon Dragon... but they dance the steps

backward, because that requires greater concentration. Thus do the demons honor the Ebon Dragon's power even as they attempt to resist and deny it.

What of those who answer the call to the shadows? They feel a thrill of fear as they give themselves to the night, but it excites them as well. The fear soon fades. As they join the throng that follows Erembour, each demon realizes that he is among friends, and more. Creatures who would set even a demon screaming with fear or revulsion minutes before suddenly seem beautiful. The music of Erembour coaxes her followers into a languorous dance. In the depths of Hell, creatures of nightmare feel a sweetness fill their hearts, tinged with wistful melancholy because they know that this enchanted night soon must pass. As the dancers flirt and gyre, they pair off and leave the dance to couple in private shadows, alone together in tender passion.

RESISTING THE CALL

See pages 47–48 of *The Books of Sorcery, Vol. V—The Roll of Glorious Divinity II* for the full description of Erembour and the fate of those who follow her horn. In brief, a character needs a Dodge Mental Defense Value of 5 or higher to resist Erembour's call. Those who lack it must live in darkness forever more, for the light of both the Unconquered Sun and Ligier becomes painful to them. If a character succumbs to Erembour's call, her player must roll (Stamina + Resistance), difficulty 3, for her to avoid a physical metamorphosis. Those in Creation whose players fail the roll transform into a night-dwelling beast. Those in Malfeas become one of the eldritch creatures who dwell in the catacombs beneath the Demon City's streets.

Characters who lack a Dodge MDV of 5+ can still attempt to resist Erembour's call. Such characters must attempt stunts to distract themselves from the seductive sorrow of her horn. Simply putting fingers in ears and humming loudly is only a one-die stunt, for Erembour's music is heard by the soul. Dancing backward, with company to help each other resist the call, provides an example of a three-dice stunt. Each success rolled on the stunt dice adds directly to the character's Dodge MDV. Anyone who can resist Erembour's call can also attempt a stunt to help those who succumb, adding the stunt dice successes to the other person's Dodge MDV instead.



Box 11



Too soon, the Ebon Dragon departs and Erembour with him. The harsh light of Ligier glares down to break the spell and scourge the revelers from the streets. They remember that they are demons in a prison-world of hate and shame. They curse Erembour for tricking them into feeling love, while praying that the Ebon Dragon passes once more.

BENEATH A WANDERING MOON

Malfeas has a moon as well as a sun: Ululaya, the Blood-Red Moon and third soul of the demon sea Kimberly. Mortals call Luna the Changing Lady, but that Incarna is a paragon of reliability compared to Ululaya. The Blood-Red Moon wanders erratically through the skies of Malfeas, though she takes care not to approach the Green Sun too closely. She likewise shows whatever phase she pleases, and her aspect changes from hour to hour.

CALIBRATION

Hell has no months or seasons, but demons know the passing of years because of Calibration. For five days, the walls between worlds grow thin and flickers of Creation appear throughout the Demon City.

Manifestations of Creation usually appear and disappear too quickly for anyone to be sure they happened at all. For a fraction of a second, ivy twines amid a patch of leaden vines. A bird's song weaves through the harping of the angyalkae. A breath of true sea air wafts through the acrid winds of Kimberly. Once in a while, though, some tiny object or creature slips through the cracks completely and stays in the demon realm.

Demons celebrate Calibration as the safest time of their year. For these five days, the unquestionable commune with their Yozi progenitors... or set themselves apart in case some mighty sorcerer summons them into

Creation. Whatever the reason, they *leave the other demons alone*, and First Circle demons regard that as a true holiday. What's more, a demon who keeps her wits about her might be able to leap through a momentary breach in the prison and escape into Creation, to seek what fun and fortune she will.

YOZIS AND TIME

Finally, Malfeas has no Loom of Fate to guarantee that effects follow causes and that time flows at the same rate everywhere. By the terms of their surrender, the Yozis must preserve the flow of time, past to future. (They cannot renounce history and unmake their defeat, for instance.) Yet, time in Hell is still much looser than in Creation. A summoned demon actually receives the call five days *before* a sorcerer summons it, so it has time to walk across Cecelyne to Creation.

Time is not consistent through the Demon City, either. Five days in one part of Hell might be one day elsewhere, or 10. No one can actually go backward in time, though the Yozis *can* declare that events in Malfeas never happened. They can reach only five days into the past, and they cannot reach beyond Hell or cause any change that would alter the past of Creation. Most importantly, they cannot change the history of any creature they did not create, or who has not submitted utterly to their power.

Thus, a visitor to Hell could ask a Yozi to unmake an event that he now considers a mistake, such as accidentally killing a comrade. Denying one's own continuity through time in this manner requires sacrificing a *dot* of Willpower. Yozis always produce the requested change to one's personal past, though. They may also produce other changes. The Yozis do not change history very often, though, for such manipulations trouble the sleep of Sacheverell, who would bring absolute predestination if he awakened. Even the Yozis don't want that.

CALIBRATION CRACK JUMPING

During Calibration, anyone in Malfeas (except for the Yozis themselves) can jump to Creation if they find one of the fraction-of-a-second gaps between worlds. This is possible if a bit of Creation manifests within a yard of someone. The being's player rolls (Wits + Athletics) to dive for the gap, at a difficulty equal to the demon's Essence. The being also reflexively spends 10 motes or three Willpower points (player's choice) to force the crack in the world wide enough to pass through. Only one being can possibly escape through a single crack.

CAVEAT EMPTOR

The Yozis' capacity to alter history within Malfeas would seem to break Exalted's principle that death is irrevocable. Well, yes, but only within certain limits. It applies only to people who die within Malfeas. It happens solely at the Storyteller's discretion. Finally, it involves letting a sadistic, nigh-omnipotent enemy of Creation change the last five days of the character's history *any way it wants*. Anyone so foolish or desperate deserves whatever he gets.

TOXIC SPITE

Malfeas hates humanity and, indeed, all things of Creation born. This hatred manifests as a faintly acrid odor in the demon realm's air—a toxin that kills mortals in seven days; no more, no less. It does not affect raksha, the Exalted, Demon-Blooded, mortal akuma or fully supernatural creatures such as ghosts.

Nevertheless, demons and other powerful beings sometimes want to bring mortals into Hell, so they have devised a few means of protecting them from the Demon King's spite. These methods are little known in Creation, but easily learned about in Hell. All protections against the toxic air carry some disadvantage.

AN ALCHEMICAL ANTIDOTE

Miasma-Warding Mist (1, Intelligence, 2, one hour): The demon alchemist Mambres first compounded this heavy silver vapor from Szoreny-pith, earthly chrysanthemums and the venom of desert scorpions. Its protection lasts for only one day, so a prolonged stay in the Demon City necessitates regular use.

In addition to its medicinal value, miasma-warding mist provides a sense of euphoria for an hour after inhalation. It has the poison traits of Damage 2B/hour, Toxicity 4M, Tolerance (Stamina)/1 day, Penalty -2. Mortals might find it addictive. It is one of the more exotic habits peddled by House Cynis—and expensive, since Creation's alchemists need a demonologist's help to obtain one of its ingredients. It isn't cheap in Malfeas, either, since demons must import the other two ingredients from Creation. A dose of miasma-warding mist requires Resources ••• in Creation or Malfeas, while a month's supply requires Resources •••••.

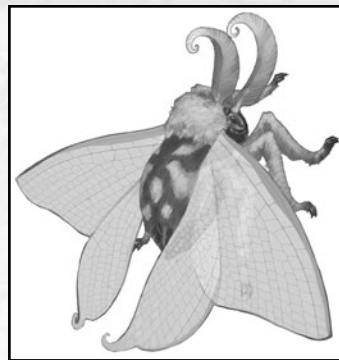
The irises of those under the vapor's influence gleam with silver, though the sheen fades once the drug passes from the system. In addition, a habitual user's hair, teeth and nails turn a leaden gray over a number of months equal to his Stamina. The user's player must also make a yearly (Stamina + Resistance) roll at difficulty 3 or suffer some form of physical degeneration, such as arthritis, weakness, fatigue or mirror-bright cataracts. Barring the use of exotic purgatives or medicinal Charms, these effects are permanent.

MAYFLY MASK (ARTIFACT ••)

This creature resembles an insect, half-fly and half-moth, with a palm-sized body and a surfeit of legs. A Solar Exalt bred the first mayfly masks during the First Age so that his retinue could join his safaris through the Demon City without succumbing to the poisoned air. The Bureau of Destiny keeps a small supply, as

does the Heptagram, Lookshy's Academy of Sorcery and quite a few demon lords.

A mayfly mask clasps itself onto a mortal's face at the first opportunity. Unless driven off—a trivial task—it covers the mortal's mouth and



nose with its body while its wings waft gently to either side. The mask sends slender tubes down its host's throat to supply her with filtered air, water and recycled nourishment. It consumes wine, juice, honey, blood and other liquid foodstuffs through an extensible proboscis, requiring only as much as is needed to feed its host.

Due to the mask's airtight grip, its host cannot eat, drink, smell, taste or speak. The creature protects her against ingested and airborne diseases and poisons, including the toxic gas that normally slays mortals who trespass in Malfeas. The host loses a temporary Willpower point from the constant effort of will to keep from ripping the repulsive creature off her face. The lost Willpower cannot be regained until the mayfly mask is removed.

DAMNABLE WEATHER

In Creation, the divine Bureau of Seasons directs the weather. The lesser gods and elementals enjoy great freedom in how they send wind, rain and other forms of atmospheric phenomena, but the grand patterns of seasons, climates and prevailing winds stay much the same from year to year. Ghataru, Shogun-Regent of the Seasons and Weather, ordains what weather Creation experiences, and the other gods do not defy him.

Not so in Malfeas. Two Yozi bear principal responsibility for weather in Hell. They do not coordinate, at least as far as any lesser demon can discern. Nor do they ordain any fixed schedule or program for their subordinates. From day to day—sometimes hour to hour—the caprice of myriad demons decides whether a section of Malfeas knows heat or cold, hurricane or calm. Other demons can influence the weather to some degree, but they never truly know what comes next.

WINDS OF TERROR

Winds blow constantly throughout the Demon City. Usually these are mere random puffs of breeze stirred by the passage of the Ebon Dragon, a shifting of one of Malfeas' shells or the movement of some other Yozi or Third Circle demon. Sometimes, strong winds blow; these usually mark the passage of the radeken.



These winds may carry strange rain or hail they stole from other weather demons, but often one manifests as nothing more than a rush of air.

The greatest wind of Hell is the Yozi Adorjan, but the Silent Wind has four daughter-winds. Three of them bring similar fear to demonkind. Adorjan and her daughters can spread to cover miles of the demon realm or shrink to whistle through a keyhole.

Vitaris, the Brilliant Wind, blazes with a light more dazzling than that of Ligier, but the Green Sun considers it beneath his dignity to show offense. Vitaris blinds those who see her, but seldom permanently. Most demons consider the Brilliant Wind a mere nuisance. The celebrants of Erembour, however, burn in her light as surely as in Ligier's glare. While the Green Sun generously holds his place and permits stone and metal to block his light, Vitaris sometimes shrinks to blow through the catacombs and gift them with her light.

Pellegrina, the Grinding Wind, scours away stone but leaves flesh and metal intact. She wears away the streets and buildings of Malfeas as she passes. Usually

she takes fractions of inches, but on rare occasions, she strips away whole yards at a time, and demons flee as their domiciles tumble around them. Sometimes, Pellegrina takes a liking to a certain street and blows through it again and again. The dwellers in the catacombs beneath the streets can only wail and hide, as the street becomes a canyon that penetrates their warrens and admits the emerald sunlight.

Kalmanka, the Arrow Wind, brings harm wherever she goes. Anywhere a single arrowhead could pass, Kalmanka may go, and while she can reduce herself to that one arrowhead, she usually manifests as millions that hurtle through the Demon City. Fortunately, demons can usually see her coming from far away. They vacate the streets, shutter their windows with grills of brass or iron and wait for her to pass.

The fourth daughter of Adorjan is Kamilla, the Wind of Promise. Demons consider her a kindly wind, for though her gusts are strong, they carry away nothing but corpses. The living have nothing to fear from Kamilla. When war or other misfortune chokes the Demon

THE WINDS OF MALFEAS

See page 131 of **Exalted** for the game traits of the Silent Wind. The four daughters of Adorjan have these game effects:

Kalmanka, the Arrow Wind, inflicts eight levels of lethal damage every five ticks throughout the area where she blows. This is not an environmental effect, just simple damage that can be soaked normally. Yet, it cannot be dodged or blocked except through perfect defenses.

Kamilla, the Wind of Promise, inflicts no damage but tugs at corpses with a (Strength + Athletics) total of six or the minimum needed to lift a particular cadaver, whichever is greater. To prevent the Wind of Promise from carrying a body away, a character must perform a feat of strength with a greater (Strength + Athletics) total. Stunting can raise this static value. (See **Exalted**, p. 127 for feats of strength.)

Pellegrina, the Grinding Wind, inflicts four levels of lethal damage per tick. This damage ignores soak, but affects only stone. The total quantity of damage to her surroundings depends on how long she chooses to blow through a given area.

Vitaris, the Brilliant Wind, affects visibility. Every character within the Brilliant Wind is blinded (see **Exalted**, p. 152) unless his player succeeds at a (Wits + Alertness) roll at difficulty 3 *each action* to shield his eyes. Doing so takes a miscellaneous action, so anything else the character does suffers a multiple-action penalty. Success means the character operates as if in fog at night (see **Exalted**, p. 135). Failure means dazzled eyes and full blindness for that action, and Perception reduced by one for the rest of the scene. At Perception 0 or on a botch, the character is blinded as a Crippling effect. Anyone who cannot heal from Crippling effects is rendered permanently blind. Various devices such as smoked goggles can remove the need for a roll, but they still reduce visibility to that of a foggy night. Characters can also cover their eyes completely until Vitaris passes, accepting temporary blindness to avoid long-term impairment.

The four winds can fill an area as small as a single square yard or as large as several square miles. They have no bodies to attack—even dematerialized ones—but can be treated as Essence 7 spirits for purposes of Shaping and other attacks that might affect truly bodiless creatures with no distinct location. They rarely blow through an area for more than five minutes before moving on.



City's streets with the slain, the Wind of Promise clears them again. No one prays for Kalmanka, Pellegrina or Vitaris to blow through their neighborhood, but demons sometimes pray for Kamilla to cleanse their streets. Kamilla often answers these prayers, though conventional wisdom in Hell says that she and her sisters lack self-awareness and intelligence.

Unfortunately, Kamilla often travels in the wake of her mother Adorjan. Demons fear silence more than the rage of Yozi or the judgment of Incarnae, and *much* more than the puissance of mere Exalted. The Silent Wind moves unseen and unheard through Hell. Demons know her presence because of the complete stillness of the air, and because every living thing she touches drops dead.

Adorjan abhors noise, so demons fill the streets of Hell with constant shouting and the clangor of gongs and bells. The Silent Wind also dislikes to approach the music of the angyalkae or her other progeny, the jazon, demjen and fulope, the gyorgyike and the katalinae. Wealthy and powerful demons collect these least of Adorjan's children in hopes they can hold the Silent Wind at bay. Demons likewise know that the laughter of a child, caught in a seashell and ground with silver and gold, forms a paste that repels Adorjan. The Silent Wind can overcome her distaste for all these things if she must, however, and can penetrate the tiniest cracks. There is no perfect safety from her passage.

Demons console themselves with the knowledge that the demon realm is vast, and Adorjan seldom chooses to cover more than a few leagues at once. Adorjan also must spend much of her time blowing the sand of Cecelyne back from the borders of Malfeas, lest it bury the Demon City. Demons, therefore, pass through these border zones in haste, and prefer not to live there. Adorjan has covered and slain entire Hell-nations at once, though—millions of demons dead in minutes—when she took offense at them. Usually, no demon survives to suggest what might have offended the Silent Wind.

ELDRITCH RAIN

Clouds seldom cover the Malfean sky, but the demon realm does sometimes experience rain, hail and other precipitation. Of course, none of it is made of water.

Vapors sometimes rise from the acid sea Kimberly and condense into clouds. These clouds are demons, minor elemental kin of the metody. The yellow-green clouds drift on the ever-changing winds until they condense and fall as corrosive rain. Most demons dislike this weather, but the metody emerge from their acid-pits to dance in

the falling life's blood of their dying kin and batten upon it. In the Demon City, vents in the streets drain the acid into sewers that lead, in time, back to Kimberly.

Most other forms of precipitation ultimately derive from the Yozi called Hegra, the Typhoon of Nightmares. Hegra is a great Malfean storm, one of the few entities who dare to shroud the Green Sun and block his light from vast sections of the demon realm. The Yozi stalks on legs of lightning, and no noise in Malfeas can surpass her thunder. For this alone, demons would love the Typhoon of Nightmares, for where she walks the Silent Wind stays far away.

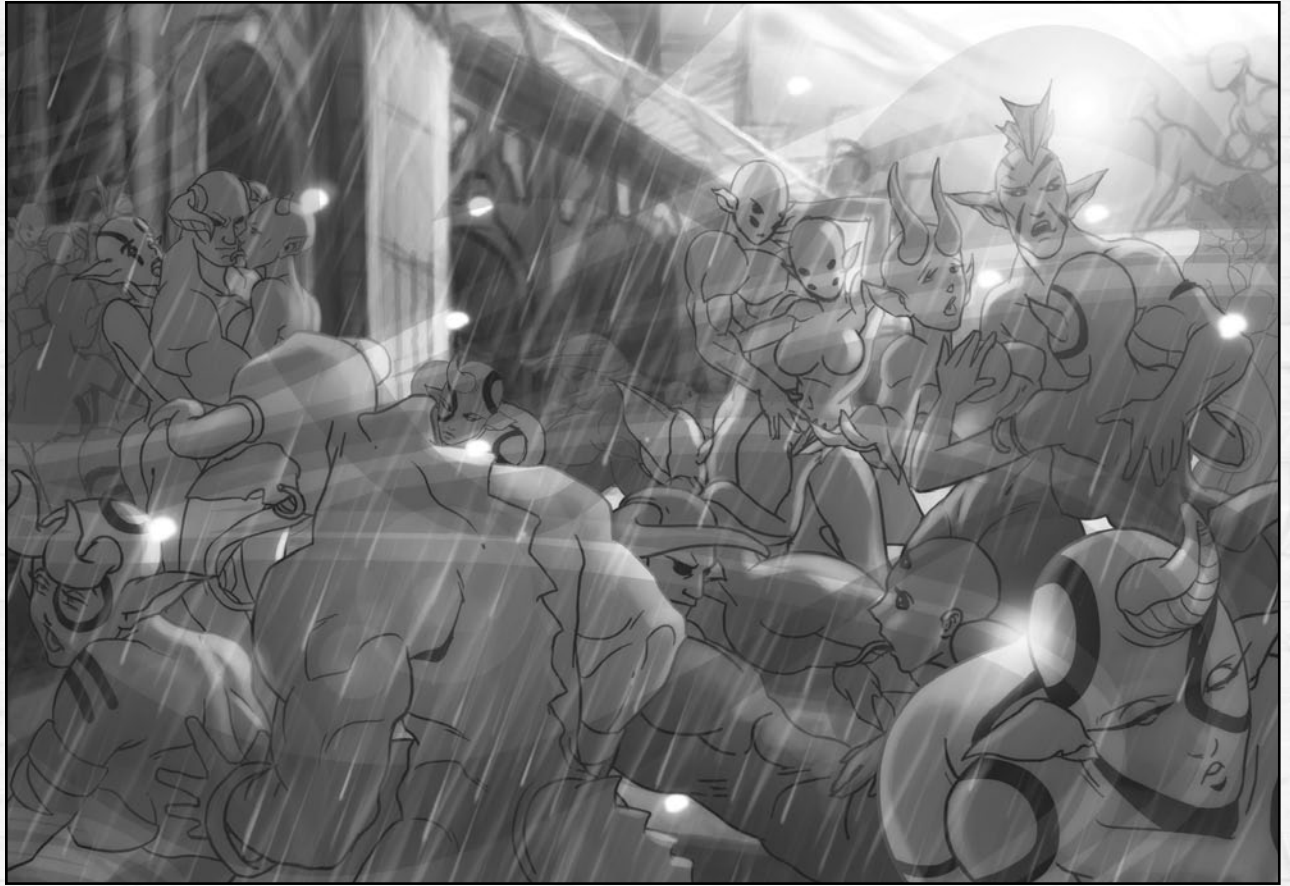
Hegra collects the constant fog of dreams that rises from Creation and condenses them into her clouds, to dispense them to the rest of the Demon City. Sometimes, she lashes the terrain beneath her with cold sweat from victims of night terrors. Sometimes, she sends erotic cloudbursts or blizzards of fancy. Anyone who touches her rain and snow, sleet and hail feels the emotions and perceives the visions of Creation's dreamers.

When Hegra passes, demons pour from the buildings of Malfeas to dance and sing in the city's streets. For a few hours, they delight in the knowledge that the Silent Wind will not kill them as they bathe in the psychedelic rain. Mortals would find madness in the waves and gusts of ever-changing moods and visions, but demons enjoy them. The celebrants of Erebour sometimes creep from the depths to share the bounty under Hegra's shadow, and the intoxicated demons are often too lost in dreams to realize what revels among them. Sometimes, the dark-dwellers have no choice but to brave the streets, for Hegra sends her rain in such abundance that the catacombs flood. At such times, the canyon-streets gouged by Pellegrina become rushing rivers that can sweep away careless demons.

A few of the celebrants absorb so many mortal dreams that they forget what they are and believe they are humans cast inexplicably into Hell. Some of them think they are further trapped in a demon body, while others refuse to admit even that much truth about themselves. Between the cruelty of other demons, the perils of their world and the secondary derangements that demons can acquire from Hegra's rain, deluded demons seldom live very long. Now and then, though, a wealthy demon keeps such a victim of Hegra's rain as a jester to mock and torment.

Various lesser demons also produce different sorts of rain, hail or snow, and not all of them are secondary souls or spawn of Hegra. For instance, eldritch rains follow the demon Zsofika. Malfeas sees rains of blood





and gall, pellets of metal, bone or glass, or even hails of small animals. Few of these freakish rains present much danger compared to the acid rains or the Arrow Wind, though.

When mortals experience such bizarre rains and hails, they know that a Wyld storm has passed—or Creation has suffered some dread intrusion from the demon realm. Mortals name these rains “omen weather,” for bad news is sure to come soon. Demons, however, enjoy omen weather because it reminds them that they could have suffered something much worse.

OTHER CATAclysms

The Yozis and their Third Circle avatars can inflict many disasters comparable to the Silent Wind. Sometimes, they lash out at their minions in rage and frustration. Other times, they seem to act without awareness—just scratching an itch or fidgeting in their confinement.

STONE RAIN

Despite the lethality of the Silent Wind, Malfeas himself might have killed more demons than anyone else. Now and then, Malfeas strains against his imprisonment and casts off a new shell of city-stuff. One of his

existing shells shudders and shakes, then splits through its middle, its two faces pulling apart in the course of an hour to reveal new surfaces of cityscape. Once the two layers move a few leagues apart, the Green Sun shines between them. A shell-splitting is a great disaster for the revelers of Erembour. Countless thousands die as their catacombs are ripped asunder and exposed to Ligier’s glare.

Conversely, two of Malfeas’ shells might collide. Sometimes, they bounce. The impact smashes the taller buildings, but the outer layer stretches and unfolds to create larger structures. Other times, however, the two layers crush together and combine to form a thicker shell. Of course, the dark-dwellers suffer as the force of impact squeezes tunnels shut, but their death toll is nothing compared to the slaughter of demons who dwell on the converging surfaces. Everyone flees who can, but there are never enough flying steeds, tunnels to the far side of the shell or other ways for everyone to escape.

The bridges of Jacint are the first part of each layer to suffer destruction. Stone shards rain down on the converging shells, warning inhabitants of their approaching doom. Within an hour of the stone rain, the Malfean

INFERNAL RAINS

Most of the strange rains of Malfeas present no danger. A rain of blood, gall, bone beads or tiny gelatinous blobs might disgust or bemuse mortal visitors, but it is no more damaging than mundane rain or hail. Some Malfean precipitation, however, can harm the mind or body.

Acid Rain: The acid that falls from Malfean clouds does not inflict damage as quickly as an acid bath, but almost as surely. Acid rain is an environmental effect: Damage 1L/action, Trauma 5; or Trauma 3 for demons or creatures protected by supernatural clothing or armor, such as hooded cloaks of gossamer, artifact armor or the flayed skin of a large demon tied about one's body. Metody are immune.

Psychedelic Rains: Hegra's rains resemble a poison in their effects, but they affect the mind more than the body. As such, the roll to resist their effect is (Stamina + Integrity) rather than (Stamina + Resistance), and they damage Willpower rather than health levels. At first, the effect is minor as a creature experiences the emotions or images borne by the rain. Eventually, however, the waves of sensation and emotion overwhelm the mind, turning dreams into nightmares. A standard dose consists of five minutes' exposure to Hegra's rain. The mental poison has Damage of 2B (but each success induces the loss of one Willpower point), Toxicity 3, Tolerance of (Stamina + Integrity)/1 hour and Penalty -2 (from the haze of distracting emotions and images). The rain has no Resources cost, as the liquid dreams quickly lose their potency unless properly captured and processed into elixirs (see p. 29).

Anyone who loses all their Willpower points from exposure to psychedelic rain suffers a derangement at the strength of a debility (see *The Compass of Celestial Directions, Vol. II—The Wyld*, pp. 148–150, or *The Manual of Exalted Power—The Lunars*, pp. 209–210). Delusions or hallucinations are particularly appropriate.

sun removes itself from between the layers. Ligier will return if the layers bounce. Otherwise, a final night falls before the continent-sized catastrophe.

ACID FLOODS

The sewers and storm drains of Malfeas all lead, ultimately, to the acid sea Kimberly. Acid rains de-

stroy much of the accumulated filth of the Demon City, but Hegra's rains simply wash the offal into Kimberly's corrosive bulk. Kimberly's nature is to dissolve and consume, but sometimes, the filth becomes too much even for her. When that occurs, she sends torrents of herself back up the pipes to overflow into the catacombs and even the city streets. The wrath of Kimberly can scour stone as effectively as the Grinding Wind, while leaving brass pitted and green. Demons hastily retreat to the higher floors of their domiciles, but many of them inevitably die screaming as their flesh dissolves in the sudden flood. Kimberly's wrath inflicts an acid bath (see *Exalted*, p. 131) on everyone caught within the flood.

CRUSHED IN PASSING

Only one force in Hell can push two layers of Malfeas apart once they converge: Isidoros, the Black Boar That Twists the Skies. When he dwelled in Creation, this strongest of the Primordials could push Luna and the Maidens off their predestined courses. Maimed and bound, he remains the irresistible force, able to kick over mountains with a tap of one hoof or raise continents from the deeps of Kimberly with his tusks. If Isidoros decides that he does not want two shells to crash in a stone rain, they do not. The Black Boar plants his hooves on one shell, braces his back against the other, and *shoves*.

Unfortunately, this does mean that at least two other of Malfeas' shells now move toward each other, propelled by the strength of Isidoros. Hell has merely traded one disaster for another at a later time.

Where the Black Boar walks, he also tends to crush everything in his path. He is simply too big and too strong. Isidoros spends much of his time in the forest Szoreny. Sometimes, his whim takes Isidoros through the streets of the Demon City. Even if he thinks to make himself small enough to fit in them, he still topples buildings if he brushes against them. When he does not take such care, each fall of a hoof crushes whole city blocks.

Unlike Adorjan, no sound or talisman can repel the Black Boar. Some courageous (or doomed) demon must fly up to the head of Isidoros, try to attract his attention and pray that he shrink himself or, better still, be somewhere else. No one can compel Isidoros, and any hint of trying to force the Yozi only makes him angry, but he responds at times to suggestions that he can find greater amusements elsewhere. Of course, a demon who fails to attract the Black Boar's notice could be inhaled like a gnat and destroyed.



A number of Third Circle demons are also very large, and at times, the unknowable will of the Yozi creates immense behemoths. These, too, sometimes walk across the Demon City and trample vast areas underfoot. The behemoth Chelphun, the Fivefold Woe, became particularly notorious after wandering through the fiefdom of Sigereth and flattening her palace in the course of settling for a nap. The Player of Games vows to destroy the Fivefold Woe but has not yet found a way to do this.

HELL'S FIRE

Fire exists in Hell. Unlike Creation, though, fire is not a fundamental principle of Malfean reality. It's just one more phenomenon that demons can produce by manipulating the proper substances.

Most substances that burn in Creation also burn in Malfeas. Examples include dried dung and the fat rendered from demon bodies. Alcohol distilled from Malfean liquor burns just like alcohol in Creation.

Other substances would not generally be considered fuel in Creation. For instance, demon bones burn with a low, hot, smokeless flame. Infernal smiths find bone-fire particularly useful for smelting the impurities from metal.

Other Malfean fuels have no close analogue in Creation. For example, when Hegra's dream-rain pools and mingles with vitriol-tainted acid rain, the light of Ligier can slowly evaporate the mixture into a dull green pitch that burns with a bright, iridescent flame. Demons manufacture this dream-pitch in huge vats, making it a common fuel in Hell.

Methods of ignition also vary somewhat from Creation. Burning glasses can focus the Green Sun's light to ignite dried dung, bones, demon-fat and dream-pitch, as well as the wicks of alcohol lamps. Demons can also strike sparks from black Malfean marble and crystals of salt from Kimberly's bitter waves. Strangest of all, vitriol can be dried into a purple-black powder called algarel that explodes like firedust when it contacts liquid vitriol. By mixing algarel with a slower-burning binder such as demon-fat, demons make pellets that catch fire when dabbed with vitriol, and which then can ignite other substances. These forms of Malfean fire can also burn wood, oil, charcoal and other fuels from Creation.

None of these methods work with Malfean plant matter, whose flame is a completely different substance. To ignite Malfean vegetation, one must employ a fire-drill with an iron shaft spinning in a log from Vitalius or Hrotsvitha, with demon ichor between them. A bit of leaden moss or shredded brass wood can serve as

tinder, and the fire can then be transferred to metallic kindling. Other sorts of fire will not ignite metallic Malfean vegetation, and their flames might melt other sorts of fuel but will not set them afire. For instance, paper placed in a fire of metallic logs would become hot, but not burn. All forms of metal-wood burn with a vivid, pinkish-violet flame that cannot be mistaken for anything else. Metal-wood loses this property if it is smelted and cast into new forms.

A PRIVATE HELL

Demons, like mortals, need shelter. Rather, even if they do not need it, they still desire it. They have few choices where to live besides the Demon City of Malfeas itself. Even assuming that a demon could somehow find food in the barren wastes of Cecelyne, endure the corrosive depths of Kimberly, avoid the crushing hooves of Isidoros or survive any of the other hazards in their world—what of the Silent Wind? Demons huddle together in hopes that their shared efforts can dissuade the Yozi Adorjan from blowing among them to kill them all.

THE DEMON KING'S BOUNTY

Malfeas himself provides much of the housing for his subjects. His architectural flesh includes countless thousands of towers, villas, tenement blocks and castellated palaces. More precisely, he provides thousands of structures that demons can adapt to such use. The Demon King does not consciously design his structures any more than a human designs a single body hair. They just grow.

Sometimes, Malfeas seems to show hints of urban planning. In one place, a dozen hollow, many-doored rings of brass and marble—just right for division into townhouses—surrounds a fretted dome of black iron. (On a human, it might be a mole.) Malfeas lays down his streets without rhyme or reason, however, at any length and at any angle to each other. Magnificent pillared forums and amphitheaters jostle stark blocks of windowless masonry. Many structures make no sense whatsoever. Vast conglomerations of vaulted stairs and landings lead to nothing but more of themselves. Turrets and balconies adorn huge towers with no floors or stairs inside. Immense triumphal arches cross minor side streets. Long fortified walls zigzag between buildings and across streets, defending nothing. They have the forms of architecture but no function. Still, many such structures can provide at least minimal shelter.

The demons often dismantle or retrofit Malfeas' buildings to make dwellings of greater utility. The marottes, or hopping puppeteers, are never more happy



than when they tear one building apart to juggle the stone blocks and girders, lintels and pillars and assemble them into some new form. Left to their own devices, marottes build structures as senseless as Malfeas' own. The amiable workaholics readily take direction, though, to erect palaces for citizens or pueblo-like apartment blocks for consortia of lesser demons. Some demons that can fly or cling to walls adapt the vast hollow towers by covering their inside walls with lofts and roosts that only they can reach.

Although the bulk of Malfeas consists chiefly of black marble, basalt and other stone, demons expend great effort in extracting the veins of brass, tin and other metals within their king's body. Metal defies the Grinding Wind and at least somewhat resists the acid floods of Kimberly. Demons who can afford it, therefore, plate their homes with silver, tin, gold or (especially) brass, creating glittering enclaves within the Demon King's dark magnificence.

LIVING HOMES

Some demons provide their own shelter or become homes for other demons. The neomah spin their own nautilus-shell towers where they pursue their trade as courtesans and flesh-weavers. If one location becomes undesirable, a neomah can slowly suck its tower back into its mouth and move on.

The demon-beasts called riwannon, the living pavilions, look like nothing so much as large squid with seven immensely long, broad flaps of skin for arms. A riwannon can arrange its arms to form a tent where a dozen other demons can huddle. A living pavilion hardly ever eats its tenants in their sleep, and only if they fall behind in supplying other nutriment and gifts of Essence. Nevertheless, only the poorer demons choose to live beneath riwannon.

Female demons can obtain a domicile in the brass forest called Hrotsvitha. Certain trees in the forest have... projections. A female demon can couple with these trees of brass. This activity is quite painful (enough to inflict one level of unsoakable bashing damage). A month later, however, she gives birth to a brass cylinder about a foot long and six inches wide.

The demoness can then plant the brazen seed and water it daily with her blood. In a week, the seed grows into an onion-domed, one-room cottage of brass. Twigs of brazen foliage sprout from the dome's tip, while brazen roots dig into the ground. Every week, however, the resident must feed the cottage with demon blood (not necessarily her own) and five motes of Essence. Just as importantly, she must ply a lash against its ceiling,

walls and floor with consummate artistry, just enough to raise five welts on its gleaming skin, to remind the cottage who is master. A cottage that does not receive such weekly treatment squeezes in on itself in the course of a day, until it becomes the trunk of a squat, brazen tree. Thus does the forest Hrotsvitha spread to new sections of Malfeas.

Demons have other options as well. Some demons build nests high in the roots of Szoreny and hope that their colony can make enough noise to dissuade Adorjan. Others dwell in the catacombs threaded beneath Malfeas' streets, emerging only when called by Erembour. Indeed, demons can colonize almost any place in their world if they possess the proper abilities and work hard enough. Only the Yozis know the full range of demon settlement.

INFERNAL SANCTUMS

The average First Circle demon lives where its master permits. Third Circle demons go wherever they will. In between the serfs and the unquestionable, citizens claim true homes—places that other demons accept as *theirs*, not simply places where they spend some time. Such demons may have sanctums.

A sanctum within Malfeas is nothing more than a home owned by a demon (as per the discussion of ownership on p. 238 of **Exalted**, though demons tend to establish ownership through displays of dominance and cruelty rather than respect and care). A basic sanctum offers nothing more than a favored place for a slain demon to regenerate, and a target for Hurry Home.

Second Circle demons don't need to buy the Sanctum Background if their abode does not offer significant benefits or powers of its own. Alveua, the Keeper of the Forge of Night (**The Books of Sorcery, Vol. V—The Roll of Glorious Divinity II**, pp. 55–57) is a good example of a demon that has the Sanctum Background, because she can do things at the Forge of Night that she cannot do on her own.

First Circle demon characters, however, must possess the Background to own a sanctum. Simply *having* a place to call her own is a meaningful addition to a First Circle demon's power. First Circle owners of sanctums are almost always citizens. A serf would have great difficulty forcing other demons to accept her ownership of a location. If she did so, it would be a good sign she had distinguished herself from other demons and was ready for citizenship.

Malfean sanctums are as material as the rest of that world. (Usually, that is. See p. 124 for a discussion of possible exceptions.) Demons can also establish sanctums



in Creation, if they spend enough time there. These sanctums are immaterial, just like those of gods. See pages 15 and 16 of **The Books of Sorcery, Vol. IV—The Roll of Glorious Divinity I** for a complete explanation of the Sanctum Background and the various special powers that a demon can incorporate in its sanctum.

Bound demons cannot create a sanctum. Since they are not their own masters, they cannot metaphysically establish their mastery of a location. A demon who founds a cult, however, can gradually create a sanctum, most likely in the cult's place of worship.

A DEMON'S LIFE

The bizarre and deadly environment is not the only factor to shape the lives of demons. The Yozis created the demon races as expressions of their will, and the maimed, imprisoned former Primordials' will is twisted and bitter. Just as many aspects of the Demon City present a mad mockery of Creation, the inhabitants of Malfear live a bizarre parody of mortal existence. Demons are born and die. They eat, drink, work and fight. They learn and amuse themselves. Nothing about a demon's life, however, works quite the same as it does for humans in Creation—not even the reasons they exist.

REPRODUCTION

Among demons, sex is one of the few activities that *never* results in reproduction... at least, not in any way that mortals would recognize. Demons have many ways of making more demons, but mommy and daddy demons having little baby demons is not one of them.

Many demons appear through direct creation by a demon of greater power. Every teodozja, for instance, owes its existence to a specific act of will by the Second Circle demon Zsofika. Indeed, almost every demon species began as the creation of a Second Circle or Third Circle demon. The process is a more powerful version of the Host of Spirits Charm (see **The Books of Sorcery, Vol. IV—The Roll of Glorious Divinity I**, p. 155), costing 20 motes. Storytellers can usually treat demon spawning as a plot device, however.

GENESIS METHODS

Sometimes, a demon lord decides to externalize this productive power. Effectively, it creates a First Circle demon or an artifact whose only function is to consume Essence and shape it into new demons.

Gumela, the Jeweled Auditor, crafted a tree of coiled golden wire and jeweled leaves which bears amphislaiae in glittering golden pods. Every 20 motes



given to the tree results in the sprouting of a new pod, and each amphetisia takes a week to grow.

The Jeweled Auditor sensibly gave his tree the power to seek its own Essence. Its carved amethyst flowers exude a luring scent, and the teat-like center drips intoxicating nectar that resembles a mix of honey, blood and heroin. As demons suck the nectar, the tree sucks back at their Essence. Addicted demons often die because they surrender their last mote to Gumela's tree and achieve a nepenthe more final than perhaps they sought.

The lord Surandaman possesses a huge iron cauldron full of a bubbling, gooey substance whose recipe few demons care to know. If anyone adds a child's skull to the boiling slime, along with 20 motes, a new anuhle crawls out of the muck a few minutes later. Various spices change the breed of the spider-demon. Each anuhle inherits the voice of the child whose skull gave it birth and hopes to return to its parental proxies at some point to show its love by eating them.

Then again, some demons seem to appear spontaneously. Alveua, Keeper of the Forge of Night, created the sesseljae, but these insect-like demons now appear without any effort by their progenitor. Enough spare Essence runs through the body of Malfeas that the Yozi might have taken over the genesis of the filth-eating sesseljae himself as a way to cleanse his world-sized body.

DEMONS MAKING DEMONS

First Circle demons possess a number of means to reproduce themselves. Some methods are unique to a breed, while other techniques are generally available.

A number of demon breeds simply cleave themselves in half. The amorphous perroneles can do this in seconds, though not often. These demons cannot themselves explain the instinct that tells them when to undergo mitosis. Luminata, the deer that hunt men, take a full minute to divide as the writhing mass of tendrils that makes up their bodies gradually pulls apart into two smaller demons. Marottes possess a grotesquely spectacular means of reproduction. The hopping puppeteer grips its body with several of its arms and rips itself in half. Among these breeds, the progeny inherit the full knowledge of their parent. The two daughter demons have each lost their first -0 health level, though, and possess half their parent's Essence pool. They emerge from the division ravenously hungry.

Of all demons, the gilmyne probably come closest to sexual reproduction. Sometimes, four of the dancers at the Saigoth Gate dance a special dance, circling closer and closer until they merge. Each gilmyne contributes

five motes of Essence. Four demons join; five demons separate a moment later, the fifth carrying fragments of memory from the other four.

Any breed of demon, however, can perform a similar feat of reproduction with the help of the flesh-weaving neomah. Demons know this process as the Saber Union Dance. Five demons of the same breed spin and step about each other, flourishing their swords in graceful arcs as they slash each other to ribbons. At the point of death, they collapse together in a heap. The five waiting neomah go to work, merging the dying demons into one cyst of flesh sprouting arms and legs. A day later, the flesh-egg splits into 10 new demons, all bearing a mixture of memories.

Everyone in Hell knows that the neomah create new lives all by themselves. These demon courtesans take a sample of flesh from each client—mortal or demonic—and fuse these gobbets into small new creatures. They can also work with semen or menstrual blood. Cast into the fire atop each neomah's tower, these creatures come to life. The weavings of the neomah are unique sports that are unlikely to be duplicated, however, or even to survive long enough to learn if they can reproduce themselves.

The chrysogonae provide an example of how demons reproduce themselves through the use of other creatures. A chrysogona's bite transforms its victims into wood, like the demon itself. Un-Exalted mortals shrivel and die, but a new chrysogona is born from their remains.

A number of demon breeds reproduce themselves by nonphysical means. Erymanthoi, for instance, reproduce through pain. If a blood-ape's flesh is seared with vitriol and pierced with iron spikes at the right points, the demon gives a howl of utmost agony—which curdles to form a new blood-ape. This is hardly the strangest way that demons reproduce themselves.

THE DEMON-BLOODED

A demon's only experience of sexual reproduction comes if the demon couples with a mortal creature. Male demons often do not realize that rutting with a human woman can result in a half-demonic child. (Few who do know care.) Their surprise is nothing compared to the shock of a female demon who discovers that coupling with a human male has set a new life growing inside her.

Demons use sex for many purposes, but they tend to see it as a struggle for dominance that mingles pleasure and pain, or simply as scratching an itch. For many demons, the idea of copulating to make a child seems



strange, or even perverse. Perversion comes easily to demons, though. Thus, a significant number of demons manage to sire or bear Demon-Blooded children to use as their agents in Creation.

The Demon-Blooded offer a final source of new demons. Like the God-Blooded, demonic by-blows cannot raise their Essence beyond 3. Use of the Endowment Charm (see **The Books of Sorcery, Vol. IV—The Roll of Glorious Divinity I**, p. 146) can raise a Demon-Blooded's Essence to 4 and transform it into a full demon. Offspring of First Circle demons tend to join their supernatural parent's breed. Now and then, this results in anomalous specimens, such as male neomah or female blood-apes. Offspring of greater demons become unique and novel First Circle demons, but possibly the progenitors of a new breed.

Demons may couple with animals as readily as with humans, which can result in Demon-Blooded beasts. Such creatures rarely possess a fully human (or demonic) intellect, though they often show greater cunning than their animal forebears. Still, once in a while, these fruits of infernal bestiality become intelligent enough that they gain in Essence and, perhaps, win their transfiguration into true demons.

FOOD

Demons don't need food. Bound demons survive for millennia as guardians of long-forgotten tombs and strongholds, with no sustenance except their own Essence. Hell knows the principle of food, though, so demons still can hunger. Once again, none of Hell's methods for obtaining food (or even its notions of cuisine) quite match those found in Creation.

Malfeas has its own forms of farming, just as it has its own forms of vegetation. The plants tend to be made of metals such as tin or brass, but the will of a powerful demon can result in other substances. A common Malfean staple plant looks like ivy made of gray lead. It grows fruits that resemble small cantaloupes; their textured leaden rind covers raw, bloody flesh. The bloodmelon vine grows widely through the Demon City, climbing walls of black marble and basalt or twining around columns of iron or brass. Demons also cultivate tree-grain, which resembles rice magnified to 20 feet tall. The stalks, leaves and husks are pure gold, but the grain inside tastes of bone.

The means of cultivation similarly diverge from those found in Creation. For instance, tree-grain grows from a human finger-bone planted as a seed. The squash vines of black porcelain put forth fruit only to the beating of drums, while the malice-nut tree releases its harvest only when it receives the sacrifice of an anuhle. Few

Malfean crops require anything so simple as plowing, sowing and reaping.

Demons also feed on various beasts, or each other. Clever demons use riddles to lure the nattersquid from Kimberly's depths, and then crush their heads to stop them from talking. The bird-headed mounds of flesh called jousia can have steaks and blubber cut daily from their ever-regenerating, sessile bulk. After a battle, some demons prefer to eat the dead (of both sides) rather than leave them for the Wind of Promise.

Many and varied demons use Charms to produce foodstuffs. Such Charms generally are simple variations on the Calculated Order of Immediate Action (see p. 152 of **The Books of Sorcery, Vol. IV—Roll of Glorious Divinity I**). Demons who join the Carnifex Guild, for instance, learn to chop a blade through a demon to produce two identical demons, one living and one dead. A few demons of exceptionally refined and particular tastes refuse to dine upon anything but their own cadavers. Other variations on this Charm evoke fountains of sherbet, blood or vitriolic mead, or entire banquets from thin air.

While demonic citizens can usually obtain such magical feasts at will, the gentry of Malfeas often prefer food that someone actually cooked. Materializing food is merely a trifling exercise of Essence. A demon who commands the labor of other demons flaunts his rank and power.

DRINK

Demons love their liquor. Indeed, Malfeas offers few alternatives to drinking alcohol, for water is rare and milk nearly unknown. Blood is widely available to those who can take it, and many a demon ends up shackled or spiked in place to slake the thirst of other demons. Most demons, however, prefer liquor.

Perhaps the most remarkable aspect of Malfean liquor is how much of it demons make by exactly the same methods as in Creation. Various Second Circle demons have ordained idiosyncratic means of producing beverages—such as milking the strings of a harp strung with the hair of a maiden suicide—but demons make most of their alcohol through fermentation. They have somewhat wider choice of materials than Creation's vintners, as certain demonic stomach acids can ferment alcohol from tin, brass or other strange ingredients. An infernal brewmaster then distills the alcohol or infuses it with various other substances to produce a wide variety of liquors.

Dedicated tipplers in Creation dream of someday tasting celestial wine, but Hell offers a thousand infernal



wines, whiskeys, brandies, vodkas and other drinks. Many of them contain other drugs, both natural and supernatural. Some are flat-out toxic to mortals. Still, an Exalt who cultivates an immunity to poison—and a cast-iron gullet—can explore a world of strange intoxicants that range from gut-ripping vileness to soul-shuddering delight.

Bonewine is one of the common, basic brews. Demons ferment this drink from tree-grain. It resembles sake, though it tastes of bone, and it's the weakest beverage found in Malfeas. Distilled with the psychedelic rains of Hegra, it forms the base for a wide variety of elixirs, each of which makes the imbiber feel a specific emotion or experience a particular waking dream. Demons sometimes relish feelings that mortals find unpleasant, so the taverns of Malfeas serve elixirs of rage, envy, terror and hate as well as distilled dreams of pleasure, mirth or flight. A Lunar Hell-harrower once encountered a bottled nightmare of being naked in public. (She had forgotten how this once felt embarrassing.) Such liquors are generally known by the name of the emotion or dream they impart, such as "falling fear elixir."

Other liquors have effects that resemble some of the stronger drugs found in Creation. A popular liquor called thanachvil (after the name of its reputed inventor) has essentially the same effects as laudanum—a tincture of opium—though nothing in it came from a poppy. Another liquor, called gursant, has the same stimulant effect as cocaine.

A brew called sypax might present the greatest danger to mortal imbibers. A shot glass of sypax is the equal of arrow frog venom in its lethality to mortals (see **Exalted**, p. 131), but that is not its principal danger. Sypax grants its imbiber an experience of perfect pleasure, from the release of orgasm to the contentment of hard work completed. Mortals slain by sypax die smiling. Those who survive are most likely addicted and willing to do anything to consume it again.

One rare elixir is merely pleasant for mortals but an enticingly deadly treat for demons. Final rest elixir carries the sensation of dying with no regrets, surrounded by children and grandchildren. A demon who drinks this "liquid Lethe" might die because she forgets to continue existing... and demons find the experience of perfect peace as addictive as mortals find perfect ecstasy.

The most precious and valued drink in Malfeas, though, is called chalcant, and it contains no alcohol at all. Chalcant is the liquefied, distilled Essence of a demon. Every sort of demon has its own distinctive taste.

INFERNAL SPIRITS

The effects of most demon liquors parallel those of Hegra's psychedelic rain (see p. 22), except that a dose consists of a shot glass of liquid rather than five minutes in the rain. A few elixirs, however, are so potent that they have no Tolerance and have special, additional effects. Sypax, for instance, has Damage 8B, Toxicity 4L, no Tolerance, and -2 Penalty. An imbiber who fails to resist loses eight Willpower points, or eight dice even if it succeeds. Losing all Willpower results in an immediate, debility-strength addiction to sypax. Final rest elixir has the same psychological effect on demons, though it is merely a normal elixir for mortals.

Demonologists in Creation can import liquors from Hell. (Most notably, House Cynis includes demon liquors and other brews among its rarest offerings.) The limited supply means that all infernal liquors have a Resources value of four or five dots.

More than taste, though, chalcant gives Essence to its imbiber, along with memories of the demon from which it was made. For demons, this is drinking pure Being, and nothing gives them greater pleasure.

WORK AND TRADE

Most demons are serfs, and serfs must work. Many of the occupations found in Creation have their analogues in Hell, though the methods used in each occupation seem bizarre. Demon farmers raise crops. (Some of their techniques have already been mentioned on p. 28.) Miners hew stone from the Demon King's flesh, or the demjen sing veins of brass to temporary life as buglike creatures who parade and prance to the forge. Loggers cut the metallic wood of Hrotsvitha, Vitalius and even great Szoreny, though not without the proper devotions to ask the Yozi's permission. Artisans craft a wide variety of useful items, from furniture to talismans that repel the Silent Wind.

Demon serfs provide services too. They carry palanquins and loads of cargo, feed pet hell-beasts and carry loads. Most citizens possess at least one valet to dress them in their clothes and jewels, polish their fangs or scales, or otherwise attend to their appearance. The most important service industries in the Demon City, however, are shouting and dance. In every fiefdom or community, the demons need some



of their number to shout and play the bells and gongs that Adorjan avoids.

Many breeds of demons were created to perform specific functions. Neomah are courtesans, while the eerie gallmau are living lanterns to guide other demons through dark places. Erymanthoi are natural warriors, while the naneke seek hidden lore.

In many cases, though, demons have outgrown their utility. They are left to find their own work, or their master assigns whatever labors strike her fancy. For instance, the needle-extruding firmin emulate their creator Alveua as living sources of weapons, but they also can be trained as seamstresses or torturers. Gervesin created the decanthropes as an extension of his own power to possess mortal bodies. Their original use is forgotten, but a decanthrope who brings its supply of bodies back to Hell can coordinate an entire squad of laborers.

Very often, demons work as slaves and their masters give them little reward beyond a chance to continue living and working. Some demons, however, get paid for their work. This is especially likely for demons that possess special skills. A master must grant them at least minimal rewards, for other masters would welcome and protect such laborers if they sought asylum. Demons might get paid in the variegated currencies of Malfeas. Others simply are allowed to keep some of the products of their labor, to sell or barter as they choose.

Demons, therefore, have markets where they buy and sell what they make and what they can do. Most commerce in Hell takes place in great bazaars. Along twisting lines of booths, demons invite each other to buy liquor and drugs, tools and torture toys, housewares, musical instruments, ornaments, pets, produce, weapons, sex and garments. Some sell stranger things, such as bottles of vitriol and Hegra's liquid dreams, poisons and philters against poison, brightly colored sutures for flesh-embroidery and crystals from the Blood-Red Moon.

The demon Makarios claims the largest bazaars as his domain. Other demons may establish markets if they want, but if they do not pledge fealty to the Sigil's Dreamer, they had best be strong enough to defy every assassin that this wealthy demon can hire.

Not so much business takes place in shops, though some citizens dislike the public bazaars and insist upon other places of commerce. In most parts of the Demon City, shops are for commodities and trades best practiced away from the crowd. A body artist specializing in tattoos, piercings or scarification, for

HELL MONEY

Demons use a prodigious variety of forms of money, from gorgeously printed scrip and coins of Malfean metal to living beetles with denominations and names of Yozis scribed on their shells. None of it has standard values. Every lord of a fiefdom has the right to coin her own money, and many Second Circle demons have done so. Most demons know only the money of their master's fiefdom (if such exists at all). Few demons know many other currencies, and fewer would accept them. As a result, trade between fiefdoms usually takes the form of barter.

instance, does not want his elbow jogged by a clumsy gawker (and even less does his client desire this). Vessels of Essence also are traded away from those who could snatch away such treasures. The few demons that are willing and able to sell relics of significant power likewise operate very discreet and well-guarded emporia. More common are the restaurants and wine shops where demons sample tastes so potent they would kill mere mortals, or at least leave them gasping for water to wash them down.

ENTERTAINMENT

Given their lives of toil and terror, demons seek forgetfulness however they can manage. Food, drink and drugs distract them from their lives, if only for a short time. So do the neomah and other demon courtesans, though some demons prefer to rape victims of opportunity rather than pay a professional. Yet, these pastimes do not exhaust the possibilities for entertainment.

MUSIC

Not all music in Hell is meant to keep the Silent Wind at bay. The Yozis themselves greatly love music. It is perhaps the only aspect of their being that remains untouched by the rage and spite they feel at their imprisonment. Each one of the Yozis could make Creation's gods of music weep in despair at equaling the beauty of their songs and symphonies. The music of the Yozis can kill at its most extreme (and lesser demons are not immune), simply because such perfection consumes whatever it touches. A listener becomes what he hears, losing himself in the melody's passion. When the song ends, he might end as well.

Lesser demons share their progenitors' passion, though their music seldom achieves such deadly power. A Third Circle demon's melody usually does nothing



POETS

worse than drive its listeners mad or otherwise transform their identities, as so often happens to those who follow Erembour's horn. Second Circle demons rarely achieve even this height of artistry, though some of them could make stones dance for joy or make mortals swoon for grief.

The Second Circle lords created entire breeds of First Circle demons for no reason except music, such as the justly famous *angyalkae*. Among other demons, musical talent occurs no more frequently than it does among mortals, but all demons appreciate it when it appears, and all demons love to hear music played well. Any demon that cannot at least keep time by clapping or stamping will not survive long in Malfeas. The demonologist who summons an *erymanthus* to slaughter her enemies is sometimes surprised to find her blood-ape taking time from its rampage to applaud a particularly fine singer it overhears or to lethally chastise a teahouse musician for playing off key.

In Hell, demons play most of the instruments known in Creation and design some of their own. Percussive

instruments such as gongs, bells, drums and marimbas are the most popular. Most are made of metal, but demons also build instruments of stone, bone and glass. Horns and flutes, serpents, bagpipes and shawms also resound through the Demon City. Stringed instruments are not heard so much in the city streets, but only because of their softer tone. Malfean versions of harps and lutes, fiddles and zithers are usually played at smaller and quieter gatherings. A number of unusual concert instruments, called "*armonicas*," consist of glass rods or bowls rubbed with a moistened finger to produce a musical tone. The finest players of these instruments moisten the glass with no liquid less noble than their own blood.

DANCE

Demons enjoy dancing as well as music. Indeed, they consider the two arts nearly inseparable, for well-played music makes listeners want to move in time with the melody, and the rhythm of dancing feet makes its own music. Every breed of demon has its own special dance that expresses its nature.



Such is the demons' love of music and dance that the Yozis wove these arts into the structure of their world. Many aspects and entities of Malfeas respond to music and dance as if these arts were physical forces as powerful as heat, cold, a hammer's blow or nourishing soil. When demons add Essence to their dances, they create Charms of strange power. The Second Circle demon Stanewald, She Who Surmounted the Omphalos, is particularly famous for 13 dances that shape and compel earth and stone. Demons call such Charms "efficacious dances," but they do not regard such dances as magical, the way a human might think. Rather, demons believe that efficacious dances represent the summit of that art, which no one but demons can attain. In the Old Realm, many demons learned a grudging respect for a few Eclipse Castes, because these Exalts could learn and perform the efficacious dances.

The Yozis themselves sometimes dance among their subjects. Malfeas, for instance, rarely manifests to walk among the demons that swarm across his stony body, but he sometimes appears among them without warning as a mighty man with skin of brass, naked, for no robe or regalia could be worthy of the Yozi King. He leads every demon who can hear him in dances of the sword, the spear and the mace and shield, until the music of clashing weapons, shouts and stamping feet rises to the green metal sun. And then, demons say, the King of Hell forgets himself for a little time, and his heart is at peace.

LITERATURE

Far fewer demons cultivate the written or spoken word as delight in music and dance. Nevertheless, Hell has its poets, playwrights and novelists, as well as actors to perform the plays. The books of Hell are printed using acid-etched plates on blood-hued papyrus and demon-skin parchment. Some Second Circle lords consider themselves ladies and gentlemen of letters and patronize authors, both in Hell and (less often) in Creation.

Mortals usually find infernal literature difficult to understand—or easy to understand but difficult to endure. The more comprehensible material consists of meandering, lurid narratives of sex and death. One of the most popular Malfean novels, *The Fifty Hearts*, concerns a tomesu who sets out to murder 50 other demons who offended it in some way. Each brief chapter depicts one gruesome murder. At the end, the tomesu offers the hearts of its victims to the priests of Cecelyne and becomes a citizen. Demon literati say that mortals

just don't get the novel's poetic subtleties of metaphor and language.

PLASTIC ARTS

Of painting, sculpture and other plastic arts, little need be said. Demons enjoy these arts as much as mortals do. Citizens often like to have their likeness captured in paint, clay, metal or stone. Admittedly, the prevailing tastes show some differences from Creation. Only the more jaded despots and magnates of Creation want to have themselves portrayed engaged in rape, torture, cannibalism and other activities that humans generally do not deign to perform in public.

BLOOD SPORT

Life is cheap in the Demon City, and many demons enjoy blood sports. Simple games pit animals against animals, in Malfean versions of cockfighting or bear baiting. Other sports pit demons against demon-beasts. These contests often present real danger to the demons who engage in a hellish version of bullfighting or bronco busting. Sometimes, the sport consists merely of seeing how long a hapless demon lasts before ferocious hell-beasts tear him apart.

Demons also fight each other in gladiatorial games. It's a rare fiefdom that lacks a place for demons to fight for an audience. Some lords build elaborate theaters of blood where demons, beasts and whatever else the fiefdom's master can get his hands on battle before a screaming crowd.

Just about every block of the Demon City includes a pit or ring for smaller fights. Some contests follow complex rules, but most often, two (or more) demons just square off to try to kill one another. Strong, skilled demons can make a good living as professional prizefighters, at least until they meet someone stronger and more skillful. Not uncommonly, though, a fight promoter just seizes some convenient demon and throws him in the pit or ring, most likely to die.

The Third Circle demon Kashta, 18th soul of Isidoros, stands out as Hell's greatest patron of gladiatorial games. She can erect a fabulous coliseum anywhere in Malfeas she wants. Local demons find themselves sitting in the stands... or on the field. Kashta divides the demons into teams who battle for her favor. She couples with the last survivor in the middle of the blood-soaked field. Either this act turns the victor into a behemoth, or Kashta bears the victor's behemoth child through her scream of fulfillment. Only when Kashta has created this child of battle-fury does she withdraw her coliseum and release her audience.

CALL TO BATTLE

Kashta's summons to her coliseum affects every sentient demon or mortal within eight miles that has a lower Essence than her own rating of 8. The infernal stadium is large enough to seat as many spectators as necessary. Audience members can leave if they can find some way out. The coliseum has no doors, however, and the outer walls arch inward for 20 yards. For her gladiators, Kashta selects the 50 to 100 entities with the greatest combat skills. She supplies them with weapons suitable for their two highest-rated combat Abilities, but no armor.

A character can resist Kashta's call to battle if his Dodge MDV exceeds his highest combat Ability rating. Any character that can stunt may attempt to, as a way to increase his Dodge MDV. Those who end up on the field of battle suffer a Servitude effect to fight and kill. Resisting this urge costs one Willpower point per action. The unnatural mental influence ends when a character spends four Willpower points in this manner. Of course, the character is still in an arena with dozens of bloodthirsty demons.

The last survivor can fight Kashta herself or couple with her. (She considers either choice a fit reward for her tournament's victor.) The former course most likely ends in the character's death. In the latter case, the character avoids transformation into a behemoth if he is immune to Shaping effects or can spend three Willpower points to resist a Compulsion effect to accept the transformation. Kashta does not hold such resistance against a character. (She fondly remembers a Solar champion who won and coupled with her three times to sire the Three Golden Terrors.) The behemoth offspring clearly shows its parentage.

INTELLECTUAL LIFE

Some demons take joy in knowledge. Others seek knowledge for the sake of power: knowledge of relic crafting and sorcery, alchemy and other occult arts. The great demon Orabilis, the End of All Wisdom, grants their wish. Orabilis creates libraries from rains of molten glass, stocked with crystal scrolls and tomes. Here, demons can find every sort of lore from Creation or Hell, from the natural history of the lesser Haltan sapsucker to potent books of spells. All this knowledge, Orabilis

gives freely for the spawn of the Yozis to learn, and each library has a steady clientele of autodidacts.

Demons also know, however, that while Orabilis gives them free reign to *learn*, he does not give them free reign to *think*. Everything in a glass library is itself safe to know (by a demon's standards, anyway). Yet, an ingenious and insightful mind could see connections between facts, evolve theories, find confirming

ARCANE INDUSTRY

Malfeas has an industry of artifact creation the likes of which humanity has not seen since the First Age. Human cities such as Paragon and Whitewall boast that their artisans can produce a few daiklaves a year. Lookshy dedicates a large portion of its wealth and scholarly resources to maintaining its magitech arsenal. The Realm is, well, the Realm. Few infernal fiefdoms, however, do not surpass Paragon or Whitewall in the production of magical tools and weapons. Quite a few fiefdoms possess "helltech" arsenals that surpass Lookshy. Three factors give Malfeas its abundance of artifacts (though demons refer to them as "relics" instead).

First, absolutely everyone can manipulate Essence. This makes arcane craftsmanship much easier. Second, Malfeas abounds in raw materials that can be used to craft and empower relics, from the occult catalyst-acid vitriol to shed parts of the Yozis themselves, such as the iridescent scales of Oramus or bristles of Isidoros. Indeed, every demon is a potential arcane ingredient. Third, the knowledge of how to craft relics is widely available. Every Third Circle demon can be presumed to know anything it wants, while lesser demons can learn just about anything from the libraries of Orabilis and other sources of lore, if they try hard enough.

This does not mean that ordinary demons use wondrous devices in their ordinary lives. Hell's abundance of magical weapons, vehicles and other tools exists solely for the enjoyment of its ruling class—the citizens, the unquestionable and those strangers who function as honorary citizens. The average demon possesses no magic except its own Charms.

See Chapter Six of **The Manual of Exalted Power—The Infernals** for a complete description of how demons craft their relics, along with copious examples of these vile wonders.



evidence—and deduce certain things that the Yozi would keep to themselves. The End of All Wisdom condemns such demons to death. None are known to have survived... but perhaps that is one of the secrets the Yozi would keep.

Third Circle demons rarely engage in scholarship or research, for their knowledge flows from their Yozi progenitor. A number of Second Circle demons, however, think their own thoughts and write their own books about whatever strikes their interest. A few First Circle demons become citizens through their studies as well. Virtually all that demonkind knows about the Underworld, for instance, comes from infernal scholars who pursue tales and lore of that deathly realm, or send mortal servants on dangerous ventures through shadowlands.

TRAVEL AND TRANSPORTATION

Malfeas is enormous, even without including the nigh-infinite expanse of Cecelyne. Savants of the Solar Deliberative tried and failed to measure its area, but they knew the Demon City's size exceeded that of the Blessed Isle—and possibly all of Creation. One explorer said that, in the outermost shell of Malfeas, she saw single buildings large enough to hold Meru and plazas wide enough to bridge the Inland Sea, and she never found the end of them.

Suffice to say, then, that Malfeas is large enough that no one less transcendently powerful than a Third Circle demon could know it all, even in thousands of years of exploration. Most demons see very little of their world—perhaps no more than the average human sees of Creation, and for much the same reasons. Their world is vast, travel is slow, and most are serfs bound to the lands and wills of their masters. Some fortunate few enjoy much greater mobility than the common herd, however.

PERSONAL MOBILITY

Most demons move about by exactly the same method as most mortals: They walk. Admittedly, not all of them walk on two legs, or on legs at all. Feet, hooves, paws and talons are only a few of the more common means of locomotion. A visitor to Malfeas might see demons who hop, roll, bounce, ooze or slither through its streets... not to mention demons who glide, fly or float through the air, swim in the rivers of obsidian dust and the acidic sea, brachiate through its forests or burrow through the stone of Malfeas or the sands of Cecelyne.

MOUNTS

Some demons prefer to exploit the greater mobility of other breeds. Quite a few demons ride the demon-

beasts called peghedu just as humans ride donkeys, horses or camels—except that Creation's riding-beasts seldom scuttle up and down walls. Very few mortals ride flying beasts; anywhere in Malfeas, though, one might see demons ride the glorious, wasp-like agatae. The lumbering brantomes fill the same role as elephants or yeddim, carrying howdahs for up to half a dozen demons. The marine courser called a sourn carries single riders across the acid sea in comfort, its tentacles twisting to form both seat and safety harness. Since many Second Circle lords can spawn new breeds of demon-beast at will, the demon realm boasts dozens of different steeds, of widely varying sizes, speeds, temperaments and modes of locomotion.

VEHICLES

Hell's inhabitants devise a wide variety of vehicles as well. Palanquins are far and away the most common vehicles in the Demon City's streets. Malfeas has plenty of serfs and slaves to carry them, and the bearers can find their own way without the master's need to direct them at all times. Rickshaws, carriages and wagons appear in sections of the Demon City where the streets stay relatively flat and smooth, but they are far less popular overall.

A demon's choice of bearers says much about her tastes and capabilities. The hulking erymanthoi can carry large palanquins, magnificent with marble, gold and gems; more impressive is the statement that the palanquin's rider has the power to tame such savage brutes. Gilmyne are fairly strong but lack endurance. Their master clearly desires to make a show using their beauty, rather than engage in serious travel. Angyalkae are nearly tireless and can carry a palanquin with their prehensile hair while they play the harp of Time, for a truly magnificent display... but a mixed message. Being carried by a troop of angyalkae shows great wealth, but also suggests great fear of the Silent Wind.

While demons do not ply the obsidian dust rivers, vitriol lakes and the acid sea Kimberly as readily as mortals sail in Creation, they do know about boats. Smaller boats are usually rowed, with slaves to do the rowing. Trireme-sized or larger boats, however, use paddlewheels instead of oars. Down in the hold (or in long, narrow compartments alongside), lines of slave-demons turn the cranks with all the furious energy an overseer can extract with a whip. In the ornate galleons of powerful demons, the slaves *are* the cranks. Surgery and magic merge demon and machine to shape engines of sentient flesh who know nothing except eternal, unchanging toil and pain.



Another large fraction of Malfean boats are marine wagons or chariots drawn by demon-beasts. Demons often hitch their larger ships to the same infernal worms used by the Lintha pirates (see **The Compass of Terrestrial Directions, Vol. II—The West**, p. 158).

Sailing ships are far less common in the demon realm's corrosive waters than in Creation. Malfeas has plenty of wind to fill sails, but no steady winds that reliably blow in the same direction for hours at a time. Any demon who wants to get anywhere by sailing must call a radeken or other wind-demon and compel it to a single course. Relatively few demons find this worth the trouble, when slaves are so common.

Many sand ships sail the wastes of Cecelyne, though. Here, the winds blow in regular patterns, changing only at the will of the Yozi herself. A sufficiently learned navigator can plot courses across the Endless Desert to find a port on any shell of the Demon City. Sand ships are relatively new to Malfeas, but their numbers grow steadily.

Demons even build aerial vehicles. The birdlike unju carry aerial palanquins aloft. The gelatinous khom-fai can carry gondolas suitable for several demons across the Malfean sky, though they move rather slowly. A few demons build dirigibles that move about as quickly as Haslanti air boats, and are of similar construction. Instead of hot air, however, their balloons fill with screams of pain from demons strapped to iron frames and tortured with crystal spikes, while clever gear trains turn their writhing into power for the propellers.

RELIC VEHICLES

Hell also possesses a relatively small number of enchanted vessels analogous to the artifact ships, skycraft and other vehicles of Creation and Yu-Shan. These vehicles range from palanquins that fold into compact and convenient cubes when not needed, to hellstriders—warstriders made from a blend of hellish artifice and the warped and woven flesh of demons.

One ship stands out among the sea-craft of Malfeas: *Kimberly's Dawn*, the flagship of the mighty akuma Lintha Ng Hut Dukantha. This powerful warship is no mere relic—it's actually a Second Circle demon warped into a lethal parody of a Realm galleon. *Kimberly's Dawn* is the most dangerous ship in Malfeas. Despite its dragonwing sails, *Kimberly's Dawn* plows through the sea in arrogant disregard for any gust less potent than the Silent Wind or the Typhoon of Nightmares. (See **The Compass of Terrestrial Directions, Vol. II—The West** for a complete description of *Kimberly's Dawn*.)

Another Malfean vessel goes anywhere, on sea, sand or land. The *Foremost Gale*, built by the demon Florivet from his own bones, can sail anywhere that's flat enough to be considered a surface, including any Malfean street that's more than 10 feet wide. Florivet's yacht can turn up nearly anywhere, and the Whim-of-the-Wind gladly takes on passengers who seem like good bedmates or drinking buddies and who have someplace interesting to go.

VEHICLE TRAITS

Storytellers can find traits for a wide variety of vehicles, from chariots to Haslanti air boats, in Chapter Six of **Scroll of Kings**. Most Malfean vehicles possess the same traits as their analogues in Creation, though their means of propulsion often takes an infernal twist. Storytellers can also adapt the magitech vehicles found in Chapter Two of **The Books of Sorcery, Vol. I—Wonders of the Lost Age**. Keep in mind that such "helltech" wonders are quite rare and usually held only by Second or Third Circle demons, who jealously withhold such treasures from their inferiors.

TRAVEL BY INGESTION

The fastest way to travel through Hell is also, unfortunately, the least pleasant and most restricted in destinations. Where the Second Circle demon Neshan has pits, a demon called an ummuhan appears, never to move from its black marble throne. The mouth of an ummuhan can stretch wide enough to engulf creatures up to the size of an erymanthus. The ummuhan swallows its prey whole. Its victim slides down the demon's slick throat, into and through its slimy and stinking gut, to be shat out five seconds later—10 feet above the ground in a completely different area of Malfeas. This explains the ummuhan's other names, the gullet bridges or devouring gates.

Though disgusting, the passage does not harm anyone who can cede 10 motes of Essence to the ummuhan. Anyone who lacks sufficient Essence makes up the difference in points of Willpower. If that is not enough, the ummuhan takes its fee in unsoakable levels of aggravated damage.

Demons who know where a gullet bridge leads can use it as form of rapid transit. Unfortunately, the passage through an ummuhan is one way. The ummuhan also tries to swallow all who come within reach, whether they want to travel or not.



JACINT'S ROADS

The roads evoked by Jacint, the Prince Upon the Tower, do much to speed travel through Malfeas. They can connect any two points in the demon realm, no matter how far apart. Demons who cannot fly (or ride something that can) can nevertheless cross from one shell of the Demon City to another just by walking a road that climbs into the emerald-lit sky. No matter how a road twists and turns, it always seems horizontal to the person who walks along it.

The sky roads that Jacint builds between shells suffer one small limitation. As shells move apart, the roads between them stretch and thin, until a broad highway becomes a mere ribbon of black stone no wider than a balance beam, and no easier to walk. These roads become thicker and wider as shells move together, though—until an hour before the layers collide, at which time the roads break as the first stone rain to herald a cataclysm.

DEATH

Demons do not age. They live forever, unless something kills them. First Circle demons know that sooner or later, their world will kill them. Perhaps the Silent Wind will end them, Malfeas will crush them when two of his shells crush together, or they will learn something forbidden to them, and Orabilis will cast them burning into space. Just as likely, they will die fighting in some Second Circle demon's pointless turf war or be kidnapped and rendered into chalcant for another demon's pleasure. Some of them end their days spitted on a firmin's needle, dying for nothing but a dumb beast's instinct. The only alternative to dying in Malfeas, really, is dying in Creation as the slave of some sorcerer.

Second Circle demons seem to face a better future, but deep down, they know they don't. Their Third Circle progenitors view them as expendable tools. After all, the unquestionable can always create a new soul if one of them dies. Only the Third Circle demons and the Yozis themselves believe they could live forever... but even they know they *could* die. To the Yozis, entities literally older than time, their usurpation by the Incarnae might not seem to have happened all that long ago. And, they have the Neverborn to remind them that, maimed and imprisoned as they are, they could suffer a much worse fate. The Yozis will endure if they should die, but as Neverborn themselves, caught between being and nothingness, dreaming mad dreams of self-annihilation.



Lesser demons are spared such existential fears, at least. For them, death is truly the end.

Demons deal with their dead in many ways, largely dependent on how they die. A trapped demon knows the fate of his body all too well when he sees the butcher sharpen her knives or the chalcant vintner fill the vat with vitriol. Those who march to battle know the odds are good the Wind of Promise will bear their corpses away, though what happens after that is one of the secrets Orabilis reserves for the Yozis. Demons crushed between the layers of Malfeas most likely putrefy until the sesseljae eat their remains. Kimberly cleans away her own victims when her wrath sends floods of acid into the Demon City, which shows her solicitude for her inferiors.

In many cases, demons that die from other causes simply have their bodies eaten or fed to beasts. If they seem unpalatable, other demons toss them onto a roof for the Wind of Promise to take the next time she passes by. Yet, some First Circle citizens try to buy their serfs' loyalty with promises of funeral rites, such as they have seen in Creation. It might be the only time a demon ever receives a show of respect—too late for the demon to enjoy, but better than nothing.

Funeral rites vary widely throughout Malfeas, though citizens often copy bits of ritual from each other. They set hopping puppeteers to work building crypts, or kindle fires to cremate a minion's remains. Some fiefdoms build special, ornate towers and platforms where the corpse can wait for the Wind of Promise. A demon plays at being a priest (though would not think to claim such a title) and leads other serfs in a crude eulogy. Even if the final plan is to eat the demon, at least the feasters hold a wake and toast the memory of the dead as they carve off steaks.

ESSENCE

The most valuable commodity in Malfeas is Essence. Demons work their will through Essence, and although demons possess great reserves of Essence, no demon can ever have enough. Essence reveals the brutal realities of life in the Demon City: who has it and how they obtain it.

LARGESSE OF THE YOZIS

The Yozis possess near-limitless supplies of Essence, but most of it is bound up in their own existence. They cannot disburse their Essence as freely as they might like. (Or, maybe they can but prefer to let their subjects go hungry.) Indeed, they do not seem to make direct grants of Essence at all. Demons do, however, have

two ways to tap the prodigious currents of Essence that circulate through the bodies of their creators.

MALFEAN MANSES

Sometimes, a Yozi's Essence pools and concentrates to such a degree that it forms a demesne. The Demon City contains thousands of such demesnes. Most carry Essence aspected toward Malfeas' unique element, vitriol. The others carry the Essence of individual Yozis. Just as Creation has demesnes of Solar, Lunar and Sidereal Essence, the Demon City holds demesnes aspected toward Cecelyne, the Ebon Dragon, She Who Lives in Her Name and so on. Not surprisingly, many of these analogues to Celestial demesnes are aspected toward Malfeas himself. Nevertheless, the Essence of every Yozi permeates their entire world to some degree, so demesnes can form that carry the Essence of Oramus, Isidoros and other Yozis who do not usually manifest as landscape.

Just as in Creation, Malfean demesnes can have their power stabilized and channeled into manses that produce hearthstones. Powerful demons struggle to claim demesnes and build manses upon them. Naturally, demons prefer demesnes aspected toward their Yozi progenitor, but they suffer no penalty for using a hearthstone of a different aspect. Citizens compete for ownership of lower-power demesnes, while the unquestionable claim the mightiest demesnes for themselves. Any demesne rated four dots or higher is certainly the property of a Third Circle demon, though the unquestionable may permit the use of it to a sufficiently potent and loyal Second Circle demon—or the new Green Sun Princes. **The Manual of Exalted Power—The Infernals** provides many examples of Malfean hearthstones.

The Yozis do not consciously create demesnes. They can, however, destroy demesnes. Most Third Circle demons can wreck a demesne just by causing sufficient damage to the territory around it, forcing the Essence flows to a different path. Malfeas senses and endures such assaults on his person as less than pinpricks. Any demon that destroys a demesne aspected to a Yozi other than her own progenitor, however, has shown grave hostility to the Yozi who empowered the demesne. Therefore, the unquestionable seldom take this drastic course, except as a way to punish their own subordinates, occupying manses aspected to vitriol or their own master.

More often, demesnes dissipate because the Demon City itself has changed. As the shells of Malfeas split or crash together, their geomancy changes. Essence flows go elsewhere. The usual result is a sudden loss



of power for the demesne and any manse built on it. New demesnes appear elsewhere, however, and citizens scramble to seize them.

ESSENCE TAPS

Demons can also draw Essence directly from the Malfean dragon lines. Doing so requires a special artifact called an Essence tap. Malfean Essence taps come in many forms, but all include some sort of spike that drills into Hell to extract the Essence. The tap plugs directly into another artifact's hearthstone setting. For complete descriptions of Essence taps, see pages 187-188 of **The Manual of Exalted Power—The Infernals**.

Essence taps suffer a number of important restrictions. For one thing, they take a long time to set up or remove and relocate. A demon could attach an Essence tap to a hearthstone amulet and imbibe the Essence directly, but doing so would involve staying near the Essence tap for hours at a time. For another thing, each form of Essence tap channels just one aspect of Malfean Essence. If a citizen has access to a dragon line of Kimberly's Essence but has a tap for Cecelyne's Essence... too bad. Therefore, demons generally employ Essence taps only within their strongholds.

WORSHIP

As with other supernatural creatures, demons gain Essence from being worshiped. Unfortunately for them, demons cannot gain Essence from the worship of other demons. (The Incarnae made sure of that when they forced the defeated Primordials to reshape themselves.) No, only the reverence of mortal souls can generate Essence.

Whatever their breed or faction, therefore, demons seek worshipers in Creation. It's a rare demon that does not demand at least a small sacrifice from the sorcerer or thaumaturge who summons it, and when demands fail, demons wheedle and dicker. Indeed, demons could greatly increase the danger of summoning them and forcing them to serve—but they *want* Creation's denizens to call them, because every summoner is a potential worshiper and source of Essence.

See Chapter Three for a discussion of how demons establish, maintain and exploit their cults. Demons find many uses for mortal worshipers, but the Essence they supply is far from the least of them.

FORCED EXTRACTION

Of course, every demon does generate large quantities of personal Essence. A sufficiently powerful demon can simply rip the Essence from weaker demons and take it for his own. More often, however, powerful demons prefer to extort small, periodic donations from their subordinates.

CHALCANTH

The Essence-charged liquid called chalcant is the ultimate method for extracting usable Essence from demons. Making chalcant involves slowly dissolving a demon in vitriol, then distilling the result until only the demon's liquefied soul or Essence pattern is left. Chalcant confers a number of motes equal to (source demon's Essence x source demon's Willpower) on its imbiber.

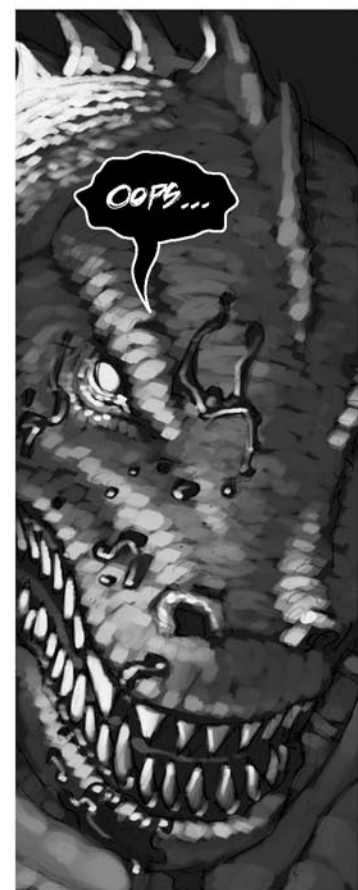
Fantastically rare bottles of chalcant called azoth—made from Second Circle demons—offer greater quantities of Essence. No one but a Yozi or a whole circle of powerful Exalted could capture a Third Circle demon and render it into azoth, and no one is known to have done so. If any bottles of such a potent elixir exist, they would be treasures beyond price... and likely incredibly dangerous for whoever drank them.

The Manual of Exalted Power—The Infernals offers more information about the creation, cost and delights of chalcant, on pages 174-176. Chalcant is only one of the more pleasant perks of Infernal Exaltation. Citizens of the Demon City enjoy it as well, while Third Circle demons rarely drink anything less potent.

TAX HELL

Most citizens of Malfeas tax their demon serfs for Essence. Charms such as Fruit of Living Essence can strip motes from a demon. After that, storage becomes the chief issue. A demon that knows Chrysalis of Preservation can crystallize the Essence into tangible form. Many demons crystallize taxed Essence into coins or scrip bearing their personal symbols. A demon could also use Touch of Divinity to place the Essence in some physical receptacle.

The unquestionable have less need for Essence taxes than do citizens. Nevertheless, every Third Circle demon tithes Essence from its Second Circle emanations and other client citizens. In return for paying their tax of motes, demons receive the right to survive and pay again.





CHAPTER THREE

TO RULE IN HELL

Many aspects of infernal society superficially resemble aspects of mortal society. Like humans, the demons, worship, make war, do business and form governments. The details, however, differ wildly from mortal customs. Ruling in Creation is no practice for ruling in Hell.

THE POLITICS OF HELL

In Malfeas, power flows from the top down. Thus do the Yozi decree: Who would gainsay their will? Certainly not their own souls, nor their souls' souls. Even if the First Circle demons had the capacity to rebel (which they don't), a single Yozi has more power than all the First Circle demons put together. The first law that Malfeas ordained and Cecelyne gave to demonkind shapes all their politics and culture:

The greater rule the lesser. The lesser obey.

FIEFDOMS AND VASSALS

Every demon with meaningful power can claim a fiefdom: an area in which it wields power, subject to no restraint from those below. Most Second Circle demons claim sections of the demon realm as their fiefdoms, which they rule however they want. Malfeas has thousands of these fiefdoms. Most of them are in the Demon City itself, but some of them occupy other zones of Hell. The demon Octavian currently rules the largest such fiefdom.

SUBINFEUDATION

First Circle citizens sometimes administer fiefdoms. Usually, the citizen does so as a vassal of a Second Circle demon. Citizenship grants privileges, but it does not grant safety from Second Circle enemies. Ambitious First Circle citizens rarely manage to rule by might alone,

so they attach themselves to demons who can. These vassal fiefdoms are always quite small, with populations comparable to towns, whereas a Second Circle demon's fiefdom might have the population of a city-state or great nation.

For example, Makarios, the Sigil's Dreamer, uses a large, central bazaar as his chief residence and base of operations. His rule is absolute there. In addition, though, more than a dozen other bazaars through the Demon City owe him fealty. A First Circle citizen administers each of them as the deputy of Makarios, enforcing his rules and passing the profits to him. In return, the Sigil's Dreamer offers his vassals a modicum of safety and a small share in the revenues.

NON-TERRITORIAL FIEFDOMS

Third Circle demons may claim territories, but these "fiefdoms" stand apart from the wars and intrigues of Hell. Lesser demons treat the forge of Ligier and other Third Circle domains as sacred places that they do not visit except by invitation. The unquestionable hardly ever intervene in ordinary war, trade or politics.

Even Demon Princes who are territories themselves might leave their administration to Second Circle lords (and not always their own Second Circle souls). Instead, the unquestionable generally claim an activity or condition as their fiefdom.

For instance, Erembour claims authority over every location under the Ebon Dragon's shadow. As this territory constantly changes, so too does the dominion of Erembour. No citizens dare to ask That Which Calls to the Shadows if she would please *not* bring her revel to their fiefdom. Their dominion becomes Erembour's for as long as the Ebon Dragon chooses to fly overhead.

Orabilis claims dominion over all whom he sees breaking the law of the Yozis. The eyes of Orabilis travel throughout the demon realm. If an eye sees a demon contravene the laws of Hell, the End of All Wisdom tells the lawbreaker to report to the nearest temple for punishment or kills the lawbreaker on the spot using a rain of molten glass. Those who break the law by learning the secrets of the Yozis suffer a stranger and more ghastly fate. Every ruler of



POWERS



a fiefdom accepts this dominion that Orabilis wields. If they did not, they would break the laws of the Yozis and fall into his fiefdom themselves.

The domain of Lypothymie is the most abstract of all, for Lypothymie is an emotional state with no physical presence outside of her equally immaterial and abstract sanctum. Lypothymie's fiefdom consists of everyone who suffers her peculiar form of melancholy, whether they are in Malfeas, Creation or any other world. Exactly how a demon of such abstraction can be considered "imprisoned in Hell" is a philosophical conundrum that the savants of Heaven do not care to contemplate.

Second Circle demons can also hold conceptual fiefdoms, if they have the power to assert their dominion. The demon Neshanha, for instance, claims her progeny, the ummuhan, as her fiefdom. Every creature that uses the devouring gates to travel though Hell briefly enters the fiefdom of Neshanha, and the motes they cede to the ummuhan is tribute paid to her. The demon Emergenzia claims a bureaucratic fiefdom, the Ministry of Despair. While Emergenzia's physical territory consists of a single office-temple, his true fiefdom consists of his petitioners. The laws of Hell give Emergenzia the authority to do what he pleases to end a demon's despair or (more likely) inflict despair on any demon who lacks the power to resist him.

Finally, a few Second Circle demons are as abstract as Lypothymie, with equally immaterial and non-localized domains of power. The Descending Hierarchy includes demon lords whose fiefdoms consist of melodies that enslave whoever plays them, drugs that bring one into the shared hallucination of a fiefdom with no physical existence, or even stranger states of being.

STYLES OF RULERSHIP

Despite such strange possibilities, most fiefdoms are simply patches of territory with a population of demons and one dominant demon who rules in whatever manner he pleases. Such fiefdoms rarely have much else in common, though. A lord can enjoy centuries or millennia of absolute rule, in which she may institute whatever customs or practices strike her fancy. If a Second Circle demon decides to promote minions based on how well they flay themselves or extemporize poetry (or both at once), she can do so. In Creation, rulers who adopt such whimsical methods are usually overthrown before long. In Malfeas, dreadful and inviolable powers back the right of a fiefdom's master to behave as badly or madly as she wants.

LORD AND CITIZEN

The terms "lord" and "citizen" carry overlapping but distinct meanings. A citizen becomes such by the order of Cecelyne's priests and holds this rank wherever she goes and whatever else happens to her. A lord is a demon who actually rules a territory, with no need to care what other demons want. A demon loses this status if she stops ruling a fiefdom.

All lords are citizens, and virtually all are Second Circle demons. Demons who rule non-territorial fiefdoms are not usually called lords. Neither are First Circle citizens who rule territories, since they seldom rule by personal power alone. Still, there are always exceptions.

BASIC AUTOCRACY

The drastic difference in power between circles of demons means that a simple pattern frequently lies behind the brutal whimsy of a fiefdom's rulership. The Second Circle lord acts as sole, dictatorial master. The demon may assume a noble title such as king, queen, daimyo or sultan. Other lords claim some other form of authority, such as mandarin, shogun, abbess, marshal, dominie, Choreographer of Executions, Blasphemer-in-Chief or Supreme Vitriolic Engineer. The demon autocrat then has a cadre of lesser citizens and minions who carry out her commands.

The fiefdom's society might adopt any number of different forms. A demon may shape her fiefdom in the image of a city-state, monastery, military base, farming village, factory complex, research laboratory, bureaucratic office or any other community she can imagine. Behind such window-dressing details, however, the essential structure is fairly obvious. The ruling citizen may appoint a council of advisors or a cadre of vassal citizens, but these subordinates rarely exercise any real influence over their master.

Octavian, the Living Tower, presents an example of such autocracy. The Second Circle demon rules his empire-sized fiefdom as its military dictator, at once king and field marshal. Dozens of First Circle citizen vassals govern sub-domains within Octavian's empire, but he appoints them at his whim and deposes or destroys them just as casually.

The Second Circle demon Kabti-Ilani provides an example of greater eccentricity. Kabti-Ilani takes the title of abbess and organizes her fiefdom as a religious



community devoted to her progenitor, the Typhoon of Nightmares. Her serfs are monks and nuns. They engage in minimal labor to obtain food and rather more labor to prepare elixirs—not because of any real need to eat or drink, but because Kabti-Ilani likes the idea of labor as a devotional exercise. The demons spend most of their time singing praises to Hegra and every one of her component souls. When the Typhoon of Nightmares herself blows through the fiefdom, all the subjects of Kabti-Ilani dance ecstatically in the driving dream-rain.

VARIATIONS AND ALTERNATIVES

While autocracy is the most common form of governance in Hell, the thousands of fiefdoms provide many alternatives.

Parliaments: Some lords make a show of sharing power by appointing a council, congress or parliament. The fiefdom's master might also modestly take a title such as president or prime minister. This show of a republic does not fool many demons. The lord might delegate considerable power to a parliament (usually as a way to foist some of the administrative work onto the lesser demons), but everyone knows the lord can take the power back at any time.

A parliament incidentally makes a convenient scapegoat whenever things go wrong. Demons do not feel sympathy when a fiefdom's master forces a minion to fall on his sword (often literally). If the counselor or captain had been competent enough, wise enough, strong enough, *useful* enough, the lord would have made someone else take the fall.

Figureheads: Other Second Circle demons hide their power and make their subjects think that some other demon rules the fiefdom. A few demons have ruled for centuries, entirely unknown, while their subjects knelt before an impostor. The Second Circle demon Neventer, for instance, apparently rose from the dead to take vengeance on his murderer, Arzhel, just as the other demon took possession of Neventer's palace. Demons now call Neventer the Lord Perdurant—not realizing that their true master, who takes the guise of a minor servant, simply wrought a First Circle demon into a new Neventer to replace the puppet whom Arzhel slew. Third Circle demons surely know the truth, but they choose not to tell.

Co-Rulers: Other fiefdoms seem to have a clique or cabal of rulers. Usually, several First Circle citizens ally to dominate a larger region than any of them could manage on his own. By infernal standards, these triumvirates, juntas or oligarchies are notoriously unstable. The

co-rulers scheme against each other to assume absolute power, or at least reduce the number of demons with whom they must share. In a few decades, the balance of power and treachery breaks down, and the fiefdom collapses in civil war.

A few demonic juntas last for centuries, however. Many demons suspect that Second Circle masters secretly rule these fiefdoms, but who knows? Perhaps the ruling citizens really did find an unbreakable and mutual binding against treachery. In other cases, territories see a long series of short-lived juntas and dictatorships as new cabals arise, overthrow old cliques, fight among themselves for mastery, recruit new allies and continue the dance of coup and betrayal. The unquestionable Saltran *shin* Szoreny, who manifests as a labyrinthine agate fortress that hangs downward from the Malfean sky, has played cliques of First and even Second Circle demons against each other for millennia in this manner, in a constant scramble for power. She grants a boon to any demon who can make himself master over all her other residents, but few demons have won this reward.

The Dominion of the Seven Sorrows (see p. 93) provides a rare example of a truly stable fiefdom ruled by a junta. In this case, demons know exactly who truly rules: the Third Circle demon Demirkol, who commanded all seven of her souls to act as co-rulers. Of course, none of the seven dare to disobey their progenitor. They implement the plan given by Demirkol and wonder if they will ever understand it.

PURPOSE

The Dominion of the Seven Sorrows also provides an example of an important way in which infernal fiefdoms can differ from mortal societies. It exists to perform a specific task (even if none of the inhabitants know what it is). Human societies usually exist for their own sake, and their inhabitants pursue many goals, both personal and collective. An entire demonic fiefdom, however, can exist for no purpose except to perform some task set by its lord—and at least some minimal regard for self-defense and avoiding the Silent Wind.

A fiefdom's purpose can be as sensible or whimsical as any other aspect of demonic rule. Some fiefdoms have a purpose that mortals can easily understand. The empire of Octavian, for instance, exists to conquer more territory. Creation has also seen theocracies such as the abbacy of Kabti-Ilani. No merely human despot or prelate, however, could dedicate his empire so completely to such military or religious goals (though a few god-ruled countries come close, as did a few Exalt-ruled domains





in the Old Realm). Other fiefdoms exist for purposes of greater obscurity or defy rational explanation, such as the sewer-lord Mestrolian's obsession with cataloguing stench or the mad cartographer Olgierd's labors to produce a precise scale model of a world that apparently exists only in his imagination.

SMALL SOCIETIES

Monarchies, cliques and assorted variations thereof do not exhaust the possibilities for rulership in Hell. For instance, some territories follow a tribal model, with citizens leading village-sized communities as chiefs. The chiefs might serve a Second Circle king or try to survive independently as best they can. Such tribes have difficulty protecting themselves from the Silent Wind or other Malfean hazards, but some find sufficiently out-of-the-way places where they survive and enjoy a modicum of freedom from Second Circle rule. As usual, such communities might themselves take variant forms as religious communities, bandit gangs, mining or logging camps, self-isolating groups of scholars or artisans, and so on. A large fraction of these small groups are mere gangs that serve no purpose except to fight other gangs for the right to dominate particular alleys, sewers, buildings or individual rooms in the Demon City. Such gangs own nothing but their pride in keeping some scrap of territory from someone else.

A society that lacks a Second Circle master can experiment with forms of governance that simply couldn't work when one demon wields so much more power than the others. Tribal and quasi-tribal villages might choose their leaders based on anything from dueling to seeking omens. Demons tend to favor contests of raw power—but what sort of power? A tribe of decanthropes might award leadership to the demon who shows the greatest skill in controlling several bodies at once, while gilmyne hold dancing contests and aalu find whose calligraphy tastes the most elegant. The possibilities are as varied, and bizarre, as demons themselves.

FAITH AND LAW

For all its political fragmentation, Malfeas has one powerful, unifying religion. All demons worship their Yozi progenitors. A single order of priests conveys the will of the Yozis to demonkind. Demons can proffer any private worship they want to whatever Yozi they want, but Cecelyne reserves the title and power of priesthood to certain special acolytes of hers. They, and they alone, have the right to say, "The Yozis command me to tell you..." Only a Yozi's fetich soul shares this right. All other emanations from a Yozi speak only for

themselves (though their word remains unquestionable). And only the priests of Cecelyne can report the words of any Yozi. Even Ligier, fetich soul of the King of Hell, would not presume to speak for the Ebon Dragon, Kimberly or Isidoros. (He might give an educated and honest guess about their wills, but only to someone he found marginally worthy of his royal regard.) To falsely claim a revelation from a Yozi is a capital and unpardonable offense.

THE PRIESTS OF CECELYNE

The priests of Cecelyne claim no territory of their own. Instead, they claim temples in every fiefdom. To refuse Cecelyne's presence in one's domain is to risk loss of citizenship.

No one below the Third Circle knows how many priests serve Cecelyne, and no one presumes to reveal their heritage. Priests invariably wear shrouding black cloaks. Their hands and feet are darkened bone, and their faces are flame the hue of Creation's clear autumn sky. If necessary, a lone priest can defeat almost any citizen at swordplay.

The priests are not demons. At least, no spell to summon, bind or banish demons can affect them.

The high priest of Cecelyne is called only the Standard-Bearer. He exactly resembles the rest. He represents the Endless Desert—or personifies her—or is her mortal-scale avatar. Or perhaps the Standard-Bearer is merely an office that passes from priest to priest. No one outside the priesthood knows for sure.

Cecelyne's priests make lengthy or ceremonial journeys in azure ceremonial barques, rowed by erymanthoi or carried through the Demon City's streets as large palanquins. The Standard-Bearer himself never travels on foot. Loose silver sand covers the bottom of his barque, and its prow bears the standard of his title: an irregular polygon of glass, empty centered, with one edge missing. Malfean tradition holds that the Standard-Bearer can never be defeated as long as he stands upon the Endless Desert, and the sand and standard mystically make his barque an extension of Cecelyne's chief temple, just as the Standard-Bearer mystically represents Cecelyne herself. Even Octavian, who loves to publicly flout the Temple's will, has never dared challenge Cecelyne's high priest.

ACOLYTES

Any serf can belong to the Endless Desert just by asking, and temple serfs come only from such petitioners. A complaint from its owner, however, will gain a petitioner a "stay of service," forcing it to remain in its

A POSSIBLY IRRELEVANT PARALLEL

Celestial Circle sorcerers can learn a spell to beckon entities called the Hidden Judges of the Secret Flame (see **The Books of Sorcery, Vol. II—The White Treatise**, pp. 72–73). These entities wear hooded black robes. Their hands and feet are blackened bone. Instead of a face, the robe's cowl holds a blue flame. The Hidden Judges punish those who violate Heaven's laws. They are incorruptible and infallible in their service to Heaven.

Any similarity to the priests of Cecelyne is surely coincidental, though their game traits are exactly the same.

current home for up to 700 years. All temple serfs are referred to as “acolytes,” though none can become priests (or, if they can, they apparently gain the priests’ black-robed skeletal form). Acolytes wear no special uniform. The slim, empty hourglasses they bear proclaim their status. The most favored acolytes carry blue ones.

TEMPLES

Cecelyne’s greatest place of worship is the Skyless Cathedral located in the center of the Equitable Market of Makarios. The tall and shining temple has walls of brass, edged in blue. The walls bend inward to reach a sharp point. Malfeas supplies the temple’s substance, but its interior belongs to Cecelyne. Stepping through the temple’s seven-angled arch, a worshiper finds himself upon the Endless Desert. Overhead hangs the brass temple, inverted. Instead of coming to a point, its seven walls stretch outward to meet the horizon. No matter how far one runs, one remains in the desert with the temple floor overhead.

Every visitor to the Skyless Cathedral meets an acolyte who can summon a priest, oversee a sacrifice upon one of the desert’s stone altars, take messages for the Standard-Bearer or formally accept a candidate for citizenship. The black-robed priests and favored acolytes know the riddle of standing upon the temple’s flat, empty verdigris-covered floor. Those who look up from the sand can see the tops of their heads. At the end of a visit, a petitioner who makes the proper obeisance to Cecelyne finds himself outside the seven-angled arch, looking in to see naught but vitriolic fog.

Lesser shrines are not so grand or mysterious. Each fane has the same irregular, seven-sided floor plan as the Skyless Cathedral and is built of brass with blue edging.

Other details differ. Inside, the temple floor consists of silver sand strewn on verdigrised brass, with one or more stone altars where a worshiper or acolyte can offer a sacrifice. The master of a fiefdom can curry favor with Cecelyne by erecting larger temples or decorating them with richer ornaments. Or at least, he can hope the Endless Desert favors such architectural offerings.

TEMPLE RITES

In the temples of Cecelyne, demons can pray to the Yozis and hope to receive a response through the priests. Every prayer must include a petition to Cecelyne, asking her leave to use her temple, priests and acolytes. Demons often simply address their prayers to the Endless Desert herself and ask her to intercede with the other Yozis.

SUPPLICATION

Demons have many ways to pray. They can speak their prayers, either by rote or extemporized, or write them on parchment, metallic bark-paper, slips of bone, stone tablets or leaves from the forest Vitalius. They can sing or play musical instruments in the favored modes and melodies of the Yozis, or they can dance their favored dances and make the gestures that represent the Yozis’ attributes.

Most of all, they can offer sacrifices: the finest food and drink they can afford; incense and spices; lamps that burn human or demon fat; jewels and other valuables. Essence is always a suitable sacrifice, whether given directly or through receptacles such as chalcanth or soulworms. So are lives, whether of demon beasts, captive demons or animals brought from Creation. The Yozis also favor offerings of demon ichor and pain, given through flagellation, ritual incisions, piercing with crystal needles, fire or acid applied to the skin, flaying a bit of oneself or other methods. Acolytes know the acceptable methods to propitiate each Yozi.

These things are sacred to Cecelyne herself: empty things, forbidden knowledge, azure, openings, exceptional words, epiphanies, change and tokens of Creation’s manses and demesnes. Demons hoping for her favor dedicate new ideas, resolutions and realizations to the Endless Desert. Many invoke her name when stepping over a threshold. The few demons with the wherewithal to bring things from Creation are almost always well loved by the priesthood, for Cecelyne particularly enjoys hearthstones and living mortal beings. Other Yozis have their own favored concepts and offerings (see pp. 105–107 of **The Manual of Exalted Power—The Infernals** for suggestions).



The Yozi hear every prayer directed to them from a temple. Sometimes, they deign to notice a prayer, and the supplicant finds enough favor to get a response. This is not easy, for the harsh and bitter Yozi are not easily impressed.

REWARDS

Yozi-rites follow the same rules as other prayers (see *Exalted*, p. 132). In return for their worship, demons can gain a variety of benefits.

The first is simply to stay on the good side of the priesthood. The priests don't have to assist every petitioner, and they receive wide latitude in how they interpret and apply Cecelyne's laws. The most common penalty for minor breaches of infernal law is a large sacrifice. A priest might reduce the scale of the offering for a demon who prays regularly and makes many offerings. Indeed, the Standard-Bearer sometimes permits a smaller sacrifice ahead of time, letting the demon buy the right to commit a particular offense. Asking for such an indulgence carries risks, though, for it involves describing the intended crime to the Standard-Bearer. Cecelyne's archpriest may decide to forestall the offense through advance punishment—declaring it a crime simply to think of

doing the deed, let alone trying to involve a priest as co-conspirator!

THE CAGE

Mortals sacrificed to the Endless Desert are brought to the Cage, a pillared basalt hall with blue tin windowsills that stands on the outskirts of the Forest of Chimes. It is Hell's grandest and most prestigious prayer mill.

The Standard-Bearer himself mixes the ritual cup that such mortal sacrifices receive. Its sandy medicine is painful to drink but inflicts no lasting harm, and it protects imbibers from the harmful vapors of Malfeas. From the moment a creature consumes this substance, however, she is considered property of the temple and marked with an hourglass brand. She will never again leave the Cage without special dispensation from the Standard-Bearer. One side of the Cage opens onto Cecelyne, and human captives live out their spans learning the Endless Desert's various topographies. Constant supervision by unsleeping priests prevents escape.

The Yozi might reward successful prayers with informative visions. These usually come from the Yozi itself, right while the supplicant prostrates himself before her altar. Many inhabitants of Malfeas have received one or two visions. Visions come rarely, but demons live for a long, long time.

Cecelyne might also reward a prayer by directing her priest to give the supplicant a bisu—a statuette of a hideous lion-headed dwarf, each hand-carved by a priest from demon bone. All bisu look the same, but the statuette can ritually represent any Yozi if it is decorated with the standard accoutrements of that fallen Primordial. For instance, a bisu sprinkled with several kinds of sand represents Cecelyne; crowned with a broken brass circlet, it represents Malfeas; dipped in black ink, it represents the Ebon Dragon. Changing the trappings changes the dedication. Prayer rolls made before a bisu of the relevant Yozi gain two bonus dice. (Those made to demons that are part of that Yozi also gain the bonus).

CECELYNE'S LAWS

Every statement ever made by a Yozi or Third Circle demon carries the force of law, but most of their utterances apply only to a specific time, place and group of people. Only the messages they give through the priests of Cecelyne become law for all of Malfeas. The acolytes write down every commandment of the Yozis for other demons to study in hopes of better understanding their progenitors.

GREATER COMMANDMENTS

A fraction of the Yozis' pronouncements apply to all demons, forever (until they decide differently). These are written in a volume called the *Azure Decretals*. Every shrine has a copy, with an acolyte who can read them. Most of the commandments lay out the basic rules for infernal society, such as the privileges granted to citizens. For instance:

- *Every fiefdom must contain at least one temple.* The priests (and by implication, the Yozis) do not recognize a citizen as ruling a territory unless the citizen builds a temple. The Standard-Bearer can demand multiple temples, if he wants. Citizens who claim non-territorial fiefdoms nevertheless must sponsor a shrine for the priests to recognize them as having a sole right to their chosen domain. For instance, Neshanha erected a temple next to her palace, the Hall of Only Departures. The Standard-Bearer keeps azure-edged records and maps of every fiefdom in his ceremonial barque. They fit in a small cupboard, though the total volume is considerably larger than the barque itself.

DANGEROUS CALLS

Zeniths, No Moons, Midnight Castes and Sidereal Exalted gain their usual priestly advantage if they try to contact a Yozi through prayer. The defeated Primordials despise their conquerors, but they *notice* their prayers. Successful prayer by an Exalt, however, emphatically does not ensure any Yozi's favor. It merely grants a brief period of attention in which the priest can try to justify his presumption.

In case it need be said, attracting a Yozi's attention while one is in Hell is deeply dangerous. Yet it is not automatically suicidal for the Exalted. Yozis can show surprising courtesy to Exalts who treat them with respect.

It could be that Yozis genuinely enjoy being treated as the glorious cosmogens they once were. For instance, Malfeas is a bitter and fallen king, but he remains the originator of kingship and seldom passes up chances to display regal greatness, statecraft and largesse. Cecelyne no longer gives laws to Creation, but she still wants all creatures to live under law. Through superlative diplomacy, Exalted supplicants *might* persuade a Yozi to act within its ancient purview and not destroy them, enslave them or try to corrupt them.

Or, maybe it's just that entities older than Time prefer to seduce their ancient foes slowly, playing for sympathy until they can trap an Exalt into turning akuma.

- *A citizen retains possession of a fiefdom through a year and a day of absence.* A Second Circle demon can do little to rule his fiefdom or defend it against ambitious rivals while he's stuck in Creation bound to a sorcerer's will. Being dead is even worse. Nevertheless, the Yozis want their secondary souls to keep their domains. The privilege was eventually extended to First Circle citizens. Citizens retain title to their fiefdoms for the standard period of servitude or the time it takes to regenerate from corporeal death. After that, the priests and the Lacunar Ministry (see p. 49) declare the territory open to new claimants.

- *The common herd shall serve; only individuals are citizens of Hell.* This commandment makes possible the trial that elevates First Circle demons to citizenship (see *The Books of Sorcery*, Vol. V—*The Roll of Glorious Divinity II*, p. 18). First Circle demons



rarely think of themselves as individuals. They tend to share stereotyped personalities, based on the purpose for which a Second Circle demon created them. Demons who develop idiosyncratic interests and motivations, however, evolve beyond their role as serfs. The priests of Cecelyne may acknowledge this personal growth by declaring a serf a citizen, with the right to own property and other demons.

TABOOS

In addition to the great laws of dominance and submission, all Yozis issue a few commandments that serve only to assert their privileged position by making life difficult for lesser demons. For instance:

- *None but Cecelyne's priests may witness the sacred azure.* Orabilis has the right to destroy any serf who does not cover her eyes upon seeing it. A citizen who fails to do so must make a great sacrifice at the Skyless Cathedral within a year and a day. The unquestionable may see the color, but wearing or creating it is a clear provocation to the Endless Desert.

Naturally, all the official documents of the priests are edged with this exact shade of blue. The *Azure Decretals* take their name from this hue. Therefore, demons cannot legally read their own laws, look their priests in the face or indeed look at the temples they are obliged to visit. Most Yozis ordain at least three of these perverse taboos (except Hegra, who ordains nothing). As a result, every demon has broken at least one law and can be condemned and punished for it if someone sufficiently influential desires that this be done. All demons can destroy those of lower circles virtually at will, but Cecelyne gives a veneer of legality to such brutal exercises of power.

Naturally, demons of greater rank and power get away with a lot more than serfs do. For instance, Cecelyne forbids demons to own any sort of clock. Nevertheless, a mighty lord such as Octavian could own a roomful of the finest Varangian chronometers and say he kept them only as art objects. Conversely, a serf could be destroyed on grounds that a drip of vitriol-rain inside her hovel constituted a water-clock.

FOLK RELIGION

The priests of Cecelyne and their attendant ministries form the religious and legal establishment of Hell, but they do not form the sole conduit of worship. Demons build shrines to other Yozis and unquestionables, and may pray whenever they feel the need. All demons know that the Yozis do not answer prayers that do not come through the priests of Cecelyne, but they

JUDGMENTAL EYES

It should be noted that while some demons (notably Orabilis) claim the right to punish any offense against infernal law, none of these demons automatically knows whenever a demon commits a crime. At most, they know about *one particular* offense—the way Orabilis knows when someone has learned a secret the Yozis reserve for themselves. All other crimes, he knows only if one of his wandering eyes sees them. Orabilis has many eyes, but Hell is vast. A neighborhood might see an eye just once a year. Other Third Circle demons are similarly selective.

may hear and perhaps act in a way favorable to a suppliant. Admittedly, most demons pray for a Yozi *not* to do something—for Isidoros to leave their neighborhood uncrushed, for Kimberly to stay her corrosive wrath, for She Who Lives in Her Name not to thwart a would-be citizen's attempt to rise above his station. Third Circle demons, however, may respond directly to prayers.

Demons even gather in congregations to worship in unison. One demon usually leads the prayers but does not claim the title of priest—which would get him killed. They are merely deacons, and their office gives them no protection at all against other demons. (It could, however, be worth one dot of Influence if their congregations think they do their job well.)

Such unsanctioned cults usually stay quite small. Local cells of the cult vary a lot, since the Yozi they worship has ordained no liturgy or ritual. The demons merely guess what might please the Yozi.

A demon can join as many cults as she wants. Demons usually join cults that bear some relevance to their work or other aspects of their lives. For instance, the crews of every ship that sails across Kimberly offer daily prayers to the Yozi. They do not expect Kimberly to grant them anything, but not to assure her of their continued reverence might make her angry. Better to be safe than dissolved in her corrosive depths.

MINISTRIES OF HELL

The priesthood of Cecelyne operates in partnership with more than a dozen half-religious, half-bureaucratic fiefdoms: the Ministries of Hell. Malfeas created the ministries as expressions of his kingship, but their charters are part of the *Azure Decretals*. A Second Circle demon rules each ministry in Malfeas' name.

KREWES AND CLAMOR

Every infernal society needs some way to repel or avoid the Silent Wind. No methods are infallible, but a fiefdom that doesn't even try doesn't survive very long. Some infernal societies create elaborate institutions for this purpose; others are haphazard. All, however, can be seen as a special form of supplication—rites performed to keep the most feared of all Yozis far away.

At one extreme, a number of demon lords ordain special groups of shouters and musicians to travel through their fiefdoms to create a constant clamor. These troupes of professional noisemakers, called *krewes*, constitute one of the most widespread institutions among larger fiefdoms. Octavian additionally chains groups of *katalinae* and *angyalkae* in high minarets around his palace, who play music in shifts as a constant barrier of sound. At the other extreme, the First Circle vassals of Makarios mount carillons in their bazaars and ask the shoppers to pull the ropes whenever they walk past. Then again, the spider-lord Surandaman surrounds his web-hung fiefdom with gongs that a single unsleeping *anuhle* controls through a system of cables and pulleys.

Few citizens would disregard their decrees, for their emerald-bordered missives are stamped with the seal of Ligier. It whispers, "Remember that your King surrounds you!" The eyes of Orabilis also frequently watch ministers as they perform their duties, as further proof of their authority. Each ministry deals with a particular aspect of Malfean life and politics—usually involving some form of suffering.

The Minister of Pain, for instance, can order anyone less than an unquestionable to feel agony, for any reason or none. She can also withdraw a demon's pain, but does this far less often.

The Ministry of Hate regulates enmity. It may stir up hatred between two demons or decide that a hatred has become too disruptive to other demons and request that Lucien—or even Orabilis—execute one of the parties involved.

Demons from the Ministry of Defeat observe battles and record their outcomes. No aggression between fiefdoms is allowed without prior notification of this

ministry. A priest of Cecelyne must register any transfers of territory that take place.

The Lacunar Ministry deals with fiefdoms whose masters are bound in Creation or temporarily dead. It makes sure that each fiefdom remains inviolate for the requisite year and a day. If the fiefdom's lord appoints a regent to administer her fiefdom during such absences, the ministry makes sure that the regent stays loyal.

Each ministry has an office somewhere in the Demon City, and some ministries have several. Ministers of Hell cannot claim any territory except their own offices, nor any subjects except their personal staff of clerks, servitors and agents—though these may number in the hundreds. Emerenzia, overlord of the Ministry of Despair (see pp. 125-126) is a good example of a typical minister in Hell.

Demons visit the ministries to request that something be done—very often, that something be done to another demon. They present their case humbly and offer the largest bribes they can afford. A demon might need to bribe several clerks before getting a chance to see the minister.

The ministries vary widely in their responsiveness. The Ministry of Defeat hardly ever rejects a petition to permit a battle between fiefdoms and promptly notifies the priests of the impending conflict. For an extra bribe, the minister will neglect to notify the aggressed-upon lord until the invader is virtually at his gates. Emerenzia fulfills his duty as Minister of Despair by rejecting most pleas to relieve the despair of supplicants. He is a bit more likely to grant a request that another demon share a supplicant's ruin.

STRANGERS

When people other than demons live in Hell, demons refer to them as "strangers." A stranger occupies a legal limbo—not subject to the laws of Hell, but not protected by them either. (Not that the laws protect most demons...) At first, demons tend to challenge strangers, trying to change their status to food or slave. In time, though, strangers can achieve limited positions of power in Hell if lesser demons find them too dangerous to threaten and greater demons find them useful in some way.

Such strangers enjoy a degree of independence and respect comparable to a First Circle citizen. An accepted stranger cannot rule a fiefdom but will not be arbitrarily enslaved, either. The transition from stranger to *accepted* stranger usually happens when a Second Circle demon or a priest of Cecelyne publicly speaks with the person in a reasonably civil manner.



Of course, a stranger who seeks acceptance must not seem like a threat to Second Circle or higher demons. The Descending Hierarchy does not want foreign residents who seem likely to kill powerful citizens, foment revolutionary movements or otherwise upset the status quo in Hell.

Note that akuma are never strangers. By definition, akuma are *owned* by a single demonic patron. Strangers remain free agents.

ENTERING MALFEAS

Humans (and others) who visit Malfeas do not immediately attract the attention of the Descending Hierarchy. The Yozis know anything they want, of course, but usually do not pay attention to tiny creatures entering their world. Instead, a stranger's reception depends on the First Circle demons she encounters, and any citizen who rules them.

Citizens and fiefdom lords vary in how they treat strangers. Some of them view any intruder as a threat and command their serfs to capture or kill anyone who enters their fiefdoms. Others welcome strangers. Many citizens just wait and watch cautiously until they know a stranger's intentions. The smarter First Circle demons often take this approach as well. After all, anyone powerful enough to enter Hell could become a useful ally or a dangerous foe. The first demon to attack a stranger could be a foolish cat's-paw of some wiser demon who seeks to assess the visitor's power. Of course, anyone under an Eclipse or Moonshadow Caste's protection can avoid such plays.

While demons are shaped by the spiteful passions of their masters, many of them are not so incorrigibly vicious that they ignore opportunities for profit, pleasure or other gain. Therefore, once strangers show the strength, cunning or social skill to hold their own in Hell, they likely encounter new demons with other interests ranging from pit-fighting scams to trades of esoteric lore.

As long as visitors to Hell deal only with First Circle demons, anything they do probably does not concern the Descending Hierarchy, the priests or the ministries. Anyone who interacts much with Second Circle demon—as friend or foe—attracts the notice of progressively greater powers. Demon Princes possess the raw power to crush most intruders, but a stranger must become extremely troublesome before they do so. The Yozis, however, prefer to stay remote unless a stranger offers a dire threat, a great opportunity or simply is very persistent and persuasive in seeking an audience.

WHO BECOMES AN ACCEPTED STRANGER

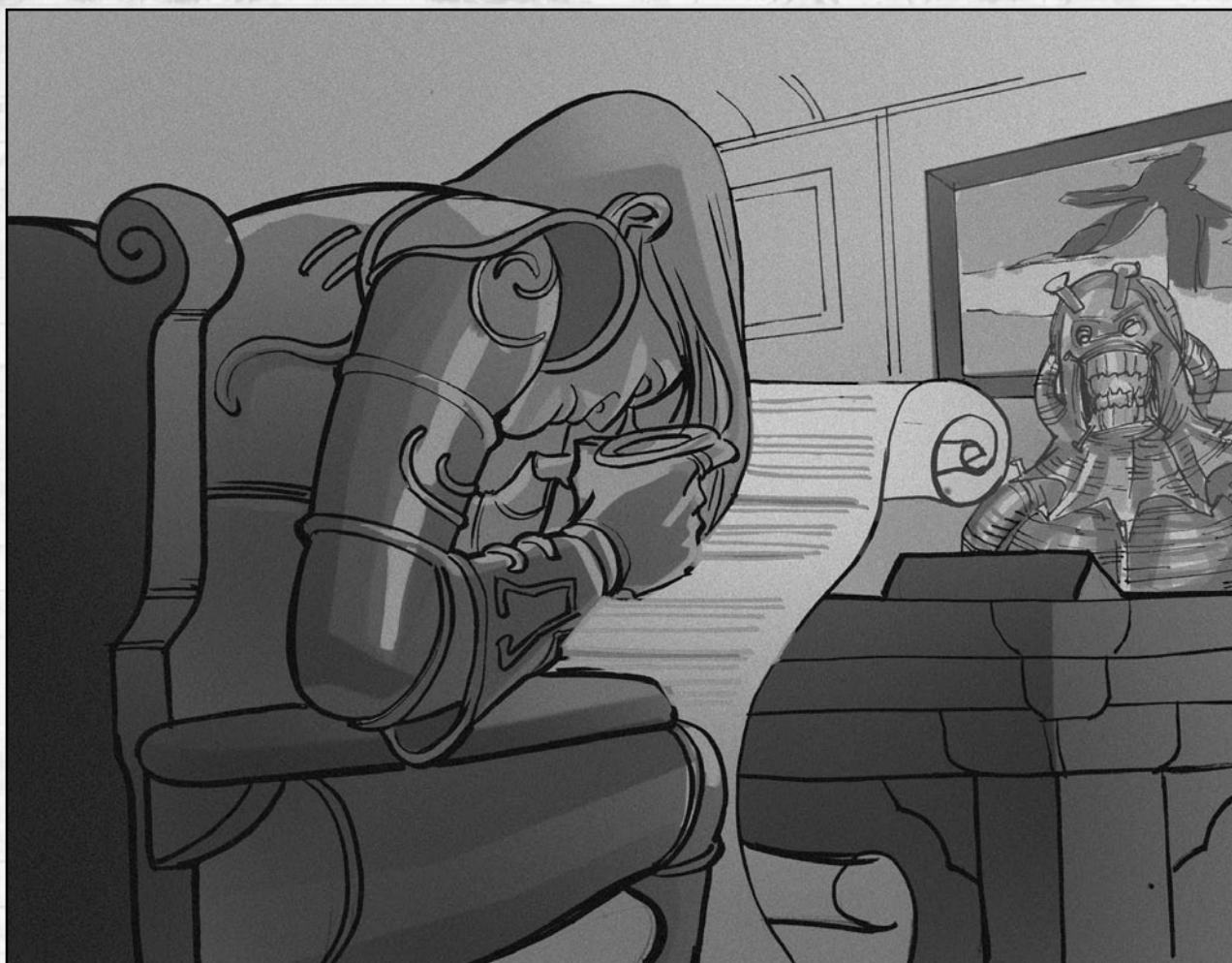
The Terrestrial Exalted find acceptance with comparative ease. They possess powers denied to most demons, and they can stand up to First Circle demons (while those from the Realm often possess considerable political acumen), but as individuals, they cannot threaten most Second Circle demons. The Dynast called Gemstone Ocean Hero provides an excellent example and illustrates one of the important services a stranger can provide: He acts as a truly neutral arbiter who can arrange contracts between demons who don't want their dealings known to the priests of Cecelyne. Gemstone Ocean Hero also reads the azure-edged documents of the priesthood that other demons are forbidden to look upon and reports their contents to his clients.

The Celestial Exalted do *not* make good strangers, and neither do deathknights. Such Exalted possess extremely valuable powers and, with experience, can equal any Second Circle demon, but they are tied to powers that the demons hate or fear. Few would trust such potent aliens in Hell except as akuma. Still, it is the nature of the Exalted to achieve the extraordinary.

God-Bloods, Ghost-Bloods and other half-supernatural mortals seldom achieve power comparable even to the Terrestrial Exalted, but individuals may acquire sufficient power and political acumen to survive in Hell and become strangers. The Demon-Blooded do not. They inherit a brevet rank based on their demonic parentage and can become true citizens.

After Creation, Hell has the most contact with the Underworld. Therefore, a very few ghosts become strangers. A ghost's inability to respire the Essence of Malfeas presents severe (but not insurmountable hardships) to a ghost. Diverse Arcanoi and the ability to move undetectably through Creation make a ghost a potentially valuable ally for a demon. For example, the powerful ghost called the Black Jade Harlequin has sufficiently mastered the Terror-Spreading Art that she can evoke the Ebon Grasp of Oblivion (see **The Books of Sorcery, Vol. V—The Roll of Glorious Divinity II**, p. 160). Demons occasionally find use for the Harlequin's power to consign objects—or enemies—to the Abyss.

Renegade gods and elementals might take refuge in Hell and establish themselves as strangers. A spirit must commit truly heinous crimes against Heaven to make the demon realm a better refuge than Creation, but some spirits manage this. Other spirits turn traitor through the blandishments of cunning demons and set up shop in Hell. For instance, Chorakchi, a renegade



Exiles

lion dog, takes contracts to protect First Circle citizens who desire a bodyguard whom higher-ranking demons cannot compel. Gods can create sanctums in Hell, but these are as material as their homes in Yu-Shan.

The Fair Folk rarely get along with demons. Most Fair Folk see the Yozi as little changed from the Primordials who assaulted the primal chaos with the blasphemy of form. Still, some Fair Folk come to appreciate life in shaped Creation, and a *very* few decide they can live in Hell too. Furthermore, a raksha may decide that its personal narrative demands such a willing damnation. The raksha can manipulate mortal dream-stuff in ways that few demons can equal. (Makarios can, but not everyone wants to deal with the Sigil's Dreamer.) Yet demons do not trust the Fair Folk any more than they trust the Celestial Exalted, for the dwellers in chaos so easily defy any attempt to hedge them with rules.

A MOST UNWELCOME STRANGER

One non-demonic resident of Hell is in a class by himself: the god Verumipra, Heaven's ambassador to Hell. His full title is Ambassador to the Cursed City,

Warden of the Exiles. Verumipra is not wanted. Most demons consider him very, very dangerous, but they have to let him reside in the Demon City and speak to whatever demons he wants.

For millennia before Verumipra, demons treated the post of Heaven's ambassador as a joke. No god lasted 10 years without being murdered, turned to the side of the Yozi or at least audited and removed in disgrace because of minor scandals and Heaven's bureaucratic infighting. Verumipra has lasted two and a half centuries in his post. Some demons think the Ebon Dragon must have corrupted Heaven's ambassador in some especially subtle and sneaky way. Others fear that Hell might finally have encountered someone truly incorruptible. Worse, there's a rumor among politically minded demons that Verumipra has built a network of spies in Hell. Any stranger might be a member, but the rumor has it that Heaven's ambassador has corrupted many demons as well.

Verumipra interests almost as many demons as he frightens. As ambassador, he speaks directly to the Yozi



(or at least their fetiches) and to the Incarnae, relaying occasional messages between them. No pious and patriotic demon has anything to say to the Incarnae, but a back-door channel to the Yozis could be very useful in the political intrigues of Hell. Verumipra's infernal embassy-palace is legally, if not metaphysically, part of Yu-Shan, and anyone who crosses its threshold leaves the jurisdiction and view of the Yozis—which has uses of its own. Of course, many powerful demons keep a close watch on who comes and goes from the Embassy of Heaven. Any fugitive who thinks she can take refuge in the embassy and have Verumipra arrange her escape from Hell must first pass one of the most vigilant and powerful screens of guards in the entire Demon City.

For more information on Verumipra (and how he is seen in Yu-Shan), see pages 66–67 of **The Books of Sorcery, Vol. IV—The Roll of Glorious Divinity I**.

DEMON CULTS

Demons worship the Yozis, but every demon is also a religious figure in her own right. Within Creation, no one can guess how many cults serve and worship demons. Virtually all of them must operate in secret. In serving demons, the cultists risk the enmity of gods, elementals and most civic authorities. Priests condemn the cults, kings suppress them, and savants ponder the weakness that leads mortals to betray Creation to its enemies.

Not so many gods or mortals look at the cults from a demon's point of view. A demon must work hard to form and keep a cult, as all the ways for demons to enter Creation are outside the demons' control. Most of the time, demons need a sorcerer or thaumaturge to summon them. Despite this difficulty, mortal cults play an important role in Malfean life.

Starting a cult is usually not too difficult. Often, mortals take the lead and summon a demon because they want something—wealth, revenge, secret knowledge, whatever—and think the demon can supply it. Less often, accidents release a demon in Creation. The demon then seizes the opportunity to recruit mortal servitors. It's just a matter of finding mortals who want some favor the demon can offer and persuading them to summon the demon again to get it. Then again, a great many cults begin with a sorcerer or thaumaturge summoning a demon and then losing control of it. If the demon keeps its head and manages to overpower its summoner, it can present an ultimatum: Serve the demon, or die horribly.

However the cult begins, the demon can typically leave further recruitment to the founding cultists. A cult has many ways to attract new members—none of

which concern the demonic patron. Once the cult exists, the demon concentrates on extracting the greatest possible benefits from her new lackeys.

EXPLOITATION

Whatever a demon gives to his mortal worshipers matters far less than what the worshipers give to the demon. Mortals can serve a demon in many ways, but a few types of service are especially common.

ESSENCE

Essence is the most important commodity that mortal worshipers can offer a demon. The Cult Background functions for demons largely as it does for the Exalted. Indicated numbers of worshipers can be reduced, however, due to the intensity of the worship. Cultists who conduct a human sacrifice at every dark of the moon generate more Essence than worshipers who make daily offerings of flowers.

Storytellers who want a precise accounting of such occasional, high-value sacrifices can use the system for burnt offerings associated with ghostly ancestor cults, as described in **The Books of Sorcery, Vol. V—The Roll of Glorious Divinity II**, page 109 and pages 118–119. Instead of black jade tokens, however, the Essence from special sacrifices passes directly to the demon.

MATERIAL GOODS

Some demons ask worshipers to give over particular substances or objects—not burned, crushed, slain or otherwise destroyed as sacrifices, but offered directly for the demons to carry back to Malfeas. Creation holds many commodities that do not exist in Hell. For instance, demons can repel Adorjan with an amulet made from a powdered mixture of silver, gold and a seashell that holds the laughter of a child. Malfean silver and gold will do, but the seashells taken from Kimberly's depths don't suffice, and no laughter will do but the honest joy of a real, mortal child. Cults supply many other commodities too: moleskins, feathers from albino peacocks, tears of pity, the dropped teeth of children, lost coins, the blood of a maiden's deflowering, and the like. Even if the demon cannot use these goods, he can trade them to other demons. A few demons seek special commodities for their own use, such as the mortal voices that Berengiere weaves into cloth.

ACCESS

A demon with a cult can sell access to Creation to other demons. The first demon just tells her cult how to summon other demons and commands them to do so. Once loose in Creation, the other demon can do what it pleases. Of course, a First Circle demon who



sells access to a Second Circle demon probably then loses her cult to the mightier demon.

Infernal tradition holds that any demon who acquires a cult should plant the seeds of future cults. Cultists frequently produce songs, stories, paintings, statues and other works of art that celebrate demons and their worship. Such propaganda can encourage the jaded or gullible to worship demons. Cultists also copy tomes of forbidden demon-summoning lore or write new ones, for the members to slip into libraries or sell to savants. Some of the best manuals of demonology impersonate some other type of book. For instance, the introduction to the *Art of Demon Summoning* called *A Lover Clad in Blue* seems to be a pornographic novel written in the First Age. (For more information, see **The Books of Sorcery, Vol. III—Oadenol's Codex**, pp. 115–116). Cults whose members include skilled artisans and savants might craft artifacts that assist in summoning demons, which the cultists can likewise send forth to begin new cults.

TEMPLE BUILDING

Cults frequently build secret temples. Apart from flattering the demon's ego, years or decades of sacrifice and ritual can warp a temple's Essence to ease the passage from Malfeas. At the very least, the demon can turn the temple into a sanctum within Creation. The demon still cannot use *Hurry Home* to move between Malfeas and Creation at will. The sanctum counts as a superior or unique ingredient for the cult's summoning rituals (see **Exalted**, p. 138), however, giving bonus dice for the rolls to call or beckon the demon. The same dice bonus applies to prayer rolls directed at the demon.

In time, the temple can become so defiled that the location functions as an artifact that *does* enable the demon to cross from Malfeas to Creation at will. (All the rules for artifact creation still apply. The Artifact rating for such a portal to Creation is 1 for a First Circle demon, 3 for a Second Circle demon and N/A for a Third Circle demon. Only one demon—the cult's patron—can use the temple in this manner.)

OFFSPRING

Demons who possess cults often take the opportunity to mate with mortals, either willing cult members or people kidnapped by the cult as a form of sexual sacrifice. This practice frequently yields Demon-Blooded offspring. Some demons consider this a useful incidental, or even a goal in itself. In time, such half-breeds often become highly esteemed leaders of the cult, and the demonic parent's most potent agents in Creation.

RESURRECTION

A cult gives a demon a hedge against death. A Second or Third Circle demon slain in Creation re-forms a year and a day later in Malfeas, but a First Circle demon is just dead. A cult, however, can resurrect a demon by continuing to worship it and offer sacrifices.

The cult has a year and a day after the demon's death in which to do so. A bit of the demon's Essence remains with its worshipers, and sufficient sacrifices within that time limit can make that seed grow, completely restoring the demon. The cult must perform the sacrifices according to the ritual it already established with the demon. The sacrifices generate Essence and Willpower (as per the system for burnt offerings, cited earlier). When the accumulated motes and Willpower of the sacrifices would be enough to fill the demon's Essence and Willpower pools, the demon can coalesce and live again. It still doesn't reappear until a year and a day after its death, though. If the demon has an intact sanctum in Creation, the demon regenerates in this location. Otherwise, it regenerates in Malfeas.

Slain higher-circle demons can also benefit from the sacrifices of worshipers. In this case, the demon regenerates at the next dark of the moon after the cult refills its mote and Willpower pools. The cult enables the demon to rise from death before the normal year and day pass.

EGO GRATIFICATION

Of course, commanding a group of worshipful servants can be an end in itself. Few demons treat their cults purely as ventures to gain Essence, wealth or other practical benefits. They also found cults for the rush of mastery and the pleasures of couch and table that reverent lackeys can provide. Most demons—even the lords of fiefdoms—live as vassals to greater beings. With a cult, however, a demon can enjoy a taste of absolute, unfettered power over other creatures.

MAINTENANCE

Once a demon founds a cult, he must choose a strategy to gain the greatest return on that investment. While demons have many specific techniques for guiding a cult, management styles range between two extremes. Most cults operate somewhere between these extremes, and a demon's priorities and management strategy might change over time.

THE BONDED CULT

At one extreme, a demon seeks to assure her cult's long-term survival. Instead of a large, immediate return on her investment, she tries to build a cult that can



steadily supply her with worship, offerings and other benefits for centuries. This means giving the cult a fairly detailed and stringent set of rules about keeping secrecy and internal discipline. A cadre of trustworthy officers can prevent overly fervent disciples from raving about the Glorious Dark Master where the wrong people can hear and make sure that none of the sacrificial daggers leave the cult sanctum. Because the demon must tie itself closely to the cult through the investment of time and work, some demons call this the “bonded” strategy.

A bonded cult cannot perform Essence-rich human sacrifices very often. (How would they keep communities from noticing all the disappearances?) They cannot spread quickly, because the cult officers take care that new recruits won’t run to the civic and religious authorities in a fit of conscience. Yet a bonded cult can last for centuries and grow shockingly large. Demons who establish a long-lived bonded cult enjoy great prestige in Malfeas for the steady supply of Essence and other commodities they bring to the Demon City.

For example, the Cult of the Darkness’s Unseeing Eye is one of creation’s largest and most long-lived of bonded cults. The cult serves the demon Sondok (see pp. 134-135) and has cells throughout the South. The Darkness’s Unseeing Eye has many autonomous cells and has infiltrated a number of front groups, including the society of bibliophiles that rediscovered and published *A Lover Clad in Blue*. The cult also includes a separate branch of assassins, the Salmalin, who murder overly talkative cult members as well as the cult’s enemies. As a result, Southern authorities have suppressed Sondok’s cult a dozen times... never realizing that they actually destroyed just one cell of the cult.

THE RAIDER CULT

At the other extreme, a demon tries to extract all the value she can from a cult, without regard for its long-term survival. The cult won’t last very long, but it might not need to. Some demons lack the patience to run a bonded cult, or they believe it isn’t worth the effort. These demons drive their worshipers to orgies of murder, perverse worship, looting of their communities and other abhorrent acts. The demons know their cults won’t survive long, but so what? For a while, a demon might amass huge amounts of Essence and other assets from the cult. The cult is essentially a raid into Creation, ripping out physical and metaphysical wealth as ruthlessly as any mortal pirate or bandit sacking a town.

Mara, the Shadow-Lover (see pp. 131-132) has a long history of creating raider cults. She has spread grimoires telling how to beckon her throughout Creation.

Through them, she tempts both jaded hedonists and those sad and lonely souls who despair of love. Mara is the Defining soul of Erembour, embodiment of desire that walks by night. The jaded call her in search of the ultimate erotic thrill and think they can escape Mara’s grasp. The despairing call her because they would rather die in a demon lover’s arms than spend another night alone.

Mara is kind to the despairing and grants their wish. The jaded, she beguiles and uses to draw in others like themselves. To please their queen of night, Mara’s lovers worship her with abominations scarcely to be named: pedophilia, bestiality, torture-rape and worse. When the cult’s crimes inevitably come to light, Mara devours the souls of anyone who escapes hanging, burning at the stake or the demon-hunter’s blade.

PRAYER MILLS

As part of managing a cult, a demon must provide some sort of favor in return. Benefits can be purely physical, such as endowing cultist-bandits with greater strength and ferocity, or giving Malfean silver and gold to a cult that seeks wealth. Other demons simply delude their devotees with glorious but empty rhetoric or meaningless wonders of illusion.

Now and then, however, a demon maneuvers her cult into a position where the demon can function as a purely parasitic master, giving nothing—not even lies—in return for worship. To achieve this, the demon needs some way to bring the cult into Malfeas itself. After dazzling the cultists until they believe anything the demon says, the demon offers to reward the cultists by bringing them to live with him in eternal bliss and glory.

Bringing mortals physically into Malfeas takes considerable power, but it’s possible. The greater challenge is keeping her worshipers alive in Hell’s toxic atmosphere. The cult’s patron must build a completely sealed environment for the cultists and arrange for a reliable supply of untainted food. If a demon can do this, however, she has a small, captive population returned to the function the Primordials originally set for humanity: reproducing sources of prayer. Only now, the mortals are trapped in a world where escaping their master means certain death.

Alternatively, demons have observed that prayers from ghosts generate as much Essence as prayers from mortals, and bringing a cult of ghosts into Malfeas is easy. The demonic patron tells her worshipers to perform certain rituals in her honor—actually thaumaturgy that binds the cultists’ souls to the demon, so they cannot vanish into Lethe or pass to the Underworld. Such

thaumaturgy is quite difficult, for it must work against both the natural cycle ordained by the Primordials and the gravity that the Underworld exerts as a second option for souls. A well-trained cult priest can pull it off though. At the climax of the ritual, the cultists share a special sacrament that they are told will grant them eternity with their god.

And the poison does.

The toxicity of Malfeas does not bother ghosts, because they are already dead. This makes housing a cult of ghosts much easier than housing a cult of mortals. The ghost-cultists could try to flee the prayer mill, but where would they go? No other demon would treat them any better, the vitriol rains are spiritually corrosive, and there are always the Silent Wind and the other perils of Malfeas.

Ghosts also enter Malfeas as prisoners. Deathlords occasionally deal with Second or Third Circle demons and pay the demons with coffles of enslaved ghosts. The Lintha pirates also have contact with Malfeas (through their progenitor-deity Kimberly) and the Underworld (through their own dead). They too sometimes use ghostly slaves to pay for infernal favors. Such a tribute of souls is called a teind.

Alive or dead, the prisoners of Malfeas chant liturgies, pour libations of their own blood or plasm, prostrate themselves before their master's image, trace his sigil in the air or in sand, make the sacred gestures with the proper implements, defile each other and perform whatever other ceremonies their master ordains. They are granted only minimal time for food and sleep. When the living become too old, sick or feeble to continue their work, they become sacrifices.

MALFEAS AND THE DEAD

The connections between Malfeas and Creation are far more tenuous than the connections between Creation and the Underworld. Like the Underworld, Malfeas is a spiritual realm, so ghosts are solid there. Malfeas, however, has its own unique rules for the passage of souls between death and life.

By the terms of their surrender, the Yozis normally have no claim on the souls of people who die in Malfeas. Mortals who die in the demon realm pass to Lethe, Oblivion or the Underworld, just as if they had died in Creation.

Mortals can forfeit that escape, though. They may do so through the *Passage to the Verdant Paradise* or similar magic, or by pacting with a demon in exchange for an Endowment, Essence-enlightenment or other Charms that let a demon get its claws in the mortal's soul.

THE GREAT RITE OF SACRIFICE

Passage to the Verdant Paradise (3, Intelligence, 4, one hour): The celebrants pledge themselves to their demon master and paint the demon's personal symbol over their hearts. They ceremonially consume a lethal meal of poisoned bread and wine then lie down and cover themselves with emerald-green triangular shrouds that bear a sunburst in green thread and spun brass. As they die, their souls slip free and pass to a hall prepared for them in Malfeas, with a corresponding sunburst and sigil on the floor. They see the mad green sunlight streaming down from overhead. This is when they realize they have made a terrible mistake.

Once drawn to Malfeas, these ghosts seem trapped. There are no shadowland border-zones between the Underworld and the Demon City, and no Arcanoi permit travel between Malfeas and other worlds.

A soul in Malfeas can always implode to Oblivion, however, no matter what binding a demon places upon it. A ghost that suffers the destruction of its corpus while in Malfeas immediately falls to Oblivion if it lacks a fetter within the demon realm itself... such as a demon to which it bound itself in a pact.

The Yozis can permit a soul to forget itself in Lethe, but the magical binding still holds it in Hell. The Yozis retain the soul, and can place it in a new mortal body. This is the only way a mortal soul can be born in Malfeas. Higher souls never pass spontaneously from other worlds to the demon realm.

Mortals who die in Malfeas also leave a lower soul that invariably slips free as a hungry ghost. These mindless spirits are similarly trapped in Malfeas. Demons typically find little use for them save as meals, as sport to be hunted or as pets.

Ghosts and hungry ghosts cannot respire infernal Essence. They can, however, take Essence from newly shed human blood, prayers and burnt offerings. Demon masters do not usually allow this. A ghost suffers no harm from an empty Essence pool.

Given some way out of Malfeas and into Creation or the Underworld, a ghost can re-enter the normal cycle of reincarnation, no matter what binding a demon placed on it before. If a demon-bound ghost is somehow returned to Malfeas before it reenters the cycle, it is just as trapped as it was before. Zenith Castes can also rip



a ghost from the Yozis' clutches through their anima power to burn and purify the dead.

Reincarnation ends all demonic claims on a soul, which is inconvenient for demons who maintain captive mortal cults. Children are born only if they have higher souls available for them, but those children are born free. The demon master makes sure the young mortals bind themselves through pacts as soon as possible, but souls gradually drizzle away, requiring replacement from Creation.

For millennia, the Celestial Exalted have died while harrowing Hell. Their Exaltations always escaped back to Yu-Shan for reassignment. The Yozis would like to change this. Their studies of the Jade Prison showed them, however, just how difficult it is to trap an Exaltation. Regretfully, they conclude that obtaining Exaltations they can turn Infernal is probably a non-repeatable event... at least, until they reclaim Yu-Shan.

THE NEW ORDER

Demons once managed cults simply for their own benefit—to extend their personal power and to exploit Creation. Few cult patrons seriously thought they could undercut the dominance of Creation's gods. Their cults seldom achieved more than brief, soon-suppressed surges of covert political power or overt reigns of terror.

All that changed recently, with the introduction of the Green Sun Princes. Word passes down from the Infernals' five Yozi sponsors that demons are to place their cults at the service of Hell's new champions. A few other Yozis also endorse the Reclamation project (of which the Infernal Exalted are the keystones) and donate the cults of their subordinate souls. Cult patrons who do so can expect rewards. Those who refuse can expect the Yozis' wrath. At least some of the Yozis now seem to believe they can wrest Creation back from the usurping Incarnae, and they see demon cults as tools to that end.

WAR IN HELL

Malfeas sees at least as much war as Creation does. At any moment, several fiefdoms make war upon each other. Some demon lords strive to build empires, as Octavian has done, by conquering their neighbors. Other lords engage in diffuse conflicts—piracy, brigandage—against whoever is available. Malfeas has many thousands of fiefdoms, controlled by proud and bitter despots who simultaneously know they are slaves. Any power they gain must come at each other's expense. Of *course* there is war. It is, indeed, one of the few activities common to all fiefdoms, sooner or later.

CASUS BELLI

Societies in Creation fight wars for many reasons: territory, political or commercial advantage, to avenge insults, loot and so on. Wars in Malfeas can seem to happen for all these reasons. At the base, however, a fiefdom makes war for one reason: Its lord desires that it be so. No grievance or ambition matters unless the fiefdom's lord considers it important. The subjects have few ways to restrain a lord who decides to make war, no matter how whimsical her rationale—not when the unquestionable and the priests of Cecelyne support her absolute right to do anything she wants.

At any moment, an unquestionable could abort a war with a mere word. This does not happen very often, but it does happen. No one knows why. Equally puzzling is when Third Circle demons let two or more of their own souls make vigorous war against each other. Hell's inhabitants suspect that Demon Princes do this to test aspects of their own personalities and excise weaknesses, but First Circle demons never really know what drives the unquestionable.

SCOPE

Malfeas has never known a general war that involved territories comparable to an entire direction of Creation. It has, however, seen regional wars that drew in up to a dozen fiefdoms, as one alliance of lords sought to conquer another alliance. Most wars, however, involve just one fiefdom attacking another.

Three times in the history of Malfeas, though, Ligier ordered a general mobilization of every fiefdom's military power. The first happened during the Second Deliberative Era. As far as any lesser demon can tell, the King of Hell's fetich did this purely as a military exercise, to see if it was possible. (A minority believes the Green Sun performed this exercise to intimidate or impress a visiting Lawgiver.) The second mobilization happened at the height of the Usurpation, right as demons began returning from Creation with news that the Chosen of the Incarnae were slaughtering each other. The third happened in the midst of the Great Contagion. Second Circle demons (and a few other survivors from this period) remember being told that this was *not* a drill and to watch for Fair Folk intrusion. No fighting occurred, however, and Malfeas has never fought a war against another world. At least, not yet.

ARMORY

Many demons require no armaments except the claws, fangs, stingers, venomous tentacles or other natural weapons their creators gave them. More types

of demons do battle than were explicitly designed to do so, however, and even the warrior breeds sometimes find it practical to use weapons.

Demons possess every sort of weapon known in Creation. Infernal armies frequently rely on swords, spears, bows, javelins and the other ordinary, muscle-powered weapons borne by mortal warriors. Armor likewise resembles that used in Creation, if a bit more grotesque in its ornamentation.

ARTILLERY

Hell's legions make greater use, however, of infernal analogues to the firedust weapons developed in the South. Hell has its equivalents to firewands, flame cannon, fire grenades and other such weapons (for most of which, see Chapter Six of **Scroll of Kings**). These weapons work in substantially the same way, except that Hell has no firedust. Instead, demon alchemists produce a blackish-purple powder called algarel (mentioned in Chapter Two). When exposed to liquid vitriol, algarel explodes much like firedust does, though the flames are green. Whereas most of Creation's militaries are slow to adopt flame artillery due to the expense and the danger of transporting huge quantities of volatile firedust, many infernal armies include artillery divisions. After all, the demon lords don't care about either the costs or the hazard to their troops.

Demons also build a full variety of ballistae, trebuchets, onagers and other catapults. Instead of torsion skeins of twisted rope, however, the throwing arms often powered by living demons flayed, boned and warped into coils of raw muscle. In some cases, the throwing arm is actually a gigantic, living arm on a wheeled box. The box has a hatch to feed the thing. Sometimes, it whimpers, "Kill me," when it hears other creatures move past.

RELIC ARMAMENTS

Hell's capacity to craft magical weapons exceeds that of Creation, but not many demons own these treasures. The lords of Hell reserve relic weapons for themselves, for First Circle citizens and for small units of elite warriors. (Which is not to say that other demons do not acquire these weapons—but they do so in defiance of the Descending Hierarchy.) Second Circle demons are powerful, but not so powerful that they tempt rebellion by granting powerful armaments to their serfs.

Lords and the unquestionable also frequently own truly powerful arsenals of emplaced weapons to protect their fiefdoms. Such defense grids require potent demesnes and dragon lines to power them, and possibly stranger Essence sources as well. Fortifications routinely incorporate Essence artillery of the First Age, such





as implosion bows and lightning ballistae (because demons summoned to work on the creation of such weapons brought their knowledge back to Malfeas). Some infernal defense grids also incorporate Essence battlements and other defensive screens. (See Chapter Six of **The Books of Sorcery, Vol. I—Wonders of the Lost Age** for Essence artillery, all of which could be given an infernal twist. Chapter Six of **The Manual of Exalted Power—The Infernals** also describes uniquely Malfean Essence weapons such as the marmoreal cannon, which transforms its targets into black marble, or the noon-and-midnight cauldron, which fires eldritch blasts of light and darkness.)

Defense grids suffer one great disadvantage: They cannot move, for the powerful weapons need copious supplies of Essence from powerful demesnes or Essence taps. If an invader finds a gap in the grid's coverage, a lord cannot quickly re-deploy her weapons. Invaders might also find subtler gaps—ways to evade detection, defenses against the chief sort of weapon used in the grid—that enable them to bypass the grid. On one now-legendary occasion, the lord Guyomard, Attendant of the Dancing Mirror, found how to deactivate the defense grid of his foe Jamarauli and captured his fiefdom almost without a fight. Therefore, few lords rely entirely upon a powerful defense grid to protect themselves.

A few lords build mobile weapons platforms comparable in might to the heavy battle cruisers or thousand-forged dragons of the Old Realm (see pp. 46–47 and 113–115 of **The Books of Sorcery, Vol. I—Wonders of the Lost Age**). They require the assistance of Third Circle demons to do so or thousands of years of work—even for demons, the compact Essence generators that such battle stations require are not easy to build. Nevertheless, every lord in Hell recently received word to begin work on mobile weaponry, even if it's just a few lightning ballistae slung between pairs of brantomes.

TROOPS AND RULES

Malfean armies usually concentrate on infantry, from heavy shock troops to light slingers, archers and other ranged combat specialists. Most armies include cavalry auxiliaries as skirmishers or highly mobile, elite shock troops sent to assault weak points that open in an enemy's deployment. These divisions might include air cavalry of demons who ride flying beasts or who can fly by themselves. Few commanders, however, use cavalry for scouting. Instead, they typically rely on demons with Charms of clairvoyance or divination.

Demon armies often include a variety of specialist troops... though not necessarily the same specialists.

The prevalence of catapults, algarel cannon and relic heavy weaponry means that many armies field artilleryists or even a special artillery corps. Large armies often include a signal corps dedicated to relaying battlefield information and commands. Combat engineers and sappers try to reshape battlefields to favor their side, such as by digging trenches or erecting barriers. Infernal armies also include esoteric specialists seldom seen in Creation, such as chemical/biological warfare officers who deploy clouds of alchemical toxins, venomous stinging flies or other hazards.

As always, though, Malfeas has its exceptions. Just because most lords favor infantry does not mean that some lords do not prefer cavalry, sending waves of knights mounted on fast peghedu swarming toward their enemies, or deploy vast formations of archers. Octavian owes the last phase of his fiefdom's expansion to creating all-artillery units of unprecedented size, which simply flattened fiefdom after fiefdom until his neighbors learned to defend against trebuchet bombardment.

MAGNITUDE, DRILL AND MORALE

When lords gather armies, naturally they try to muster as many troops as possible. The demon horde—poorly drilled masses of troops that range in Magnitude from 7 to 10—is a common tactic in Hell, and one well described in both First Age military texts and romances about Exalted heroes. Many lords, however, prefer smaller units (Magnitude 3 to 5) with greater skill and discipline. A frequent tactic for infernal battles is for these smaller, elite units to attack the enemy's main force, hoping to provoke a rout or at least several moments of confusion. Then, the main force charges and hopefully rolls over the disordered foe. Super-elite units armed with relic weapons, powerful combat Charms or other special attacks, however, tend to be quite small (Magnitude 2 or less), just because few lords can muster that much force or high-grade training, or would trust it in the field. But again, exceptions sometimes appear.

Morale tends to be high. Living in Hell, likely to die of random violence or malice at any time, most demons find little reason to fear death in battle. Particular breeds vary widely in their innate courage or capacity for battle fury, but most lords find little reason to recruit militias of demons who just aren't made to fight. Not, that is, unless the demon lord is deeply eccentric (which happens) or requires a brigade of neomah, chrysogonae or other breed for some peculiar tactic (which also happens). Even these odd troops can develop extra courage from the knowledge that their master can do very bad things to deserters.

Neither fire nor magic increases the chance that a demonic combat unit suffers hesitation or rout. Similarly, demons are not intimidated by supernatural beings. What mortals find strange and terrifying, demons find quite ordinary. A superior force can still overawe an army of demons... but compare the sums of the units' Magnitude and Might, not simply the Magnitudes of the opposing units. Demons know they are far more potent than mere mortals, so being outnumbered by only two or three times doesn't frighten them.

MIGHT

Not surprisingly, all demon military forces have Might—never less than 2, and 3 is standard for Hell. Still, Might greater than 5 seldom occur. Lords rarely create forces whose power approaches their own. A typical Second Circle demon, treated as a solo unit, has a Might of at least 4; 6 is typical and 8 is not too strange.

SPECIAL CHARACTERS

A fiefdom's lord usually commands its military directly, though some lords delegate this responsibility to a trusted (read: thoroughly bound or blackmailed) captain. Such captains might be First Circle citizens or simply slaves made overseers of other slaves.

Beyond that, infernal militaries follow exactly the same rules for special characters as militaries in Creation. A lord with extensive military forces virtually needs to appoint subsidiary commanders, which gives them great flexibility to split off subsidiary combat units. Just as importantly, infernal armies make great use of sorcerers—most often, First Circle demons who mastered unusual Charms they can use against an enemy combat unit. (First Circle demons seldom know actual sorcery, though.) Large militaries (Magnitude 4+) also need a complement of relays.

CHARMS

All demons know a variety of Charms. The Charms known by the troops seldom affect the process of mass combat (the unit's Might subsumes the innate supernatural powers of the troops) but can influence the strategies and tactics of infernal war.

Sometimes, commanders can apply their Charms to all the troops they lead. Commanders can always apply their own Excellencies to the actions of their combat unit, for the metaphysical bond between troops and commander can link their Essence to a limited degree. Thus can a demon that leads a spear charge extend her own Essence-enhanced puissance to the demons that follow her.

Most other Charms do not extend their effects so readily. An All-Encompassing Charm can usually affect a mass combat unit as readily as an individual. Demons may also develop specialty Charms whose designated target is a militia.

Each general class of spirit Charms has its own potential uses in infernal warfare. See the appendix to **The Books of Sorcery, Vol. IV—The Roll of Glorious Divinity I** for descriptions of spirit Charms. Full possibilities can only be suggested.

COMPASSION CHARMS

- **Blessings:** A demon commander can confer diverse advantages on her troops. Since the demons of a combat unit always have an Essence of 2+, the commander must be present to confer the blessing and must commit the motes.

- **Divinations:** Commanders use these Charms to gain information about the battlefield, watch the actions of their troops and forecast the strategies of their foes. Troops who possess divinations of their own might use them in combat to avoid harm or to strike when a foe is most vulnerable, but this merely contributes to the unit's Might.

- **Sendings:** Demon armies don't usually need to send signals using horns, drums, banners or the like, because their relays use Charms instead—most often, a simple Call. A demon might also try to force an enemy commander into a Worldly Illusion for a private visionary duel and, more importantly, to keep her from commanding her own troops.

CONVICTION CHARMS

- **Divine Works:** These Charms offer diverse possibilities for reshaping a battlefield. A lord's fiefdom is an eminently suitable target for Domain Manipulation Scenario, while a demon might draw power from aspects of the landscape through Affinity (Element) Control.

- **Eidola:** Commanders may disguise or conceal themselves using Charms such as Shapechange or Host of Spirits—or a whole unit of demons with such Charms might disguise itself as something else. In their own fiefdom, lords may disguise defensive installations or waiting troops using Paper Tiger Arrangement.

- **Relocations:** Mobility is power in Hell as much as in Creation. An army of demons who all can accelerate their passage using Landscape Travel enjoys a great advantage over troops that cannot do this. Opposing commanders might also duel to Banish or Capture each other.



TEMPERANCE CHARMS

• **Enchantments:** The capacity to deceive or control an enemy commander can end a battle before it begins. Demon lords frequently take great care to protect their minds and wills against such influences. In battle, they attack opposing heroes, sorcerers or relays, or simply try to make a group of enemy soldiers flee or die in a misconceived suicidal attack, to open gaps in the enemy forces. In Creation, only the Fair Folk have equal experience at the military uses of illusion, though the Lunar Exalted know a thing or two as well.

• **Inhabitations:** Spirits cannot generally possess or inhabit other spirits. Demons could inhabit objects, however, as a way to infiltrate an enemy's fiefdom and plant spies or saboteurs.

• **Tantra:** Most of these Charms simply help a demon to replenish its stock of Essence in battle. Meat of Broken Flesh is particularly useful in this respect.

VALOR CHARMS

• **Aegis:** In battle, of course, it pays to protect oneself as best one can. Most versions of these Charms simply help a demon avoid or survive damage. Note, however, that only the Yozi themselves can supply a Destiny Sponsorship protection to a demon, which means that anyone who attacks that demon implicitly challenges the Yozi patron. At this point, one had best have a Yozi patron of one's own. The Yozi, however, seldom grant Destiny Sponsorship to any demon except those who act as their direct agents. (For instance, Cecelyne might grant this protection to her most loyal and effective priests.) They do not grant it to demons that merely rule domains—not even to their own souls.

• **Curses and Edges:** Demons who know such Charms routinely use them on the battlefield. Except in one-on-one combat, they merely contribute to an infernal combat unit's Might.

SAMPLE COMBAT UNITS

These mass combat units offer a taste of Hell's military possibilities: two examples of relatively commonplace sorts of militaries, the sort that many fiefdom lords might command, and two highly specialized and idiosyncratic units to show how strange Malfean militaries can become. Sorcerers and thaumaturges with the power to summon multiple demons can also assemble their own combat units of demons. As the description of the Nine Champion Army suggests (see pp. 65-68), Storytellers can also create infernal mass combat units by adjusting the traits of combat units from other supplements.

THE BASIC DEMON HORDE

Description:

Sometimes, a demon lord just rounds up every First Circle demon available, hands spears to the ones who lack significant natural weaponry and sends them running at the enemy. Most often, a demon lord uses a horde as backup. Smaller, elite units do most of the fighting until the lord can force her enemy into a moment of

strategic weakness, such as a rout. Then the lord sends her horde to roll over the disordered foe, hoping to finish them off.

Commanding Officer: Varies

Armor Color: Varies; horde members might wear a sash or other token bearing their master's symbol.

Motto: The master's name, shouted as loudly as possible.

General Makeup: A few thousand demons of all shapes and sizes.

Overall Quality: Poor by the standards of Malfeas, but Fair by the standards of Creation—the average demon has greater physical competence than the average mortal.

Magnitude: 6 to 8

Drill: 0

Close Combat Attack: 2 **Close Combat Damage:** 2

Ranged Attack: — **Ranged Damage:** —

Endurance: 4 **Might:** 2 **Armor:** 1

Morale: 2

Formation: A horde fights in unordered formation. It has no special characters.

BLOOD-APE PLATOON

Description: These blood-apes form a typical small unit of demon warriors. A sorcerer who can summon First Circle demons might build such a platoon and either command it herself or delegate command to some trusted associate. The platoon could also represent the bodyguards or elite enforcers of a Second Circle demon or an unusually powerful First Circle citizen.





Adjust the unit's Magnitude to represent different circumstances. A weaker sorcerer might settle for a pack of five erymanthoi, while a sorcerer of greater power might summon and bind a brigade of 125 demons. In Malfeas, powerful lords such as Octavian routinely deploy

their beauty or, failing that, at least to achieve surprise and possibly start a rout. Sting of Defeat also tries to snatch and carry off enemy commanders, heroes and relays, leaving the opposition leaderless and disordered.



dragons of blood-apes, or even entire legions.

Commanding Officer: Varies

Armor Color: Typically dull red fur, although some erymanthoi have different colored fur.

Motto: "Blood!" (in Old Realm)

General Makeup: 25 erymanthoi armed with nothing but their own claws and fangs

Overall Quality: Good

Magnitude: 2

Drill: 2 when initially summoned
(3 if drilled together)

Close Combat Attack: 4 **Close Combat Damage:** 3

Ranged Attack: — **Ranged Damage:** —

Endurance: 7 (8 if drilled together) **Might:** 3

Armor: 2 **Morale:** 4

Formation: Blood-apes typically fight in skirmish or relaxed formation. They assume close formation if ordered to do so by a sorcerer or greater demon with control over them. Initially, the demons have a Drill of 2, but a month of training by truly courageous sergeants can raise their Drill to 3. This training additionally raises the unit's Endurance from 7 to 8.

STING OF DEFEAT DESCENDING IN GLORY (AERIAL CAVALRY)

Description: The talon that calls itself Sting of Defeat Descending in Glory consists of 50 firmin archers, mounted on 50 agatae. Reversing the usual pattern of Creation's cavalry, the mounts direct and train the riders. In flight, the firmin create arrows for their bows and fire at the enemy. When the talon closes with its foe, the agatae sting and the firmin wield their needle-swords.

Standard tactics are for the agatae to teleport over a battlefield, hoping to stun the enemy troops with

Sting of Defeat could be an elite unit that serves a demon lord. It would also make an excellent mercenary unit hired by a lord, the leaders of a sodality or a particularly stylish Infernal Exalt. Its own leader, Simocatta, is an agata citizen with War 3. All firmin members of the scale have Archery 3.

Commanding Officer: Simocatta

Armor Color: Iridescence and gold; nude skin and black needle-resin.

Motto: "Surrender to beauty, thy death be swift."

General Makeup: Fifty agatae carrying 50 firmin with self bows and needle-swords.

Overall Quality: Excellent

Magnitude: 3

Drill: 4

Close Combat Attack: 4 **Close Combat Damage:** 3

Ranged Attack: 3 **Ranged Damage:** 2 (piercing)

Endurance: 7 **Might:** 3 **Armor:** 2

Morale: 4

Formation: The agatae usually fight in skirmish formation, for maximum mobility and defense against ranged attacks. They like to appear over a battlefield in close formation, however, just to show off and make maximum effect of their stunning appearance (effectively, a stunt to maximize their chance of achieving a surprise attack). The unit has no relays, but three agatae function as heroes and can command in Simocatta's absence or incapacitation.

THE SIX

Description: The metody who call themselves the Six (having renounced their individual names as token of their unity) serve a demon lord as elite enforcers and assassins. Heaven help any mortals who must face the



Six, for these First Circle demons battle like a sworn brotherhood of Dragon-Blooded elders. While they are usually sent against individuals who offended their master, the Six could just as easily appear on a battlefield.

They cannot

kill an opposing army quickly, but they could certainly whittle down their foe with the relentless power of their element.

Each demon has mastered the Terrestrial Hero Style of martial arts (see **The Manual of Exalted Power—The Dragon-Blooded**, pp. 191–193), and they fight with close coordination. Their favorite tactic is to surround an enemy so the foe has no DV against at least one demon.

The Six took humanoid shape when they studied Terrestrial Hero Style, and they prefer to stay in that form. Each one looks like a muscular nude man, but hairless and sexless. They scorch footprints into the ground wherever they go.

Commanding Officer: Not identifiable

Armor Color: Mottled yellow-green-tawny skin

Motto: “Six become one, and many become dead.”

General Makeup: Six highly trained martial artists with no weapons except their hands and feet.

Overall Quality: Elite

Magnitude: 1

Drill: 5

Close Combat Attack: 4 **Close Combat Damage:** 2

Ranged Attack: — **Ranged Damage:** —

Endurance: 10 **Might:** 4 **Armor:** 2

Morale: 4

Formation: The Six prefer to fight in close formation, so that each of them can attack a foe that a fellow has clinched or knocked down. Any one of them might function as the unit’s commander, with Dexterity 4, Martial Arts 5 and War 4 (+3 Coordinating Attacks). Any of them might function as a hero to take command if the first leader falls. After losing three members, the remaining metody lose their order, and rout becomes likely.

SODALITIES

Over the last thousand years, groups called sodalities have grown prominent in Hell. Sodalities stand apart from the fiefdoms of the Descending Hierarchy, while engaging in worship without sanction from the priests of Cecelyne. These groups of demons are not, however, primarily political or religious. Rather, the sodalities formed as craft guilds and business cartels. Wealth makes them political players whether they want it or not, while no institution can survive in Hell without some show of reverence toward the Yozis.

Since the sodalities’ membership comes almost entirely from First Circle demons, these commercial enterprises can never threaten the dominance of the Descending Hierarchy and the priests. They collectively possess enough wealth and power, though, to become a distinct third force in Malfean affairs—a venue for power-struggles between the lords of Hell, and possibly for other entities as well.

HOW SODALITIES WORK

Each sodality supplies a particular product or service to other demons. For instance, the Reverent Society of Reflective Foresters logs the metallic forests of Malfeas, while the Bleak Sand Argosy is a shipping company. Fiefdom lords could order their subjects to perform such activities, but they sometimes find it easier to pay someone else. Why build sand ships and train crews to sail them, when the Bleak Sand Argosy already exists? Why train thaumaturges when the Tin Orchid Academy does this so well?

Second Circle demons lead some sodalities, so there is not a clear division between these businesses and non-territorial fiefdoms. First Circle citizens lead most sodalities, however. These demons sometimes ally with a Second Circle demon to dissuade other demons from trying to take over their businesses, but sodalities usually pick citizens who lack the interest to exert real control over the sodalities’ operations.

The Tin Orchid Academy, for instance, cultivates an alliance with Gebre, the Pavane of Dying Stars (see pp. 126–128). When savants trained at the Academy seek wisdom in the dying stars of Hell, they implicitly honor this Second Circle demon, but the Academy’s founder knows that Gebre dislikes administration and sees enslaving the Academy as more trouble than it’s worth. Ambitious demons must wonder, however, if Gebre would see an attack on the Academy as a challenge to his own power and strike back.



Every sodality also worships at least one Yozi as a “spiritual patron”—but carefully *not* asserting that any members act as priests or that they receive any special favor from the Yozis. For instance, the Reflective Foresters ask Szoreny’s permission before cutting any wood in the Silver Forest but they present this practice to the priesthood as reverent submission to the Yozi’s will rather than some special right to petition Szoreny and receive responses.

Since claiming priesthood is a capital offense in Hell, sodality members who lead worship services call themselves deacons. Nevertheless, sodality members often take their worship very seriously and believe that they develop some sort of relationship to a particular Yozi (however one-sided the relationship might be). As such, the sodalities present an implicit challenge to Cecelyne’s priesthood. Sodality leaders, therefore, make large offerings to the temples, with many protestations of loyalty, to keep the challenge merely implicit.

LEADERS AND FOLLOWERS

The greatest difference between sodalities and fiefdoms lies in the relationship between the leaders and the led. The First Circle citizens who lead most sodalities cannot rule by raw force and the threat of Third Circle retribution. They must persuade at least some demons to serve willingly and help keep the other members in line. Methods vary, but the most powerful incentive is the chance to hold power over another, however qualified. The most common incentive that sodalities offer, though, is a salary. Even serfs receive a little pay. Sodalities are hardly models of generous labor relations—for instance, the salary might be paid in addictive drugs—but sodality leaders cannot leave their workers entirely hopeless. Remaining with the sodality must seem better than accepting slavery somewhere else.

SODALITIES AT WAR

The sodalities make war as well. Such incidents tend to happen for motives that folk of Creation could easily understand, such as greed. For instance, one shipping guild might attack the ships or caravans of another, so as to take their business in the most direct way possible.

Unlike lords, the leaders of a sodality must consider the opinions of their subordinates. No unquestionable authority supports their dictates, so the leaders must convince their cadre of employees that a war serves their interests. Most demons, however, respond well to arguments such as “Kill rivals and take their stuff.”

Very few sodalities possess military forces on the scale of even a modest fiefdom, so Magnitudes tend to be small. Morale can be lower than for fiefdom troops, since the warriors do not fight under a lash of terror from a lord of much greater power. Indeed, they might simply be a group of demons who find themselves under attack. Drill and skill can vary widely. Demons who know they fight only for their own benefit can shirk training or train all the harder because it’s *their* fight, not the whim of a despotic master. Might tends to be low (for demons, anyway), since most sodalities lack the resources and patronage for significant arsenals of artillery or relic weapons. As always in Hell, though, one never knows. Some sodalities hire mercenary companies of demons—or are mercenaries themselves, such as the Nine Champion Army.

SODALITIES AND BACKGROUNDS

Membership in a sodality can function as Backing for a demon character. Full employees gain one dot of Backing from the sodality: They might obtain minor favors from masters who want to keep them around. Leaders gain two dots, or at most three for the largest and most powerful sodalities. None of these organizations are large enough or wield enough power in Hell to justify any higher degree of Backing.

Non-members could take a sodality as Allies or Contacts, while a sodality leader could serve as a Mentor. Again, no rating higher than three dots is plausible.

SODALITIES AND CREATION

As the sodalities become a greater force in the economy of Hell, their attitude toward their world and Creation presents another latent challenge to the established order. For the sodalities, Hell is not a prison they must escape. Instead, they treat their world as a resource to exploit—as well as being their home and the home of their customers. If these demons think about the campaign to retake Creation, it’s as war profiteers scenting a business opportunity. Some sodality leaders even make the conceptual leap of seeing Creation (and other worlds, to a lesser extent) as sources of raw materials and as potential markets. They see how demons that lead mortal cults manage to exploit Creation and imagine even greater possibilities for trade.

The sodalities do not present a united front in this respect, or any other. Each sodality’s leader seeks his



own best advantage. As the Yozis mount their greatest campaign against Creation, some sodalities forge alliances with individual Green Sun Princes. Others oppose particular demons or Infernal Exalted. A few sodalities even seek allies and business partners in Creation, from individual Exalted to the Guild. These Malfean merchants bring a new complexity to the interactions between mortals, gods and demons.

SODALITIES AND HELL

Some demons do not want the complexities that sodalities bring. A significant minority of Second Circle demons opposes *any* challenge, however implicit, to the Descending Hierarchy or any suggestion, however feeble, of better treatment for serfs. These hard-liners push for suppression of the sodalities. So far, the priests, the unquestionable and the Yozis permit the sodalities to operate as they choose.

Yet that could change. This is not the first appearance of the sodalities. Infernal guilds and corporations first appeared during the Old Realm, and some sodalities became quite powerful through the patronage of the Celestial Exalted. The Usurpation brought a matching purge of demons who seemed too friendly to the Yozis' jailers, wiping out that Age's version of the sodalities. It could happen again.

THE BLEAK SAND ARGOSY

The desert Cecelyne stretches literally forever from the demon realm, though it offers some backdoor routes into Creation. Some demons pay more attention to the fact that the Endless Desert touches every layer of Malfeas. It is, therefore, possible to leave one shell, travel through the Endless Desert and return to another shell.

The Bleak Sand Argosy exploits this fact. This guild operates a fleet of sand ships that greatly resemble those found in the South of Creation. These ships sail the Endless Desert, carrying cargo and passengers between the layers of Hell.

The Argosy began with Leinth, a decanthrope who enjoyed a long stay in Creation during the Shogunate. Leinth fell in love with sand yachts and became highly skilled at sailing them (possessing all the members of the crew). On its return to Malfeas, Leinth spent many decades building its own sand yacht. Doing so involved persuading other demons that a sand yacht could be useful. The decanthrope obtained the money and backing it needed by presenting the ship as a commercial venture. Leinth died long ago, but its murderers carried on and expanded its venture into a sodality that sends dozens of sand ships across the Endless Desert. Other

sand-ship companies later formed in imitation, but the Bleak Sand Argosy remains the largest of them.

ORGANIZATION

Five First Circle citizens own and manage the Bleak Sand Argosy as its commodores. They arrange the cargoes, pay the expenses and collect the fees. Beneath them, each ship has a captain who receives a modest share of the earnings. The crews are serfs, though not slaves. (Sailing a ship requires too much skill to trust the job to a possibly resentful slave.) Captains are paid in Essence, while serfs are paid only in potent liquor and chits for houses of prostitution.

The Argosy sends regular gifts as a token of fealty to the Second Circle demon Florivet, an avid sailor himself, but the Whim-of-the-Wind plays no role in the sodality's operation. Other citizens know that the flighty Florivet ignores anything less than a concerted effort to take over or destroy the Argosy, so they sometimes bully the sodality into paying tribute or serving them in other ways.

The commodores and captains also revere Cecelyne. Before every voyage, the captain leads the crew in a prayer to the Endless Desert. After each voyage, the captain offers another prayer of thanks for its safe conclusion. Argosy members praise Cecelyne for the reliability of her winds and ask her not to send storms, monsters or other hazards their way during their journeys.

ACTIVITIES

The Bleak Sand Argosy maintains home ports on five of the most populous shells of the Demon City. Here, infernal traders can warehouse cargo until a ship is ready, and travelers can stay at a rather nice caravansary. Typical cargoes include fine liquors, victuals, spices, house-seeds from Hrotsvitha, demon-skin parchment, carboys of distilled vitriol and slaves with special talents. The Resources cost of shipping a cargo using the Argosy is one dot less than the cargo's value. Passage to one of the Argosy's regular ports of call requires Resources ●●●, while Resources ●●●● is required for a special location.

The port is the most dangerous part of the Argosy's operation, for the Silent Wind often blows at the edges of Malfeas. The shouters, musicians and shell-grinders needed to dissuade Adorjan from exterminating everyone constitute one of the Argosy's largest expenses.

Once loaded, a ship sails out into the wastes of Cecelyne. The captains know which sorts of winds to catch, and for how long, to reach any layer of the demon realm. The captains and commodores make a great show of keeping this navigational lore secret. In truth, very few other demons could use it.



Most ships travel a circuit from port to port, with additional stops at quays on other shells. These secondary ports, however, lack the protections against the Silent Wind. Stevedores work quickly, and travelers hurry on and off the ships.

Cargo and travelers use the Argosy because, while demons can travel between shells using flying beasts, very long vine-ladders and the roads of Jacint, none of these methods work especially well for bulk cargo. It's less trouble to hire a sand ship than to organize all the porters needed to carry a large load along a small path. Sometimes it's simply quicker to sail across Cecelyne than to travel across a shell of the Demon City.

HAZARDS

Crossing Cecelyne in a sand ship is safer than long journeys across the Demon City, but it is still not completely safe. Most of the sand-beasts who inhabit Cecelyne's wastes cannot harm a sand ship. The ones who can are usually large enough that a sharp-eyed sailor can see them coming and slow enough that the ship can outrun them. Of course, sometimes the ship's lookout isn't keen-eyed enough or the beast approaches from an unfortunate angle for the ship.

Wherever ships carry wealth, there are pirates, and the Endless Desert is no exception. Fortunately, all the desert pirates currently seem to be isolated shiploads of demonic desperados, who attack only near the Argosy's ports. The last time the Argosy faced a major, organized threat from pirates, Florivet took it as a personal insult (though only after the Argosy lost half its ships). If the pirates had any Second Circle backer, that worthy chose not to confront the Argosy's patron. For now, the Argosy faces greater danger from attacks by rival fleets.

As with Creation's ships, the Argosy faces danger from storms. Most of the time, the trade winds across the Endless Desert lift only a little stinging sand into the air. Sometimes, however, huge sandstorms surge across the desert. The Argosy's sailors believe that Cecelyne (or one of her souls) raises these storms to hide certain unknown activities from the sight of lesser demons. A crew caught in a sandstorm faces a quandary. In searching for the edge of the storm, it might see whatever Cecelyne wants to hide. Yet, if it doesn't keep moving, the sand might bury the ship. Now and then, an Argosy ship disappears, and no one knows what happened to it.

A NEW PORT OF CALL?

On rare occasions, one of Cecelyne's sandstorms overtakes a ship of the Argosy while at the same time, a mortal's sand ship battles a sandstorm in Creation.

If a mortal sailor dies a bloody death in the storm, the Argosy's ship passes from Hell to Creation, right by the other ship. The demonic sailors may attempt a little piracy of their own, taking the mortal sailors prisoner. The ship can return to Malfeas by sailing into the next sandstorm it finds, but the captain might decide to see what other fortunes Creation holds.

The five commodores recently hired the Tin Orchid Academy to devise a thaumaturgical ritual to summon an entire sand ship and its crew into Creation. They believe this feat would be comparable to beckoning a Second Circle demon. If the Academy succeeds, the commodores believe they can arrange for thaumaturges in Creation to summon designated ships on a regular schedule. The Argosy then can embark on massive slave raids into Creation or import valuable commodities on a scale never seen before. Certain other personages already know about the plan and see ways the Argosy could serve their interests.

SAND SHIPS AND SAILING

The ships of the Bleak Sand Argosy use the same traits as a large yacht (see *Scroll of Kings*, pp. 145–146). The crew of 10 generally lives in cramped squalor to make room for cargo.

As one might expect for Malfeas, navigating the Endless Desert is not like navigating the seas or sands of Creation. Just following a course calls for a roll of (Intelligence + Sail), with a difficulty of 4 minus the navigator's number of Lore specialties in the Endless Desert. Establishing a new course calls for a roll of (Intelligence + Sail) at a difficulty one higher. Journeys from one shell to another usually take a week, but each threshold success reduces the travel time by one day. A botch results in something very bad, such as a sandstorm or sailing straight into a desert behemoth.

THE NINE CHAMPION ARMY

Whether Hell's largest mercenary company is a sodality or a nonlocal fiefdom is a matter of perspective. Its Second Circle founder Tegus, the Ninefold General, once ruled about a tenth of a Malfean layer. In addition to an ordinary horde, Tegus's military included nine elite battalions, each devoted to a different and unusual combat art. A First Circle master of that art led and trained each battalion, giving Tegus his epithet. Tegus lost his fiefdom, however, when his shell crashed into another. He evacuated his champions and some

of their troops, but found them insufficient to seize another fiefdom. So the Ninefold General rented out his troops instead.

The Nine Champion Army supplies a variety of small, elite combat units to other citizens. In this manner, Tegus seeks to amass enough wealth and train enough troops to wrest a fiefdom from some other citizen. He has more than enough power to create a brand new fiefdom in an unpopulated section of the Demon City, but Tegus has his pride. He is a warlord, and the thought of building a fiefdom from scratch displeases him.

ORGANIZATION

No one disputes the Ninefold General's command over his mercenary army. The Nine Champions know, however, that Tegus could not easily replace them. He could perhaps promote skilled fighters from within their battalions, but they would not be citizens and would not carry as much prestige. Tegus has resurrected most of the champions two or three times. Just to be sure of their loyalty, though, he poisoned all nine of his champions. They will die without regular doses of the antidote, and they need Tegus to bring them back.

Not all the nine brigades are described here. Some are left for Storytellers to invent to suit the needs of their series. *Compass of Celestial Directions* and *Compass of Terrestrial Directions* supplements also provide many combat units that Storytellers can easily adapt as Nine Champion Army brigades by adjusting a few combat traits. For instance, all units have a Might of at least 3 and Drill 4. The examples here are based on combat units from *Scroll of Kings*.

- **The Black Doom Hoplites:** Blood-apes clad in superheavy plate armor of black Malfean iron, swinging poleaxes, move slowly but chop through damn near anything that gets in their way. (Use the Black Watch Fang on pp. 97–98 of *Scroll of Kings*, but raise the Magnitude to 3 or 4.)

- **The Key That Falls Like Rain:** The metody commandos of this brigade could be called paratroopers, except they don't use parachutes. Instead, they know a Charm to spread part of their substance into an acidic fog on which they descend. The commandos ride to battle in gondolas carried by khomfai (see pp. 151–152). They then drop into a fortress or behind enemy lines to perform sabotage, open gates to other troops and similar missions. General Tegus observed that very



few things can keep a metody out, or in, and found military applications of their corrosive power. (Use the Haslanti Paratrooper Scale from p. 76 of **Scroll of Kings**, raising the Might to 3, Close Combat Attack to 4 and Close Combat Damage to 3. They carry vitriolic relic blades and throw globs of their own substance for their ranged attack.)

- **The Land-Shaking Ormolu Foe-Plows:** These troops ride howdahs on the back of brantomes clad in glittering brass armor. Before it, each brantome pushes an angled brass blade that shoves aside any troops that get in the demon-beast's way. The demons that ride in the howdah carry spears and hellfire-projectors. (Use the War Elephant Talon on pp. 20–21 of **Scroll of Kings**, but raise the Close Combat Attack and Ranged Combat Attack values to 3 and Might to 4.)

- **The Melodious Amalgam:** This force of demjen and heranhal builds and operates catapults, battering rams and other siege weapons. The quickeners of ores can sing raw metals from the ground if needed, while the fervid smiths quickly shape it into weapons. These military engineers also know how to shape a battlefield using earthworks, fields of stakes and other simple hazards and barriers, but they need additional demons to perform such labors. As an added benefit, the songs of the demjen repel the Silent Wind. (Use the Engineering and Artillery Scale on p. 124 of **Scroll of Kings**, but raise its Might to 3.)

- **The Victory-Catching Crimson Web:** This brigade consists entirely of anuhles. The spider-demons specialize in commando raids to capture or kill enemy leaders. They are at their most effective in forests, narrow city streets and other places where they can spin their webs and take advantage of their ability to climb and maneuver in three dimensions. (Use the Haltan Commando leaf from pp. 91–92 of **Scroll of Kings**, but raise the Might to 3 and Close Combat Attack value to 5/6, with the value after the slash representing the demons' advantages in their favored environments.)

ACTIVITIES

General Tegos rents out his troops by the scale or talon. Clients pay with Essence, relic weapons, casks of algarel and serfs suitable for training as additional soldiers, as well as mere money. Contracts are usually short term, for a particular battle or war. Clients include both Second Circle lords and juntas of First Circle demons who rule fiefdoms.

As mercenaries, Tegos's troops and officers gain far more combat experience than is usual for infernal soldiers. Citizens sometimes hire Nine Champion of-

THE NINE CHAMPIONS

Each brigade has one of the Nine Champions as its commander. Four other demons act as heroes and may command fangs or scales on their own. Clients don't always want a full talon (particularly those sorcerers or thaumaturges who might summon units of the army into Creation). Relays account for the rest of each brigade's special characters.

The Nine Champions are all First Circle demons with Essence ratings two dots higher than usual for their kind, plus additional Attributes and combat Abilities. All of them have at least War 3. They also know additional Charms, including Excellencies with War and a favored combat Ability. Storytellers who write them up should take care to give them distinctive personalities and combat gimmicks of their own, the better to present them as powerful, legendary figures in their own right—the height of what a First Circle demon can achieve.

ficers simply to train their own troops or advise them on military matters. Tegos knows that he could increase the hazard to his own troops if he rents Melodious Amalgam experts to design a citizen's fortifications or sends Black Doom Hoplite officers to drill other blood-apes, but... a client is a client.

The Nine Champion Army bivouacs in three separate fiefdoms, all ruled by First Circle citizens. No one is willing to let General Tegos bring his entire small but powerful army into their fiefdom, and the Ninefold General is not yet ready to challenge a host in this manner. The presence of such a mercenary force discourages attacks, though, since the Nine Champion Army pays for its bases with a promise to defend the fiefdoms if they come under attack.

HIDDEN AGENDAS

Of course, everyone who hires the Nine Champion Army knows that General Tegos plans to conquer a fiefdom eventually. Less well known is that Tegos wants to expand his client base to Creation. He pays other demons to let sorcerers and thaumaturges know they can hire their own infernal horde! In particular, the Ninefold General seeks partnerships with the Exalted—preferably Terrestrials (who can beckon him only through thaumaturgy), but he's prepared to work with (or for) Celestial Exalts as well.



General Tegos does *not* seek alliance with the Infernal Exalted and has not asked them if they'd like to hire his army. The Ninefold General fears that the Infernal Exalted could replace Hell's thousands of warring fiefdoms with an empire of allied dominions ruled by them in the name of their five patron Yozi. This does not accord with Tegos's plans. What's more, a number of his old Second Circle enemies support the Green Sun Princes.

Therefore, Tegos seeks champions in Creation who could defeat the Green Sun Princes and prevent them from achieving their full power. He would even work with Lawgivers or Sidereal demon-hunters to achieve this. Tegos knows this is treachery, but he considers himself clever enough to pass information to the Exalted while hiding his own involvement.

THE REVERENT SOCIETY OF REFLECTIVE FORESTERS

In Malfeas, even a simple activity such as chopping wood can become a complex profession. Hell's greatest forest, after all, is the Yozi Szoreny. The lesser forests, brazen Hrotsvitha and golden Vitalius, present challenges of their own. Taking wood from these supernatural forests involves more than just chopping down trees. Many demon lords send teams of serfs to log the forests, and they accept that some loggers won't come back. The Reverent Society of Reflective Foresters, however, seldom loses its members. These demons attribute their success to their detailed knowledge of the forests, their reverence for Szoreny and their strict obedience to whatever guidance the Silver Forest offers them.

This sodality began with Sakari, a tinsiana who served the Second Circle demon Malavisch as overseer of her woodcutters. In the time of the Old Realm, a young Sidereal named Holok destroyed Malavisch for offenses that no longer matter. As soon as Sakari suspected that her master might never return, she quickly petitioned the priests of Cecelyne for citizenship. The moment that Malavisch's fiefdom emerged from its year and one day of probate, Sakari declared her work crew as her property before any other citizens could start fighting over the vacant fiefdom. Sakari also offered to rent her crew's services to any other citizen. (She never worked for the Exalted, though, and so avoided the purge of extant sodalities.) Several centuries ago, Sakari joined with other citizens who led groups of foresters to form a cartel. They have since muscled out every other freelance woodcutting company to dominate logging in the metallic forests of Malfeas.

ORGANIZATION

Seven First Circle citizens run the Reverent Society of Reflective Foresters as its board of directors, the Chief Foresters. Sakari and three other directors owned the logging camps that merged to form the sodality. The other three are demons who worked their way up to overseer and then used their influence over the loggers to force their way onto the board (and, incidentally, into citizenship).

The four founders and the three labor organizers despise each other but work together to prevent any other of their employees from extorting concessions and cutting into their shares of the profits. Reflective Foresters make good wages by Malfean standards (Resources •• for common workers, Resources ••• for overseers). They also pay a bonus to any worker who can tip them off to an attempted power play by any of the overseers. Such entrepreneurs disappear. The cleverest overseers have figured this out, and know that this practice gives their workers a way to dispose of bosses whom they hate. These overseers work especially hard to convince the Chief Foresters of their continued loyalty.

ACTIVITIES

The Reflective Foresters cut wood. In Vitalius and Hrotsvitha, the process is relatively simple and quite like chopping wood in Creation. In Szoreny, however, the loggers use braided cords of vitriol-treated brass wire moving rapidly through a gritty slurry of vitriol, demon ichor, salt from Kimberly and an exceptionally hard sand from the depths of Cecelyne. The ichor is a sacrifice, and after cutting wood, every demon involved must open his veins and pray while pressing the wound to the silver trunk and offering the Yozi as much of his Essence as the Silver Forest cares to take. Every demon loses at least one mote. The Yozi rarely takes more. In Vitalius and Hrotsvitha, the demon lumberjacks also make offerings and prayers to Szoreny, but chiefly to convince the resident demons that they act with Szoreny's approval.

The loggers do not dare cut willy-nilly. They frequently pray and conduct divinations in hopes that Szoreny will reveal what trees they may cut and to what extent. They never cut a trunk in the Silver Forest. Instead, they take only one root-branch per tree. In Hrotsvitha and Vitalius, their divinations sometimes tell them to take only part of a tree or to give special treatment to what they leave behind. The divinations seem to work, as Szoreny seems not to mind the wood they take.

In Vitalius, the Forest of Chimes, the Reflective Foresters practice a number of special techniques to shape



the growth of the golden trees. For instance, they may coppice a young tree by cutting it off and treating the stump so it grows a crown of several saplings, eventually producing smaller, higher-pitched bells and chimes. If they pollard a tree by cutting all the branches back to the trunk, the tree grows a dense clump of jingle-bell foliage. Thus do the Reflective Foresters increase the variety of bells and chimes they harvest and sell to demons that hope to repel the Silent Wind.

FOREST DIVINATION AND SACRIFICE

The divinations performed by the Reflective Foresters are applications of Foretell the Future (see *The Books of Sorcery, Vol. IV—The Roll of Glorious Divinity I*, p. 148). It guides the loggers to trees, branches or roots they can cut without angering Szoreny or any Third Circle demons. Safety from the greater powers assured, the loggers deal with the lesser powers through bluff, bribery and other normal methods of social interaction.

The Silver Forest reflexively takes one mote from each demon who presses a bleeding wound to a cut stump, probably without knowing that anything has happened. Nevertheless, a prayer roll should be made on behalf of the congregation of loggers, with their blood and Essence considered a Resources ••• offering. If the prayer roll fails, the Silver Forest takes 10 motes from a randomly chosen demon. If the roll botches, the Yozi annihilates one supplicant by consuming every mote of Essence, including the Essence of the demon's body. The demon becomes a reflection in Szoreny's bark that fades a few minutes later.

HAZARDS

In addition to the mundane dangers of logging, the Reflective Foresters face the eldritch perils of Szoreny's images and illusions. They have experience with these threats, however, so loggers face little danger if they obey their overseers. The loggers also face the occasional danger of Isidoros stepping on them. The Black Boar crushes only a few logging parties a century, though.

The Reflective Foresters face a greater ongoing threat from Szoreny's Second Circle souls, some of whom feel that mere First Circle demons should not become so profitably intimate with the Yozi. So far, every attempt to set the priests of Cecelyne against the sodality has failed. The Chief Foresters mollify

some of the Second Circle demons by paying regular tribute, and Second Circle clients put pressure on some of the others. The Reflective Foresters make up one of the wealthier and more successful sodalities, but that just makes them more of a target for Hell's contests of power and influence.

Sakari and the other Chief Foresters believe they can get their enemies off their backs by cutting a deal with one or more of the Green Sun Princes. The Infernal Exalted seem likely to become powerful enough to withstand any Second Circle demon, but they will also spend much of their time in Creation and so lack the opportunity to exert real control over the sodality. In exchange for protection, the Reflective Foresters offer financial backing in Hell.

What's more, the sodality knows a great deal about how Malfean trees propagate and grow. The Chief Foresters believe they can make infernal trees grow in Creation—their contribution to the overall plan to merge Creation with Malfeas. This, too, they offer to any Infernal Exalt who becomes their protector.

THE TIN ORCHID ACADEMY

The arcane school called the Tin Orchid Academy provides another example of a community that could be either an unusually localized sodality or an unusually small fiefdom. Physically, the Tin Orchid Academy occupies a single villa. Mentally, its limits are hard to judge.

The Academy's story began during the Shogunate at the court of the Quicksilver Queen, a lesser dragon of earth and famous savant (see *The Books of Sorcery, Vol. IV—The Roll of Glorious Divinity I*, p. 100). A sorcerer and alchemist at her court summoned an agata as a steed. While there, the demon had quite a lot of free time. His intelligence and beauty endeared him to the ant-headed dragon queen, and her ambition and learning made a great impression on the demon. The agata decided that, although he enjoyed being a steed, he could become much more. He learned a great deal of thaumaturgy. Upon his return to Malfeas, the agata petitioned Cecelyne for citizenship, noting that his understanding of his own role in the world had grown. He took the name his summoner gave him, Lucent Wing.

The new citizen first set up a stall in the Equitable Market, where he sold talismans and potions. Lucent Wing had no protectors, but he also offended no one. Being able to fly, the agata easily avoided most unwanted attention while continuing his researches. The first student requested his tutelage



several centuries later. Lucent Wing saw no reason to refuse and soon gained a reputation among interested serfs as a fair and focused teacher. Within half a millennium, Lucent Wing set up a thriving academy in a dilapidated iron villa, overgrown with tin weeds and unwanted by other citizens.

The Tin Orchid Academy gained its name because its students, some of whom couldn't see in the dark, developed the glowing orchids that now light parts of Malfeas. Lucent Wing's students have often been inspired by summonings—either by the environment they were summoned into or by the sorcerers who bound them. Many hope to be called into Creation again, where they can learn even more without fear of mightier demons.

ORGANIZATION

The Academy still occupies its original villa, though the grounds are now in much better condition. Lucent Wing claims strict authority within the walls of his school and over his students but no authority beyond it. What's more, Lucent Wing's students pay him for their education and can leave whenever they want. A few of the agata's disciples have become assistant teachers. While Lucent Wing is significantly more powerful than any of them (how much so, they discovered but recently), he could hardly hope to enslave or defeat them all. They are headmaster and faculty, not master and serfs. The students seldom number more than two dozen at a time, but several hundred Academy graduates are scattered throughout the demon realm. Some of them have become citizens or serve citizens as almost-respected minions.

Lucent Wing cultivates an alliance with the Second Circle demon Gebre (see pp. 126-128) in the expectation that the Pavane of Dying Stars will not care to usurp control of the school. The distant partnership has endured for centuries, so the agata is probably correct. The academy also includes small shrines to Florivet (though



the Whim-of-the-Wind has never acknowledged the school's existence), to great Orabilis (adorned with graven prayers that students might not learn impermissible things) and to Cecelyne.

The Academy's small library contains few works of any substance, but it is nonetheless carefully hidden and well valued. Some of the most ambitious students think that, if summoned, they could bring back copies of *The White and Black Treatises* to share with their fellows. Such an acquisition could revolutionize First Circle access to sorcery. Cooperation is a barely familiar value for Malfean denizens, but collegiality is just one of the difficult concepts that Lucent Wing's students try to master. Their education extends beyond the arts of thaumaturgy to certain philosophical speculations that could question the bases of infernal society if they were pursued too deeply.

HAZARDS

Unfortunately for Lucent Wing, the agata has become the greatest threat to the Academy's survival. All these centuries, the demon kept secret that he mastered sorcery during his time with the Quicksilver Queen and quietly expanded his repertoire after returning to Malfeas. A few years ago, another First Circle citizen tried to annex his Academy. Faced with the choice between risking his secret and risking all he'd built, Lucent Wing used sorcery to destroy his attacker. Too bad the citizen was just a cat's-paw for a Second Circle lord...

Lucent Wing's successful defense of the Tin Orchid Academy attracted the attention of many powerful creatures. Everyone thought that his school merely taught minor thaumaturgy and perhaps a few strange ideas. Now, some of his fellow citizens believe he has been building a sorcerously capable secret army, spread

throughout Malfeas. In fact, the agata never intended to challenge anyone, being a relatively mild-mannered demon more interested in theorizing than causing trouble. Indeed, he cautiously never taught sorcery to any of his students, allowing them to think he didn't know it.

Lucent Wing finds himself in a difficult spot. He owns some interesting and valuable things but knows that wealth cannot protect him. Although he feels some attachment to his students and the Academy, he sees no alternative but to abandon them. Fearing for his life, he even considers rejoining the agata swarm and hiring himself out as a mount again. If summoned, Lucent Wing might attempt to bargain with the sorcerer for some advantage that could save him upon his return to Malfeas.

LUCENT WING: SAMPLE CITIZEN

Lucent Wing provides an example of a First Circle citizen. Many of Lucent Wing's traits are as a normal agata, but he also has Manipulation 3, Perception 3, Awareness 2, Bureaucracy 3 (The Tin Orchid Academy +2), Craft (Air) 3, Craft (Vitriol) 3, Craft (Water) 4, Investigation 3, Linguistics (Native: Old Realm; Others: Forest-tongue, High Holy Speech, High Realm, Riverspeak) 4, Lore 4 (Alchemy +1, Philosophy +1), Occult 4 (Alchemy +2), Presence 3, Socialize 3, War 3 (Defense +2), and Essence 5, as well as a mastery of thaumaturgy and Excellencies for Bureaucracy, Lore and Occult. He also has Terrestrial Circle Sorcery, and Storytellers can give him a small number of spells to suit the needs of their series.





SIGH

MASTER! LOOK AT ME! LOOK AT ME!

HAVE YOU FINISHED YOUR WORK, LITTLE ONE?

WE HAVE! COME SEE!



THIS WAY, MASTER! THIS WAY!

I'M COMING. I'M RIGHT BEHIND YOU.



DID WE DO GOOD, MASTER? DID WE?



YAY!

OH YES, MY LITTLE ONES. VERY WELL INDEED.



CHAPTER FOUR

THE DEMON CITY

From one perspective, Malfeas is mostly a city like any other. It has streets, businesses, parks, forests, even sewers and slums. The demons that live inside its walls work for their lords and masters as well as for their own benefit. Malfeas' demons build temples and other houses of worship like the citizens of many other cities. Here they pray for blessings and guidance, and they fear the wrath of their gods. In their leisure time, they frequent brothels and pleasure houses and attend great festivals and dances. They build kennels for their pets, cells for their slaves and houses for themselves. Truly, Malfeas is undeniably more fantastic than some cities, but not so different from others.

Malfeas is a great city full of terrible and wonderful things, to be sure, but then, the same could be said of Nexus. It is vast beyond most mortals' ability to comprehend, but one could say the same of the Imperial City. It is a place ruled by spirits who often take mortal guises, but the same can be said of Great Forks. It is a place

where mortals are not often welcomed, but the same could be said of Thorns. It is a place surrounded by a vast wasteland and hard to travel to and from, but the same could be said of Gem. So, from this perspective, Malfeas can be understood as a city like so many others. Since so many things in Malfeas resemble those found elsewhere in Creation, this assumption is very reasonable.

It is also very wrong.

Malfeas is unlike any city anywhere. Even its various levels are unlike each other in a thousand different ways. Some are lavish fiefdoms ruled by mighty demons, while others are slums and fallen kingdoms toppling slowing into ruin. It is a living inside-out prison of mashed-together metropolises surrounded by a desert without end. It is a hellish urban landscape of black stone and brass with its own emerald sun. It is a place with no water set above a living sea of acid. It is a place made of and inhabited by the oldest known beings in existence—beings who existed before the gods themselves.



It is a city of demons, creatures of strange forms and even stranger desires. It is an asylum, a prison and countless kingdoms all at once.

It is Malfeas, and there is nothing else like it.

A CITY UNLIKE ANY OTHER

Later sections detail the Demon City more thoroughly, but it is useful to look at the city as a whole first. There are some important factors unique to Malfeas to always keep in mind when reading about, playing within or using Malfeas in a series. These factors color every landmark, building, region and event within the Demon City.

MALFEAS ISN'T REALLY A CITY...

People build cities in order to live in a particular place for purposes of trade, social interaction, strategic advantage and other reasons. Malfeas is not like that.

It is a living being of vast power. The very crust of the earth, the streets and even the sun above are all unique to the city and very much alive. Despite buildings and constructed works found inside its walls, Malfeas itself was not built by lesser demons. Instead, Malfeas existed before and superior to these creatures. Its walls and levels are part of its own inside-out body, and even most of its major landmarks are either part of its Yozi soul, the component soul of some other Yozi or even another Yozi living within it.

Many cities seem to have a life of their own. Malfeas actually does. It lives, breathes, moves, grows, changes, rages and hates. Where other cities have those who work and defend their lifeless walls and streets, Malfeas has countless beings that serve and fear it. Where other cities grow and expand gradually based on land availability and need, Malfeas crashes and grinds its own levels together to form new space. It is populated



by demons, but with the exception of definition given by its component souls, the demons are not what make Malfeas. Malfeas' ancient Primordial nature, the reality of its defeat and imprisonment, and its vast power do. So, in a very real sense, the place called the Demon City is neither.

...BUT IT IS A PRISON

Cities hold people who wish to live together. For jobs, companionship or a sense of belonging, people choose to come to urban areas and live together. Virtually no one in Malfeas is there by choice. Malfeas and his fellow Yozi are bound there by their own powers turned against them. The demons who serve them are not technically bound by these same magic, but the spite and pride of the Yozi does not allow them to escape either. Mortal slaves and captives in the city most definitely don't want to be there. The only

ones who might be considered to dwell in Malfeas by choice are the Green Sun Princes and some other human servants of the Yozi, and most of them come to stay only because they know they are allowed to leave. And even these few exceptions would tear down the barriers between Malfeas and Creation if they could to free their Yozi masters.

So Malfeas resembles a prison much more than it resembles a city. Demons form prison gang alliances, and the environment is more confining and hostile than it is nurturing. Confinement, fear and danger define life in the Demon City.

That is not to say there is no beauty, song and celebration in Malfeas. Yet every one of the many festivals, orgies, parties and gatherings echo with hints of desperation and hatred. Only when Malfeas is able to right his sundered body and free himself, thus freeing all the Yozi, will true celebrations of joy be seen and





songs of triumph be heard. Until then, everything is Malfeas is colored by the greenish light of envy of those who truly live free.

A PRISON FOR YOZIS AND DEMONS

Most of Creation's cities are filled with humans. Even in cities such as Great Forks and Onyx, many humans can be found in places of honor and power within the municipal government. In the Imperial City where the Dragon-Blooded rule, one can still find their un-Exalted cousins and siblings and their many servants. Even the Underworld's cities are populated with the spirits of deceased humans.

Malfeas isn't like that at all. Malfeas is a city constructed of and populated by Yozis and their demon servants. Unlike humans, the residents of the Demon City do not need water, food or sex. Their aesthetics run toward uniform expanses of black stone and brass decorated with occasional sights of mad beauty and unfettered horror. Their rivers run with acid or dust, their skies burn with unrelenting green light, and everywhere dwell things that would destroy mortals. And for the most part, things are this way because that is how the Yozis like it. They cannot free themselves, so they warp their prison to their own alien desires and spawn demons that are similarly at home here. These demons spawn their own demons, who scrape and scramble to serve those above them. It is true some mortal slaves and other unique individuals have come to Malfeas, but the city is not for them and is not built with them in mind. Malfeas exists for the Yozis and their demons, and because of that, it is unlike any place else.

MALFEAS

The Demon City is a hard place to describe to non-residents and a harder place to comprehend. It is an endless mix of colliding shells of black stone upon which rest vast brass and basalt cities. Its construction defies normal understanding of physics, architecture and common sense. The angles of its roads, windows and arches are both perfectly set and impossible. Great buildings that should collapse under their own weight push skyward and mazelike collections of lesser structures spread like a cancer through every available space. In many places, buildings grow together, creating a continuous maze of adjoining structures that is at once impressive and maddening.

Amidst this urban landscape are found pockets of other terrain, usually manifestations of another Yozi or a demon of the First Circle who serves one. These pockets of disparate life range from the size of large

WAIT A MINUTE...

Careful readers may note that this book states that the Yozis and their demons both hate Malfeas and have molded it to their liking. So which is it? Do the Yozis and their spawn despise the Demon City and wish nothing more than to be free of it? Or is Malfeas a home customized to their wants and desires?

It's both. And neither.

For the Yozis, Malfeas is like being stranded on a lush desert island. They have enough to sustain them and can even find pleasant places and diversions to pass the time. They took the time to build, decorate and rearrange the place a bit to make themselves more comfortable. They've even set themselves up as kings and queens of this little private world and have plenty of children and servants to wait on them. But mostly, they'd just like to get off the damned island.

For demons, Malfeas is like their own cubicle at a boring office job. It pays the bills, and they are allowed to decorate their little space as they like as long as it doesn't anger the boss. Sometimes, they even have office parties where they socialize, mingle, gossip or even hook up for a bit of office intrigue or lust-charged diversions. But honestly? They generally don't get to pick who their co-workers are, and all things considered, they'd rather be fishing.

Malfeas is a lot like that. Except with upside down rivers of acid, living trees that will eat your brains and other assorted novelties. This isn't to say that some demons haven't come to feel at home in Malfeas and believe that perhaps after several millennia they should just make the best of it. It's just that these demons are in the minority, and they include none of the Yozis or their component souls.

streets and lakes to truly massive. Some, such as the forest of Szoreny or the sea of Kimberly, are continent sized or even greater.

Around all these things, however, grows Malfeas. Confined by the wastes of his sister Cecelyne, Malfeas grows on top of himself, his layers thrashing and colliding with callous disregard for all others. Steel and certain other substances from Creation decay or wither upon being brought within his walls, and his very air is toxic to mortals. Human slaves and visitors to the



Demon City must be give special medicines or treatments lest they perish within seven days, and many demons are crushed by the Yozi's constant shiftings. Malfeas is above noticing the pain and suffering he causes, but he never tires of causing it. The hostility of the Demon City is a testament to the Yozi's eternal hateful defiance of the gods and his imprisonment. It will stop only when he is free to unleash his wrath on Creation and beyond.

As a result, Malfeas is often frustratingly difficult to navigate. Streets shift and levels are separated by vast distances that require special mounts or transportation. City levels collide with each other, and older sections sometimes fall into the acidic depths of Kimberly below. Demons and other strange creatures lurk everywhere, making aimless wandering especially dangerous.

Still, for all one can feel Malfeas' frustration, malevolence and rage at every turn, it is still a city of wonders. Demons that wear forms beyond mortal imagination walk the streets. Businesses and markets offer goods not for sale anywhere else. Pleasure houses and brothels offer every diversion and perversion known to man, and many that are not. For the rare visitor in the Demon City, there is opportunity to mix in with all of that danger. Some denizens of Creation, such as the Dragon-Blood Gemstone Ocean Hero, have even come to live in Malfeas permanently, and it is rare but not unheard of to encounter a mortal in its homes, markets and temples.

Black stone and polished brass form incredibly complex buildings, some the size of mortal cities themselves. Temples to the Yozis and the fortresses of demon warlords dot the green-black horizon. Demons of the Third Circle live atop great spires, castles and aeries that overlook their fiefdoms of lesser demons. In some cases, these demons are the structures themselves, or the streets, rivers and other landmarks seen everywhere in the city. Long-forgotten behemoths lurk in remote corners of Malfeas too, unwilling or unable to escape. And the Green Sun, Ligier, shines everywhere.

Malfeas is king over the Yozis and first among the prisoners of his own inside-out body. Everything he creates within his city reminds him and everyone else of this. His cities are terrifying in their scope, and yet exist only as long as the Yozi does not decide to destroy them to form new landscapes. He forms of brass those things he half-consciously wishes to survive the Grinding Wind or other hazards while leaving other parts to be ground to dust. He gives gold and other metals from the veins in his black stone flesh but wrecks steel

brought to his realm. He longs for the day when he frees himself and can visit his torments upon Creation, the gods and their Chosen. Until then, he tears at himself and his fellow prisoners in smaller ways and laughs mirthlessly at the results.

JUST HOW AWARE IS MALFEAS?

Some Storytellers and players probably wonder just how aware the King of the Yozis is about what happens inside him. Does he realize what goes on in his back alleys and streets? Does he care enough to even take pleasure in the suffering his collisions and movements cause, or is he oblivious to it, instead obsessing over his own feelings of rage and indignation?

The answer is that Malfeas is as aware as he wants to be and no more aware than individual Storytellers need him to be. Theoretically, given the Yozi's power, he could be totally aware of every little thing that happens inside the city. He could find a hiding Exalt and send armies of demons after her or merely shift his body to crush her. As a being only truly contained by his own power and body, there isn't much Malfeas can't do.

Strictly adhering to this idea doesn't work very well in most cases, however. Characters can't fight Malfeas directly, and under the preceding theory, they couldn't distract or hide from him. As a result, any confrontation or meddling in the affairs of the Yozi would result in a quick, messy death. Storytellers wishing to avoid this ignoble and sudden end to their players' characters should not use this interpretation of the Yozi, especially when running games set in Malfeas.

An alternative method is to realize that—as a living, immortal being thousand of times larger than any mortal metropolis—Malfeas simply doesn't take any more notice of an Exalt fighting on top of one of his buildings than a human would of the bacteria in his stomach. He has grander plans and bigger things to consider. Even if an Exalt or circle of Chosen has really messed up one of the Yozi's plans, that's what he has lesser demons, servants and his own Exalted for. This method allows characters to actually work against the Yozis and even come to Malfeas itself without being immediately crushed for doing so. Malfeas is special compared to many settings because he (and Kimberly, Cecelyne, et cetera...) are living, thinking beings. Anthropomorphizing the Yozis too much, however, leads to them taking too human an interest in the actions of troublesome characters. This results in certain doom in situations where probable doom is more interesting and desirable.





IMPORTANT PLACES IN MALFEAS

The following section details important parts of the Demon City proper. From the pleasure palaces of Ipithymia to the forges of Ligier, Malfeas' vast and varied wonders are explored. Landmarks and locales belonging to other Yozis but situated in Malfeas' urban areas are also described here. Other non-city terrain found inside Malfeas, such as the forests and rivers inside the Yozis' prison and the domains of other Yozis are described later in the chapter.

LIGIER, THE GREEN SUN

In the sky above the Demon City blazes Ligier, fetich of Malfeas. The molten metal heart of Malfeas, Ligier shines constantly over the surface of the Demon City. When the gods defeated Malfeas, Ligier was ripped from his master and cast into the sky of Malfeas' inside-out body. Now, the Demon Prince casts his green light over the black stone and brass of the city. The Green Sun serves as a constant reminder of both the power of Malfeas and the Yozis' imprisonment by the gods.

Ligier's light shines all over Malfeas, but it does not shine equally. In the lower neighborhoods and other places where lesser creatures often dwell, his light is harsher and more brutal. The towers of the most powerful demons are closest to Ligier, and many build elaborate open-air elevated ballrooms so they can receive him as an honored guest at their parties and gatherings. Due to this appeal to the Green Sun's vanity, these places often host more pleasing illumination. For most in the Demon City, Ligier and the character of light one receives from the Green Sun is a symbol of their relation to the Yozi Malfeas himself.

Ligier himself relishes this attention, though he would never admit it to lesser beings. He is the fetich heart of his lord Malfeas, whom he knows is the most powerful being in existence. By association, Ligier is nearly as mighty. He looks forward to the day when he can shine his brilliance down upon Creation, and he is certain that day will come. The emerald sun of the Yozis is an arrogant thing.

Yet he is right to be so. As a fetich, he is significantly more powerful than most Third Circle demons. As the fetich of the first among the Yozis, he is even more terrifying. He can burn whole armies to ash and crush all but the most experienced Exalted with little effort. In addition to his skills in battle, he is an adept sorcerer and one of the greatest smiths in existence. He can craft mighty war machines or delicate clockworks the size of a fly. For the right price, he even takes commissions.

During any time he spends in Creation or elsewhere outside Malfeas, Ligier still shines above the Malfean sky. He will continue to shine there until his master is finally able to burst free from his imprisonment. On that day, Ligier plans to shine over all existence—burning the palaces of the gods for their impudence and replacing the Unconquered Sun in the skies over Creation.

THE ILLUSTRIOUS FORGE OF THE GREEN SUN

Located directly below the Green Sun at its highest point in the center of Malfeas is the Illustrious Forge of the Green Sun. Part foundry, part workshop and part temple, this enormous complex is where Ligier works his smithcraft. The size of a mortal city itself, the Illustrious Forge is made of black stone and brass specially treated to withstand the incredible heat that Ligier generates within. Its high black walls serve both to contain the heat for the furnaces and to hide the secrets of Ligier's smithcraft from spying eyes.

Inside the Illustrious Forge, the Demon Prince burns the metals right out of the crust of Malfeas himself. Molten pools and rivers of all manner of material are everywhere, threatening to incinerate lesser beings with their heat alone. Those demons able to withstand the fires work everywhere, crafting ingots for later shaping. Mobile workshops mounted on great mechanical legs move constantly through the maze of forges and molten metal, collecting materials. Here various demons work on projects deemed not worthy of Ligier's attention but still necessary to life in Malfeas. Work songs to the glory of the Green Sun are sung day in and day out, praising his light, his skill and his power.

In the center of the Illustrious Forge is the anvil of Ligier himself. Carved from the hardened black bones of his master, this building-sized mass is proof against even Ligier's heat. It is on this anvil where Ligier makes some of the most wonderful and terrible devices ever conceived. It is here the demon crafted his own blade, the Sword of the Yozis, as well as countless other weapons and armor for the greatest beings in Malfeas. Whether it is an automaton the size of a city or thread fine enough to sew dreams together, Ligier can turn, hammer and shape it on his anvil. In truth, the Green Sun needs neither his anvil nor any other tools to shape and create. He can use his own hands and heat to work wonders. Still, he prefers the aesthetics of his favored workplace and often forges there.

Those who wish to request that Ligier make them something come to the Illustrious Forge. Attached to the forge at each of its seven corners is a finely decorated parlor crafted to resemble brass lanterns and elevated so

one can look out upon the fires of the forge. Business meetings are conducted in these parlors. Depending on the status of the customer, Ligier speaks with them directly or works through a lesser demon who serves as sales representative and intermediary. In either case, the request is heard and the price is set. There is no negotiation or haggling. The price often includes strange or rare sacrifices the buyer is expected to procure for the object's creation. These offerings, be they the tears of a king or the voice of an unborn child, must be provided, or Ligier will hide flaws in the finished product. Given the alien nature of the demon's whims, these flaws might or might not hinder his creations when they are used. Nonetheless, few of his customers wish to risk it, and Ligier's terms are nearly always met. Ligier will entertain any potential request, be it from demon, mortal or Exalt. There is, however, a waiting list for less interesting and important requests.

PUNISHMENT SPHERES

Punishment is a reality of any prison, and Malfeas is no exception. Even among the mad inmates of the Demon City, there are rules, orders and a way of doing things. In most cases, those below obey those above out of fear and respect. On occasion, though, a lesser demon or other servant is deemed too rebellious or incompetent. In many cases, these creatures are simply demoted, destroyed or devoured, depending on their masters' whims. In some cases, an example must be made. For these times, Ligier is more than happy to volunteer his services.

To this end, the Green Sun crafted a number of large spheres made of green-black glass and brass. These

structures are found in most neighborhoods, from the richest precincts to the worst slums. Some are found at major crossroads, while others hang in the air above the Demon City. These spheres are usually mercifully empty, though when a deserving party surfaces, he is taken to a punishment sphere.

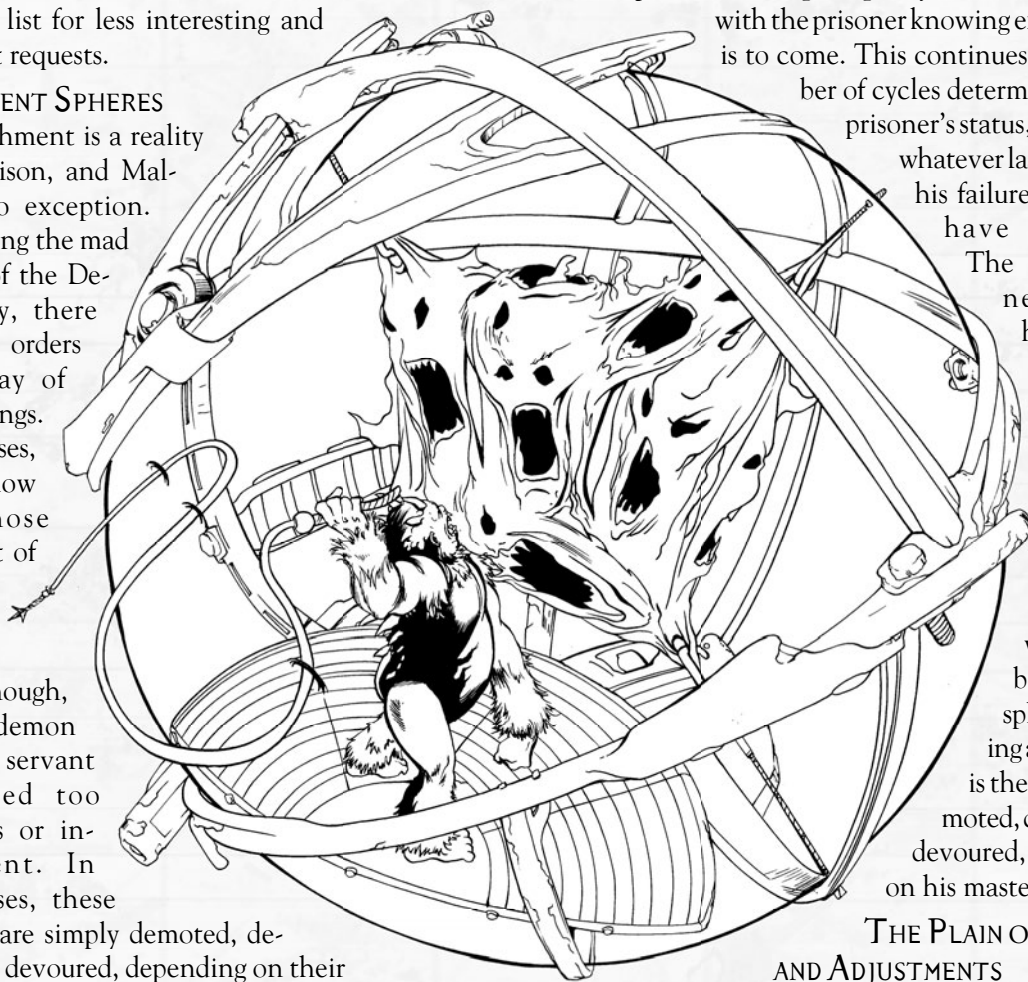
Once inside the sphere, the prisoner is subjected to all manner of torments, the specifics of which vary with the offense and the offender. Some are flayed, others burned, still others are left to slowly waste away. The torment and suffering inside one sphere can be seen by those looking into any sphere, a reminder to all what price failure and disobedience brings. These tortures continue until the party begs for death. Then the sphere's wondrous machinery heals all of the prisoner's hurts, refreshes his body and soothes his savaged mind. And then the punishment begins again, just as before, but now with the prisoner knowing exactly what

is to come. This continues for a number of cycles determined by the prisoner's status, crimes and whatever lasting effects his failures or crimes have wrought.

The prisoner is never told how many cycles he must endure. At the end of the last cycle, the prisoner is released without the benefit of the sphere's healing abilities. He is then either demoted, destroyed or devoured, depending on his master's whims.

THE PLAIN OF TRIALS AND ADJUSTMENTS

On a vast plain of melted stone on one of central levels of Malfeas, Ligier keeps his testing grounds. Here he sets his creations to war with one another. City-sized automata battle against swarms of lesser clockwork soldiers, hellstriders and flying craft.





Living swords slice away at armor styled from children's dreams. Demons sworn to the Green Sun's service operate, adjust and record the results of these trials. Promising projects engineered by Ligier's subordinates are also sometimes tested here. These war games continue constantly, generating explosions and impacts that can be seen and felt 100 miles away.

Ligier uses this personal toy box and battleground to find the best of his weapons and war machines. Some he sells to other powerful demons for favors and considerations for his agents. Others he dangles in front of mortals to entice them into his service. The rest, and many believe the best, he hordes for use in battle against the Chosen and the gods once the Yozis escape their prison. Many akuma came to Malfeas seduced by the power of machines and weapons tested here, and several powerful demons have traded much to have one of Ligier's toys in their arsenals.

The Plain of Trials and Adjustments also serves two others purposes. The first is that it serves as yet another reminder of the glory of Ligier. In truth, the Green Sun is so vain he can never have too many wonders to lord over lesser beings, and the vast plain provides an excellent place to showcase his flashier inventions. The second reason is misdirection. So huge and impressive are the wonders revealed on the Plain of Trials and Adjustments that many less perceptive or wily observers miss Ligier's other plans and projects. Despite this ploy, most in the know realize that the terrifying war machines and deadly arsenals displayed on the Plain of Trials and Adjustments make up a mere fraction of the marvelous devices crafted by the Green Sun. This thought does not give them comfort. Nor should it.

MALFEAN BUILDINGS

There are no hard-and-fast rules of zoning or architecture in Malfeas. Buildings are made according to the whims and desires of the builders and their owners. In many cases, the structures of Malfeas himself are renovated, altered, rebuilt or otherwise used as foundations and frameworks. This is not always the case, of course, and the residents of the Demon City have had millennia to build vast buildings independent of the Yozi's structures. The result is a city with architecture so wondrous and diverse it seems almost random. Some structures are web-like matrices that link individual rooms together. Others are solid pieces carved to resemble long-forgotten creatures. Still others are grown from seeds or eggs and watered with blood. Little thought is given in most areas to urban planning, so structures often grow together, intersect or simply appear vastly

different than those around them. The variations are endless, and many structures that could not stand in Creation loom tall over the skyline in Malfeas.

Despite this variety, some common elements do persist. Most buildings in Malfeas are made of brass and basalt. Jet, iron, obsidian and other dark materials are used to augment and reinforce as needed. Some buildings have green-black crystal or glass made from melting the obsidian dust that flows in Malfeas' rivers. The few exceptions that exist are usually structures constructed to honor a particular Yozi or constructed by one of its souls. In these rare cases, materials are often imported through demonic bargains or the offerings of mortals. These materials are usually quite exotic, as most mundane materials from Creation do not last long in Malfeas. Therefore, it is far more likely to find a monument made from the teeth of Dragon-Blooded children than it is to find one of common metals or wood. In addition to such rarities, the magical materials are sometimes used in construction, though many demons consider the use inauspicious given their connection to the Chosen.

Malfean architecture is unlike anything found in Creation. Techniques that were burned away by She Who Lives in Her Name have been rediscovered. For one thing, demons do not need pillars, arches and other support structures to build. Buildings hundreds if not thousands of feet high can be built without any apparent load-bearing walls or struts. Windows and doors can be placed anywhere without disrupting the integrity of a building. These techniques work best with the brass and black stone common to Malfeas, however—yet another reason buildings of these materials are so common.

It is a rare edifice in Malfeas that has no mosaics, wall carvings, murals, paintings, metal inlays or other forms of ornamentation. Demonkind has worked for millennia to turn the Yozis' prison into a gilded cage, and the results are visible everywhere. Scenes of depravity and perversion are common, but so are scenes of beautiful sights from Creation long passed. Many murals and carvings depict the battle of the Primordials against the gods and the brave defiance of the Yozis in the face of betrayal and imprisonment. The deaths of many Chosen at the hands of various demons are also common sights, and those demons who kill an Exalt can expect an artist somewhere in Malfeas to re-create the deed.

Some powerful demons have trophy rooms and personal collections of artifacts and artwork, but there are few galleries and museums. As a rule, the Yozis and



demons of the Third Circle have no objection to decoration, but they see little reason to allow such dedicated diversions for their servants. Demons themselves seem to prefer more active forms of recreation anyway. The exceptions are all places built to commemorate the glory of the Yozis and their souls through art.

THE COPPER HOUSE OF GEMSTONE OCEAN HERO

In truth, one of the most famous non-demons in Malfeas doesn't really own this house. He rents. Still, the home and office of the Dragon-Blooded stranger known as Gemstone Ocean Hero is understood to be his domain.

The structure itself is a rather modest three-level townhouse made primarily of copper. The bottom floor contains a reception area where lesser demons or human slaves in Gemstone Ocean Hero's employ greet prospective clients. The rest of the floor is devoted to record-keeping. The top two floors are Gemstone Ocean Hero's personal living quarters and are decorated with a mix of art and artifacts from Creation and Malfeas.

Gemstone Ocean Hero has a small garden out back where he often entertains clients and guests. It is here the Exalt makes a good living in the Demon City deciphering azure edged documents and drawing up contracts for various parties without need for the approval of Cecelyne and her priests. The garden's flowers are the brass-stemmed roses with petals of green-black glass that grow in some rare parts of Malfeas.

One of the most noteworthy aspects of the house is also the chief reason that Gemstone Ocean Hero chose to rent it from the demon Makarios over other similar properties. When commanded by its owner (or lawfully designated tenant) the whole building rises from the ground and slowly floats to another designated location. The house is not fast enough to avoid active pursuit or flee most flying beasts. It does, however, allow for easy relocation when a neighborhood is threatened by Adorjan or the collision of two levels of Malfeas, or when the area simply becomes too hot for a Terrestrial Exalt alone in a city of demons. Gemstone Ocean Hero tends to relocate his residence about once a month, relying on word of mouth and well-placed bribes to keep his current location known to his clients and obscured from his enemies. The house is usually located somewhere on the outer level of Malfeas, but he has been known to move to less active areas from time to time.

THE MINISTRY OF RECORDS

The priests of Cecelyne are well known throughout Malfeas as the lawbringers and arbitrators of the Demon City. They approve citizenship, legitimize contracts and

pass judgment on the guilty. Their records would fill all the libraries of the Realm easily. The Ministry of Records is where these countless volumes of contracts, citizenship applications and other official documents are kept.

The Ministry of Records is a towering black marble block that looms over the Malfean skyline in one of the middle levels of Malfeas. It is well over 1,000 feet tall and miles long on each of its sides. Unlike most buildings in Malfeas, it has no windows or external decoration. The inside of the building has a great open reception area. Here is found a huge stone wall on which is mounted an enormous brass plate. The plate is a directory of the building with the contents of each floor carved into its surface. A great iron spiral staircase large enough to march an army up leads from the ground floor all the way to the top of the building. There are entrances at each floor where a visitor can exit or enter. Each floor is filled with one long counter and miles of shelves. The counter is worked by a handful of lesser demons who serve as clerks. The shelves are carved stone and on them are countless scrolls, documents and records separated by brass dividers. Those who wish to see a particular record bring their request to the clerk. Provided they are citizens or have proper authorization from a high-ranking demon, the clerk will retrieve the requested records. Bribes can also sometimes work with the clerks, though like all demons they are fearful of angering their superiors.

The current Ministry of Records is not the original building. The old Ministry was demolished millennia ago when the level it rested on fell into Kimbery and a new Ministry building is already under construction for when the current building's level falls into ruin. All three Ministry of Records buildings share the same design, though each one is noticeably larger than the last.

Inside the Ministry, one can theoretically find a copy of every legal deal, contract, claim and action in Malfeas since the Yozis were imprisoned. In truth, many records have been lost or lay buried in the old Ministry of Records. Others have been stolen by various parties interested in hiding or exposing them. In these cases, the various priests and lawgivers of Cecelyne should be able to provide the documents from their personal records. In practice, however, these requests often take years to fill as the lesser demons who toil at the Ministry have no power to compel the production of these documents.

Even if the documents are in the building, they are often misfiled, which means they will take days, weeks



or even years to find again. There is a common joke among Ministry of Records employees that the secret to escaping Malfeas is somewhere in the building but it's misfiled as a bread recipe. While this itself is just a joke, it is true that the details of countless rituals, contracts and other secrets are lost somewhere in the countless shelves of the Ministry of Records.

THE PALACE OF THE EBON DRAGON

As a Yozi of incredible power, one whose very presence can blot out the Green Sun, the Ebon Dragon has little need of a home, palace or otherwise. Nonetheless, roughly five years ago, the Shadow of All Things directed his demons to raise a great palace in one of the wealthiest neighborhoods in the outermost layer of the Demon City. His servants did not dare question, they merely began to work. The result is the structure known only as the Palace of the Ebon Dragon, a grand project that is nearing completion.

As the Ebon Dragon's demons complete construction, his demons and trusted slaves are already assembling to make up the staff. His Infernal Exalted already stroll the nearly complete halls as an honor guard,

with more to be added soon. The Ebon Dragon himself is rarely found here, but most believe that is because he is preoccupied with plans for his upcoming nuptials. Once he is married, many believe the Shadow of All Things and his new bride will direct efforts to break out of Malfeas and into Creation from this place. At the very least, most believe it will make a comfortable home for the Yozi's bride as he works toward escape.

The palace is a huge affair, all black marble, gold and brass. The Ebon Dragon's demons have had great tapestries and works of art procured from his cults in Creation and transported to Malfeas. The Palace of the Ebon Dragon rivals any in Creation, as great as or greater than the Imperial Palace itself.

In fact, those demons with intimate knowledge of Creation have noted a remarkable similarity to the Ebon Dragon's new home and the Royal Palace of the Dragon-Blooded. Halls, ballrooms, bedchambers, libraries and other rooms are laid out in a fashion that almost seems to shadow the mortal structure. The only major differences are the building materials and the slightly off angles of the Ebon Dragon's palace. Otherwise, it

A NOTE ON DEMONS OF THE THIRD CIRCLE

From this point on, readers will encounter a number of Third Circle demons. These creatures are an important part of the geography of the Demon City and that which exists inside it. The Demon Princes described here are those who operate and exist mostly as fixtures and terrain in Malfeas. Therefore, they are described in detail but not given game traits such as those found for similar demons featured in *The Books of Sorcery*, Vol. V—*The Roll of Glorious Divinity II* or later on in this book in the antagonists chapter.

The demons described here are rarely summoned or compelled to take a form that would bring them into direct conflict with other characters in *Exalted*. The knowledge of many of these demons has long been lost in Creation, and only the most adept summoners with especially complete libraries know enough to draw them from Malfeas. It is possible to see Ipithymia's golden half-naked form dancing down her street, but it is unlikely that she would fight or challenge most she meets. The same goes for the other demons described in this chapter. They are encountered far less in humanlike form than their fellows, such as Ligier and Jacint.

Despite this trend to stay in Malfeas and exist only as landmarks and locales, their other guises, expertise and general battle tactics are given some mention in the demons' descriptions. These exist to give Storytellers a general idea of what each demon is like when it is encountered outside its most common form. Further game traits are not provided, though Storytellers will find excellent examples of other demons of the Third Circle in *The Roll of Glorious Divinity II* or later on in this book's antagonists chapter should they wish to create traits for any of the demons here. Storytellers who do so should remember that the power of even the least of these creatures is terrifying and should give even battle-hardened Solar circles pause.

Keep in mind that simply because few of these demons go to Creation doesn't mean they can't. Like all Demon Princes, they are more than capable of existing simultaneously in Malfeas and Creation. Therefore, encounters with these demons outside the Demon City have no effect on Malfean geography.

seems the Palace of the Ebon Dragon is a home fit for the Scarlet Empress herself.

MALFEAN STREETS AND CAUSEWAYS

Malfeas, like any city, has roads and streets. Unlike other urban areas, the streets that form in Malfeas have a spark of infernal life from the great Yozi himself. This spark causes the streets to move, grow, wither and sometimes even die. A road might go from a grand avenue to tight back alley as the buildings around it press inward. Or a footpath barely large enough for a child might strain against its borders to become a roadway that could let two armies pass each other going opposite directions. Streets that one day run on for miles might suddenly dead end the next.

Streets are often destroyed by forces beyond their control. When Malfeas' levels slam together, many streets are obliterated in the resulting stone rain. Others are buried under toppling buildings or abandoned after Adorjan slaughters everyone on a stretch of road who does not flee her presence. When Isidoros ventures forth from Szoreny, he destroys whole city blocks and the streets that run between them. Battles and the destruction brought by various powerful demons can also destroy many roadways in the Demon City.

Despite the mad geography of Malfeas, some roads stay constant and unchanging for Ages. These are typically pathways to places of power within the Demon City. In some cases, these mostly permanent streets are traveled often by or otherwise associated with Third Circle demons. Demonologists theorize that this patronage strengthens these roads and lets them better resist the push and pull of the rest of the landscape. Malfeas, if he even notices this effect, does nothing to prevent it. To him, the persistence of a few avenues across his vastness matters little. Many of these more constant streets are used to mark the territory of various demonic fiefdoms and holdings. Natives are aware which streets mark the end of which lord's territory, and visitors are ignorant at their peril. Turf wars are common on these border zones. The sounds of battle or the constant clamor of patrols assigned to ward off Adorjan are common in these areas. Few affluent or powerful demons live in these areas, not wishing to risk injury or destruction of property due to infernal gang wars or inattentive musicians.

Not all the streets in the city are of Malfeas himself. In fact, many are the work of others. For example, Adorjan's 18th soul, the demon Jacint, forms roads, bridges and causeways from his words. He sits upon his black tower and speaks paths for his mistress to flow through.





His roads run throughout the Demon City, crossing and merging with paths both his own and other. Jacint's roads were once dependable landmarks for many travelers. Since the demon's recent defeat in Nexus, however, Jacint cannot manifest in Creation and Malfeas simultaneously (see **The Books of Sorcery, Vol. V—The Roll of Glorious Divinity II**, p. 49). This causes many of his streets to fade or be overtaken by others if he spends too long in Creation.

Whatever their origins, the Malfean streets are the Demon City's arteries and veins, and through them flows its life. Foot travel is the most common way for lesser demons to travel, so streets are often crowded at all times. Strange sights, horrible dangers and even the occasional exciting business opportunity are available to those who travel these footpaths and grand avenues.

DEMON STREETS

Some streets and back alleys are demons themselves, lording over the slaves and lesser demons who call them home and feed their gang-cults. These demons often seek to annex nearby streets, be they other demons or the black flesh of Malfeas. These conflicts sometimes lead to gangs of lesser demons serving as soldiers in violent turf wars. In such times, servants of these demon-streets launch raids on their masters' enemies—killing and enslaving rival street dwellers, defacing landmarks on opposing territory and performing general acts of mayhem. Typically, other demons allow these battles as long as all the forms or traditions

are obeyed and appropriate offerings are made to local priests and overseers.

Some of these demonic avenues are component souls of one of the Yozi, usually Malfeas himself. They serve their Yozi masters in a number of different ways and can be in multiple places at once. Like other demons of the Third Circle, this allows for a demon to be a street in Malfeas, while simultaneously being summoned to Creation by a sorcerer or traveling elsewhere in the Demon City in another form. These most powerful of infernal roadways command great fiefdoms in Malfeas themselves, often centered around or enclosed by their own form.

Two examples of demons who manifest as roadways in Malfeas are detailed here. These two powerful and alien beings are often at odds with each other or some other power in Malfeas.

IPITHYMIA, THE STREET OF GOLD LANTERNS

*DEMON OF THE THIRD CIRCLE,
THIRTEENTH SOUL OF MALFEAS*

In Creation, red-hued light often suggests the carnal and the perverse. In Malfeas, it is the golden light of the Unconquered Sun that invokes a similar reaction. Brothels, torture theatres and other such establishments operate in Malfeas under gold-colored lights. One such place is Ipithymia, the Street of Gold Lanterns. This soul of Malfeas and personification of the Yozi's lust and urges is the model for all other lesser avenues of sin and vice throughout the Demon City. The street

TWO VERY DIFFERENT SIDES OF THE STREET

Though they are only two of countless establishments found on Ipithymia, the Black Lotus Pagoda and the Stockade illustrate the range of businesses the Street of Gold Lanterns hosts.

The Black Lotus Pagoda is a high-class pleasure house carved out of a single piece of jet that caters to rich, powerful guests seeking skilled and beautiful companionship. This brothel employs both demons and mortal slaves, all trained in a number of sexual and social disciplines. Many of the Pagoda's courtesans specialize in serving a client's particular interests and needs, usually by combining training with their natural gifts and abilities. Within the walls of the Black Lotus Pagoda, one can find everything from skilled but relatively conventional sex to demons who can stimulate pleasure centers by changing their coloring in a particular pattern.

By contrast, the Stockade seems low class and ugly, though it is just as busy and popular. The building itself is all iron and brass, and it resembles nothing so much as a giant cage. Smaller cages are mounted throughout the interior and exterior in no discernible pattern and serve as places to entertain customers. One enters the Stockade through a great barred door that opens into the reception area. Here, demons act as combination overseer and salesmen for clients, offering a variety of slaves and unfortunate lesser demons for abuse, torture and torment. Once a client has selected her companion and negotiated her price, she is directed to a cage to do as she wills. The Stockade is constantly in need of new stock as its clients tend toward the most violent, twisted and hungry of Malfeas' demons.



is paved with the bones of virgins and lined with vast pleasure houses of brass and crystal. It stretches on for miles in each direction no matter where one stands on it, and it can be found on many levels of Malfeas simultaneously. Her lantern lights can be seen everywhere on the street, pushing aside the greenish light of Ligier to cast golden rays on all manner of strange and fantastic pleasures. Ligier allows this as part of an ancient agreement with his fellow soul, the details of which are a secret between the two of them.

On Ipithymia, patrons can find the most profanely original diversions in any realm. Noteworthy establishments include the Black Lotus Pagoda and the Stockade. Ipithymia is aware of all that transpires around her, so no secrets are kept from the Street of Gold Lanterns by its patrons. She can twist and tweak the desires and appetites of those around her and can cause insatiable lust to literally burn and consume those who displease her. She is both festival and festival grounds. None who visit her curving streets and back alleys leave untouched.

Ipithymia's few rules are enforced by a cadre of demonic prostitutes, courtesans, geisha and other employees of the street's various establishments. Neomah are the most common demons employed in this way, though they are not the only ones. Most of those who work here are demons of the First Circle, mere soldiers and drones of Ipithymia and her lord Malfeas. Yet every storefront, brothel and pleasure palace on Ipithymia is run by at least one Second Circle demon. These are usually component souls of the Street of the Gold Lanterns, but other demons with an aptitude for lust, debauchery and perversion can be found here too. Of course, in addition to such demons, Ipithymia herself is literally everywhere.

In addition to running her businesses, Ipithymia's demons also collect tribute from the surrounding neighborhoods. Shopkeepers and craftsmen nearby are expected to pay a weekly tribute. Those who cannot must contribute a slave, lover or trusted companion to the workforce of Ipithymia's businesses. The Street of Golden Lanterns is filled with such discarded and forgotten markers on past debts.

When it takes her fancy, Ipithymia takes a mortal form and moves among her patrons and employees. Other times, she might be summoned to Creation to aid a sorcerer in the arts of seduction, power-brokering and the breaking of the human spirit. Everywhere she goes, lust and debauchery escalates. Where she passes, the scent of sex and opiates hangs in the air. Her favor-

ite form is that of a golden-skinned, four-armed young woman in the scant clothing of a dancer or courtesan. In this form, she appears young, usually a bit too young for her highly sexualized dress and manner. In this guise and others, she is often solicitous and sexually aggressive, especially toward powerful beings of non-demonic origin such as the Chosen. She can generate a longing and lust in all but the divinely chaste, and the thought of being denied her causes a pain so profound it physically harms. She has taken and destroyed more lovers than any can remember, and she shows no signs of ceasing.

BOSTVADE, THE QUICKSILVER HIGHWAY

DEMON OF THE THIRD CIRCLE, SECOND SOUL OF SZORENY

A path of mercury rimmed with brass, Bostvade leads out of the depths of the Silver Forest into the Demon City. The Quicksilver Highway flows on for miles, a roadway of silvery poison, going wherever he wills, through walls, into homes and over existing streets. He leaves lesser demons and mortals sickened and dead from his touch. He is never quite in the same place from day to day, as he shifts and flows constantly. Bostvade represents the Yozi tree Szoreny's desire for exploration, conquest and escape.

Bostvade does not rule the streets and blocks through which he flows. Instead, he rules the reflections of these places that are trapped in his silver surface. His demons can be seen walking on its reverse surface and living in the reflections of its homes. Those wishing to enter this mirror-place need only dive into the silver depths of Bostvade and swim to the other side of the road, being careful not to lose their bearings, swallow the poisoned liquid or fall prey to the hungry demons that live in between. If they survive, they emerge on the other side of the road in a twisted mirror realm of the streets they left.

Bostvade draws powers and life from the places it reflects. Neighborhoods through which Bostvade flows sicken and wither as their mirror images grow and prosper. This realm is not an illusion or a trick, it is a real place linked to the very nature of Szoreny itself. It is possible to live an entire lifetime in Bostvade's reflected places without ever returning to the rest of Malfeas.

Bostvade's demons often travel to the surface for trinkets and slaves to take back to their mirrored dwellings. Some who live in the places Bostvade runs through choose to join these demons, preferring to live in a vibrant reflection rather than a drab and dying original. Bostvade's demons often actively recruit and even sometimes kidnap locals to come to their realm, causing the mirror place to grow at the expense of its source.





Eventually, when an area is stripped bare of prosperity and life, Bostvade moves on.

When he chooses to appear in mortal guise, Bostvade seems to be a handsome youth with quicksilver hair and eyes. He can sometimes be found wandering Malfeas, surveying new places to take his road. He has the lean frame of a wanderer and carries a long walking staff of silvery wood. He is often summoned for his insight and knowledge of pathways, real and metaphysical. Other than Jacint, there is no more knowledgeable road-builder in Malfeas than Bostvade. If threatened, he slams his walking stick down, causing a flood of quicksilver to erupt from the ground and drown his foes in poison. He can also cast razor-sharp droplets of quicksilver that poison the blood of whoever they wound.

THE MEAN STREETS OF MALFEAS

Demonic roadways and their street-gang-like demonic servants can form interesting encounters for those visiting Malfeas. Some small fiefdoms, such as the Twelve Points, are even run by these demonic gangs (see pp. 93-95). If characters find themselves seeking an item or piece of information within the Demon City, they might discover it is the property of one of these demonic locales. Perhaps the demon is willing to render assistance to any who would help it expand its influence and territory over the surrounding alleys, avenues and boulevards. Alternatively, characters might simply stumble upon one of these demonic turf wars by accident, running afoul of one or both parties in a conflict.

Demonic streets and their demon gangs can also find their way into Creation. The most likely way this would occur would be for a gang of mortal criminals to fall into demon worship. These cult-gangs could call upon their demonic counterparts for power in exchange for servitude and sacrifice. Perhaps a large or powerful enough cult could even manage to call one of the demon streets of Malfeas. Such a creature might take a more human-like guise while in Creation, though it is just as likely to infect some dark corner of a city and work its corrupting influence until forced to return home.

OTHER STREETS AND PATHWAYS

Not all pathways and roads of note in Malfeas can move and speak for themselves. Many are simply places

where interesting things happen or that fall under the domain of powerful and influential beings.

THE BOULEVARD OF CANDIED NIGHTMARES

This street can be found in the outermost layer of Malfeas, where it runs for miles along the edge of one of Malfeas' more affluent neighborhoods. The buildings here sprout from the ground at unnatural angles and are made of polished brass turned a rainbow of colors by a process known only to the most skilled architects. Multicolored gems glisten at travelers' feet, embedded in the basalt road.

The prime businesses on the street are a horrible mixture of confectioners and the dream parlors of Creation. Patrons come to these establishments to consume the dreams and nightmares of living beings. Shopkeepers employ thousands of human slaves and lesser demons with sufficient imagination to supply their stock. These unfortunates are strapped into elaborate machines that place them in a tortured slumber. While the mortals are in this state, the machine's operators can then flavor and adjust the dreams to produce particular scenes or emotional states. These nightmares are then placed into specially treated hollow brass balls from which a buyer can drink in the feelings and sights of the dreamers. Nightmares of war, death, defilement, loss and torture are popular delicacies. More exotic or specific dreams, such as being tortured to death by an unrequited love, fetch higher prices and have a smaller client base. Some shops on the street, such as the famous Mazarine's World of Final Slumberings provide the chance to suck the final death dreams of a person. This is usually done by devouring the dreamer's brain. Only certain demons enjoy this, and they pay a premium for the chance. These death dreams are also available in traditional brass ball form, though true connoisseurs swear this dilutes the flavor and ruins the bouquet.

In addition to a place of recreation, the Boulevard of Candied Nightmares is a great place to uncover secrets and rumors. Dreamers sometimes let bits of information they possess slip through while slumbering, and the dreams of prophets are highly sought after. Clients may also let a secret or two slip while indulging in a particularly potent nightmare. Many of the workers on the street are spies for one powerful demon or another as a result.

THE WAY OF WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

This rather literally named street is found on the second innermost level of Malfeas. The street itself is made of interlocking blocks of black pavement stone in a variety of shapes, sizes and shades. These blocks are

arranged in a variety of patterns. Some of these patterns seem random, while other form vast mosaics.

Those who travel here unaware quickly learn where the street got its name. The various pavement blocks combine to form a network of pressure plates. Stepping on one stone might cause brass spikes to shoot up from beneath to impale. Another might raise a whole city block suddenly into the air, invert it and slam it back into place. Still others open trapdoors that drop into the Kimberly-flooded ruins below. Many stones are linked to others elsewhere, meaning that one must step on them to avoid obstacles farther down the street.

Frequent travelers of the Way of Weights and Measures rush over the stones in an uneven dance, dodging hazards and unlocking alleyways and side-street access as they move. Tourists are visibly more cautious, making them easy marks for harassment and ridicule. Leading the unaware toward embarrassment, pain and death is common pastime here, and only the most agile or foolish non-native would attempt a battle or foot chase on the treacherous Way of Weights and Measures.

ENVELA, THE BEHEMOTH IN SUBMISSION

Not all creatures who find their way into Malfeas are the Yozis and their servants. At times, creatures

walk out of Cecelyne's desert and enter the city. Some leave eventually, some don't live long enough to flee, and some are there still. This final fate is that of Envela, the Behemoth in Submission.

No one is quite sure why Envela came to Malfeas. This miles-long nanopede briefly rampaged through the streets of the Demon City shortly after the prison's creation. Eventually, it was defeated and nearly slain by Ligier, who had grown bored with watching the creature disrupt the order of the city. Ligier's light blackened and burned the great insect-like thing, and his sword split it. Nearly dead, Envela lay where it fell. The Green Sun then decided with a whim some might mistake for mercy not to finish the beast. Instead, he crafted a billion leg shackles of iron and brass to hold the wounded beast to the ground. Then he poured a mix of black stone, sand and vitriol over these shackles and dried it with his own blazing heat. The result was a winding road that still entombs the behemoth. There, Envela lies on its back, facing Ligier forever in half-dead submission.

Travelers on Envela walk upon the segmented belly of the great beast. The behemoth's paved-over legs form sidewalks upon the main avenue created by Envela's body.





Ligier left the creature's head unfettered, but other demons long ago encased the beast's huge maw in iron and brass. This huge mask has been decorated and carved with a scene depicting the beast's rampage and defeat. Placed at the intersection of Envela and other streets in the Demon City, it stands as a marker of the street's end and a reminder of the power of Malfeas and Ligier.

Walking on Envela, one can still feel the faint pulse of life in its trapped body. More sensitive pedestrians can sense the beast's impotent rage and desire for freedom mixed with a desire for a fatal end to its humiliation and torment. No one has dared try to put the beast out of its misery, though, despite its exposed underbelly. To do so would be an affront to Ligier, and it is unlikely the Green Sun would let such a merciful act go unpunished.

CAUSEWAYS

Travel between the layers of Malfeas is not available on land-based streets. Some demons can take various flying sedan chairs, mounts and other forms of fantastic transportation. For everyone else, including most First Circle demons, pedestrian travel is the answer. A great network of causeways exists for those demons and visitors to the city who cannot fly or otherwise travel between the layers of the Demon City. Many of these are the creation of the Third Circle demon Jacint (see **The Books of Sorcery, Vol. V—The Roll of Glorious Divinity II**, pp. 48–49). Others are spawned by Malfeas himself or built by other demons. Each causeway connects from a street, alleyway or building to another level of Malfeas. Those that sprout naturally from the city itself are made of the same black stone that makes up so much of Malfeas. Jacint's aerial roadways are of black stone reinforced with iron and brass. Most other demon-crafted causeways are made of brass and iron, especially in wealthy or important neighborhoods that prefer not to risk their modes of transport to the whims of the Grinding Wind.

The largest causeways are huge affairs able to move the largest demons and beasts comfortably. The smallest are little more than thread-like spans navigable by only the smallest or most graceful of travelers. The average causeway is about six feet wide, large enough for two human-sized beings to travel abreast in relative safety.

In heavily trafficked areas, multiple causeways can be seen passing over and under and to all sides. In the more desolate and remote areas of Malfeas, one might look out over miles only to see a single modest path leading upward.

In some places, Malfeas' causeways grow so thick that they mesh together, overlap and form great tangled growths. This is particularly common in less affluent neighborhoods that cannot afford viasectors (demons employed to redirect, reshape, connect and cut away unproductive causeways). In these slums and ghettos, the cancrioid masses that result from blocked causeways hang impassable overhead until they are worn away or collapse and crush those beneath them. It is partly because of these dangers that many prefer the paths of Jacinth, whose roads and causeways never meet, or those of lesser demonic construction.

Like their earthbound street counterparts, the causeways of Malfeas are often transient and transforming. When Malfeas shifts and great sections of the cityscape collide and new levels are created, the shattered causeways begin growing to bridge the new terrain before the dust has settled. They are the venose skyways of the Demon City, as eternal and twisted as the Yozi who is their host.

HOUSE OF THE UNHOLY

Many Yozis and demons of the Third Circle have cults within Malfeas and in Creation. Prayer feeds the residents of Malfeas much as it does the inhabitants of Yu-Shan or the Underworld. Only Cecelyne has a dedicated order of priests to enforce her edicts and ideals, but other Yozis and demons have those who pray to them. To better enable the worship and demonstrate the glory of worshipping the infernal, many temples have been constructed within the Demon City. Some are merely small shrines, while others are vast cathedrals rivaling the celestial halls of Yu-Shan.

There is no temple district per se in Malfeas. Most houses of worship are situated in the territories of lesser demons that pay homage to and serve a particular Yozi or Demon Prince. Nonetheless, many demonic fiefdoms and territories have at least small shrines to the other Yozis or demons. For example, a demon of the Third Circle might build a great temple to his mistress She Who Lives in Her Name in the center of his holdings while constructing impressive but less majestic shrines to the other Yozis. Or a demon of the Second Circle might craft a grand shrine dedicated to his master and then make a smaller one that houses images of all of his masters' brother and sister souls. This is done carefully, as no demon wishes to draw the wrath of his own Yozi mistress by appearing too deferential to the others. Still, many demons engage in this practice out of hope that they might receive some small blessing or consideration in return. All demons are aware that



most prayers go unheeded and that their Yozi masters care little for their fates. Still, most believe it never hurts to try, especially in desperate times.

THE SKYLESS CATHEDRAL

The greatest of Cecelyne's temples, the Skyless Cathedral is located in the center of Makarios's Equitable Market (see p. 92). The exterior of the temple consists of seven vast, towering walls of brass topped with inward-curving spires. This exterior structure, like so much of the Demon City, is part of Malfeas' inside-out form. Those who pass through the seven-angled arch of the cathedral to the interior, however, find themselves upon the Endless Desert. The spires visible from the outside reach up to support a vast brass inner temple that floats inverted overhead, and the inner walls are seen to rise up from the horizon in every direction. Upon the walls can be seen carved the current laws by which the city is governed. Many of these laws remain constant, such as the edict naming the Yozis and their Third Circle representatives as unquestionable, but others change with the shifting of allegiances, power struggles and the like. No matter how far one travels along the desert while within the Skyless Cathedral, they can always see the inner temple directly overhead and the laws written in the sky walls. The temple attendants, a number of lesser demons, regularly move to and from the inner temple. One attendant is always placed by the entrance to guide worshipers in and out.

Those who have the means to reach the inner temple are free to do so under their own power. Others may, for a small donation, be transported by one of the temple attendants. Once reaching the temple, visitors are free to pray, make offerings or conduct whatever business they wish. Upon completion of their affairs, visitors are guided from the temple back to the desert floor. Leaving the cathedral requires a small prayer or offering. Afterward, one simply exits where the attendants are posted. Those who refuse to make an offering or give a prayer to the glory of the Endless Desert find themselves unable to leave until they see the error of their ways. (See pp. 45-47 for more information on the temples of Cecelyne and the Skyless Cathedral.)

THE SCREAMING CATHEDRAL

The Screaming Cathedral is found amidst several temples, theological retreats and other structures dedicated to the Cecelyne priesthood. The great brass temple rises hundreds of feet into the air, its spires gleaming in the green sunlight. Glass crafted with scenes of violence and stained with blood are set into vast frames all around the structure. Two great doors carved with images of the Yozi form the entrance to the building.

The Screaming Cathedral is nominally a hall of worship, but it is more famous for its chief function: to repel Adorjan and keep the surrounding area free of her killing winds. To accomplish this, the priesthood long ago contracted the Green Sun to use his unparalleled smithcraft to construct an instrument unlike any other. The result is the Organ of Agonies, a massive device that is the centerpiece of the Screaming Cathedral. A great network of pipes, blades, bludgeons and spikes attached to towering clockwork of incredible complexity, the Organ of Agonies literally turns suffering into art.

To play the instrument, first human slaves, beasts and minor demons are strapped into harnesses and impaled on spikes set all throughout the Screaming Cathedral's concert hall. Once these unfortunate creatures are ready, an individual trained to play the Organ of Agonies begins his concert. As the main organ plays the central tune, spinning blades slice flesh, bludgeons break bones, and machines twist and stretch bodies. The screams and sounds of violence combine with the music into a horrible concerto. This music is then amplified through great brass tubes leading from the Organ to the outside of the Screaming Cathedral. This music serves to keep Adorjan at bay as well as providing pleasing music for religious services and other activities in the area. Bells and gongs are rung from the building's towers while new performances are being prepared and the musicians change shifts.

For special performances and to accompany major festivals, the most skilled musicians from across Malfeas are contracted. These virtuosos usually have specific requests that must be met for them to properly perform their masterpieces. For example, one demonic composer must have 13 virgins of no more than 16 years impaled equidistant from each other across the Organ of Agonies to perform his most famous work. Another piece from a different demon can reach a proper crescendo in an oft-requested work only if the machine is fitted with six infants and one white calf to bludgeon to death. In a pinch, substitutions can be made, but true aficionados of music in the Demon City insist it is never the same.

Perhaps the most shocking part of the Organ of Agonies to mortal ears is its sound, as the music produced from the instrument is invariably beautiful.

THE SHRINES OF KIMBERY

Kimbery's presence in Malfeas is eternal and often unnoticed. Her waters run under most of the Demon City, and her canals carry beautiful but deadly liquids through the realm. Her surface shrines are few but are fantastic places whose walls and levels shift and flow like



unsettled dark green glass. These great structures often resemble frozen fountains, with layered walls leading to the central shrine from which the rest of the temple seems to sprout. Here a pool of caustic seawater, linked to Kimberly herself, rests in a brass basin. Her followers commune with their mother-goddess through this pool. Those wishing to make offerings or sacrifices to the Yozi may cast them into the pool, where they will be carried to Kimberly's waiting waters.

Her underground temples are more alien and terrible, reflecting the hidden horrors that sleep beneath all oceans. Located in the sewers and other subterranean areas, they are often home to amphibious lesser demons that serve the Sea That Marched Against the Flame and are patronized by those desperate for Kimberly's favor. These structures often seem to be grown from coral or woven from great black kelp fronds around complex brass frames. As with the surface temples, a pool linked to Kimberly is found in the temple's center. Unlike the clear, inviting waters of the surface pools, however, the waters of these temples are clouded with sediment and totally impenetrable. Sacrifices and offerings cast into these waters go directly to the depths of the Yozi to be devoured and dissolved.

Prayers and sacrifices made in Kimberly's temples vary in effectiveness depending on which temple supplicants use. The upper temples require greater sacrifices for the same results, and prayers made there are more often ignored. Praying at the lower temples is more effective, and even small sacrifices are sometimes rewarded, but the journey to them is often dangerous and always unpleasant. Therefore, demons who can afford it give extravagant offerings to the upper temples, hoping the Yozi will give them insight into the secret paths and movements to which she is especially attuned. Those poorer and more desperate travel below.

DEMONIC FIEFDOMS

Although Malfeas and his fellow Yozis rule all in the Demon City, they do not rule directly. Instead, their demons of the Second Circle and some few demons of the Third Circle rule vast districts, neighborhoods and blocks in their name. These demonic fiefdoms range in size from vast empires spanning a significant portion of a city level to small precincts covering only a few city blocks. Most lesser demons serve or live under the rule of one of these demon overlords. In addition to the political aspects of these kingdoms (see pp. 40-44), this structure has an effect on the city itself. Demon lords command their subjects to build new roads, buildings and shrines constantly. Turf wars result in

borderlands constantly being rebuilt and redecorated. These territories usually make allowances for other powerful beings. For example, it is rare to attempt to demolish the roadways of Jacint. Most demons also do not attempt to exert their power over areas that are themselves demons, particularly in the case of demons of the Third Circle such as Munaxes or Sagarduia. This only further warps the geography, as certain streets, rivers and other landmarks are built over and around many of these Demon Princes.

Examples of both major and minor fiefdoms follow, but these are only a small fraction of the thousands of holdings that exist inside Malfeas.

THE EMPIRE OF THE GREEN SUN

One of the largest and most powerful fiefdoms in Malfeas, the Empire of the Green Sun is devoted to the glory of the Malfean sun, Ligier. Ligier himself is a frequently absent ruler, content to leave the rule of his holdings in the talons of his various souls. In truth, this fiefdom is merely a social experiment famous mostly for its policy of urban remodeling and public works. The Empire of the Green Sun represents a mere fraction of the territory the Green Sun could claim in the Demon City if he felt compelled to do so.

Ligier drew the borders and crafted his empire as a model for what he one day hopes to make of Creation. To this end, he has any homes and buildings not constructed already of black stone and brass rebuilt using those materials. He then has them reworked to remove roofs and widen windows. Finally, the very skyline is rearranged. Anything that gives shade is moved or destroyed. The final result are great expanses of brass and stone where the Green Sun shines in every room, every corner and onto every street. These cities must be constantly worked to accommodate for stone rain, damage from the Grinding Wind and other environmental hazards. To aid in the constant repairs and remodeling, Ligier and his craftsman have created several construction automata. It is a common sight to see these brass and black iron monsters moving through the street, tearing down buildings and crushing the unwary.

Despite his dream of spreading order and light to all, Ligier is not without a sense of aesthetic and artistry. He allows his craftsmen and lieutenants to customized and refine his projects as long as they do not stray from his original designs too much. His own souls are given the most leeway here and are generally allowed to mold their holdings to their own liking. For example, Gervesin, the Grieving Lord (see **The Books of Sorcery, Vol. V—The Roll of Glorious Divinity**

II, pp. 60–62, and p. 12 of this book) has statues and mosaics in the Chiaroscuran style depicting images of his dead love, Kinnojo, throughout his dukedom.

The result is a vast empire that looks the same but upon closer inspection is a place of countless variations on a central theme. Demons remold and remodel the Demon City to bring a bizarre order to the chaotic landscape. Such is the Empire of the Green Sun. If Ligier has his way, it is the future face of Creation.

THE QUARTER PRINCIPALITY

One of the mightiest demons of the Second Circle, Octavian, the Living Tower (see **Exalted**, pp. 308–309), is often called the Quarter Prince for his rulership of a full quarter of one of the levels of Malfestas, a fiefdom that dwarfs most nations in Creation. Demons usually refer to Octavian's fiefdom as the Quarter Principality to echo his title, though it is also known as the Tower Kingdom.

Unconcerned with aesthetics, Octavian exercises little influence over the construction and appearance of his holdings. The Living Tower instead cares only that his banners are hung, his subjects are subservient and his victories are glorified in the war songs that keep Adorjan at bay. Despite this detachment, his lands have

taken on a certain character of their own during his centuries of rule. First and foremost, buildings are built and reinforced to stand against the trembling earth that accompanies Octavian as he strides proudly through his domain. Places where the Living Tower frequently walks are marred by mottled white sear marks from the oil the demon's skin produces.

Another constant in the Quarter Principality is war. Every block and street bears some mark of Octavian's dream of creating the largest empire in history. Armed patrols and press gangs roam everywhere, and weaponsmiths and armorers are common. Trophies from battles are displayed prominently, and news of Octavian and his army's latest exploits are shouted for all to hear. Even the parks in his domain sport trees of twisted iron with razor-sharp leaves and are populated by the demon's hunters, the luminata (see **The Books of Sorcery, Vol. V—The Roll of Glorious Divinity II**, pp. 80–82). The kingdom itself is always pushing to annex or invade some nearby territory, often with Octavian himself leading the charge.

In the center of the Quarter Principality sits Octavian's Tower. The tower itself is formed of long strips of





brass and black iron twisted into spirals and fused into a great spire over a mile high. Octavian can often be found in his tower when he is not campaigning or in Creation. The demon's great hall is at the tower's top. Here, Octavian sits on his throne carved from the bones of a long-dead behemoth surrounded by the heads and weapons of his vanquished foes. A scroll containing an account of all the Living Tower's victories is also kept here, made from the skin of the same Solar Exalt whose head adorns his belt.

THE EQUITABLE MARKET

The Equitable Market is the domain of the demon Makarios, the Sigil's Dreamer. This vast collection of merchant houses, trading stalls and businesses all pay tribute to Makarios, who looks over all his holdings from his citadel of chrysoprase and alabaster.

In the Equitable Market, one can barter and bargain for nearly anything. If a good is not readily available, then it can usually be obtained through demons who function as procurers of various rare goods. Makarios owns most of the major businesses, while manufacturers and trade shops in the Market pay him a tax to be allowed to operate here.

Laborers, mercenaries, liquor and weapons make up a good portion of the sales here. Malfean delicacies of various sorts are also popular. Commodities such as water and artifacts are rarer and more expensive. Goods deemed illegal by Cecelyne's priests can also be found here, though both seller and buyer must tread carefully.

For some rare requests, buyers must negotiate directly with Makarios himself. The demon can give a prospective buyer nearly anything he wishes and is usually happy to do so. His price, however, is always the same and consists of surrendering one's dreams and possibly their chance at life beyond mortal death (see **The Books of Sorcery, Vol. V—The Roll of Glorious Divinity II**, pp. 65–67). The demon has little interest in trading directly with other demons unless they have something truly exceptional to offer.

The Equitable Market is like a mortal market on serious drugs. Strange demons offer even stranger goods. Mercenaries who appear to have stepped right out of a nightmare offer their swords, talons or whatever to the highest bidder. Slaves and beasts of burden are sold for labor, food or both. In truth, much of what is offered is rather mundane to a native, and most wise visitors hire guides to keep from getting conned into buying fanciful junk. Despite the prevalence of common goods in much of the market, there are strange wonders truly

unseen in Creation to be had for one wise enough to find and rich enough to afford them.

Makarios worries little about claiming or holding his territory. He long ago put a self-sustaining system in place in the market and is happy to let it run while he concentrates on trading with mortals in Creation. The merchants who work for him or with his blessing know that the demon can destroy their fortunes and seduce away their customers with little effort. Those rare few who try to disrupt Makarios's territory, the demon either quietly buys out or turns over to Cecelyne's enforcers for violating the countless contracts and trade agreements the Sigil's Dreamer holds.

THE BISHOPRIC OF UNENDING TORPIDITY

This small holding is mostly notable for its owner and purpose. Ruled by the demon of the Second Circle Lucien, the Guardian of Sleep (see **The Books of Sorcery Vol. V—The Roll of Glorious Divinity II**, pages 64–65), it is a city-state located on one of the Demon City's older levels. As Lucien is often away on his eternal mission to keep the Yozi Sacheverell asleep by quashing upheaval and disloyalty, the fiefdom is administrated mostly by priests and scholars of Cecelyne. Still, Lucien returns often to refresh and prepare himself for his next task.

To aid Lucien, those in the Bishopric are devoted to the study of two concepts: sleep and rebellion. Related concepts such as dreams, death, betrayal and loyalty are also studied. The results of all these studies are recorded in the hundreds of libraries that exist all across the Bishopric. It is said that Lucien's libraries are one of the greatest repositories of knowledge on these topics, with their lore limited only by those things Lucien's own master, Orabilis, forbids. Many sorcerers with knowledge of the Bishopric seek to summon its demons for counsel and assistance on these matters.

Unlike nearly every other place in Malfeas, visitors often describe the Bishopric of Unending Torpidity as "sleepy." Most demons who live in the Bishopric work sedentary jobs as scribes and scholars. Others work to support the writings and research of these demons. The buildings in this area are modest and unlike many places in Malfeas, and the streets are generally quiet to better facilitate the study of slumber. Because of the subdued nature of the Bishopric, Adorjan comes here more frequently than most other places in the Demon City, though most of the residents have built shelters and airtight hiding spots to protect themselves. Despite the general lack of clamor, music is not uncommon,



and the dancing of Lucien's progeny the gilmyne (see **The Books of Sorcery, Vol. V—The Roll of Glorious Divinity II**, pp. 79–80) serves to entertain residents and visitors alike.

The heart of the Bishopric of Unending Torpidity is Lucien's own monastic retreat, where he is attended by many lesser demons. At the heart of the modest complex of black sandstone and brass is an inner chamber accessible only by Lucien or beings with a similar skill at shapeshifting. Here, Lucien keeps two books. The first is a book linked to every volume in the Bishopric of Unending Torpidity's library. Using this book, the Guardian of Sleep can reference any study or treatise with a thought and a turn of the page. The second book is the demon's ledger. This book contains a record of all the demon's deeds and all the tasks he must undertake to continue his mission. New assignments magically appear as others are completed and the names of those whose actions might rouse Sacheverell are listed. Without this item, Lucien would be hard pressed to effectively continue his mission.

THE DOMINION OF THE SEVEN SORROWS

One of the few powerful oligarchies in the Demon City, the Dominion of the Seven Sorrows is a fiefdom encompassing roughly one tenth of the outer level of Malfeas. In an uncharacteristic show of unity and centralization, all the rulers of this kingdom are the component souls of a single demon of the Third Circle. That demon is Demirkol, the Wayward Child, Seventh soul of Cytherea. Like his mother and mistress, Demirkol hides in the unknown spaces of Malfeas and has not been seen publicly in Creation or the Demon City since the First Age. Before the demon went into seclusion, he gave instructions to each of his souls. These instructions, when followed, would allow each of the seven souls to carry out a grand plan of Demirkol's own devising. The resulting conquest and administration of the Dominion of the Seven Sorrows is only the first phase of the plan.

The kingdom gets its name from its seven rulers and souls of Demirkol, commonly called the Sorrows. It is a fantastic kingdom of white brass with streets of black basalt. Shrines to Demirkol and Cytherea have been placed at precise locations throughout the Dominion, a project overseen by some of the greatest geomancers in Malfeas. Many of these shrines bear differing images of the Wayward Child and the Mother of All, each taken from a different legend or tale about them. Other buildings are similar to those found elsewhere in Malfeas, save that the design of everything from the grandest palace

to the lowliest shack must be vetted by the Dominion's personal geomancers. To construct a building without this approval carries harsh punishments and can result in a loss of rank and status.

This custom gives the whole Dominion of the Seven Sorrows a certain uniformity of appearance that is hard to put into words. This strange uniformity hints at a pattern hard to illustrate to others. And this pattern suggests a plan that cannot quite be comprehended. All those who look long at the Dominion of the Seven Sorrows feels this way, even its own rulers. These feelings serve only to reinforce the understanding that the whole kingdom and the actions of all inside it are part of Demirkol's grand scheme.

Demons birthed by the seven souls of Demirkol make up the majority of the population, and the whole populace works both in Malfeas and in Creation according to a grand plan of which each of its rulers knows one part. Demirkol's Warden soul—Isary, the Four-Helmed General—leads military operations, builds armies and organizes the fiefdom's defenses. At the same time, Demirkol's Messenger soul—Nizar, the Unending Glance—makes alliances and deals with various cults and sorcerers in Creation. The result of these actions combines to execute a plan so intricate that each soul cannot fully comprehend its whole. Instead, they trust in the wisdom of their master and continue to execute his will.

THE TWELVE POINTS

So named for being the intersection of a dozen major streets, the Twelve Points is a small fiefdom encompassing several blocks in every direction. A three-demon council rules the area, consisting of the heads of the most powerful gangs in the area. The fiefdom itself is contained within one of the Quarter Principality's slums. All within pay Octavian homage, but the gangs rule in local matters.

The gangs in and around the Twelve Points are a good sampling of those found throughout the streets of Malfeas. Most of its members are First Circle demons, though a few weaker Second Circle demons sometimes form gangs of their progeny and servants. They are twisted, colorful and violent. They are also usually not very deep thinkers, which is why they are ruling city blocks instead of cities. Those who are more intelligent are careful to avoid taking more territory than they can defend. Still, most of the bigger gangs in the Twelve Points also have chapters in other parts of the Quarter Principality or even elsewhere in the Demon City.



SO WHAT'S THE BIG IDEA?

Demirkol's plan is as simple in purpose as it is complex in execution. Escape.

Simply put, Demirkol is working under the inspiration of Cytherea to devise a way to break out of the Yozi's prison and allow the Mother of All to return to Creation. Like all good mothers, Cytherea knows the children of Creation are lost without their mother, and she has been planning a return to Creation since her imprisonment. Many Yozis and demons of the Third Circle have divined this much.

So what exactly is the big plan?

Nobody knows. It is certain that it involves geomancy, the flow of Essence and the cooperation of cults and summoners in Creation working with demons in Malfeas. The exact details, however, are unknown.

Well, that's not entirely true. Cytherea knows, and Demirkol has a decent idea, but neither is talking. And even if he is found, the Wayward Child has come to realize recently that his understanding of the Yozi's escape plan is limited. He is beginning to suspect that the actions of all the Mother of All's component souls are part of it and that his contributions are not as special as he once thought. Still, despite this blow to his rather sizable ego, the demon allows his souls to continue to work in hopes that he and his children will be able to play unfettered in the streets of Creation one day soon.

Storytellers planning on using this plan as part of their **Exalted** games should tailor the specifics of Demirkol's escape plan to their needs. The plan might involve a grand ritual that can be foiled by timely intervention in a single session, or it could be a series of stories set in Creation and Malfeas to prevent several necessary events from occurring. In any case, the grand plan of a Demon Prince is not something to do away with lightly. Any Exalted attempting to foil these plans will meet with great resistance, and simply trying to understand the details of the plan itself by mere observation and detection would tax the powers of many Chosen.

Also, though two of Demirkol's souls are described in the entry for the Dominion of Seven Sorrows, the other five are left up to individual Storytellers to design. Storytellers who wish to use the Dominion in their games are encouraged to make the other five souls interesting foils and adversaries for their players' characters. The remaining souls not yet named are Demirkol's Defining, Indulgent, Expressive, Reflective and Wisdom souls.

The effect on Cytherea's plans of the Ebon Dragon's Reclamation are left up to individual Storytellers as well. It is possible that Cytherea is counting on the plots and ploys of the Shadow of All Things to enable her own. It is also possible that the Ebon Dragon's plans are spoiling her own or that they simply don't matter.

The ruling council of the Twelve Points is called the Murder. Membership is determined by combat. The leader of any gang can challenge any member of the Murder, though regular gang members must first rise to lead their own gang before they can challenge. Gang members are allowed to use champions instead, though few do since it tends to give the champions ideas about overthrowing the leader. The Murder sets general policy, decides how to answer all edicts of Octavian that affect the Twelve Points and hears applications for the creation of new gangs.

The current Murder in Twelve Points consists of the demons Garibald, Pudukhepa and Safrax. Garibald is the leader of the Sons of the Yozis (often called just "the Sons"), an all-erymanthus gang that believes that their kind are the purest descendants of the Yozis in

all First Circle demonkind. He is recognizable by the starmetal smashfist he uses in battle, a trophy taken from a careless sorcerer long ago. His gang's members wear black armbands emblazoned with a green sun to identify themselves. Pudukhepa is an anuhle who leads the Brass Talons. The Brass Talons are a mostly female demon gang that concentrates on running profitable rackets and businesses in the Twelve Points. Pudukhepa herself is a black and green demon spider who adorns the tips of her eight legs with sharpened brass points. Safrax is a tomescu demon who leads the Black Stone Assassins. The Black Stone Assassins make up an eclectic collection of various demons interested in holding power in Malfeas while expanding mortal cults in Creation. Safrax is rumored to be one of the rare tomescu who do not scream in agonized recogni-



tion of fate (see **The Books of Sorcery Vol. V—The Roll of Glorious Divinity II**, page 89). Whether this is true or a careful ploy crafted by the tomesu to sow fear and grow his legend is unknown. What is known is that the demon is a terror in combat, often able to defeat multiple challengers at once.

In addition to the Sons of the Yozis, the Brass Talons and the Black Stone Assassins, many other gangs exist in the fiefdom. Most are affiliated with one of the ruling gangs, serving as soldiers in turf wars, messengers and allies when a grand meeting of all the gangs is called. These meetings are called a row, partially because they often break out into massive brawls.

The Twelve Points itself looks much like any other slum from a distance. Upon closer inspection, one can see the symbols of various gangs stamped, burned or carved on various blocks and buildings. Gangs roam the streets collecting tribute and looking for trespassers. When Octavian calls for more troops, these gangs can often be seen pressing nonmembers into service so that they can keep their members at home. Gangs

proudly display their colors and symbols on hideouts and businesses, and Octavian's other demons usually leave well enough alone as long as the Twelve Points obeys the Living Tower's edicts.

BEGGARS' RIFTS

Not so much a static kingdom as a reoccurring idea that refuses to die, Beggars' Rifts are coalitions of lesser demons who have gathered together for mutual protection. Despite their inhuman nature, demons sometimes display a very human desire for freedom and the company of peers. Beggars' Rifts are the result of these desires. Appearing almost exclusively in one of the poorer areas of Malfeas, these alliances of various First Circle demons and the weakest demons of the Second Circle grab whatever unwanted territory they can to build and rule. The results are jagged, uneven holdings in dead zones and areas recently devastated.

Beggars' Rifts are usually ruled by a council of the strongest or most cunning demons in the territory. These are also usually the demons whose idea it was to attempt to form a fiefdom in the first place. These demons direct attempts to defend the territory, annex



more land and improve the quality of life for the demons who live there. Beggars' Rifts usually cover territory equal only to a small town in Creation, though some rare exceptions can cover entire slums and large ruins. The Rifts tend to attract demons that fled their masters and even the occasional non-demon allowed to dwell in Malfeas.

In the end, these makeshift kingdoms are always doomed to fall. Demons turn on each other and sell out their fellow citizens for wealth and position in a more powerful fiefdom. Powerful demons finally take notice and easily crush and conquer them. Even if those two outcomes can be avoided, the citizens of Beggars' Rifts are eventually marked as dissidents and rebels and made examples of by the servants of Cecelyne or other powerful Yozi. It is even theorized by some that these rebellious collections of the disenfranchised are usually started by agents of the Yozi to help root out the disloyal. Whatever the reason, Beggars' Rifts keep reappearing in the poor and unwanted areas of Malfeas only to be destroyed once those in power take notice.

A THOUSAND AND ONE PETTY KINGDOMS

While this section gives examples of demonic fiefdoms large and small, it is far from an exhaustive list. It is not even a complete list of all the types of government and holdings that exist in the Demon City. Storytellers are encouraged to create their own fiefdoms to use in their games. Most of these fiefdoms would be ruled by powerful Second Circle demons.

The more powerful demons of the Third Circle usually are Malfeas' major landmarks, phenomena or even kingdoms themselves. Therefore, they prefer to direct others to rule in their stead. In cases where they do carve out territory, it is for some greater purpose, such as Ligier's Empire of the Green Sun.

Weaker Second Circle demons and virtually all First Circle demons are simply not strong enough to rule. They might carve out a city block or two as their turf, but they can hold it only as long as a demon such as Octavian doesn't take notice. Exceptions exist, such as the Beggars' Rifts, but they are usually short-lived, and their rulers suffer greatly after they fall.

Fiefdoms also need some form of strong rulership and defenses. Like young children, demons crave structure or at least need it to keep from running amok. Tyrants and despots are the rule here, but there are always exceptions. One thing that must exist are soldiers, magics and warbeasts to protect and expand the territory. These forces might be drilled regiments

or wild mobs of berserkers, but all kingdoms must have some military might.

All demon kingdoms come into being for the same reason: power and glory. Either to grow the powerful or empower the less formidable, fiefdoms exist in the Demon City to give armies, territory and Essence to those who rule. For example, Octavian does not rule a quarter of one level of Malfeas because he wishes to spread his great wisdom and improve living conditions. He does it because he wishes all to know he is among the strongest. Sure, many demons do improve the conditions of those who serve them, and some few even convince themselves they're doing it for some noble purpose. In the end, though, it's all about the power and glory.

Other than those general guidelines, the green-black sky of an inside-out Yozi is the limit. It is even possible for players' characters who gain citizenship in Malfeas to attempt to carve out their own little kingdoms, though these would-be conquerors will find this far more challenging and dangerous than ruling over a township in Creation. As a rule, the denizens of Malfeas sometimes accept outsiders, but they rarely embrace them as rulers.

THE WAY OF THE INFERNAL FIST

Not quite fiefdom, not quite temple, but greater than a mere single building are the fighting academies of Malfeas. These complexes of various buildings linked together and often surrounded by high walls serve to train the worthy and the faithful in the twisted fighting arts taught in the Demon City. Worthy students accepted into an academy learn infernal martial arts and various armed fighting styles. Unworthy students are either rejected, accepted only to be used for sparring practice and manual labor or killed outright. The exact fate of a prospective student depends on her status in Malfeas, the attitude of the academy's head and the prospect's behavior.

Most fighting academies have several masters working together to train several groups of students. All schools teach mastery of at least one martial art, though many of the larger academies teach multiple styles, infernal and otherwise. The demons and other warriors trained at these academies often trade and steal secrets from martial artists in Malfeas, Creation, the Underworld and even Yu-Shan. The greatest of the fighting academies of Malfeas have vast libraries of scrolls and treatises locked away in their inner sanctums.



The headmaster of each academy is often called the Grandmaster of the Green Sun Kingdom. He advises the other masters and teaches only the most advanced students. Many Grandmasters are Exalted akuma or powerful demons of the Second Circle. Many have mastered a number of martial arts styles, not all of which they necessarily teach most students. These individuals are terrifying combatants, able to defeat scores of lesser opponents without breaking a sweat and usually capable of besting all the other masters in the academy.

Below each Grandmaster of the Green Sun Kingdom are the academy's lesser masters. These individuals are often given elaborate titles styled after substances common to Malfeas. Thus, a school might have a Master of Twisted Brass or a Master of Black Stone. Masters are also sometimes named after particular creatures or landmarks. Some instructors also take titles that hint at their fighting styles or what demon of the Third Circle or Yozi they serve. The lesser masters instruct the majority of the students, answer most challenges from visiting fighters and see to the running of the academies. These masters vary in skill and ability. Some are merely adequate bullies kept around to scare away the weak willed. Others are true masters of the fighting arts who rival their schools' Grandmasters.

Below the masters are students of various ranks. Some schools have formal ranks for their students, while others eschew such titles. In either case, most at these schools are aware of who are the toughest fighters and who are weak links in the classes. Many demons form fighting clubs within the school. They train together and occasionally confront and deal with troublesome new arrivals. The masters of most academies do nothing to discourage this activity, for it roots out the weak.

In some schools, the title of master is gender neutral. In others, female masters are called mistresses. A few schools adopt family titles instead of ranks of mastery. This practice is relatively rare, though, as most academies feel that doing so creates bonds of kinship that can soften the ruthless aggression required to master most infernal martial arts.

Fighting academies are scattered throughout Malfeas. Some are even built in secret locations and will teach only those who can discover them. Some are dedicated to teaching only the followers of a particular demon or Yozi. Others teach anyone who can pass their tests or pay their fees. Rivalries between the various schools are intense, and when students from two schools meet, violence and bloodshed often follow.

THE TEN SHADOWS ACADEMY

Individuals cannot find the Ten Shadows Academy by following a map or asking the demons of Malfeas for directions. In order to locate this school of the fighting arts, one must wait until the Ebon Dragon flies through the skies of the Demon City. As the Shadow of All Things passes overhead, the light of Ligier dims, and for Malfeas briefly knows darkness. It is only during this time that one can see and enter the Ten Shadows Academy. At all other times, the school is simply impossible to find to all save powerful servants of the Ebon Dragon himself. Without the aid of the Ebon Dragon, only the most perceptive seekers can find the Ten Shadows Academy.

Joining the school is by invitation only, and nearly all the students here are in the service of the Ebon Dragon or one of his subordinates. A number of the Ebon Dragon's honor guard of Infernal Exalted study here, learning the secrets of the school so they can better serve their master's plans. The rare students who do not serve the Shadow of All Things showed great skill and perception in locating the academy and passing whatever tests its masters put before them.

The Ten Shadows Academy teaches various martial arts, from conventional fighting forms to secret styles stolen from Creation. The philosophy of the schools is focused on what the masters here call the Ten Shadows. These 10 principles and concepts give the academy its name and form the core of its curriculum. Arts that do not draw from these tenets cannot be taught in the dark chambers of the Ten Shadows Academy. The forces that mask the school from Ligier's light simply will not allow such things. The Ten Shadows are assassination, obfuscation, misdirection, interrogation, seduction, betrayal, deception, secrecy, persistence and the poisoning of the spirit.

Each of the school's 10 masters is considered to personify at least one of the Ten Shadows. The school's grandmaster embodies them all and bears the title of the Eleventh Shadow. The current Eleventh Shadow is Kalliyen, demon of the Second Circle and faithful servant of the Ebon Dragon. Kalliyen has served as grandmaster for 300 years and has survived many assassination attempts and challenges. Kalliyen often appears as a half-solid shadow with four mouths and 17 eyes that constantly shift and flow. He favors the material form of stocky middle-aged man who appears to be made entirely of jet and black iron.

Physically, the Ten Shadows Academy is a complex with 10 dojos surrounding a central shrine. The large



shrine hosts a towering carving of the Ebon Dragon, where masters and students offer daily prayers to the Yozi. Each dojo is the domain one of the school's masters, while the Eleventh Shadow teaches a few elite students in the courtyard of the central shrine. All the buildings in the Ten Shadows Academy are made of black marble and black ash wood imported from Creation's shadowlands. It is always dark here, and everything outside the school appears as an empty abyss except during those times when the Ebon Dragon blocks the light of Ligier. During this period, the school appears in the streets of Malfeas, and the Demon City can be seen from within the academy's grounds. The school always appears in a different place each time, vanishing into shadow once more as the Ebon Dragon passes.

SUNTARANKAL, THE CRUCIBLE OF BRASS AND IRON

*DEMON OF THE THIRD CIRCLE,
FIFTEENTH SOUL OF MALFEAS*

The demon Suntarankal is among the largest and most famed marital arts academies in Malfeas. This soul of Malfeas is one of the greatest martial artists in existence, and now trapped with his master, he attempts to pass on a fraction of the fighting lore he has absorbed over the millennia. Those seeking to learn at Suntarankal must endure the demon's callous nature and ruthless lessons, but the worthy can master fighting arts thought lost long ago.

The Crucible of Brass and Iron is a vast complex covering miles of the Demon City. It sits in a deep basin near the forest of Hrotsvitha. Brass and iron bolted to Malfeas itself form barricades that follow the slope of the basin to form a great bowl-like outer wall. Living quarters, dojos, shrines and open courtyards paved with bone spiral out to the sloped walls, all built around a great pagoda in the center of the school. The pagoda has seven levels, and within each level are seven rooms, forming the fabled Forty-Nine Chambers. It is here that Suntarankal tests the faithful and crushes the unworthy.

Acceptance into the academy is actually quite easy. Suntarankal opens his gates to all who wish to learn the fighting arts. Even slaves may come to train, assuming they can elude their masters. Few applicants are turned away, and smiling demon statues stand at the gates of the academy with arms open in greeting. Once accepted, however, the training is brutal. Many students are injured, crippled or destroyed every year. The Crucible's demons and instructors devise hellish regimens of physical training. Full-contact sparring

without any protection or medical treatment for the injured is a common method of instruction. Training typically lasts seven years, though particularly skilled fighters can sometimes finish sooner. Unsurprisingly, many students find they cannot hack the training. Unfortunately, once a student signs the rolls of the Crucible of Brass and Iron, she cannot leave without the permission of the school. The Crucible of Brass and Iron rarely gives such permission, preferring to keep poor students around to serve as fodder to train the more promising ones and as lessons about the cost of failure. When he does occasionally allow a student to leave his walls, it is always as part of some greater scheme or plan. There is no set curriculum at the school, and students study form after form, art after art until Suntarankal and his instructors declare one's studies complete. The exact completion criteria are unknown, though no student ever leaves the school without having mastered at least one of the demon's infernal arts.

Once a student of Suntarankal completes his training, he is taken to the Forty-Nine Chambers for his final test. Here, the Crucible of Brass and Iron tests the student, leading him on a journey that takes him through each chamber in whatever order the demon deems appropriate. Suntarankal does not actively try to slay his students—virtually no one would survive if he did—because the demon wants powerful fighters to spread the glory of his martial arts. Yet walls of living razors, towering demon gladiators, scything blades of red-hot iron and other such obstacles still kill or cripple many. Those who survive are branded with the sign of Suntarankal to show that they have passed his trials and learned his arts. The brand, depicting an eye surrounded by 49 spines, quickly fades but becomes noticeable again whenever the student uses the martial arts he learned at the school.

When Suntarankal is summoned to Creation, it is almost always to reveal some lost secret of the martial arts or fight some great foe in a duel. While serving in this manner, the Crucible of Brass and Iron often displays wondrous powers and hints strongly that the summoner could learn much more in Malfeas. Those who agree are taken back to Malfeas and put through an exceptionally brutal training regimen that will teach the promised skills but is also more likely to kill or break the student. When he takes a mortal guise to personally instruct or to fight, Suntarankal prefers the classic form of the old wizened master. In this form, his brass-colored eyes shine with malevolent glee, and his smile seems both pleasant and sadistic. In this form or

any other, the demon is an unparalleled martial artist. He can defeat whole schools of Exalted fighters single-handedly and often employs no magic or weapons to accomplish this feat. If confronting a particularly powerful foe, he sometimes calls his staff of black ironwood to his hand and uses it to rain bone-shattering blows down upon his opponent.

THE SEWERS OF MALFEAS

Underneath the sprawling domains of Malfeas, between the surface streets and the hungry Yozi sea of Kimberly, lie the sewers. A labyrinth of virtually endless tunnels, drainage pools and lines carries the city's excrement, trash and other unwanted byproducts down from the homes and streets. These sewers collide with long-buried areas of the Demon City to form a vast underground. Ancient ruins cross with waste tunnels, and buried streets overlap with drainage pits. The refuse and sewage that finds its way here is picked through, consumed or recycled by this area's subterranean dwellers. Those things too useless or fouled that remain ultimately flow down into the acidic depths of Kimberly, disappearing into her vastness. It does not please the Yozi to be used in this fashion, but she rarely

lashes out against this treatment unless it is taken to excess. (Those who dwell near her take special care to prevent this from happening.)

Most of the creatures that live in the sewers are squatters and carrion-eaters. Vermin range from rat- and insect-like creatures to the great sewer beasts that delight in the occasional fresh kill provided by the unwary. Many of the demons and other creatures that exist in this way have only the most basic level of awareness. They are mindless monsters that feed on the foul refuse of Malfeas. Some creatures are more intelligent and ultimately less fortunate. Fully aware of their parasitic existence, they nevertheless survive on all manner of things that greater beings expel. These lesser demons labor in vain to curry the favor and notice of those above, only to find themselves back feeding on half-digested sludge and adorning their makeshift dwellings with castoffs. In many cases, these demons turn on each other. The strongest torment the weak to help them forget all those above them more blessed, and forgotten beasts that have spawned in the fetid darkness prey on the foolish and unprepared.

Besides these pathetic creatures, the sewers are often home to various demons of Kimberly.





These creatures spring from the liquid womb of the Sea That Marched Against the Flame to push upward into Malfeas and beyond, where they can work for their mistress's freedom. Many form lakes, pools and other bodies of green-black water around Malfeas. Some of the least cunning or weakest of Kimberly's servants stay below, too weak to travel farther or too simple to navigate the maze of tunnels and drains any farther. Swarms of lesser demonic spawn live in the lowest sewers. They seize those who venture too close to their mistress and feed them to her restless waters as yet another way to keep her satisfied. Those who have been changed by the demon Erembour are also found here, lurking in the shadowy depths away from the light they can no longer tolerate.

Life in the sewers is as dangerous as it is unpleasant. In addition to the aforementioned hungry beasts, demonic swarms and murderous squatters, the sewers themselves present terrible hazards. Chief among these hazards is disease and the ebb and flow of the sewers themselves.

PLAGUES OF MALFEAS

No Malfean diseases are found naturally in Creation, though certain diseases in Creation (such as rabies, cholera and so on) have Malfean equivalents. Most of the dwellers of the sewers and slums in Malfeas have developed at least some immunity to these common ailments, and the apothecaries and physicians of Malfeas can provide cures to the wealthy. Infected demons can carry Malfean-equivalent plagues to Creation where they could run rampant or even mutate into entirely new diseases. These Malfean equivalents are subtly different from their terrestrial counterparts and are harder for mortal physicians to treat and mortals to resist (adding two to the Morbidity, Treated Morbidity and Difficulty to Treat of such diseases). Exalted healing Charms and mystical cures work against such equivalent diseases as normal.

Certain foul places in the Yozis' prison, however, give rise to afflictions so exotic and terrible that even demons must concern themselves. These diseases range from incessant nuisances to contagious killers. None of these diseases are threats to the Yozis themselves, so they do nothing to prevent plagues from coming into being or spreading. Few Malfean diseases are powerful enough to affect Third Circle demons, and most Second Circle demons have the resistance or resources to stave off illness. Yet some Second Circle and First Circle demons (and most human slaves) must worry about catching one of these ailments. Exalted are as immune

to most of these ailments as they are to Creation-based diseases, though even the Chosen might fall victim to some of the more exotic diseases of Malfeas.

Two samples of uniquely Malfean diseases are described here. Storytellers can use them as described or as a basis for developing their own strange and terrible afflictions.

SUPPLICANT SYNDROME

Virulence: 2 **Difficulty to Treat:** 3

Morbidity: 4 **Treated Morbidity:** 2

Symptoms: Stiffness and soreness in the joints. This stiffness increases until shortly before the final phase, in which the limbs lose all strength and go completely slack. Then, the victim's limbs buckle. Moments later, the stiffness returns one final time to lock the limbs in place, often leaving the victim frozen in a prostrate position until they die from suffocation or starvation. **Duration:** The initial symptoms begin within about an hour. After a day, a victim can barely walk; within three, he collapses. The final hardening of the joints occurs roughly a minute afterward and takes full effect within a quarter hour.

Vector: This disease forms in the remains of castoff temples and ruined house shrines in the underground. Traveler's spending time in these befouled holy sites risk infection.

Treatment: Prayers captured in brass bulbs in an unsullied temple, heated and applied directly to the flesh can cure this ailment. Wrapping the joints in prayer strips soaked in sacramental spirits can also be effective.

THE JINGLING POX

Virulence: 3 **Difficulty to Treat:** 2

Morbidity: 3 **Treated Morbidity:** 1

Symptoms: An egg mass is implanted somewhere under the victim's skin which then hatches into a horde of larvae. These larvae spread out under the skin and form cocoons. These cocoons harden to protect the larvae and produce a bell-like sound when the victim moves. After the larvae grow into their adult form, they painfully burst forth and fly off. The disease is rarely fatal but often leaves the victim badly scarred and possibly insane from weeks of living with the constant jingling of tiny bells and the feeling of being host to a demonic swarm.

Duration: The gestation period of the swarm is 39 days.

Vector: Those who find themselves spending too long in filth and excrement where such swarms feed risk implantation. This disease is particularly common among those who sleep in such areas, as immobile hosts are easier to infect.



Treatment: Cutting and burning are the most reliable method. Most poisons will kill the swarm, though the host will also have to resist the effects of such toxins. Water from Kimberly destroys the infection, though it could kill the victim too.

OTHER DANGERS OF THE SEWERS

In addition to disease, the shifting sewer pipes, drains and pools create many dangers. As the city above shifts, grows and rearranges, the sewers do the same to compensate. Tunnels that were closed off might suddenly be flooded with excrement and sludgy liquid waste. A shallow drain pool might slide downward to deposit its contents directly into Kimberly. These shifts and upheavals cause lesser demons and sewer creatures to suddenly migrate in a panicked stampede. Even if the immediate area is safe, that is no guarantee that the entrances above are the same. Many who venture into the sewers for whatever purpose do not exit the same place they entered, if they exit at all.

It is because of all of these dangers that most avoid the sewers if at all possible. Those wise enough to know the risks but who must travel there hire guides. Commonly known as meddardes, these guides are lesser demons and other sentient creatures who scrape out a living helping others navigate the sewer's stinking maze of tunnels and drains. Most of these guides have an innate sense of the sewer's shifting layout that (coupled with centuries of experience) allow them to guide others through in relative safety. Many gallmau serve in this capacity, using their light to guide travelers in the dark places underground. Other meddardes have particular artifacts, Charms or innate abilities that allow them to travel safely. No meddardes' abilities are perfect, though the chance of successfully navigating the sewers is greatly increased by their presence. Since such trips are rarely necessary by most who live in or visit Malfeas, meddardes of any type are rare, and finding one often requires contacting the priests of Kimberly's few surface temples, who often employ these individuals to guide pilgrims and convey messages. Some followers of the Sea That Marched Against the Flame even work as meddardes themselves to generate extra income and to better keep their mistress and her servants informed of the comings and goings of those who travel the places between Malfeas' metropolises and Kimberly's seas.

THE OLD MINISTRY OF RECORDS

This half-submerged ruin is the remains of the original Ministry of Records building (see pp. 81-82). The building collapsed millennia ago along with the

level of Hell on which it rested. It now rests with its lower levels underwater and its top levels collapsed on top of one another. Although most of the records and documents contained within were transferred before the building's destruction, not everything was saved. Some of the records have long since dissolved into the waters of Kimberly that flow around the lower half of the ruins. Other records remain, slowly decaying and mostly buried under tons of black stone.

Demon archeologists from the Ministry of Records can often be found working in these ruins, trying to find and retrieve some important piece of information. These demons are usually focused on their work and the dangers around them and rarely bother other explorers unless they discover something of value.

Entrance into the ruins is made difficult by the lack of windows in the original building. Those unable to squeeze between the cracks in now-shattered walls have two options. They must either be mighty enough to physically clear the tons of rubble to get to the guts of the building or be able to survive diving into the waters of Kimberly to swim in through the lower levels. The demons working here use a mix of both methods, assisted by machines and devices that allow them to move stone and survive briefly in Kimberly's waters.

KIMBERLY, THE SEA THAT MARCHED AGAINST THE FLAME

Below the cities formed from Malfeas' stretched and twisted ribs sleeps the endless sea of Kimberly. An acid ocean with no bottom, Kimberly slumbers under her brother's restless form as a churning and tempestuous collection of solvent and marine life. She is both helper and outcast among her kind, willing to give aid to her siblings in time of need but forever distant and unwilling to fully commit to any of their schemes. It was Kimberly's akuma who ferried the stolen Exaltations from the Deathlords to the Yozis in Malfeas, but she herself partook of none of this bounty. It is her demons who help shape and mold many structures of Malfeas, but few of them live on its surface. From her watery womb came the great Demon-Blooded Lintha, who rose to greatness and fell to near extinction before the gods and their Exalted servants ruled.

Once a sea without end, Kimberly both gave and took life as she wished. She pushed against the fires of Creation lest they run rampant and consume all, and she washed away the spark of life as it pleased her. With the defeat of the Primordials, she was banished along with her fellow Yozis. Cast into Malfeas just as

the Yozi was turned inside out and reshaped into a prison for his kind, Kimberly flowed into her brother's fresh wounds. She burned and ate away at his insides as she passed to finally pool in his depths. Even today, some of the oldest areas of the Demon City still show where her waters smoothed and eroded the city's walls and buildings, and ancient waterways carry some of her more agreeable children. She pools beneath much of the city and wells up to border Szoreny.

Kimberly is both toxic and acidic. Those few who can weather the corrosive effects of her seas often find themselves poisoned by even a small mouthful of her waters. No mortal-made boat can travel her waves without melting and rotting beneath its captain's feet. Her depths hide creatures spawned from the Yozi herself. These monsters are infernal reflections of the worst and most ravenous marine life. Demonic siaka the size of small islands, great ever-hungry sea worms and schools of marrow-eating fish await any who fall into her vastness. And if these things were not all horrible enough, Kimberly can lash out directly, striking with great tendrils of green-black water that can crush warships and melt flesh.

Not all things within the Yozi are terrible, however. Great sunken treasures rest upon coral fields and float wrapped in crystalline kelp. Great weapons of the final battles of the Exalted and Primordials or artifacts from the ruins of Lintha cities cast down into her from this time may still rest within her. Those trying to retrieve such a treasure, however, would confront all the terrors described thus far and would most certainly perish. It is within Kimberly's power to give treasure-seekers safe passage, but she has no reason to do so. Only a promise of freedom or a gift at least equal to the treasures sought would hope to placate her enough to receive this boon. Even before her incarceration Kimberly was more often the taker of things than a gift-giver, and

her long imprisonment has only intensified this aspect of her nature.

KIMBERLY'S WATERS

The exact effects of Kimberly's waters depend on where and how a character interacts with them. Falling into Kimberly's surface waters is less harmful than being plunged into the Yozi's acidic depths, though neither is pleasant. Swallowing the water is also very dangerous, with the murky depths of the deepest sea being the most poisonous. The following table shows the various effects of exposure to the Sea That Marched Against the Flame.

Storytellers should note that any character ingesting Kimberly's waters must resist both their corrosive and toxic effects. In these cases, the environmental effects are equivalent to a splash of water and the poison effects are dependent on the water's source, though drinking large quantities might increase the corrosive effect. Also note that the waters of Kimberly found in the sewer levels of Malfeas count as surface waters.

Certain individuals and demons with knowledge of the proper distillation techniques and with the proper equipment can create a concentrated toxin from Kimberly's waters that function in the same manner as Yozi venom (see *Exalted*, p. 130). This poison is a popular tool of assassination within Malfeas, and a gift of water sufficient to manufacture it is a common request by those praying and sacrificing to the Yozi.

GNIMERSALT, THE MOUTHLESS EATER OF ALL

*DEMON OF THE THIRD CIRCLE,
ELEVENTH SOUL OF KIMBERLY*

In the depths of the Malfean sewers can be found Gnimersalt, the Mouthless Eater of All. One of Kimberly's component souls, Gnimersalt represents the Yozi's endless hunger and baser desires. He is not his mother's favorite or most beautiful, but he serves his

POISON EFFECTS

Name	Damage	Toxicity	Tolerance	Penalty
Kimberly (surface waters)	5L	3	-/-	-3
Kimberly (depths)	7L	4	-/-	-4

ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

Name	Damage	Trauma
Kimberly (splash of water)	3L	3
Kimberly (surface waters)	5L	5
Kimberly (depths)	5A	4L



Malfeas

purpose as a go-between for her and much of Malfeas. Gnimersalt's normal form is that of a yellow-white grub-like creature with no visible eyes, mouth or limbs. He easily dwarfs in size the largest whales and many buildings. He wallows half submerged in his great pit in the sewers. Into this pit flows the waste of several of Malfeas' component levels, as well as offerings brought to him by his attendant demons.

Here, the Mouthless Eater of All is ever awake and hungry, absorbing anything he touches. He grows constantly as he consumes all of the filth, excrement and waste that even demons cannot stomach. From this refuse he eats the very stories and secrets that are still attached to these things, learning much about the city above. Gnimersalt expels nothing, consuming all he touches with equal relish and appetite. In this way, he prevents the unwanted from reaching his mother's waters or any of her discerning souls but also consumes many things that might be of use.

His growth is kept in check only by his attendants, lesser demons who carve vast chunks of flesh from his unfeeling hide using special brass blades the demon does not absorb. This meat is then taken to the surface to be sold in the markets and butcher shops above. The flesh of Gnimersalt is considered a rare delicacy among the demon elite and is rumored to provide the eater with rare insight into finding things discarded and

being some protection against poisonings. The truth of these claims is unknown, though many of the more perverse gourmands in Malfeas enjoy the meat purely for the delicious irony of taking tasty sustenance from something fed by their prison's foulness. It is known that the demon consumes the thoughts and dreams both of those he feeds upon and those who venture too close to him. Exalted and most Essence-users can resist having thoughts sucked from their heads simply by standing in Gnimersalt's presence, but even such beings risk this fate if they touch the demon's hungry flesh.

On occasion, Gnimersalt takes a more pleasing shape to travel. During these times, he favors the form of a completely hairless young woman tending to just slightly heavier than normal or a gaunt man with too many teeth. He might also take the form of an ocean breeze that is just a bit too hot and strong smelling. He assumes these forms most often to act on behalf of his mistress, though he has also been known to put in appearances at the greatest feasts and banquets in Malfeas. At these times, others feel their own hunger vanish, as their need or desire to consume is overcome by Gnimersalt's own and devoured. Unfortunate mortals have starved to death in his presence, ignoring their need for sustenance. He can assume these forms in Creation or Malfeas while remaining to gorge himself in his feeding pit.



ORAMUS, THE DRAGON BEYOND THE WORLD

In a far corner of Malfeas lies a veritable mountain range of jagged, ruined buildings and cities lain waste. Shattered spires and leveled temples are found at every turn, and the earth shakes frequently as if some terrible creature bound to it moves restlessly.

Which is precisely the case.

When the Yozi were imprisoned within the inside-out body of their leader Malfeas, the dragon Oramus presented the gods with a unique problem. Firstborn of the Primordials, Oramus spawned from the Wyld before any of the patterns or consistencies that came later existed. A being of anomaly and chaos, Oramus defied all attempts to define or contain his nature. Instead, it was he who defined others, declaring all that was inside and outside Creation. The Dragon Beyond the World was pure chaos given form and mad purpose.

Because of Oramus's power, it was feared that he would eventually discover a way free of Malfeas. The Yozi's nature meant that he could find that one insane plan that would actually work or he would intuit that one unknowable variable in the gods' plans that might grant him freedom.

The solution to this problem was both simple and elegant. Unable to trust Oramus to any prison of definable borders and sensible purpose, the Dragon Beyond the World was bound inside the only prison that could hope to hold his terrible might... himself.

In a distant corner of Malfeas, the mightiest of the gods held Oramus's seven mighty limbs down as an army of Exalted with the assistance of incredible machines first solidified and then broke his seven great wings. His wings were then wrapped and shaped around the Yozi and fused together, containing Oramus's chaotic power inside a prison of the Yozi's own flesh and bone. It was a prison with no bars, no door and no key intended to contain a being that had existed before all others.

Oramus thrashed and raged at what the gods and their servants had done to him. He strained and roared for Ages. He sought to push through, slip past or tear down the cage that held him, only to find he could not. Then, spent from his great futile effort, the Dragon Beyond the World fell into a sleep from which he has yet to awaken.

Since that day, the bulk of that which is Oramus lies in his cage, deep in a death-like dream state. The tossing and turning of his sleeping form shakes the very earth, and his subconscious often bleeds out into Malfeas and the Wyldlands.

Unlike other Yozi, Oramus either cannot or will not take other forms and travel throughout Malfeas. He can still possess his followers for a time if he wishes, but the Dragon Beyond the World finds these lesser forms even more confining than his prison. Instead, Oramus prefers to visit his followers in their dreams to guide them as they work toward freeing him first from his prison and then from Malfeas itself.

THE GREAT PRISON-TEMPLE OF ORAMUS

From a distance, Oramus and his cage seems to be an egg-like mass the size of a mountain. It stands tall on a plateau that looks out over a sea of ruined buildings of shattered stone and bent brass. Upon closer inspection, one can make out the twisted membranes of the Yozi's great wings and see his great body twisting and shifting beneath them. At times, lesser beings spawned from Oramus's body can be seen emerging from the cage. A great structure of brass and marble hundreds of feet tall surrounds Oramus's cage like a scaffolding constructed by mad spiders. This chaotic mass serves as both a dwelling and a temple for many of Oramus's spawn. Oramus's fetich—Daendels, the Unfettered Heart—is also sometimes found here between endless questing to free its master. Parts of this temple are constantly being rebuilt after being cracked and shattered by the fitful movements of the sleeping Yozi. The necessity of this has demanded that Oramus's demons, despite their chaotic and seemingly random nature, be surprisingly gifted architects and builders.

Unlike the many other Yozi, Oramus has no other temples in the Demon City. His reason for this is simple: He does as no others do because he is unlike others. Those who seek Oramus's blessing must go to his temple and pray that the Dragon Beyond the World is feeling agreeable. Those attempting to build a shrine to Oramus are visited by his demons and convinced to do otherwise by whatever means necessary.

THE SHATTERED CITIES

Oramus's restless shiftings create earthquakes and tremors that eventually level all other buildings near him. From time to time, Malfeas' shifting form or some ambitious demon will throw up a number of vast majestic structures, and Oramus's movements will turn them to rubble. Ruined temples, half-buried statues and other structures surround his temple. The worst of these quakes send tremors throughout other sections of Malfeas, often accompanied by nightmares of the Yozi breaking free and rampaging through the city. The zone around his temple has come to be known as the Shattered Cities



because even the spires of Malfeas do not stand long in his presence. Few but Oramus's servants and spawn wish to endure the dreams that proximity to him inevitably bring. The Dragon Beyond the World's servants are the sole inhabitants of the makeshift dwellings constructed from the remains of once-great buildings.

Ironically, the Shattered Cities exist only due to the presence of Oramus. The mountain-sized Yozi roots the cities and keeps them together in their ravaged form. Without Oramus's presence, the ruined landscape would crumble and fall into the flooded undercity. Instead, block after block of devastation stands as a testament to the power of the Dragon Beyond the World. A force that levels all buildings larger than a hut is the only thing keeping the whole area from falling into the caustic waters of Kimberly.

A WORLD WITHIN THEIR PRISON

The following section describes the non-city geography found in and immediately around Malfeas—such places as the Yozi-tree Szoreny and various other forests and jungles found scattered across Malfeas. Rivers and lakes of various substances also exist under the Green Sun and are described later. Finally, the great wastes of Cecelyne that separate Malfeas from Creation are examined.

Much like the description of the urban areas of the city, the following section is not exhaustive. Malfeas has so many wonders it would be impossible to describe every strange river and stream or to detail every woodland. The examples given represent the major geographical areas and noteworthy landmarks. Storytellers are encouraged to add more to this list for their games. Malfeas is a vast realm that began as a prison for ancient alien beings of godlike power. Then, it just got weird.

THE FORESTS OF MALFEAS

Plant life is generally sparse in Malfeas. The Green Sun nurtures little in the way of traditional life. Small gardens and sparse vegetation are seen in various areas of the city, but these are usually the result of constant care. Nonetheless, three vast forests exist under the light of Ligier. The first is the Yozi Szoreny, easily the largest and most notable of the forests.

SZORENY, THE SILVER FOREST

On the banks of Kimberly, under the green skies of Malfeas, can be found Szoreny. The great Primordial tree once stood tall and upright, reflecting greatness from his quicksilver leaves and chromed branches. Its

many trunks met together and held fast the lands where it grew, giving them consistency but reflecting onto those who dwelled there Szoreny's particular ideas of order and aesthetics. After the defeat of the Primordials, Szoreny was uprooted and cast into Malfeas. Szoreny landed inverted, the impact driving his branches into Malfeas' crust with his roots reaching skyward. Since that time, the Yozi has remained there. His many trunks and branches meld with the ground while his mass of silvery roots spreads up and into the air to form a forest of tree-like branches centered around great trunks scattered throughout the area. Szoreny stretches out for hundreds of miles in this manner. The roots of the tree fill the sky with a canopy of silvery foliage that often filters out much of Ligier's light. Quicksilver sap gathers in places, forming drinking pools for the creatures of the forest, which have adapted to living on such deadly poison.

As it was before his imprisonment, Szoreny's mirrorlike form reflects. Imprisonment and rage at the indignities thrust upon the great tree, however, have caused these reflections to take on their own warped life. No image seen in the polished bark of Szoreny reflects a true, or even properly reversed, image. Something is always amiss. A virtuous man might find his reflection turned evil and murderous. A shining sword might appear as a broken bloody axe, and a small empty hut might become a vast castle full of life. Expressions of joy can become glares of hatred or silent wails of sorrow. Some changes are subtler, such as slightly different hair or eye color, but they always hint at profound differences lurking unseen. Szoreny is also the only mirror that can hold an adequate reflection of his brother Isidoros. Otherwise, the Black Boar That Twists the Skies tolerates no pale imitations of his greatness.

At times, these reflections slide free and become solid. These fun-house doppelgangers usually last only moments before melting into quicksilver pools, but some mirror images have persisted for Ages. Their behavior is tied to the exact way in which they twisted the original's reflection. These reflections rarely leave the forest, though they can and sometimes do travel into the city and beyond.

Travelers in the forest soon find that not just their eyes play tricks on them. Senses can become mixed and altered. Sounds become sights, sights become smells, and so on, until the disorientation gives way to insanity. These effects are not universal, which makes them even more maddening. Szoreny's demons and creatures native to the forest are immune to these effects, but all others must take precautions. The two most common

and effective protections available for sale in Malfeas are small brass mirrors that hold a frozen image of their user and quicksilver elixirs made from the sap of Szoreny itself. The elixir is more effective than the mirrors in general, but prolonged use of it can produce hallucinations of its own.

Like forests in Creation, Szoreny is full of life. Birdlike creatures and smaller beasts live in the highest roots. Larger predators and herd animals move around the forest floor, with their twisted reflections also being frequently encountered. The most effective and successful creatures here find ways to use the forest's reality-warping effects to their benefit. Some can hide inside the mirrored trees until a victim passes too close; others manage to control the exact way in which Szoreny twists others' perceptions. Szoreny's demons dwell in houses of brass hung from the Yozi's roots and branches.

Malfeas' denizens enjoy hunting here, with many wealthy and powerful demons hosting grand hunting parties. These parties either hunt the various beasts that live here or bring their own slaves, prisoners and lesser demons to serve as prey. The Yozi tolerates these excursions provided proper sacrifices are drowned in his quicksilver pools and lashed to his mirrored branches.

Szoreny, like all of his kin, wishes to free himself from Malfeas and take his revenge upon the gods and their Chosen. He is exceptionally patient, however, even among his immortal brothers and sisters. He will not act rashly or without careful reflection. Szoreny has put in place plans that will not bear fruit for Ages, and

so certain is he in the eventual success of these schemes that he is reluctant to join in the efforts of other Yozi to escape. Possible exceptions to this are his brother Isidoros, to whom Szoreny has always had been especially close, and She Who Lives in Her Name, whose fire spheres often come to visit the Yozi-tree.

VITALIUS AND HROTSVITHA

As noted previously, Szoreny is only one of three great forests in Malfeas. The other two are Vitalius, the Forest of Chimes, and Hrotsvitha, the Spawning Forest.

VITALIUS, THE FOREST OF CHIMES

Unlike many places in Malfeas, Vitalius is more well known for who does not dwell there than who does. The Forest of Chimes is a place of constant noise, some pleasant and some maddening. Due to the eternal clamor, the Yozi Adorjan rarely comes here, preferring instead to blow through quieter places. The forest itself is located near the outermost city layer of Malfeas, and it continues on for miles, skirting the edge of various neighborhoods.

Vitalius is a forest of gold. Metal trees from which hang all manner of chime, noisemaker and instrument are everywhere. In some cases, the trunks of the trees themselves grow into shapes that produce tones when the winds blow through them. Other times, forest-dwellers brush the chimes and forks that sprout from these flora and set off series of notes that echo through Vitalius. Musically minded demons can even learn to play the trees through their movements and breath to create an orchestra like no other.

QUICKSILVER POISONS

Szoreny's forests and many of his component souls contain a particularly toxic form of mercury that is fatal to most mortals. Szoreny's own demons and beasts are immune to this poison, as are most demons of Isidoros and She Who Lives in Her Name who frequent the forests. Attempting to feed off most of these creatures can be deadly, however, as most carry the poison in their flesh.

Name	Damage	Toxicity	Tolerance	Penalty
Quicksilver Sap	7A/minute	3L	-/-	-3
Quicksilver Pools	7L	3	-/-	-2
Quicksilver Tainted Flesh	4L/day	3	Stamina/1 year	-1
Bostvade's Quicksilver (see pp. 85-86)	6L	3	-/-	-2

Attempting to save this poison for later use is generally successful, though it can help Szoreny track the movements of the poison's possessor at the Storyteller's discretion. Also, treat any stored poison as being equivalent to the poison of Bostvade's regardless of the source.

Despite the beautiful music created in Vitalius, the forest is not without its dangers. Songs from the trees have a variety of effects, from disorientation to madness. It is not unheard of for passersby to be drawn into the forest by a sweet melody only to find they are unable to find a way out. Others return maddened by the music that has burrowed into their minds and taken root. Not all folk are affected the same way, and some find the sounds pleasing and harmless. Nevertheless, wise travelers and those who live close to the forest often stop their ears (or what passes for ears) with a waxy paste to quiet the noise. The paste is made of the crushed crust of Malfeas and the bones of one killed by Adorjan's perfect silence. Those who live near the forest soundproof their homes with a variety of materials, most of which are taken from the wake of Adorjan's constant wanderings throughout the city.

Despite the dangers the forest presents, many demons reside inside and near Vitalius. Most of the houses built near the Forest of Chimes are owned by powerful demons and their most valued servants. This is because the forest and its constant noise is avoided by Adorjan. In fact, the Yozi has not blown through the gold flora of Vitalius for Ages and shows no interest in doing so.

Many residents of Malfeas are willing to risk madness or mania to be safe from the Silent Wind.

HROTSVITHA, THE SPAWNING FOREST

DEMON OF THE THIRD CIRCLE, NINTH SOUL OF ISIDOROS

Hrotsvitha is a forest of brass desire. It is the soul that represents the Black Boar's lust and primal instincts. Hrotsvitha appears as a vast sprawling forest with trees of brass that often lurch and thrust in strange patterns. The brass branches and trunks stretch and strain when this occurs, filling the air with metallic moans and rasps. The air is hot, sticky and carries the coppery smell of blood even when no living thing can be seen. Behemoths and other powerful creatures are common sights here. Most are spawned from Hrotsvitha's couplings with various creatures. In addition to these creatures, Demon-Blooded children who have found their way into Malfeas play huntsman alongside the Spawning Forest's demons.

All who come to the forest feel a mix of arousal and violent urges. These urges begin with strange moods and faint whispers in the mind but grow as one remains in the Spawning Forest. These feelings are a result of Hrotsvitha itself, whose lust and love of the kill are everywhere. The entire forest is full of life and twisted fertility.





Hrotsvitha can overpower most visitors with these feelings if he wishes, but he usually simply lets the idea creep into their heads as they move among his trees and drink from his lakes. Staying too long inside Hrotsvitha drives most mortals mad. The Chosen fair little better in this regard, as the nature of Hrotsvitha's madness plays on the Great Curse like a harpist playing his instrument.

Hrotsvitha is a popular spot with many residents of Malfeas. Female demons often come to couple with the trees so that they might give birth to new tree-houses and spread the forest (see p. 25), while demons of both sexes come to rut and play. Slaves and prisoners taken by Hrotsvitha's demons are brought here to be hunted. Those who escape capture for five days and nights, the exact time of Calibration, are freed. Those captured are used in all ways the hunters desire and then ritually slain. Their blood is painted on the trees as an offering to Hrotsvitha. During Calibration itself, a great hunt is held. Hrotsvitha's Indulgent soul, the demon Mauer, oversees this festival.

Isidoros himself sometimes comes here when he ventures beyond Szoreny. Since the Black Boar That Twists the Skies must lessen his form somewhat to enter that which is merely a part of himself, this is a fairly rare occurrence. Still, the forest contains many hoof-shaped lakes and craters from these visits. Hrotsvitha bears these marks with pride and fills them with sweet liquors that act as hallucinogen and aphrodisiac.

When not in his forest form, Hrotsvitha often appears as a half-naked man with eyes of brass and brass horns jutting from the sides of his head. He wears a loincloth of human skin and a headdress of human hair. His flesh is painted with the blood of the victims of many hunts, and he exudes a musky but not unpleasant scent. In battle, he strikes powerful blows with a great club made from the bones of a long-dead behemoth and can cause everyone around him to go mad with desire for sex and murder. The Spawning Forest is rarely called to Creation, as most demonologists know little of his exact nature. When he is summoned, it is usually to assist and advise in matters of tracking, hunting, murder and procreation. He can bless unions and matings, causing even unlikely pairings to bear offspring. Children conceived in this way always carry a hint of Hrotsvitha's madness, however.

OTHER FORESTS

The Demon City has little in the way of vegetation outside of Szoreny, Vitalius and Hrotsvitha. Still, there are a few other landmarks that are best described

HROTSVITHA'S MADNESS

Staying too long in Hrotsvitha or drinking too deeply of its lakes can have a potent effect. After a number of hours equal to a character's Willpower, her player must make both Temperance and Compassion rolls. Success on both rolls means everything is fine, though the character might feel a bit flushed or seem a bit more short tempered.

Failure of the Temperance roll means the character becomes noticeably more amorous. Failure of the Compassion means the character becomes noticeably more violent. Each period of time equal to (Willpower) hours spent in Hrotsvitha afterward require another roll with the difficulty increasing by one each time.

Each failed roll escalates these feelings. This escalation continues until the character has failed a number of rolls equal to the Virtue used in the roll. Once this happens, the character goes temporarily mad with passion, murderous impulses or both. Drinking from Hrotsvitha's lakes has the same effect as staying in the forest, with roughly each cup of liquid being equal to one period requiring a roll.

A character can spend Willpower to avoid acting according to these urges. Spending one Willpower staves off the effects until the next roll is required. Willpower spent to avoid acting according to these urges counts as trying to avoid acting according to one's primary Virtue for concerns such as Limit. Characters can also spend Willpower to exert some control once they have been overwhelmed by temporary madness, but at this point, they cannot suppress their feelings completely.

Once a character has exited Hrotsvitha, she returns to normal after 24 hours. Characters lost to madness return to normal after 24 hours whether outside Hrotsvitha or not, but they will begin the cycle anew if they don't leave. Demons are generally immune to these effects. They feel the increased desires, but are not especially compelled to act on them as others are.

as forests, jungles or woodlands. They are often found away from the most populous areas of Malfeas and often have some connection to a Yozi other than the Demon King himself.



These locales often defy any logic known in Creation. Plants of metal, stone and other substances sprout and grow strangely. Behemoths spawned by demonkind roam hungry and mad. Lesser demons make their home in these lands only when their own twisted natures allow them to fit in.

MURSILIS, THE SKITTERING JUNGLE

DEMON OF THE THIRD CIRCLE,

TWENTIETH SOUL OF ORAMUS

Between the Shattered Cities where great Oramus is imprisoned and the rest of Malfeas lies Mursilis, the Skittering Jungle. Forming a borderland between Oramus and the rest of Malfeas, Mursilis is a forest of living metal. A component soul formed by Oramus after the Yozi's imprisonment, Mursilis represents the Dragon Beyond the World's desire for movement. Because of this desire born of Oramus's confinement, everything in Mursilis moves.

Mursilis consists of insects of various size and shapes formed from a variety of metals such as iron, brass, gold and copper. At a glance, these components look like complex clockworks, but if broken open, they appear to be living insects filled with black organs and blood. Trees are actually either giant mantis-like constructs that stand immobile until likely prey comes along or swarms of smaller creatures held together by complex queen brains. The jungle floor is littered with castoff metal wings, carapaces and other parts that chink and crunch as one walks. Wasps buzz overhead, and centipedes and beetles skitter along the ground. Massive creatures and killer swarms move through the forest seeking prey. Many of the jungle's inhabitants are poisonous, and none are edible by humans. Some of these creatures are the Skittering Jungle's Second and First Circle demons, while others are simply parts of the demon itself.

The uniform metallic sheen of the jungle combines with the slow shifting of the animated foliage and green light of Ligier to produce a disorienting camouflage for most of the demon's clockworks. Paths through the jungle often move and change as the living foliage moves and shifts. It is easy to become lost in the Skittering Jungle, and many who do fall prey to predators.

As per its nature, Mursilis's borders shift and move. It always forms some sort of boundary between Oramus's domain and the rest of Malfeas, but the specifics vary. Sometimes, it forms an impossibly dense jungle in one place and is absent save a few individual insects elsewhere. Other times, it stretches evenly around the whole of the Shattered Cities, ringing the temple-prison

of its master in a circle. Mursilis has been known to rearrange suddenly, with migrating swarms devouring everything in their path.

Like most Demon Princes, Mursilis exists inside all of his component parts. He sends insect messengers and representatives as needed and can speak and act through them. These messengers appear as metal insects in a variety of shapes and sizes, though the creatures are usually brass, as the demon favors this metal. While he is perfectly capable of assuming a variety of other shapes, he rarely does so. Much as his master's boundaries are set by his broken wings, Mursilis's are set by his own preferences. Only in Creation does he sometimes eschew insect form in favor of a brass man or woman with multifaceted eyes or a beautiful woman wearing a swarm of brass beetles. Mursilis is usually summoned to provide assistance with infiltration, assassination and escape. There are few places he cannot slip into or out of, and few creatures can survive his toxic stings. If necessary, he can be less subtle, burying whole cities in a hungry swarm. If called to battle, he often appears as a massive insect-like beast commanding swarms of poisoned metal insects.

Like Vitalius, Mursilis's buzzing and humming typically wards off Adorjan. Unlike Vitalius, the immediate threats of the Skittering Jungle means that few seek shelter there.

ZANNANZA, THE SIDEWAYS FOREST

Part behemoth, part forest, Zannanza is a flat, slug-like beast that clings to the side of Malfeas' levels. She migrates these surfaces so slowly that few notice her move. Black trees and creepers sprout from the beast's flesh, nurtured by the Green Sun. These growths mask the beast's fleshy body and make her appear as a forest. Although that forest is set sideways, travelers find that they can walk through the forest as if it were upright. Occasionally, when levels of the city align just so, travelers can walk up to the edge of one level, through Zannanza, and onto another.

Zannanza is the result of a mating of a demon of the Third Circle and a mortal woman. Sometime during the First Age, it is said that Zannanza ate her way out of her mother's womb and grew to devour her whole village until a Solar Exalt finally summoned her father to fetch his child. (Why he did not simply slay the Demon-Blooded horror is a secret between the Solar and the Demon Prince.) The demon took the beast home to Malfeas and cast her into the city. Zannanza hit the side of one of the city's levels and stuck fast. Since that day, Zannanza has slept and grown steadily



until she now resembles a forest growing sideways from a layer of the Demon City. The identity of Zannanza's father has been lost to history, and none of the demons of the Third Circle today claim her.

Unlike many places in Malfeas, Zannanza is more of a curiosity than a threat. She is normally content to exist in her half-slumbering state, feeding off nourishment she can leach from the black surface of Malfeas. Someday, she might decide to rampage once more and prey on humans, but she would first have to escape Malfeas to do so, which she is unlikely to do on her own. That said, the trees and plants that grow from her flesh do mask strange demons and dangerous beasts that have come to live in the Sideways Forest. Also, the spongy surface of Zannanza's skin allows a person to stand on the forest despite its sideways orientation. Stepping off her surface with both feet, jumping or similar actions will cause one to fall from the forest and to the nearest level Malfeas. Given the shifting and movements of Demon City and the area the Sideways Forest covers, the nearest flat surface can be anywhere from a few feet to several miles away. For these reason, travelers here should always be cautious.

ZANNANZA'S FATHER

The identity of Zannanza's father is left up to individual Storytellers to decide. In most cases, it is a matter of little importance, unless Zannanza somehow escapes from Malfeas. If that happens, it is likely that discovering the identity of and summoning her father to return her is one of the more reliable ways to vanquish her. Other Third Circle demons can likely accomplish the task as well, and powerful Exalted might be able to kill her.

More than likely, Zannanza's father is one of Cytherea's souls. As the Mother of All, this Yozi and her kin were responsible for the spawning of many great behemoths and monsters, and Zannanza is just another unfortunate side effect of the strange fertility of the Yozis and their spawn.

RIVERS, CANALS AND LAKES

Since it has no water, Malfeas has no rivers or other waterways as most would understand them. Instead, Malfeas has places, natural and constructed, where strange substances run in liquid form. Demons often navigate small boats and rafts down them to travel from one part of Malfeas to another.

Channels formed by sections of Malfeas fitting together in peculiar ways and flowing with vitriol are the most common. These canals and streams are usually small, some no more than a thin trickle of fluid. Shallow canals filled with this caustic liquid make for convenient and rapid travel in some areas, provided one possesses a craft that will not dissolve. Many of these canals have been expanded and connected over time by demons. In some areas, these canals take the place of many streets.

In addition to vitriol, larger channels of obsidian dust are relatively common. These constantly flowing rivers of fine dust are often created as runoff when two sections of Malfeas grind together. Some of Malfeas' crust is ground into dust from the impact, and this dust rushes into cracks and furrows created by the impact to form rivers. These rivers are unpredictable, and many carry larger chunks of Malfeas' crust within them that can strike crafts or individuals on the rivers with incredible force. Swimming in these black-dust rivers is possible, but it requires great strength, experience or skill to avoid being driven under tons of shifting dust. Because it is already filled with ground dust, demons sometimes submerge important stone pieces in these rivers temporarily to protect them from the Grinding Wind. Doing so is not without its own dangers, though, as the shifting currents of the dust are unpredictable and move with great force and speed.

In addition to the two most common types, rivers and streams of other substances exist. Ligier has been known to melt ore from Malfeas itself to create rivers of gold, silver and other metals his demons can collect. The still-bleeding corpses of hunted behemoths and other beast form rivers of blood in some places, and quicksilver streams can be found within Szoreny. Some decadent demons have even carved canals and filled them with various exotic liquors or drugs, and some Third Circle demons manifest as bodies of liquid themselves. Small streams of just about any fluid imaginable can be found somewhere on *some* level of Hell.

Lakes in Malfeas do not follow the standard pattern seen in Creation. Since the only liquid below the surface of Malfeas is the Yozi-sea Kimberly, no lakes are fed by underground streams. The Sea That Marched Against the Flame does sometimes fill basins and valleys with her acidic waters, but these are always dedicated to specific purposes. Since so many rivers move and shift and only a few run with anything resembling water, they rarely empty out into larger bodies of water. Instead, most lakes in Malfeas are either standing liquid that





pools in craters and depressions in Malfeas' surface or are actually the work of demons or other creatures existing as giant pools. Quicksilver pools in Szoreny, often formed by the hoof prints of Isidoros are one such example. Another is the lake of Hrotsvitha that the demon himself fills with honeyed liquor.

SAGARDUIA, THE RIVER OF CRYSTAL FIRE
DEMON OF THE THIRD CIRCLE,
SEVENTH SOUL OF SHE WHO LIVES IN HER NAME

Migrating through Malfeas is Sagarduia. A component soul of She Who Lives in Her Name, Sagarduia represents her mistress's ego, her internal balancer of desires and what passes for morality with the Yozi. A river of molten glass that can burn the unwary, Sagarduia is an infectious voice of twisted reason and melodious promises. She moves from level to level of Malfeas as she wishes, appearing suddenly in a dry riverbed to destroy lesser creatures dwelling within or pushes aside existing rivers to flood the surrounding areas with vitriol or black dust. She also appears at times to erode an unwanted landmark or create a necessary boundary. She is persistent, unrelenting and often unpredictable.

Few demons make use of Sagarduia when she visits their domains. Instead, they give gifts and pleasant greetings and secretly count the moments until she moves on. There is good reason for keeping this distance. Those who tarry too close to her banks sometimes find themselves compelled by whispering voices from just below the river's surface to plunge into her agonizing glass currents.

Sagarduia's demons often swim in her rivers or follow her as she flows. The River of Crystal Fire herself often acts as an intermediary between the other souls of She Who Lives in Her Name. She also serves as a frequent messenger for the Yozi herself and can be found traveling in other forms while her currents course endlessly through Malfeas.

Sagarduia offers power and understanding to those who would summon her. She can slash and burn most obstacles she is entreated to deal with, and she is one of the foremost experts on boundaries and negotiations anywhere.

When she takes a humanoid guise, Sagarduia favors the form of a beautiful woman who appears to be made of freshly blown glass. When more subtlety is called for, she takes a similar form of flesh with hair of glass threads. She rarely bothers with clothing, though she dons diaphanous robes from time to time. If confronted in battle, she casts out tendrils of molten glass than can slice burning swaths through armies of foes. At all times, she has a subtle smile coupled with a fiery blaze of submerged anger in her eyes.

THE SPAWNING POOLS OF THE
INFERNAL WORMS

In various pits, depressions and basins around the shores of Kimberly near the forest of Szoreny are found great pools and lakes. Kimberly fills these lakes by washing up over the land and into these areas, leaving some of her waters as she retreats. These tidal pools are dangerous places that exist for a specific purpose: to spawn the infernal worms that swim throughout the Yozi's depths.

These demonic beasts are unintelligent but dangerous. They form right out of the waters of Kimberly. The strong worms devour the weak and any unfortunate passersby. As they eat, the worms grow. Eventually, when they reach adulthood, the beasts call out their shrills cries to Kimberly, who returns to carry them back to sea. Demon worms are rare in Creation, but not unknown. The Lintha Family is known to use several to pull its ships or attack its enemies. These worms cannot spawn in Creation, only in their pools in Malfeas, though they can sometimes breed half-blooded abominations with the creatures of the Western Ocean.

INFERNAL WORMS

The following traits are for the average infernal worm. Some grow much larger, though they are rarely encountered except far from the shores in Kimberly. A spawning pool can contain anywhere from three to 23 worms, depending on how many have already been devoured by the others.

S/D/S	P/I/W/W	Health Lvl	Atk (S/A/D/R)	Dodge DV/S
12/5/10	4/1/2/5	-0x2/-1x4/-2x8/-4/I	Bite: 6/12/12L/2	4/8L/18B
Abilities: Athletics 2 (Swim +3), Awareness 4, Dodge 1, Martial Arts 3 (Bite +2), Presence 2 (Intimidate +3)				





From a distance, these spawning pools look harmless enough, even inviting. Those who are not aware that no natural water is found in Malfeas might even mistake such a pool for a large lake of drinkable water. It's not until they touch the acidic liquid that they realize their mistake. By then, their cries have already drawn the worms.

MOUNTAINS AND OTHER TOPOGRAPHY

Malfeas does not generally have mountains beyond the massive, immobile forms of beings such as Oramus and towering ruins left when sections of the city collide. As a result, the geography of the Demon City doesn't exploit such formations the way Creation does. There are no rich veins of metal high up in peaks, nor do rivers start in these high places. Instead, ore veins are found scattered throughout Malfeas, and rivers begin and end wherever they wish. Even large hills in Malfeas are actually ancient mounds of rubble or black earth or the sleeping forms of great beasts. Some areas of the city boast raised sections and plateaus where the more privileged can sneer down upon lesser beings, but they are either constructed through massive projects or the

result of two layers of the city colliding in such a way that one lands atop the other.

THE HERD HILLS OF CHISSANO

In a section of Malfeas near the shores of Kimberly, in a place where Szoreny does not quite come to meet the Sea That Marched Against the Flame, are located the Herd Hills of Chissano. Chissano was once a great behemoth and beloved pet of the Primordial Adrián. When the war with the gods came, Chissano fought with his mistress and was sliced into 100 pieces by the great Exalted swordsman Blade of One Hundred Cuts, who sword dealt 100 blows every time he stuck. Chissano's scaly armor turned aside the fatal blow that would have pierced his heart but lay in pieces before his foe. Just as the Chosen prepared to finish the beast off, the Yozis surrendered, and the battle ended.

Chissano was forgotten by his mistress, her affection for him dying with her fetich-heart, Lilike. The behemoth was dumped into Malfeas, half-living wreckage of the last battle of a terrible war. Chissano still lies where he was cast. His segmented body is alive but in pieces. Black dust from Malfeas has clung to the beast's form over the years, obscuring his limbs



and flesh. Now, he appears as a number of rolling hills between the shores of Kimberly and Szoreny.

While he is terribly wounded and barely alive, Chissano still moves. Slowly, he pushes himself along the ground, inches each year. When two sections come together, the behemoth's incredible stamina and healing powers begin the process of knitting them back together. Slowly, Chissano pulls himself back together, and observers note that the Herding Hills are growing fewer in number and greater in size as time goes on. Uninterrupted, the beast will eventually rise again—masterless, hungry and burning for revenge upon the Chosen.

No one dares attack or slay the beast. The demon Jacint has declared the creature to be under his protection. Why the demon does this, no one can say. His mistress has long forgotten her loyal beast. Still, few see the point in angering the Prince Upon the Tower, so Chissano continues his long healing process unmolested.

CECELYNE, THE ENDLESS DESERT

Surrounding the Demon City of Malfeas is another of the Yozi's. An eternal expanse of shifting silver sand, terrible storms and barren wasteland, she is Cecelyne, the Endless Desert. Before her binding, Cecelyne cast herself out, continuing out in every direction toward infinity and touching all with her sense of evenness and equality. After the Primordials' defeat, Cecelyne's very nature was torn asunder, and one of her endless borders was fused to the edges of Malfeas. This act both created a buffer zone to further confine the rest of the Yozi's and their demon servants and gave Cecelyne herself an end point that served to anchor her in place. While her other borders still expand to infinity, she is now lashed to the edge of the Yozi's prison, unable to tear herself free for as long as it exists. Being able to brush the edges of Creation and beyond with her unfettered borders makes the Yozi one of the freest of her kind. Yet, the inability to taste true freedom makes this fact more torturous than pleasurable and renders Cecelyne one of the most unforgiving and empty of the Yozi's. Her inner nature is embodied in the pitiless and barren waste that surrounds Malfeas.

Those traveling through Cecelyne move through vast shifting sands under a cloudless, starless sky. At times, the green glow of Ligier can be seen on the horizon, while at others, all is black. During Calibration, where travel between Creation and Malfeas is easier

and more ordered, the dim light of the Unconquered Sun is sometimes seen over the distant dunes.

Like mortal deserts, Cecelyne is not entirely without life. Sparse brush and twisted vegetation can be seen in places, particularly as one nears Malfeas. Desert creatures such as lizards, mice and carrion birds are also encountered periodically. Unfortunately, these plants and animals give little succor to travelers, being merely cosmetic changes on Cecelyne's barren landscape. Crafted of the Yozi's barren sands and given the semblance of life, they are simply part of the Yozi, spawned on alien whims and scattered back to the sands just as easily. Only the hardest or most powerful creatures can bear the lifeless wastes of Cecelyne for extended periods, and only the most immortal or foolhardy beings do not make their homes elsewhere. Even most of the Third Circle demons who make up the Yozi's inner nature prefer to reside in Malfeas itself, where they serve as law enforcers and jailers for many of the lesser demons. Those few who live within their mistress's wastes are often strange, distant and terrible even for the inhabitants of the Demon City.

Mortals traveling Cecelyne to reach the Demon City or to return from it must survive the five-day trip across her wastes. Despite the vast size of the Endless Desert, the trip always takes five days. In all of history, not the fastest run or slowest crawl has altered this. Still, experienced travelers have noticed that many travelers who travel lazily and with supreme confidence that they will reach Malfeas anyway usually run afoul of the creatures and harsh storms of the desert. While Cecelyne must abide by the cosmic rules that dictate the length of the trip, there is no rule that says she must tolerate mocking arrogance from lesser beings.

Most demons traveling across the desert to reach Creation find they cannot unless summoned. A few powerful Third Circle demons, such as Ligier, can cross over into Creation with only an invitation. In either case, the demon begins to cross the desert five days before the summoning or invitation to arrive exactly when called. No demonologist has even gotten a straight answer out of a demon as to how they know when they are going to be summoned in five days. It is possible the demons themselves don't really know why. Demons whose summoned task are complete or who are banished find themselves dropped right back into the Endless Desert to make the trip back to Malfeas. Demons who kill their summoner or otherwise escape returning to Malfeas are either trapped in Creation or able to return to Cecelyne at will, depending on their



status and citizenship. The Yozi sees no reason to give particular access to non-citizen demons, so they are often left on their own. Citizens and all the unquestionable get more consideration, and most can return at will.

THE OASIS OF THE FALSE WATERS

It is within Cecelyne's power to provide aid and assistance to those who travel across her to reach or to return from Malfeas. With a thought, the desert could give food and water to travelers to aid them in passing over her endless expanse to Malfeas or back to Creation. The Yozi gives such aid rarely, however, and never without a price. More often, the Yozi crafts part of herself into a semblance of such a place to give false hope and illusionary relief to travelers. The Oasis of the False Waters is such a place.

At first glance, the oasis appears to be a gift from the gods. It is a large pool created by an underground spring and surrounded by fruit-bearing plants and trees. Upon tasting, the water is fresh, and the fruits are ripe and flavorful. No large creatures or visible threats lurk in or around the oasis.

Visitors may stay at the oasis for as long as they wish without harm or assault. Upon leaving, however, the oasis fades back into the sands, disappearing as if it were never there. Worse, the sustenance travelers gained from the water and fruit consumed vanishes, turning to sand in their bellies. This sickens many and leaves even the hardest of travelers thirstier than they were before.

Sometimes, when the visitors to the oasis are particularly powerful or well-known heroes (such as many Exalted), the scene at the oasis is somewhat different. Instead of being empty, the oasis is home to a stopped caravan. The caravan leader is a striking woman in her early 40s, and the rest of her entourage is made up of beautiful young men and woman she claims are her children. The woman greets travelers as their saviors and begs them to come feast with them. At the feast, the woman spins a tale of being lost in the desert and coming to this oasis. Sometimes, the woman claims to be an exiled queen, at other times a wealthy merchant or a priestess of a banned faith. In all cases, she and her children attempt to charm, entice and seduce their guests while simultaneously seeking promises to help free them from their imprisonment in the desert.

Refusing such pleas results in the woman and her children hurling jeers, accusations of cowardice and other insults. If the heroes become violent or try to throw their own retorts, the woman, her children and

the whole oasis vanishes before their eyes, blown away by the desert wind. Vowing to help free the woman and her children leads to a night of feasting and passionate lovemaking until the travelers finally retire for the evening. Upon waking, they find the caravan gone and their packs full of supplies. They also feel a nagging sense of obligation to the mysterious woman and her children as well as a sense that they will meet her again.

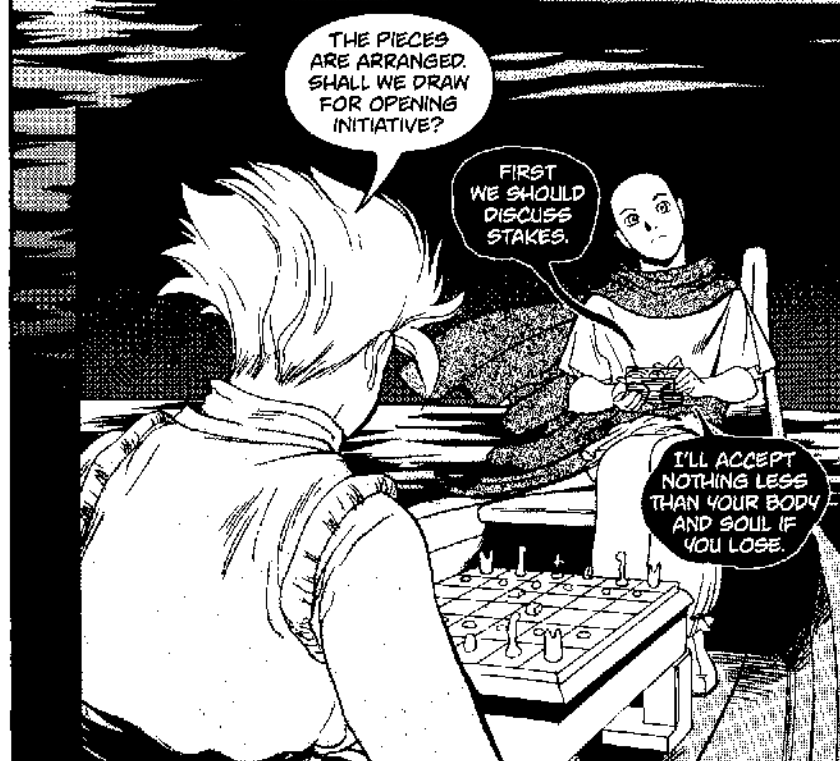
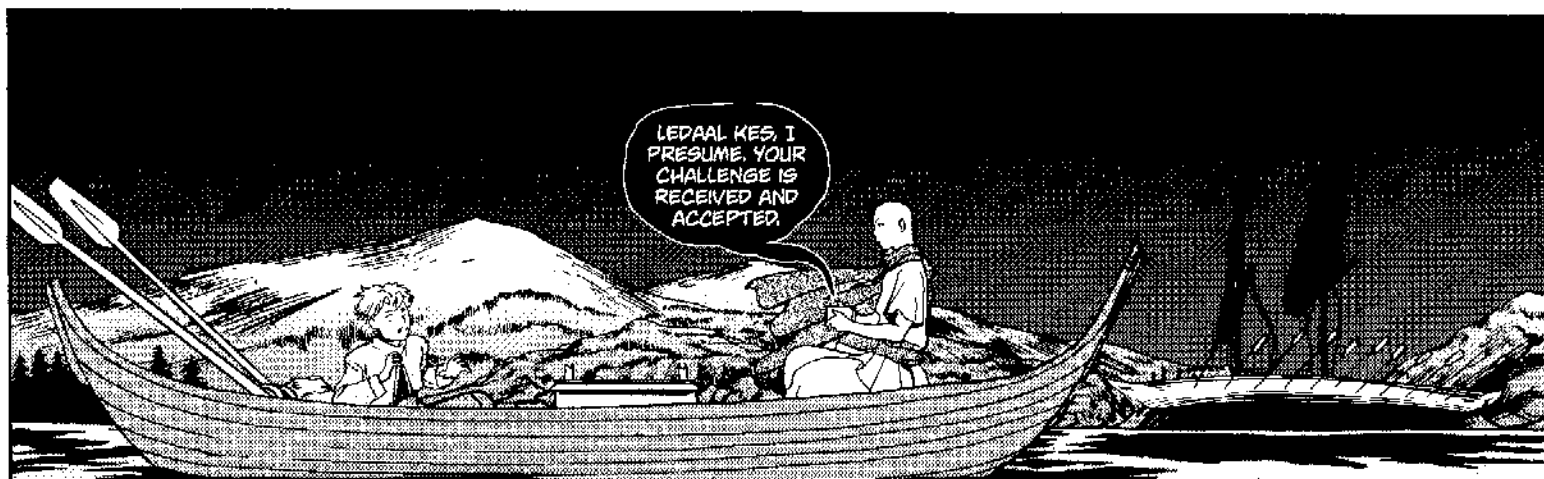
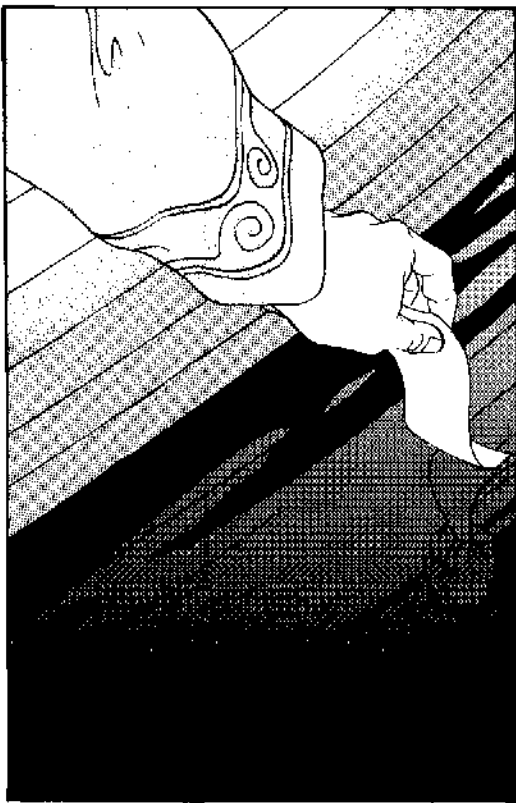
WHO IS THE WOMAN AT THE OASIS?

The most obvious answer to the identity of the woman at the Oasis of False Waters is that it is Cecelyne in disguise seeking to obligate travelers to work for her freedom. In this case, her children likely are the Third Circle demons who make up the Yozi's inner being also disguised. In this case, promising to help free her is obviously a Very Bad Thing that potentially binds a character to freeing at least one of the Yozi's from their prison. This might even be one of the ways the Endless Desert tests and recruits her akuma.

It is probable that most heroes will try to avoid doing this, but that creates new problems. At best, Cecelyne would likely throw many obstacles in an oathbreaker's path to keep him from escaping her. At worst, the oathbreaker could be mystically bound by the vow under Cecelyne's powers as lawbringer and adjudicator of Malfeas, unable to break the oath without terrible curses befalling him. Also, those characters who lie with a Yozi and her children might also find unexpected consequences arise from those unions.

Some Storytellers, however, might find this answer too obvious.

Instead, it is possible the woman is exactly who she claims to be, and Cecelyne is keeping the woman and her children hidden for some reason. Or the woman is a spirit or lesser goddess in mortal form who has become a prisoner of the Yozi. In either case, the woman would have to be involved in something of great importance or know some incredible secret to warrant the attentions of such a vast and alien presence as Cecelyne. Trying to free her would draw the wrath of the Endless Desert, but hey, that's what heroes are for, right?





CHAPTER FIVE

THE DAMNED

DEMONS

What more need be said of the inhabitants of the Demon City? The souls and spawn of the Yozis come in ten thousand forms. They inhabit every corner of their prison: Malfeas' mad labyrinths of black stone and brass; the wild metal forests Szoreny, Vitalius and Hrotsvitha; the acid depths of Kimberly; the airy abysses of the emerald-lit sky. Yet, for all their fantastical variety, their inscrutable minds and their twisted bodies, the Demon Princes and their progeny are united in servitude to the Yozis.

DEMONS OF THE THIRD CIRCLE

AMALION, THE MANSE OF ECHOES ASCENDING

DEMON OF THE THIRD CIRCLE, FIFTH SOUL OF MALFEAS

In each layer of the Demon City, one manse inexorably draws the eye from the surrounding architecture. Each differs in nature and purpose. Some are manors,

others fortresses, still others cathedrals to the Yozis. These manses do not dominate the skyline through cyclopean size or gaudy splendor. No, what they share is a beauty that makes one's breath catch in one's throat and one's heart skip a beat. These manses are the bodies of Amalion, the gentlest of Malfeas' many souls and the finest architect of the demon realm.

Amalion's knack for designing manses and other buildings is without peer. In the First Age, so much did the Exalted value her skills that she spent more time in Creation than not, and so much did they accept her presence that when the Exalted sorcerer Five Moons wed her, the Solar Deliberative celebrated their blasphemous union. Since the Usurpation, Amalion has struggled to reshape the febrile architecture of the Demon City into something beautiful.

When Amalion manifests, she appears as a courteous woman of middle years. Beneath layers of fashionable





apparel, her body is veined like old marble. She hides her face behind a lavender veil. Those who see her smile love her forever after, and though she gladly enchants mortals and lesser demons to adore her, she deems it discourteous to compel such worship from an unwilling citizen or Exalt. In this form, she will draft the blueprints for a manse at a petitioner's request if he can pique her curiosity and meet her price, which is always a unique thing of beauty—inanimate or living.

Summoning: (Obscurity 2/5) When not employing her magnificent smile to subdue a society, sorcerers summon Amalion to design buildings and raise manses. She erupts from the earth around the summoning circle as a level-5 Infernal- or Terrestrial-aspected manse of her own design, warping the area's dragon lines to assimilate its Essence. Her summoner may demand the hearthstone of that manse, but not those of her other manse-bodies. This manse is immobile, though her human form may leave its confines. She occasionally appears in human form when an architect kills himself to escape a commission beyond his capabilities.

Motivation: To create things of beauty. Amalion's Intimacies include Malfeas, architecture, the structures she has devised, manses, hearthstones, her worshipers, the

memory of long-dead Five Moons and the young Exalt who holds Five Moons' Exaltation.

Virtues: Compassion 2, Conviction 3, Temperance 5, Valor 2

Traits: 25 dice for all rolls involving architecture; 18 dice for all other rolls. (See *The Books of Sorcery*, Vol. V—*The Roll of Glorious Divinity II*, p. 46.)

Sample Powers:

Her Neighbor's House—With but a word, Amalion can raise a manse from any uncapped demesne. The ground erupts as earth, wood, metal and stone flow like water to her design. Raising a manse thus costs her one temporary Willpower and takes a number of hours equal to the manse's rating. The manse's architecture bears the unmistakable stamp of Malfeas, but it is otherwise fully functional and contains any unusual characteristics that she sees fit to include (see *The Books of Sorcery*, Vol. III—*Oadenol's Codex*, pp. 63–79). She has complete control over the manse's layout and the nature of its hearthstone. Amalion erects mundane structures in a similar fashion. A hut forms in seconds, a new wing of a house in minutes and a castle in just under an hour. If she designs rooms and structures to support specific feelings or activities, treat them as perfect equipment (see *Exalted*, p. 366).

Mastery of Internal Configuration—Amalion has total control over her architecture. Rooms and corridors rearrange themselves at her whim without regard for the laws of geometry. She can open paths between her manse-bodies, allowing guests to travel between the layers of Malfeas in a blink of an eye. One can even travel between Creation and Malfeas in this way, though doing so requires a five-day sojourn through doorless sandstrewn corridors. Her internal Essence flows subordinate themselves to her desire. Each of her manse-bodies is a level-5 manse, and she can align her Essence so that any one of her manse-bodies generates any level-5 Infernal- or Terrestrial-aspected hearthstone in its hearthroom. Creating a new hearthstone takes one hour and renders the previous hearthstone inert. She loans hearthstones to other denizens of the Demon City in exchange for favors. Knowledgeable Infernal Exalts likewise court her in hopes that she will loan them such stones.

Smile of Perfected Joy—Amalion's smile compels those who see it to love her. This is a 20-die social attack that she reflexively initiates against everyone who can see her smile, no matter the distance. This works even in combat or against beings of which she is unaware. She cannot turn this power off. The only way to prevent it from affecting others is for her to conceal her face.

Willpower: 9 **Essence:** 9

Other Notes: Although Amalion's manse-bodies brim with endless wealth, most of it is part of her body and cannot be removed. Still, if she wishes to bestow some of

Exalted

her gathered objets d'art on another, she has an effective Resources 6.

BENEZET, THE GARDENER OF IDENTITIES

*DEMON OF THE THIRD CIRCLE,
SEVENTEENTH SOUL OF ORAMUS*

Thirty-three infernal domains lie concealed in the folds of Elsewhere. They appear upon none of the layers of the Demon City, and one can enter them only through hidden doorways, such as the gates of black nacre that lead to Qaf, the Heaven-Violating Spear—a mountain with no base and no summit. Upon the slopes of Qaf, across countless verdant terraces, sprawls the thrice-walled garden of Benezet. There, the Gardener of Identities cultivates uncanny herbs and flowers that grow nowhere else in the demon realm or in Creation.

Benezet loves that which is distinctive. She favors the mighty, the gifted, the exiled and the mad. Prodigies presage her arrival: rainbows at night, frogs in the desert, selfless generosity from rich men or earthly roses blooming in the gutters of Malfeas. Uniqueness is her nature, and nothing can abide congruity with its fellows in her presence. When she grows weary of her garden, she drifts through the streets of the Demon City in the form of the change-rain. Her waters fall from a cloudless sky, shattering the Green Sun's light into rainbows full of fragrance and shifting shapes. In that rain, all things of a kind—blades of grass, grains of sand, leaves on the

trees or mortals in a crowd—metamorphose to become wondrous and strange.

In her garden and in the summoner's circle, the Gardener of Identities wears a human form. None know her true shape, however, for she delights in the change-rains and dances in her own falling waters. Even the scrolls of the Copper Spiders cannot agree as to her semblance, for she never appears twice in the same guise. Only her hair remains the same. It hangs long and sleek, and every strand is of a subtly different color. Wise sorcerers beware her transforming power. Her summoner can compel her neither to refrain wholly from its use, nor to reverse the changes she has made.

Summoning: (Obscurity 3/5) Sorcerers typically invoke Benezet to warp people into new forms. Some seek to remake themselves and their allies in superior forms, while others would blight their enemies with deformity. When an artist or craftsman creates something truly unique, something never seen in Creation, Benezet may emerge from the demon prison without sorcery. Fortunately, she rarely does more than admire the new creation, lest her intervention destroy the beauty of that which called her forth.

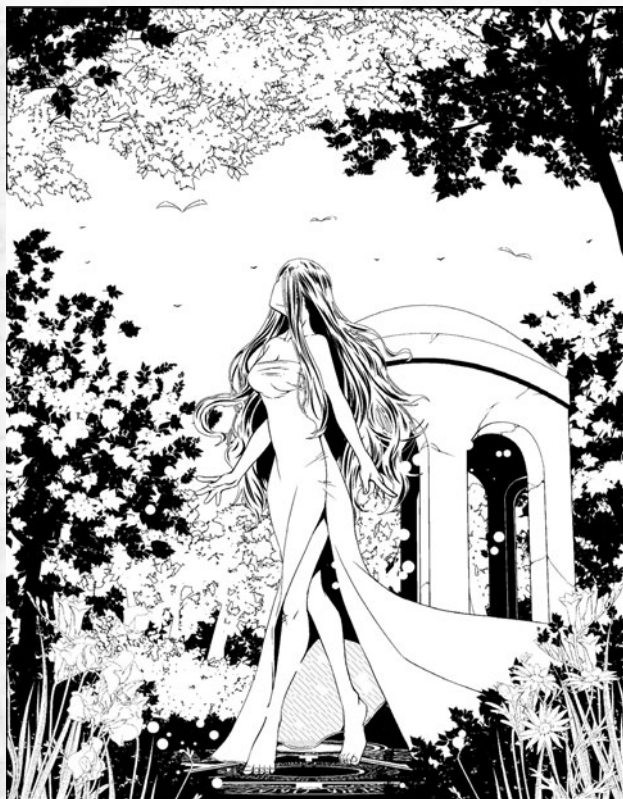
Motivation: To shatter conformity and make all things unique. Benezet's Intimacies include Oramus, her garden, rain, the dawn, art, only children, behemoths, transformation and the Wyld.

Virtues: Compassion 2, Conviction 4, Temperance 1, Valor 3

Traits: 22 dice for all rolls involving actions aimed at changing a thing's appearance or nature; 18 dice for all other rolls. (See *The Books of Sorcery*, Vol. V—*The Roll of Glorious Divinity II*, p. 46.)

Sample Powers:

Change-Rain—When Benezet assumes the form of the change-rain, the commonplace blooms into a riot of diversity. She spreads over an area from one yard to one mile in diameter and can move at the same pace as Adorjan's daughter winds (see pp. 19-21). Treat her as a Wyld storm with a specific effect: She randomly mutates every member of a group in a different way, but not so much that any member ceases to belong to that group. For instance, were a stand of pear trees to drink in the change-rain, individual trees could sprout apples or roses, glow a bright blue, grow legs and walk or transform into brass, yet all would recognizably remain trees. Anything with no counterpart in the rain is unaffected, as are objects and creatures that have already suffered mutation. Benezet determines how narrowly she defines a thing's type, such as whether a lone woman or Exalt in a band of mortal men mutates along with the group. Players of characters with awakened Essence roll (Willpower + Essence) against difficulty 3. Success renders the character immune to the



effects of the change-rain for one month. Failure results in the acquisition of one to three points of mutations (see **The Compass of Celestial Directions, Vol. II—The Wyld**, p. 144), with no two characters gaining the exact same mutations. Players of Dragon-Blooded add one to their roll; players of Sidereals and non-tattooed Lunars add two. Players of Solars, Abyssals and Green Sun Princes add three. This is a Shaping effect.

Spagyric Mastery—Benezet grows every sort of plant imaginable in her garden, and some that are beyond imagination besides. In Creation, she can breathe upon ordinary seeds and water them with spittle or tears to cultivate herbs of unusual potency. Each functions as a talisman or alchemical concoction of her choice, and she can grow and harvest 100 such herbs in a single day. Her Malfean garden is more fertile. She can grow plant-artifacts there, including (but not limited to) the vegetative technologies developed by the Dragon Kings. If instructed to grow a plant-artifact, she will be gone at least 10 days as she travels back and forth across the desert Cecelyne.

Wyld Suspire—Benezet's breath shines with a mad radiance. With a simple exhalation, she warps any creature or non-magical object to her desire. The target must be within one yard. A successful (Willpower + Essence) roll against difficulty 9 resists this effect and renders the character immune to this power for one month. If the roll fails, all mutations currently affecting it melt away, replaced by up to 18 points of mutations of Benezet's choice. This is a Shaping effect.

Willpower: 9 **Essence:** 9

Other Notes: The change-rain has no effect on the Yozis themselves. She often travels to where Oramus lies fettered in a cage of his own wings, bathing his raw flesh with her waters, but her powers cannot set him free.

FERAND, THE CHARIOT OF EMBERS

DEMON OF THE THIRD CIRCLE,

SEVENTH SOUL OF ISIDOROS

The Chariot of Embers presses forward like a charging legion or a buffalo stampede. He advances with the irresistible force of the dawn or the rising tide. He appears as horses and chariot and charioteer all merged into one, with leads and reins throbbing like the veins in a warrior's temple, all of charcoal black laced with blazing red and orange, trailing hair and manes like streamers of ashen smoke. Scorching air billows from his body like the breath of a forge. Obstacles crumble before his inexorable advance. Walls shatter, armies rout, and swaths of forest burst into flaming flinders in the face of his furious onslaught.

Ferand craves opposition. He loves to destroy those things that resist his passage. Nonetheless, he is honorable in his way. He does not hunt down those who flee from his glory, nor do his fires consume them. In Malfeas,



the brazen roads and stony towers stand pristine after he passes, but in Creation, all mundane things that cannot escape his path—trees, buildings, stones, ponds and the like—explode in flames as their least gods erupt from them in terror.

In his more-human form, Ferand appears as an old man as hale and brawny as a youth, clad in light ornamental armor of black and silver. In his left hand, he bears an ivory bow strung with a thread of topaz, and a scarlet mospid perches on his outstretched right arm when he calls. The well-worn hilt of Gentle Reproach, his black iron daiklave, juts up above his left shoulder. He looks kindly upon conquerors and heroes, and is angered when the weak band together against the strong. He disdains young Celestial Exalted, deeming them arrogant for claiming the mantle of authority their former incarnations once held, but they can earn his respect through mighty and ruinous deeds.

Summoning: (Obscurity 2/5) Sorcerers summon forth the Chariot of Embers to carve a trail of devastation across the world. When a warrior-monarch has been ousted by intrigue, Ferand's scarlet mospid may fly to her wrist and offer her aid in reclaiming her throne. Should she succeed, her accession opens the door for Ferand to enter the world.

Motivation: To lay waste to all who oppose him. Ferand's Intimacies involve powerful and destructive things: chariots, siege engines, mammoths, behemoths and such natural disasters as avalanches, volcanoes, flash floods and typhoons.

Virtues: Compassion 2, Conviction 5, Temperance 2, Valor 5

Traits: 24 dice for all rolls involving authority, domination and feats of strength; 18 dice for all other rolls.

(See *The Books of Sorcery*, Vol. V—*The Roll of Glorious Divinity II*, p. 46.)

Sample Powers:

Chariot of Embers—In the form of the Chariot of Embers, Ferand can carry up to 12 passengers. Those he permits aboard travel in perfect comfort, untouched by the flames, while intruders suffer as they would in a bonfire. He streaks over land or water at a speed of 100 miles per hour without tiring, or travels through the air at half that speed.

EILARIA

Ferand's bird resembles a mospid, but it is significantly larger than others of its kind, with blood-red feathers and eyes that smolder like hot coals. It speaks as eloquently as a poet, with a voice as low and rich as a bassoon. Eilaria is a part of its master and not a separate demon. If it dies, its body bursts into flame at midnight, and an identical bird is reborn from the ashes. If the corpse is at hand, Ferand can resurrect it at any time with a touch.

Motivation: To aid those chosen by Ferand. Her Intimacies are toward Ferand and those Ferand favors.

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 6, Stamina 6; Charisma 5, Manipulation 5, Appearance 3; Perception 6, Intelligence 4, Wits 5

Virtues: Compassion 2, Conviction 4, Temperance 3, Valor 3

Abilities: Athletics 5, Awareness 5, Dodge 6, Integrity 5 (Loyalty to Ferand +10), Investigation 5, Larceny 5, Linguistics (Native: Old Realm; Others: Forest-Tongue, High Realm, Riverspeak) 3, Lore 1, Martial Arts 5, Occult 1, Performance 3, Presence 3 (Persuasion +2), Resistance 3, Socialize 3, Stealth 1, Survival 5

Backgrounds: Backing 3, Cult 1, Followers 3

Charms:

Landscape Travel—Double flight speed

Materialize—Costs 65 motes

First (Ability) Excellency—Awareness, Dodge, Integrity, Presence, Socialize

Join Battle: 10

Attacks:

Claw: Speed 5, Accuracy 12, Damage 4L, Parry DV 6, Rate 2

Soak: 3L/6B

Health Levels: -0/-1/-1/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Dodge DV: 9 **Willpower:** 8

Essence: 5 **Essence Pool:** 90

Other Notes: None

Path of Ruin—When the Chariot of Embers speeds to a full gallop, Ferand cracks his whip and his horses roar like lions. All inanimate objects within 100 yards of the Chariot's path explode in flames as their least gods flee in terror. Wood detonates, water turns to steam, boulders shatter and metal bursts into red-hot shards. Solid ground is unaffected, as are objects made of the magical materials and structures formed from the bodies of the Yozis or other Third Circle demons. Lesser creatures suffer the effects of a bonfire while within the area of effect. Creature that attempts to flee the path of ruin escape miraculously unharmed, as do all of their possessions and any vehicles they draw along with them.

Scarlet Raptor Blessing—The presence of Ferand's scarlet mospid, Eilaria, marks those who have earned his favor. His chosen one gains a three-die bonus to all of her dice pools while the bird is present. Yet, Ferand requires strength and courage from those who would stand high in his esteem. If the recipient ever acts in a manner that would require a failed Valor roll, Eilaria departs and the benefits it provides are lost. Even if a once-favored individual regains Ferand's approval—or commands him with sorcery—she cannot employ the bird's blessing until the end of the next Calibration.

Willpower: 10 **Essence:** 10

Other Notes: None

KAGAMI, THE CITY OF MIRRORS

DEMON OF THE THIRD CIRCLE, FETICH SOUL OF SZORENY

The brass mirrors of the Demon City deceive the eye. In subtle ways, their reflections stand at variance to the things they reflect. Objects and their images appear in different places, or one's reflected face evinces a different expression from one's own. When the Ebon Dragon blots out the light of the Green Sun, those who dare can step through such a mirror, for the brass mirrors of Malfeas are gateways to the realm called Kagami, the City of Mirrors, a distorted reflection of the Demon City.

Within the mirror city, phantoms tread the brazen streets bearing the likenesses of those who dwell in the real Malfeas. A traveler can walk among these phantoms, speak with them or even fight them to the death. These figments are not real, however. Addressing or slaying a being's reflected self has no effect on the original, nor may phantom treasures be brought from the false city into the true. Moreover, the City of Mirrors does not adhere so closely as other realms to the normal understanding of space and time. One might encounter phantom tableaux from times past, meet friends rendered unfamiliar by altered histories and differently led lives or confront the shades of those as yet unborn. Information gathered in the mirror city cannot be trusted, for it reflects the world as it might have been rather than as it is. Nonetheless,

the possibility of winning secrets among the phantoms is sufficiently enticing that demons and Exalts travel there in search of insight.

Intrepid explorers may enter the mirror realm from elsewhere in the demon prison. When the Ebon Dragon is in the sky, hardened pools of Cecelyne-glass display a different desert, while the glittering icebergs of Kimberly open on a reflected sea. And in the forest Szoreny, it matters not whether Ligier's light is hidden, for one can pass through the polished trunks and quicksilver pools at any time to enter the forest's reflection.

Hidden among the shadows of the reflected realm lie roads, doors and corridors that do not exist at all in the real Malfeas. These lead to deeper layers of the City of Mirrors, layers where Malfeas itself manifests in different forms. While one might wander through these strange worlds in search of singular experiences and adventures, travelers most often use the deep layers as shortcuts for travel to other parts of the real Demon City.

Kagami has no human form in the usual sense. He can, however, take on the guise of one of the phantoms of the mirror realm. One can recognize such a phantom by its eyes, which are perfectly reflective silver spheres, and by the quicksilver that pulses through its veins. Kagami's preferred visage is that of his summoner.

Summoning: (Obscurity 2/5) Sorcerers most often call upon Kagami to spy upon their rivals or to seek out prophetic visions. Some also employ his talents to travel swiftly and without interference. Should a dead calm fall upon the ocean during Calibration so that a vast stretch of sea perfectly reflects the sky, mirrors looking out upon those waters sometimes display a landscape of black stone and brass lit by a mad emerald sun. When that happens, one can step through such a mirror into Kagami. It is for this reason that the people of the West cover their mirrors or turn them to the wall during Calibration.

Motivation: To offer undesirable revelations. The Intimacies of Kagami include such things as mirrors, twins, philosophers, chroniclers, astrologers and Szoreny.

Virtues: Compassion 2, Conviction 4, Temperance 5, Valor 1

Traits: 25 dice for all rolls involving travel and reflection; 20 dice for all other rolls. (See **The Books of Sorcery, Vol. V—The Roll of Glorious Divinity II**, p. 46.)

Sample Powers:

Enter the Mirror Realm—Kagami opens the way through a mirror, allowing anyone who can fit through the mirror's frame to pass through into the mirror realm, a subtly skewed reflection of the travelers' current realm of existence. The summoner and her companions can travel through the mirror realm as they would through the environment it duplicates. Mirror regions are generally uninhabited, al-



lowing for swift and uninterrupted journeys. Travelers can see and hear through mirrors as though they were windows into the real world; those in the real world can see, but not hear, into the mirror world. Outside the demon prison, the mirror realm covers a 10-mile radius surrounding the summoner. Those who leave that radius return to the real world automatically.

Speak With Phantoms—Travelers in the City of Mirrors can interact with the phantoms that populate the city. Finding a specific phantom is automatic if one has Kagami's favor or has bound the demon by sorcery. Otherwise, doing so requires a successful (Perception + Investigation) roll. The difficulty ranges from 1 if one finds a place where the phantom's original is gazing in a mirror, to 3 if one visits a place frequented by the phantom's original, to 5 if one searches randomly. A searcher may interrogate phantoms at his leisure, but any phantom diverges from its original in at least one major respect—be it a radically different personality, a subtle-but-crucial alteration to her history or an appearance several years too young or old. Any information acquired from a phantom will be colored by such divergences. Moreover, as these phantoms ultimately stem from Kagami (and ultimately from Szoreny), they are limited by Yozi perceptions and Yozi desires. No phantom will reveal a secret that the Yozis wish to remain hidden, nor can they know anything

Exalts

that has been kept wholly secret from the masters of the demon realm.

Tread the Hidden Paths—By entering deeper layers of the City of Mirrors, a traveler can bypass obstacles and distance to journey more swiftly than she could in the real world. Kagami guides his summoner on such journeys, cutting her travel time down to one-tenth normal. Others traveling in the City of Mirrors must rely on their own perspicacity. A successful (Wits + Lore) roll cuts such a character's travel time down to (1 / [number of successes + 1]) of normal. A failed roll indicates unexpected delays as the character is lost in a phantom realm or encounters some unexpected threat. Each deep layer bears a distant resemblance to one's current locale, but portrays it as it might have been had past events taken another path. For example, a deep layer entered in the city of Nexus might appear as a plague-haunted ruin ruled by a Deathlord, the shining city of Hollow in a world untouched by the Usurpation or the Great Contagion, a vacant flood plain where no city was ever built or a Dragon King city-pyramid under the rule of the victorious Primordials.

Willpower: 10 **Essence:** 10

Other Notes: The City of Mirrors exists in Creation only when Kagami is summoned, and even then only in a 10-mile radius around his summoner. Within that radius, or anywhere in the demon prison, it's possible to enter the City of Mirrors without Kagami's permission. In Malfeas, all of his mirrors allow free passage when the Ebon Dragon is in the sky. In Creation, the same occurs on the night of the new moon. Any Charm or spell that allows passage

through a closed portal, such as Door-Evading Technique (see **Exalted**, p. 229), opens the way to the reflected realm at any time. Savants also know a thaumaturgical ritual of the Art of Geomancy that performs the same function: *Open the Mirror Portal* (2, Manipulation, 3, one hour): This rite allows passage through a mirror into the reflected realm of Kagami. The gateway remains open for one day in Malfeas or until sunrise in Creation. It functions in Creation only within 10 miles of Kagami's summoner.

LYPOTHYMIE, THE MASK OF MELANCHOLY

DEMON OF THE THIRD CIRCLE, TWELFTH SOUL OF HEGRA

Lypothymie is a peculiar passion endemic to the Demon City, a feeling akin to melancholia, a lugubrious yearning for a past that never was. She is also a demon of the Third Circle. Lypothymie afflicts the demon races with desire and despair. Those whom she touches feel her as waves of aimless, dejected longing, and those who experience her most deeply grow languid and weak, numbed to the very soul by her caress.

The Mask of Melancholy dwells within a sanctum formed from her own Essence, a multidimensional labyrinth of coalesced ennui that exists within every being that has ever felt her touch. Bound by her own dismal nature, she cannot depart from her sanctum. Instead, she spreads herself among the demon races like a disease, for those in her grip infect others with her emotion. Even when summoned, she must manifest within another being's heart. If her summoner does not present her with a host, she enters him instead.

LYPOTHYMIE (EMOTIONAL DISEASE)

Virulence: (carrier's Charisma)

Difficulty to Treat: (victim's Compassion)

Morbidity: 2

Treated Morbidity: 1

Note: Victims' players roll (Temperance + Integrity) instead of (Stamina + Resistance) to avoid or resist infection.

Symptoms: Victims of this disease experience bouts of a strange, distant sadness. Visions flit through the mind's eye: images of unknown people and places that are nonetheless freighted with familiarity and loss. These spasms of melancholy grow stronger as the disease progresses, until the victim swoons beneath the weight of nostalgia and longing. This condition is rarely fatal, but some delicate souls never wake from their swoon.

Duration: The initial symptoms appear within hours and intensify erratically over a period of five days. The disease then goes into remission. Once a victim is cured, others cannot infect him again for a full year, but immersing himself in memories of the emotion can result in a relapse.

Vector: This disease spreads through observation of a victim's emotional state. One person might catch it by watching a victim through a spyglass or even in a memory crystal, while another can sit mere inches away without risk as long as she pays no heed to the sufferer's grimaces and sighs. As a result, sensitive and gregarious individuals are far more vulnerable to infection than the aloof and self-absorbed. Likewise, overly dramatic hosts spread the disease quickly, while laconic souls hardly spread it at all.

Treatment: Immediate and powerful sensations overwhelm the languorous reflection that the disease demands. Infernal physicians administer stimulants such as cocaine, inflict physical torture or prescribe life-threatening motivators such as gladiatorial combat. Laymen propose prolonged bouts of sexual intercourse, but experts reject it, as the ensuing refractory periods are breeding grounds for the disease.

Those who approach Lypothymie in her sanctum each see her in a different way. Lao Lao's *Record of Fallibility* describes her as "lissome and haunting as some nameless lover from youth, with hair the color of autumn sunsets and eyes as pale as newly fallen snow." The *Fire Chronicle* states that she assumed the mien of its author's late grandmother, with a voice "akin to the sougning of leaves in the uttermost East." Demons liken her voice and visage to the music of the angyalkae. All agree that she eschews personal interaction, but if confronted, she consents to withdraw from an infected host if another submits to her taint.

Summoning: (Obscurity 2/5) Sorcerers beckon Lypothymie to overwhelm others with emotion or to employ her sufferers as spies. Others seek the knowledge she has gathered from millennia of looking out from behind her victims' eyes. If she has ever slipped through from Malfeas into Creation without a summons, no writings chronicle the visit.

Motivation: To share the melancholy of her nature. Lypothymie's Intimacies encompass the trappings of melancholy: dirges, mourners, funerals, graveyards, overcast skies, rain, empty streets and the hour before dawn.

Virtues: Compassion 2, Conviction 4, Temperance 4, Valor 1

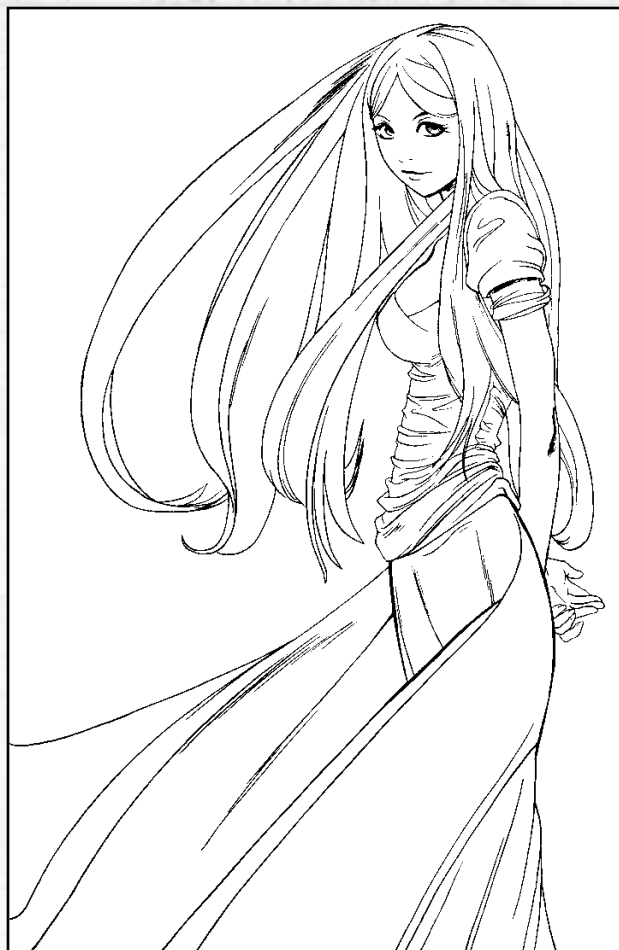
Traits: 22 dice for all rolls involving emotions; 18 dice for all other rolls. (See *The Books of Sorcery*, Vol. V—*The Roll of Glorious Divinity II*, p. 46.)

Sample Powers:

Infectious Melancholia—Whenever someone suffering from the disease that is Lypothymie interacts with another being, there is a chance of infection (see sidebar). This is an Emotion and Sickness effect. Once a victim succumbs to Lypothymie's touch, she anchors herself in his soul, recurring across the span of his life. She may reclaim her place in a former sufferer's soul at any time by spending a temporary Willpower. Only magic or death can exorcise her permanently.

Passion-Form Apotheosis—The Mask of Melancholy transforms a willing creature into a living emotion not unlike herself. The process is painful and irreversible. Sloughing his flesh, the recipient becomes a new emotional disease conveying a unique passion flavored by his personality. This is an Emotion and Shaping effect. The recipient infects another creature as part of the process; this host becomes a portal to his nascent sanctum. Empowering another host as a portal takes one week, and the new emotion-entity may have no more portals than his permanent Essence. If he loses all of his portal-hosts through death or exorcism, his sanctum perishes, as does he. Otherwise, he is as immortal as Lypothymie.

Soul's Grip—During the five days in which she wracks a victim's heart, Lypothymie gains great power over him. She perceives what transpires in her sufferers' presence as



though they were open doors onto the world. Whenever she wishes, she may visit them with haunting dreams and visions as per the Dreamscape and Worldly Illusion Charms at no cost. She may even afflict any number of hosts with heart-stopping paroxysms of anomie, an Emotion effect that kills those who fail a (Stamina + Integrity) check at difficulty 3. This is an all-or-nothing assault; those who survive are wholly exorcised of her influence.

Willpower: 9 **Essence:** 9

Other Notes: When Lypothymie is summoned, she automatically infects a willing or helpless victim prepared for her by her summoner. If no victim is present, she infects the sorcerer instead. She never leaves her sanctum and cannot be confronted physically without entering it. Lypothymie's power does not extend across realms of existence. When she leaves Creation, her hosts all go into remission. They never relapse on their own, nor can they infect others by any means.

MADLRADA,

THAT WHICH WEARS DOWN THE MOUNTAINS

DEMON OF THE THIRD CIRCLE, EIGHTH SOUL OF KIMBERY

In the Age before history, when the Primordials played games of empire with mortals and Lintha and Dragon

ABSTRACT DOORS AND SANCTUMS

While most sanctum entrances are tied to physical objects, some spirits anchor their sanctums to thoughts, sensory stimuli or other ephemeral things. Such an entrance, called an *abstract door*, can be anything with a distinct conceptual existence: a piece of music, a celestial conjunction, a feeling or a dream. If an abstract door has a physical manifestation, such as a certain archaic litany or the first sunset of the year, anyone who perceives that physical manifestation may access the sanctum. If the door exists only within a living being's psyche, such as inside an uncanny emotion or idea, one accesses the sanctum by touching a being who's actively feeling or thinking about that abstraction. Leaving the sanctum takes one to the last place whence someone entered. The sanctum's owner can redirect it to another appropriate location, using Charms such as Sense Domain to find a corresponding target. Few gods know how to craft abstract doors, and the Celestial Bureaucracy frowns on their use by lesser divinities. Demons, being stranger than gods and lacking the same restrictions, craft such doorways more often, but they remain rare even in the Demon City.

In even rarer instances, spirits build entire sanctums out of abstractions. For example, such a habitation might be constructed from solidified mathematics or furnished with congealed emotions. As with an ordinary sanctum's contents, abstract furnishings, or *ephemera*, become tangible to all who enter the sanctum's confines. Mortals and Exalted alike find it difficult to navigate places made of ephemera. Any action taken by a non-spiritual entity to examine or interact with such a sanctum and its accoutrements uses the lowest of (Lore, Occult or the appropriate Ability).

Kings, few equaled Madelrada in matters of strategy. When the gods made war against their makers, Madelrada directed legions of Lintha warriors against the armies of the Exalted. And now, as Kimberly drowns in her cage of blackened bone, Madelrada tests her stratagems with demon armies, always preparing for war against the lords of Creation.

Demons speak of Madelrada in reverent, uneasy tones. She numbers among the Eight Masterful Demon Generals who survived the Primordial War, infernal masterminds that endured the ravages of battle and the traumatic reshaping of the Yozis into their own prison. In military matters, her principles run toward Fabian tactics



and guerilla warfare. Like her progenitor, she is a creature of ebb and flow. She guides her troops upon the tides of battle, striking suddenly and then falling back, willingly sacrificing troops to achieve her objectives. She gladly loses any number of battles to win a war. This philosophy informs all of her actions and inspires apprehension in those who deal with her. Who can say whether a victory over Madelrada in battle or intrigue is but a stepping stone to ultimate defeat?

Madelrada appears as a massive woman, tall and barrel-chested, whose indigo skin absorbs the light. Her eyes gleam with blunt, authoritative intellect, and her hair is cut in a military crop. Both are dull gray and flecked with rust. At all times, she attires herself in nigh-impenetrable armor of ivory and tarnished bronze.

Summoning: (Obscurity 2/5) Sorcerers typically call upon Madelrada for martial purposes, whether to slaughter enemies in personal combat or manage prolonged campaigns against a superior foe. On rare occasions, when great wars decimate the adult populations of whole swaths of the Threshold, she may follow the resulting rivers of blood back into Creation.

Motivation: To wear away all opposition to the Yozis. Madelrada's Intimacies are toward the trappings of war, including armies, generals, soldiers, arms, armor, military histories, ambushes and battlefields, as well

as such carrion-eating beasts as jackals, rations, ravens and vultures.

Virtues: Compassion 1, Conviction 5, Temperance 4, Valor 4

Traits: 25 dice for all War rolls; 20 dice for all other rolls. (See *The Books of Sorcery*, Vol. V—*The Roll of Glorious Divinity II*, p. 46.)

Sample Powers:

Eye of Erosion—Madelrada's gaze wears away all things, from the concrete to the abstract. Employed as a miscellaneous action, her stare automatically strikes a single target as an unblockable, undodgeable, unsoakable attack with raw damage of 10. This attack does not inflict normal damage. Instead, depending on whether Madelrada wishes to attack the body or the soul, each success either reduces the target's soak and Hardness by 1L/1B or strips away one dot of temporary Willpower. Against a target with soak and Hardness of 0L/0B, each success removes one permanent dot from a Physical Attribute or one permanent health level. Against a target with no temporary Willpower, each success removes one permanent dot from a Social or Mental Attribute, a Virtue or Willpower. The target's player determines what permanent traits are lost. Mortals lose these traits forever, while Exalted and other magical entities regain lost traits at a rate of one dot per day of the player's choice.

Hundredfold Armament Assault—When Madelrada enters battle, 100 arms burst forth from her shoulders, each bearing a weapon of dark blue ice. Her attacks have infinite Rate, and her multiple action penalties are halved. In mass combat, if her unit's Magnitude is 9 or less, its minimum damage increases to 10. She reflexively reshapes her weapons into swords, spears, maces, bows or any other armaments or combination thereof. All these weapons are acid rimed (see *The Manual of Exalted Power—The Infernals*, pp. 178-179).

Vitriolic Blood—Pure vitriol courses through Madelrada's veins. Whenever she suffers damage from being slashed or stabbed, a dark and acrid torrent of vitriolic blood gushes forth. Any non-artifact weapon that wounds her in this fashion is instantly destroyed. The wound continues to spew vitriol for as many minutes as she suffered health levels of damage, affecting all other creatures and objects within three yards as an acid bath (see *Exalted*, p. 131). She may cut herself to unleash her blood as a miscellaneous action, taking as many health levels of lethal damage as she chooses.

Willpower: 10 **Essence:** 10

Other Notes: Although her strategic prowess cannot match that of Mars or the Unconquered Sun, Madelrada is easily the equal of any other general in Creation or Malfeas within her area of specialty.

DEMONS OF THE SECOND CIRCLE

EMERENZIA, THE MINISTER OF THE IVORY TASSEL

DEMON OF THE SECOND CIRCLE,

DEFINING SOUL OF HE WHO DECEIVES

A great plateau in the Demon City supports the wealthy district known as the Stephaton. There, amidst the district's brazen plazas, its bubbling fountains of vitriol and walled gardens of flowering copper trees, rises a tower of shining jet. Demons of every stripe converge upon this tower, from haughty citizens in their palanquins to bedraggled serfs that could not, under other circumstances, ever receive permission to set foot upon the Stephaton's streets. This ebony spire is the office-temple of the Ministry of Despair, whose chief official is Emerenzia, the Minister of the Ivory Tassel.

Emerenzia always comports himself in accordance with his station. His deep blue robes of office never crease or stain, and his scholar's cap, glistening with badges of tainted orichalcum and jade, is surmounted by a bone spike from which hangs his eponymous tassel. Beneath his cap, his ancient eyes never reveal a hint of compassion. A decanthrope accompanies him at all times as aide-de-camp and honor guard. Its many hosts carry Emerenzia's



bags, his five-tiered parasol of human skin and the small, engraved brass case that contains his personal seal.

The Ministry of Despair operates under a mandate from Cecelyne to assess and distribute suffering throughout the Demon City. A few come to the Ministry in hopes of alleviating their troubles, although such petitions are rarely approved. Most supplicants requisition misery for well-to-do rivals instead, and these requests are far more likely to get results. The Minister of the Ivory Tassel delegates most of these matters to his many subordinates. Other office-temples devoted to Cecelyne's law, such as the Ministry of Failure and the Ministry of Lust, possess overlapping fields of responsibility, and Emerenzia dedicates most of his time and effort to intrigues against his counterparts there.

Summoning: (Obscurity 3/5) Sorcerers summon Emerenzia to aid them in matters of government and intrigue. When thousands in Creation suffer in the grip of a heartless bureaucracy, the Minister of the Ivory Tassel may appear to give pointers to the bureaucrats responsible.

Motivation: To crush the dreams of the weak and drown them in misery. Emerenzia's Intimacies include the Ebon Dragon, Akallu (his progenitor), his reputation, the trappings of his office and the Ministry of Despair. He also has negative Intimacies toward rival ministers, such as Istar, the Censor of Forbidden Loves.

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 5, Stamina 4; Charisma 4, Manipulation 6, Appearance 4; Perception 6, Intelligence 6, Wits 4

Virtues: Compassion 1, Conviction 5, Temperance 4, Valor 2

Abilities: Archery 3, Athletics 1, Awareness 3, Bureaucracy 7, Craft (Air) 4, Dodge 3, Integrity 5, Investigation 6, Larceny 3, Linguistics (Native: Old Realm; Others: Aalu, Guild Cant, High Holy Speech, High Realm, Riverspeak) 5, Lore 4, Martial Arts 3, Melee 3, Occult 3, Performance 2 (Ceremonies +3), Presence 5, Resistance 2, Ride 3, Sail 1, Socialize 5, Stealth 1, Thrown 3

Backgrounds: Backing 3, Cult 1, Followers 3, Manse 5, Sanctum 4

Charms:

Banish—Expels target from his office

Calculated Order of Immediate Action—Crush hope

Domain Manipulation Scenario—Speed, slow or halt bureaucratic activities

Emergency Prayer Relocation—Only to ancillary offices

Eye of Inspiration—Bureaucracy; only for subordinates

Harrow the Mind—Illusions of horror and despair

Materialize—Costs 80 motes

Melodious Diagnostic Report

Mind-Knife Sacrament—Empower subordinate priest-bureaucrats

Paper Tiger Arrangement—All-Encompassing

Plague of Menaces—Albino snakes

Portal

Regalia of Authority

Signet of Authority—A writ marked with his seal

Words of Power—Recitation of Cecelyne's laws

Worldly Illusion

First (Ability) Excellency—Bureaucracy, Presence, Thrown

Second (Ability) Excellency—Bureaucracy, Integrity, Lore

Third (Ability) Excellency—Bureaucracy, Investigation

Infinite (Ability) Mastery—Bureaucracy

Divine (Ability) Subordination—Bureaucracy

Join Battle: 7

Attacks:

Punch: Speed 5, Accuracy 9, Damage 4B, Parry DV 5, Rate 3

Kick: Speed 5, Accuracy 8, Damage 7B, Parry DV 3, Rate 2

Clinch: Speed 6, Accuracy 8, Damage 4B, Parry DV —, Rate 1, Tags P

Infernal Prayer Strips: Speed 4, Accuracy 12, Damage 4L, Range 50, Rate 3

Soak: 14L/16B (Ivory scales, 12L/12B)

Health Levels: -0/-1/-1/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Dodge DV: 7 **Willpower:** 10

Essence: 6 **Essence Pool:** 110

Other Notes: Emerenzia uses prayer strips marked with the names of Demon Princes or Yozis as thrown weapons. When thrown, they become stronger and sharper than steel, reverting to ordinary paper at the end of the scene.

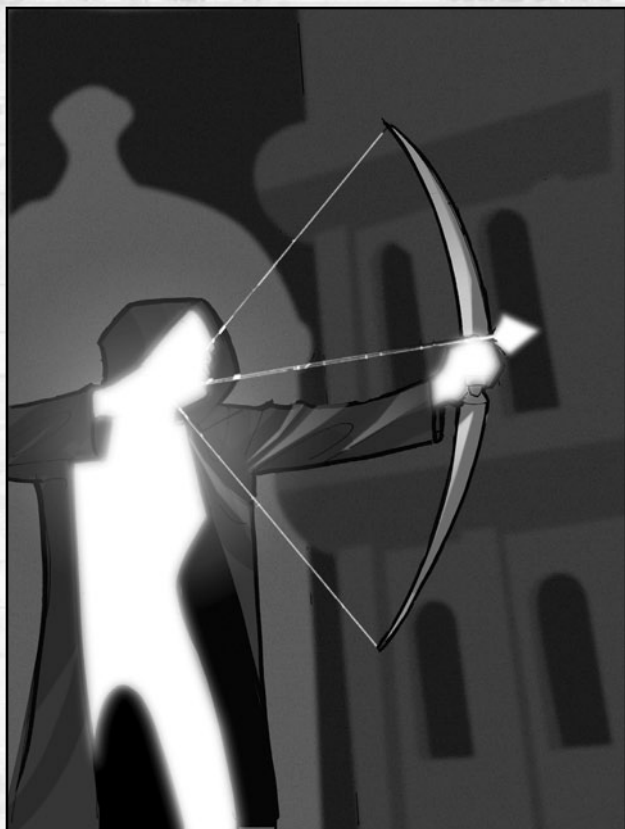
Emerenzia's decanthrope is named Maonim. Its Motivation is to serve the Minister of the Ivory Tassel in all things. Maonim has learned a thing or two from centuries of service to the Minister. It has Intelligence 4, Bureaucracy 3 (Ministry of Despair +2), Lore 2 and Occult 2. Its host bodies are all handsome and well-groomed (Appearance 3), while its own warty form is an unusual white. When Emerenzia is summoned, Maonim and all of its host bodies accompany him. Binding Emerenzia also binds his servant.

GEBRE, THE PAVANE OF DYING STARS

DEMON OF THE SECOND CIRCLE,

MESSENGER SOUL OF THE END OF ALL WISDOM

Hundreds of stars gleam fitfully in the Malfean skies. Ligier's green light masks their smoldering glow; only when the Ebon Dragon emerges can they be clearly seen. They drift slowly through the empty spaces between the layers of the Demon City, withering in the Green Sun's glare, moving to the endless measures of their own funereal dance. That dance is Gebre, the Pavane of Dying Stars.



Gebre's dance conveys those secrets that Orabilis vouchsafes to the wise, and infernal adepts glean the messages placed there through their arts. Unlike Creation's astrology, Gebre's patterns say nothing of destiny. Instead, they reveal the lore of the stars themselves. Each of the dying stars was once a scholar, one who learned things known only to the Yozis, and their movements reveal that knowledge as they slowly burn away.

Even as his stars ebb and sway in the infernal skies, Gebre dances through the streets of the Demon City in the shape of a small, lithe man made of starlight. When he casts back the hood of his violet cloak, his sparkling hair sweeps across his shoulders like a halo. Sparks trail from his smoldering fingertips and rise from his footsteps like fireflies. His eyes are bottomless pools of night. He is gregarious by nature, impelled to outbursts of song and story, but his tales cannot be trusted. It is his nature to dissemble, and none can compel him to tell a wholly unembroidered truth.

Should the Pavane of Dying Stars be slain, all of the stars enmeshed in his dance die with him, flaring and guttering out like candle flames in a strong wind. But it is in the nature of Malfean stars to die, and new stars always emerge to replace them as demons overreach the limits of their understanding and meet with the touch of Orabilis.

Summoning: (Obscurity 3/5) Sorcerers invoke the Pavane of Dying Stars to learn the arts of infernal astrology. In-

fernalists commune with Gebre by catching starlight in a bronze mirror drenched in the blood of a goat. He speaks gladly to those who call upon him in this manner, but he will not enter Creation unless summoned.

Motivation: To enthrall with tales that hint at the will of the Yozis. Gebre's Intimacies include Orabilis, astrologers, stories, dances, enigmas and the dying stars.

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 5, Stamina 4; Charisma 5, Manipulation 5, Appearance 3; Perception 7, Intelligence 6, Wits 4

Virtues: Compassion 2, Conviction 4, Temperance 2, Valor 1

Abilities: Archery 4 (Composite Bow +3), Athletics 4, Awareness 5, Bureaucracy 1, Dodge 6, Integrity 1, Investigation 3, Linguistics (Native: Old Realm; Others: Flametongue, High Holy Speech, High Realm, Seatongue, Skytongue) 5, Lore 4, Martial Arts 1, Occult 5 (Art of Astrology +3, Art of Weather Working +1), Performance 7 (Dance +2, Storytelling +1), Presence 2 (Persuasion +3), Resistance 2, Ride 1, Sail 1 (Navigation +5), Socialize 5, Stealth 4, Survival 1

Backgrounds: Artifact 3, Backing 3, Cult 1, Followers 2, Manse 4, Resources 4, Sanctum 4

Charms:

Amethyst Awareness

Benefaction—Anyone whose horoscope he has cast

Essence Bite—Gebre's touch burns if he wishes (up to 7L Elemental damage)

Essence Plethora—10 extra motes

Hoodwink—Hypnotic blaze of starry lights

Hurry Home—When stars are in view

Impromptu Messenger—Hijacks astrological divinations

Loom Stride

Materialize—Costs 85 motes

Memory Mirror—Those who have been burned to points of light and cast into the sky by Orabilis

Shatter—Calls down a dying star

Subtle Whisper—Draws a target out of doors to look up at the stars

First (Ability) Excellency—Dodge, Occult, Performance

Second (Ability) Excellency—Dodge, Integrity, Occult, Performance

Third (Ability) Excellency—Dodge, Occult, Performance, Presence

Infinite (Ability) Mastery—Dodge, Occult, Performance

Divine (Ability) Subordination—Occult (astrology)

Join Battle: 9

Attacks:

Touch: Speed 5, Accuracy 7, Damage 2B, Parry DV 4, Rate 3

Kick: Speed 5, Accuracy 6, Damage 5B, Parry DV 2, Rate 2

Clinch: Speed 6, Accuracy 6, Damage 2B, Parry DV —, Rate 1, Tags P

Perfect Composite Bow (Emberlight): Speed 6, Accuracy 13, Damage 6L, Range 350, Rate 4, Tags 2, B

Soak: 15L/17B (Body of starlight, 13L/13B)

Health Levels: -0/-1/-1/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Dodge DV: 9 Willpower: 10

Essence: 7 Essence Pool: 130

Other Notes: Gebre's bow launches flickering white arrows of starlight. These arrows appear when he draws the bow and ignite any flammable materials they strike.

Each of Malfeas' dying stars acts as an abstract door (see p. 124) to Gebre's sanctum, accessible by viewing Hell's stars from across any distance. Within, Gebre dwells alone in sybaritic luxury. His treasures include jeweled orreries and astrolabes, a cache of personal transport artifacts (see **The Books of Sorcery, Vol. I—Wonders of the Lost Age**, pp. 52–54) and hundreds of bolts of Berengiere's cloth-of-voices filled with lost tales.

IYUTHA, THE VITRIOLIC DRAGON

DEMON OF THE SECOND CIRCLE, MESSENGER SOUL OF THAT WHICH WEARS DOWN THE MOUNTAINS

Borne upon infernal winds, the dragon Iyutha glares down at the Demon City with a heart full of venom. She loathes love and harmony and stability with every fiber of her being. Even the discordant streets of Hell contain too many of these things for her to know joy, so she pits herself against the order of Malfeas in every way she can encompass, employing politics and intrigue and force of arms to undermine the city's fiefdoms and cast them down into chaos.

When she takes flight to spit vitriol upon her foes and rend their towers with talons of black iron, Iyutha appears as a dragon scaled in ebon and purple. Jagged bone spikes jut through her skin, and her transparent wings ripple with horrifying phantasms and ornately blazoned blasphemies. When she would wreak subtler harm, she becomes an ugly crone with fingernails of rusty iron. Entering a rival's court, she worms her way into the ruler's inner circle with honeyed words, then pours poisonous advice into his ear. Meanwhile, she spreads rumors and lies throughout the court and the general populace, encouraging treachery and strife. Only in watching her efforts yield the fruit of betrayal does she sincerely smile.

Bleak omens accompany the Vitriolic Dragon when she appears in Creation. A greasy haze obscures the day, and stars wander from their constellations at night. Sheep abandon their shepherds, and cattle break from the herd. In the South, lions quarrel over their kills, while fleets in the West lose their bearings as compasses randomly spin. Jackdaws and kingfishers

MALFEAN ASTROLOGY

The stars in Heaven guide the fates of the children of Creation, but their power ends at the edge of Cecelyne, for there is no destiny in the Demon City. Instead, each of Hell's dying stars is the living ember of an infernal scholar, and a thaumaturge versed in Malfean astrology can divine their wisdom. Malfean astrology is a part of the thaumaturgical Art of Astrology, although its rituals do not function outside the demon prison.

Celestial Tutelage (1, Wits, trait's experience cost, one day): With this ritual, the thaumaturge gleans knowledge of a subject from the dance of the dying stars. She acquires a chosen trait with normal training times as though she possessed a tutor. Doing so requires performing the ritual each day of training; a failed roll means no progress is made on that day. Traits not found among demon scholars, such as Exalted Charms, cannot be learned in this manner.

Question the Dying Stars (2, Perception, 4, one hour): The thaumaturge petitions the dying stars for an answer to a single question regarding past events or the present locations of creatures or objects. Questions involving other realms of existence suffer a -5 external penalty. The number of successes rolled determines the accuracy of the answer obtained: 1+ (vague), 4+ (incomplete but enlightening), 7+ (somewhat accurate) or 10+ (accurate with details). On a botch, an incorrect answer is obtained. Questions regarding the Yozis, Primordials or Neverborn botch automatically, as do questions regarding subjects the Storyteller deems wholly beyond the ken of any infernal scholar.

Astral Palimpsest (3, Charisma, 4, one hour): By dancing beneath the dying stars, the thaumaturge adds to their dance, inserting a message of his choosing into their movements. He addresses the message to one or more persons, each of whom receives that message the next time they perform a divination using infernal astrology.

circle above palaces and ministries, presaging misfortune for the great.

Iyutha serves as brood mother to a score of aerial demon species and countless Demon-Blooded offspring, but she is no loving parent. Meddlesome and cruel, she employs her progeny as pawns in her efforts to destroy her enemies. Hatred comes naturally to her, and her adversaries are legion, comprising all who have ever given her offense over the Ages.



Summoning: (Obscurity 2/5) Some sorcerers conjure Iyutha to ravage their foes with claws and vitriol, while others call her forth to poison the hearts of their enemies' courts. She sometimes wrests herself free of the demon prison when the cruelty of a tyrannical parent or elder drives a child to parricide. For each month she does not betray someone whose trust she has won, she gains a point of Limit.

Motivation: To destroy love, beauty and order. Iyutha's Intimacies include Madelrada, treachery, ruins, war and her demon offspring.

Attributes: Strength 10, Dexterity 4, Stamina 10; Charisma 1, Manipulation 6, Appearance 1; Perception 4, Intelligence 4, Wits 4

Virtues: Compassion 1, Conviction 5, Temperance 2, Valor 4

Abilities: Athletics 3, Awareness 2, Bureaucracy 4 (Corruption +3), Craft (Vitriol) 3, Dodge 3, Integrity 3, Investigation 2, Larceny 4, Linguistics (Native: Old Realm; Others: High Realm, Low Realm, Seatongue, Skytongue) 4, Lore 2, Martial Arts 5, Medicine 1, Occult 3, Performance 1, Presence 3 (In Dragon Form +2), Resistance 5, Socialize 4, Thrown 4 (Dragon's Suspire +2), War 3

Backgrounds: Backing 3, Cult 1, Followers 3, Resources 4, Sanctum 3

Charms:

Affinity (Element) Control—All-Encompassing; Air, Vitriol

Bane Weapon—Her most recent sworn enemy (Element) *Dragon's Embrace*—Vitriol; Incites corrosive bitterness

Form Reduction Technique—Assumes an aged mortal form

Geas—Compels betrayal

Hoodwink—Vile whispers or the maddening markings on her wings

Materialize—Costs 85 motes

Memory Mirror—Secret failures and stifled ambitions

Mind-Knife Sacrament—Wears away Virtues; perverts memories and Intimacies

Natural Prognostication—Omens accompany the Vitriolic Dragon

Ox-Body Technique

Principle of Motion—Iyutha possesses up to 10 banked actions

Signet of Authority

Subtle Whisper—Silently urges disloyalty

Weather Control—Summons storms

First (Ability) Excellency—Investigation, Martial Arts, Socialize, War

Second (Ability) Excellency—Bureaucracy, Performance, Presence, Resistance

Third (Ability) Excellency—Investigation, Martial Arts, Socialize, War

Infinite (Ability) Mastery—Martial Arts, Socialize

Join Battle: 6

Attacks:

Claw: Speed 5, Accuracy 9, Damage 13L, Parry DV 5, Rate 3

Clinch: Speed 6, Accuracy 9, Damage 10B, Parry DV —, Rate 1, Tags P

Dragon's Suspire: Speed 6, Accuracy 10, Damage 10L, Range 30, Rate 1

Soak: 17L/22B (Draconic scales, 12L/12B, Hardness: 5L/5B)

Health Levels: -0/-1/-1/-1/-1/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Dodge DV: 7 **Willpower:** 10

Essence: 7 **Essence Pool:** 120

Other Notes: Iyutha's Dragon's Suspire is an unblockable gout of tainted black vitriol that rots flesh and scores both metal and stone.

JANEQUIN, FORTUNE'S FOOL

DEMON OF THE SECOND CIRCLE,

INDULGENT SOUL OF THE MISCONSTRUED COUNSELOR

Remondin, sixth soul of the Dragon Beyond the World, knows those futures that may yet come to pass. Her joy in the most improbable and outrageous futures condensed into Janequin, who promptly turned her back on her maker and danced out into the streets of the Demon City.



To this day, Fortune's Fool seeks her own pleasures in the saloons and grand estates of Malfeas. Wherever she goes, she leaves chaos in her wake.

Janequin's inscrutable behavior stems from the simplicity of her nature. She loves randomness and gladly risks everything on one cast of the dice, either literally in the Demon City's gambling halls or figuratively in the palace intrigues of her empire-building fellows of the Second Circle. Moreover, strange coincidences and improbable circumstances crop up around her, conspiring to spare her from the consequences of her whims. Her own not-inconsiderable mastery of the sword stems as much from luck as competence, for her blade penetrates even the most brilliant defense through blind chance.

Although Janequin's visage shares the delicate, inhuman beauty of the Fair Folk, one might mistake her for mortal if not for her eyes, which lack both iris and pupil. The left ripples in shades of aquamarine, while the right glitters with the color of rust. She wears luxurious garments—silks, furs, satins and velvets—that match the glory of her eyes and adorns herself with gold and jewels. While she spends wealth as freely as the clouds spread rain, she always finds a way to replenish her funds.

Summoning: (Obscurity 3/3) Rash sorcerers summon Janequin to employ her talents for gambling, intrigue and swordplay, while vain sorcerers call upon her as a paramour. When the wise feel compelled to bring her forth, they send her into the jaws of an enemy's machinations and watch as complex schemes fall to ruin around her. Fortune's Fool occasionally finds her way into Creation when a mortal weds one of the Fair Folk. If Janequin receives orders that so thoroughly hem her in as to make her behavior predictable, she is freed of one order (chosen at random) and gains a point of Limit.

Motivation: To act whimsically and recklessly. Janequin's Intimacies include gambling, gamblers, intrigue, unanticipated events and the Fair Folk.

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 6, Stamina 4; Charisma 6, Manipulation 3, Appearance 6; Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 6

Virtues: Compassion 2, Conviction 2, Temperance 1, Valor 4

Abilities: Athletics 5 (Leaping From High Places +2), Awareness 2 (Unexpected Threats +3), Bureaucracy 2 (Malfeas +2, Whitewall +1), Dodge 6, Integrity 1, Larceny 6 (Games of Chance +3), Linguistics (Native: Old Realm; Others: Flametongue, Guild Cant, High Realm, Low

Realm, Riverspeak, Skytongue) 6, Lore 1, Martial Arts 2 (Free-for-Alls +3), Medicine 1, Melee 6 (Free-for-Alls +2), Occult 2, Performance 2, Presence 3 (Persuasion +1, Seduction +1), Resistance 2, Ride 4, Sail 1, Socialize 4, Stealth 3, Thrown 2

Backgrounds: Artifact 3, Contacts 5, Cult 1, Influence 2, Resources 1–5

Charms:

Benefaction—All-Encompassing

Divine Decree—Improbable events

Essence Plethora—10 extra motes

Harrow the Mind—Persuade the target to believe something wildly implausible

Impromptu Messenger—Her visage appears on a face card in a card game

Malediction—All-Encompassing

Materialize—Costs 80 motes

Mirror of the Infinite Wardrobe—Any mortal, feline or vulpine shape, but her eyes always remain the same

Natural Prognostication

Principle of Motion—Janequin possesses up to nine banked actions

Spice of Custodial Delectation—Gambling

Stoke the Flame—Recklessness or loss of self-control

Touch of Eternity—The recipient shrugs off curses and enchantments

Wyld Armor—For three motes, Janequin gains +6 to resistance against the Wyld for one day; she may extend this benefit to others for two additional motes per person

First (Ability) Excellency—Dodge, Melee

Third (Ability) Excellency—Athletics, Larceny, Melee, Socialize

Infinite (Ability) Mastery—Dodge, Melee

Divine (Ability) Subordination—All-Encompassing; Melee (Conviction Flaw of Invulnerability)

Join Battle: 8

Attacks:

Punch: Speed 5, Accuracy 9, Damage 3B, Parry DV 5, Rate 3

Kick: Speed 5, Accuracy 8, Damage 6B, Parry DV 3, Rate 2

Clinch: Speed 6, Accuracy 8, Damage 3B, Parry DV —, Rate 1, Tags P

Wyld-Steel Rapier (Martingale): Speed 4, Accuracy 17, Damage 10L, Parry DV 7, Rate 3

Soak: 12L/14B (Robe of demon-fox fur, 10L/10B)

Health Levels: -0/-1/-1/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Dodge DV: 10 **Willpower:** 9

Essence: 7 **Essence Pool:** 125

Other Notes: Janequin is a random factor, a roving snag in the Loom of Fate, and providence has no hold on her. She is wholly immune to all forms of astrology (mortal,

infernal and Sidereal), and opponents do not gain the benefits of the Destiny Background while facing her.

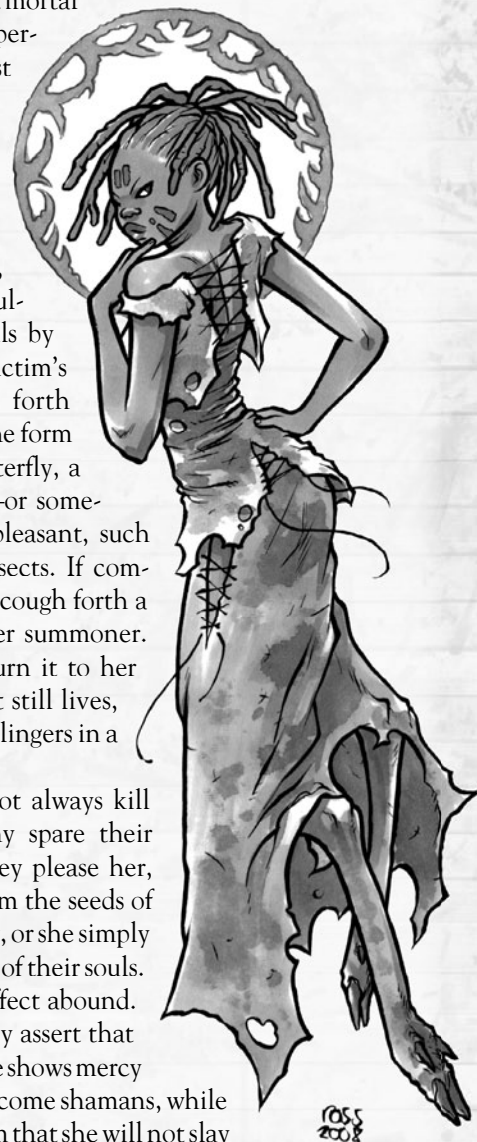
MARA, THE SHADOW-LOVER

DEMON OF THE SECOND CIRCLE, DEFINING SOUL OF THAT WHICH CALLS TO THE SHADOWS

Mara, the Defining soul of Erembour, shows a mutable face to the world. Her apparent age varies from youthful to motherly, while her ethnicity matches the region to which she has been summoned. She is comely in all forms, however, with bright blue eyes and, hidden beneath her long skirts, the hooves of a deer. She favors forest colors in her garb and prefers to travel beneath a woodland's eaves. In Malfeas, she makes her home in a great tree amidst the forest Hrotsvitha, wherein her verdigrised garments gleam with threads of shining brass.

Some call Mara the Shadow-Lover. She comes after dark, either in the flesh or in dreams, to seduce both men and women. Most mortal lovers die. Some perish amid the first night of coupling, while others waste away over weeks or months of doleful pleasure. Some, too, call her the Soul-Eater, for she kills by swallowing her victim's soul, drawing it forth with her kiss in the form of a vapor, a butterfly, a bird or a snake—or something even less pleasant, such as a swarm of insects. If commanded, she can cough forth a stolen soul for her summoner. She can also return it to her victim's body if it still lives, though life rarely lingers in a soulless frame.

Mara does not always kill her victims. Why spare their lives? Perhaps they please her, or she sees in them the seeds of some dark destiny, or she simply dislikes the flavor of their souls. Rumors to this effect abound. In the South, they assert that those to whom she shows mercy are destined to become shamans, while Northerners claim that she will not slay



a bedmate who can make her laugh. Cathak Rakara's *Journey to the East* states that she has a pact with the forest spirits of the East and will do no harm to those under a wood god's protection. Among the villages and towns of the Hundred Kingdoms, they say she afflicts only the beautiful, and they disfigure their children when rumor spreads that she is near.

When Mara finds someone fated to bring great suffering into the world, she becomes that one's lover in truth, returning again and again to teach him or her every pleasure of the flesh. Such a one battens on stolen souls delivered from her lips, growing strong in infernal power and acquiring a taste for death.

Summoning: (Obscurity 1/3) Sorcerers conjure Mara for purposes of seduction and murder, or to empower a mortal with the strength of stolen souls. Some say that deep and abiding grief over the loss of a loved one calls her forth from Malfestas wearing that loved one's shape. Others conjecture that she emerges from the demon prison when someone sheds seven tears into a placid forest pool, and that a shooting star marks her arrival in Creation.

Motivation: To find lovers worthy of her attentions. Mara's Intimacies include woodlands, deer, beautiful mortals, dark fates, pleasure and death.

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 4, Stamina 4; Charisma 6, Manipulation 6, Appearance 4; Perception 4, Intelligence 6, Wits 4

Virtues: Compassion 3, Conviction 4, Temperance 5, Valor 2

Abilities: Athletics 2, Awareness 2, Dodge 3, Integrity 2, Linguistics 3 (Native: Old Realm, Others: Flametongue, Forest-tongue, Riverspeak, Skytongue) 4, Lore 4, Martial Arts 5, Medicine 2, Occult 5 (Sorcery +2), Performance 3, Presence 4 (Seduction +3), Resistance 5, Socialize 2, Stealth 5, Survival 1 (Forests +2)

Backgrounds: Allies 2, Backing 3, Contacts 2, Cult 1, Followers 3, Influence 2, Resources 1

Charms:

Benefaction—Those who survive her favors

Dreamscape—Appears in dreams to seduce her victims

Essence Bite—The touch of Mara tears at the soul; inflicts three aggravated health levels of damage that bypass armor

Foretell the Future—Divines precisely what havoc her lover is destined to wreak

Form Reduction Technique—Mara assumes the form of a cat or a mist

Fruit of Living Essence—Consumes souls; a mortal victim suffers lethal health levels of damage equal to Mara's successes

Hand of Destiny—Guides those with dark destinies upon their paths

Harrow the Mind—Seduces her victims

Hoodwink—Her sultry presence befuddles the weak willed

Materialize—Costs 80 motes

Mind-Knife Sacrament—Feeds stolen souls to a protégé

Mirror of the Infinite Wardrobe—Mara assumes the guise of a deceased loved one, while her raiment matches the hues of the woods nearby

Natural Prognostication—Senses whether a lover is fated to bring horror to the world

Principle of Motion—Mara maintains up to nine banked actions

Stoke the Flame—The Shadow-Lover inspires lust

Touch of Eternity—Strengthens the soul of her protégé

Wine of Infinite Heartbreak—Even as she drains their lives, the Soul-Eater's victims crave her touch

First (Ability) Excellency—Occult, Presence, Socialize, Stealth

Second (Ability) Excellency—Integrity, Resistance

Infinite (Ability) Mastery—Occult, Presence

Sorcery—Mara knows many spells of the Terrestrial Circle and a few spells of the Celestial Circle, including Sapphire Countermagic and Shadow Theft.

Join Battle: 6

Attacks:

Punch: Speed 5, Accuracy 10, Damage 4B, Parry DV 6, Rate 3

Kick: Speed 5, Accuracy 9, Damage 7B, Parry DV 4, Rate 2

Clinch: Speed 6, Accuracy 9, Damage 4B, Parry DV —, Rate 1, Tags P

Soak: 14L/16B (Inhuman resilience, 12L/12B)

Health Levels: -0/-1/-1/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Dodge DV: 7 **Willpower:** 9

Essence: 7 **Essence Pool:** 115

Other Notes: Mara's presence frightens all animals except for deer, which regard her as one of their own kind.

SIGERETH, THE PLAYER OF GAMES

DEMON OF THE SECOND CIRCLE, INDULGENT SOUL OF THAT WHICH WEARS DOWN THE MOUNTAINS

Those who call Sigereth are greeted to the sight of a hairless young man the color of cocoa, inhumanly slim, bearing a box carved of red jade and Hrotsvitha's brass. This youth is but a puppet—his heart does not beat, he neither breathes nor dreams, and when struck by weapons, his wounds ooze a milk-white sap. The wise summoner lays his binding on the box the boy carries, for the box itself is Sigereth, who is among the most brilliant gamesters in the demon realm. Her voice, a haughty and lubricious contralto, rises from the box as if wending out of the depths of a seashell. She contains in her depths every game ever played in Creation and Malfestas. Her pieces and dice are

her bones, and her boards and cards are her flesh, all of which pulse with her blood and breath.

Those who play one another at the games of Sigereth may wager anything they possess: physical property, pledges of action or even friendships, skills, memories and dreams. One may also play against Sigereth herself, with her puppet moving the pieces on her behalf. She encourages those who run out of resources to stake themselves upon the next game. She draws those who wager themselves and lose into Malfeas, where she reshapes them into the First Circle demons known as baidak (see pp. 139-141).

Sigereth dwells in luxury in her Palace of Ineluctable Victory, a sprawling fortress-manse from which she rules one-tenth of a Malfean layer. The manse swarms with baidak demons in her service. Most practice endless war games, while others tend to their mistress's personal needs, massaging her pieces with scented oils and retouching her painted pasteboards. Beneath the vast dome of her map room, those baidak she has imbued with sentience plan her campaigns to expand her empire.

Summoning: (Obscurity 2/4) Those who summon Sigereth most often seek her tutelage in matters of strategy. Others use her to command troops, enforce wagers or provide an opponent worthy of their skills. A challenge from a master of sufficient repute, written in his own hand and cast into the sea, draws her forth from Malfeas without a summons.

Motivation: To facilitate games between adversaries of great skill. Sigereth's Intimacies include games, gamesters, tacticians, maps, intriguers, pawns, intricate stratagems and her demon servants.

Attributes: Strength 0 (puppet 2), Dexterity 0 (puppet 4), Stamina 7; Charisma 6, Manipulation 7, Appearance 4; Perception 6, Intelligence 7, Wits 7

Virtues: Compassion 2, Conviction 3, Temperance 4, Valor 5

Abilities: Awareness 5 (Gameplay +3), Bureaucracy 4, Integrity 6, Investigation 5, Larceny 3 (Games of Chance +3), Linguistics (Native: Old Realm; Others: Flametongue, Forest-tongue, Guild Cant, High Holy Speech, High Realm, Low Realm, Riverspeak, Seatongue, Skytongue) 9, Lore 4, Occult 3, Resistance 5, Socialize 2, Stealth 2, War 8 (Games of Skill +3)

Backgrounds: Backing 3, Cult 1, Followers 5, Influence 2, Manse 4, Resources 5, Sanctum 4

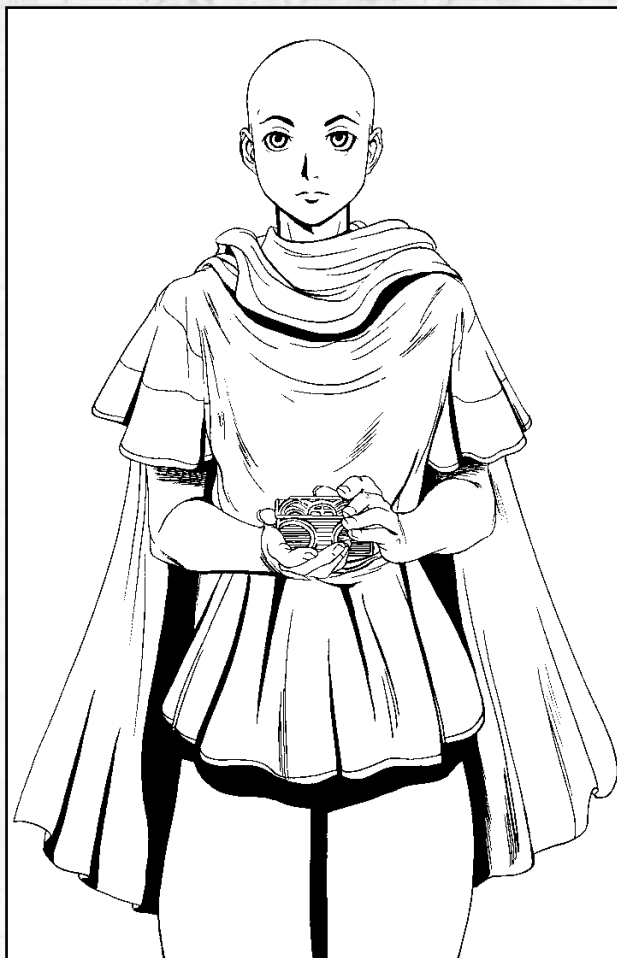
Charms:

Bread of Weak Spirit—Baidak

Call—Baidak

Capture—One that loses a wager against Sigereth is drawn through her box into her sanctum

Divine Prerogative—Compelling Sigereth to lose a game is an unacceptable order



Domain Manipulation Scenario—Controls the fall of dice, cards and other random game elements

Dreaded Embrace of Mundanity—War

Endowment—Augments a baidak

Essence Bite—Pain wracks those who strike the Player of Games

Geas—Compels the loser of a wager to fulfill his forfeit

Materialize—Costs 80 motes

Mind-Knife Sacrament—Transfers a game's ephemeral wager from loser to winner

Possession—Puppet

Sense Domain

Signet of Authority

Spice of Custodial Delectation—Games of skill

Subtle Whisper—Compels onlookers to play

First (Ability) Excellency—Lore, Resistance, War

Second (Ability) Excellency—Awareness, Integrity, Lore, War

Third (Ability) Excellency—Lore, War

Infinite (Ability) Mastery—War

Divine (Ability) Subordination—War

Join Battle: 12

Attacks: None

Soak: 19L/21B (Case of brass and jade, 15L/15B, Hardness: 10L/10B)

Health Levels: -0/-1/-1/-1/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Dodge DV: 0 **Willpower:** 9

Essence: 7 **Essence Pool:** 115

Other Notes: The Player of Games possesses no means of physical action. She cannot move unless carried, nor can she fight without the aid of subordinate demons to do battle on her behalf.

Sigereth uses her Geas Charm to force losing players to pay their debts. Her Mind-Knife Sacrament Charm facilitates wagers of ephemeral things, such as friendships, skills and memories. The Charm may raise or lower Attributes and Backgrounds in addition to the usual traits. Every improvement to a game's winner is matched by an equivalent debit to the loser, and the effects are permanent. Transference of Attributes and Backgrounds is a Shaping effect. If one participant is unaffected by the Charm, so is the other. Her Geas and Mind-Knife Sacrament Charms only work on those who enter a game of their own will, without unnatural persuasion or compulsion.

If a mortal wagers his body and soul against Sigereth and loses, he instantly travels to her sanctum, where she remakes him into one of the First Circle demons known as baidak (see pp. 139-141). The only known remedy is to gamble against Sigereth, wagering one's own body and soul to win the baidak's restoration to mortality.

Sigereth's nameless puppet is an extra with 5L/10B soak. It may perform only menial non-combat tasks, such as to carry Sigereth's box and to move her pieces in play. If it is killed, she draws the remains back into her box, from which it re-emerges whole and unharmed at the following sunset.

SONDOK, SHE-WHO-STANDS-IN-DOORWAYS

DEMON OF THE SECOND CIRCLE, WARDEN SOUL OF THE GREEN SUN

Ligier crafts many instruments of worth, and he owns many treasures that are precious to him. Sondok, his Warden soul, formed to protect those things he holds dear. Her demeanor is as cold and hard as her black iron blades, save for when intruders threaten that which is in her care. Then her anger blazes up like the fires of her progenitor's forge.

She is of no great stature, but Sondok looms larger than life, moving with a tiger's feral grace. Dried blood streaks her face, her nails are blood-crusting talons, and her teeth come to points. A black tattoo resembling a bird's claw marks her left breast, concealed beneath dark red leathers and raiment of midnight silk. A decaying brown dog-spirit named Biryu paces endlessly at her heels. Under her golden wolf-ears crown, strung with braids of garnet twisted like tree roots, her hair forms a cloud of ebon fibers



so fine they cannot be distinguished as individual strands. Her eyes, if one dares look into them, are pools of blood filled with alien stars.

In the South of Creation, a ritual to beckon Sondok is well known to the Yozi-worshipping Cult of Darkness's Unseeing Eye, which she founded centuries ago. Although political subversion lies beyond her usual domain, she strengthens the cult as best she may, forging it into another weapon with which to safeguard her maker's interests.

Only once has She-Who-Stands-In-Doorways shown fondness for anyone born of Creation. Less than 20 years ago, a Dragon-Blooded sorcerer wooed Sondok and fathered a child upon her. Their daughter, Silla, hides somewhere in the River Province—perhaps in Nexus itself. Aside from a birthmark of a bird's claw, Silla seems no more than a Dragon-Blooded girl, but the dying stars of Malfeas know that Sondok can only truly die after being washed in her daughter's blood. Sondok guards the girl's identity and location with mad fury. Despite her love for Silla's father, it is said that she killed (or possibly only imprisoned) him to protect their daughter's anonymity.

Summoning: (Obscurity 1/4) Sorcerers summon Sondok to guard their homes and treasures or to train them in the arts of war. On moonless nights beneath the stars, blood sacrifices in her name open the way for her to enter Creation.

Motivation: To secure those things entrusted to her care. Sondok's Intimacies include whatever currently lies within her care, Ligier and his treasures, locks, sentinels, the Cult of Darkness's Unseeing Eye, her daughter and the child's father.

Attributes: Strength 7, Dexterity 8, Stamina 7; Charisma 2, Manipulation 3, Appearance 3; Perception 6, Intelligence 4, Wits 7

Virtues: Compassion 1, Conviction 5, Temperance 2, Valor 5

Abilities: Athletics 4, Awareness 4, Dodge 4, Integrity 3, Investigation 2, Linguistics (Native: Old Realm; Others: Flametongue, Forest-tongue, Riverspeak) 3, Lore 1, Martial Arts 4 (Claws +3), Medicine 1, Melee 7 (Axe +1, Sword +2), Occult 3, Presence 4 (Intimidation +3), Resistance 4, Thrown 4 (Axe +2), War 3

Backgrounds: Allies 1, Backing 3, Contacts 4, Cult 3, Familiar 1, Followers 3, Resources 2

Charms:

Affinity (Element) Control—Earth, Fire

Banish—Sondok ejects an intruder from the place she protects

Destiny Sponsorship—Sondok cannot die permanently until drenched in her daughter's blood

Divine Prerogative—She-Who-Stands-In-Doorways cannot be swayed from her guardianship

Dreaded Embrace of Mundanity—Melee

Essence Plethora—10 extra motes

Harrow the Mind—Convinces intruders to turn back

Intrusion-Sensing Method—Sondok knows when her charges are tampered with

Landscape Travel—Walk across lava as though it were solid stone

Malediction—Her star-filled eyes confound her opponents

Materialize—Costs 75 motes

Paper Tiger Arrangement—Conceals that which Sondok guards

Principle of Motion—Sondok maintains up to 10 banked actions

Sheathing the Material Form—Resists heat and flame

Spirit-Cutting

Weather Control—Disperses clouds from the night sky

Words of Power—Excoriates those who would trespass upon that which she wards

First (Ability) Excellency—Integrity, Martial Arts, Melee, Presence

Second (Ability) Excellency—Martial Arts, Melee

Third (Ability) Excellency—Martial Arts, Melee

Infinite (Ability) Mastery—Martial Arts, Melee

Join Battle: 11

Attacks:

Claw: Speed 5, Accuracy 17, Damage 10L, Parry DV 9, Rate 3

Kick: Speed 5, Accuracy 12, Damage 10B, Parry DV 5, Rate 2

Clinch: Speed 6, Accuracy 12, Damage 7B, Parry DV —, Rate 1, Tags P

Infernal Straight Sword: Speed 4, Accuracy 20, Damage 10L, Parry DV 9, Rate 2

Infernal Axe (melee): Speed 4, Accuracy 18, Damage 12L, Parry DV 7, Rate 2

Infernal Axe (thrown): Speed 5, Accuracy 15, Damage 10L, Rate 2, Range 10

Soak: 16L/18B (Infernal reinforced breastplate, 12L/11B, Hardness: 8L/8B, -1 mobility penalty, 1 fatigue value)

Health Levels: -0/-1/-1/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Dodge DV: 9 **Willpower:** 10

Essence: 5 **Essence Pool:** 110

Other Notes: When the stars shine down from a cloudless sky, Sondok receives a one-die bonus to all rolls.

BIRYU

Sondok's dog-spirit is as much a part of her as it is its own creature. If Biryu dies but Sondok does not, she resurrects him at midnight on the next new moon.

Str/Dex/Sta	Per/Int/Wits/Will	Health Levels	Atk (Spd/Acc/Dmg/Rate)	Dodge DV/S
6/5/6	4/2/3/6	-0/-1x3/-2x3/-4/I	Bite: 4/10/7L/1	6/11L/14B

Abilities: Athletics 4, Awareness 4, Dodge 4, Integrity 2, Martial Arts 4, Presence 1 (Intimidation +2), Resistance 6, Stealth 4, Survival 4 (Tracking +2)

Spirit Charms:

Materialize—Costs 40 motes

Tracking

First (Ability) Excellency: Athletics, Awareness, Dodge, Martial Arts, Survival

Essence: 2 **Essence Pool:** 50

STANEWALD,
SHE WHO SURMOUNTED THE OMPHALOS
DEMON OF THE SECOND CIRCLE,
REFLECTIVE SOUL OF THE RAVINE OF WHISPERS

Stanewald dances like wind-spun smoke, a shrill drone rising from the earth in her wake. Dark blood oozes from cracks and hollows in her presence, and corrosion spreads where her fingers brush silver or brass. When she speaks, she renders firedust impotent. She leaves no footprints, for her feet hover inches above the ground. She wears a horsehide cloak over her raiment of white silk. When she wishes foes to hear her approach, she casts it down, and it untwists into the empty shell of a horse. This is Wulfthryth, a creature neither wholly a part of her or wholly discrete. Its hollow legs bear her across land and sea, the beats of its iron-shod hooves ringing as clear and even as a drum.

The lore of the Demon City states that only the Yozis and two other demons dance as well as she. Those who have watched her claim that all mortal things appear clumsy and awkward beside the perfect beauty of her movements, but they speak without certainty, for none

have seen her clearly. Her body dissolves in strong light, only to flow away and re-form in shadow.

No music pleases Stanewald more than the sound of shattering stone. Its song draws her away from other matters, even those commands issued by her summoner. Her greatest strength lies in those dances that harm the land. Her Essence formed around that power. When she emerged from the bleak womb of Munaxes, she bore the title “The Answer to the Earth,” and for centuries, she came to Creation to scourge the spirit courts of stone. But 70 years ago, she climbed the Imperial Mountain at a Yozi’s behest, and whatever transpired on that journey changed her. She has lost her mission, and she desperately seeks a new purpose.

Summoning: (Obscurity 2/4) Sorcerers conjure Stanewald to perform her infamous dances. She loves the sound of splintering rock, and a major earthquake or damage to a stony manse can draw her forth from Malfeas.

Motivation: To find a purpose for her existence. Stanewald’s Intimacies include dancing, the sound of breaking rock, spirits and elementals of stone (a negative Intimacy) and Wulfthryth.

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 7, Stamina 4; Charisma 6, Manipulation 3, Appearance 5; Perception 5, Intelligence 4, Wits 4

Virtues: Compassion 2, Conviction 4, Temperance 3, Valor 4

Abilities: Athletics 4, Awareness 3, Dodge 5, Integrity 2, Linguistics (Native: Old Realm; Others: High Realm, Low Realm, Riverspeak) 3, Lore 4, Martial Arts 4, Occult 3, Performance 8 (Dance +3), Presence 6, Resistance 3, Ride 5, Socialize 3, Stealth 3

Backgrounds: Backing 3, Cult 3, Familiar 5 (Wulfthryth)

Charms:

Affinity (Element) Control—Earth; Stanewald manipulates up to eight barrels of stone

(Element) Dragon’s Embrace—Earth; Disguises her Essence as that of a spirit of stone

Host of Spirits—Stanewald may create a company of identical dancers

Landscape Hide—In shadow

Loom Stride—Flows between shadows

Materialize—Costs 80 motes

Material Tribulation Divestment—Stanewald dissolves into shadow, allowing weapons to pass right through her

Paper Tiger Arrangement—Conceals, disguises or creates illusions of stone objects

Principle of Motion—Stanewald possesses up to eight banked actions

Shatter—A stony surface erupts in a rocky maelstrom; inflicts 19B unblockable damage



Sheathing the Material Form—Stone cannot harm She Who Surmounted the Omphalos
Subtle Whisper—Her dances persuade without words
Worldly Illusion—Stanewald and a dance partner plunge into endless shadow
First (Ability) Excellency—Athletics, Dodge, Martial Arts,

Performance, Presence
Second (Ability) Excellency—Martial Arts, Performance
Third (Ability) Excellency—Martial Arts, Performance
Infinite (Ability) Mastery—Performance
Divine (Ability) Subordination—Performance
Join Battle: 7



STANEWALD'S 13 EFFICACIOUS DANCES

Stanewald has mastered 13 supernatural dances that draw on the power of Munaxes, the Ravine of Whispers, and her Yozi progenitor She Who Lives in Her Name. Twelve of these dances are described here, while the last remains a mystery for individual Storytellers to reveal.

Each dance operates like a thaumaturgical ritual. Although they belong to no Art, others can learn them as individual Procedures. Many of these dances require greater-than-human endurance to perform, however, and most Exalts can accomplish similar effects more quickly and easily with Charms and sorcery.

1. *The Hollows Dance* (1, Conviction, 1, 62 minutes): Weakens stone walls, leaving them porous (and halving their soak). Affects 50 square feet of wall per success.

2. *The Boulder-Dissolving Dance* (1, Conviction, 1, 63 minutes): Dissolves a boulder into sand.

3. *The Earth-Drumming Dance* (1, Conviction, 2, 67 minutes): The earth trembles gently, like a lightly tapped drum, until the dance ends. Affects one square mile per success.

4. *The Irkstone Giddha* (1, Conviction, viewers' MDV, 69 minutes): Mortals seeing the dance whose MDVs are overcome grow irate with rocks and stone and things made from them.

5. *The Earth-Wracking Reel* (2, Conviction, 2, 92 minutes): Inflicts agony on any earth spirits or earth elementals who view the dance in its entirety. Used on such a spirit as a form of torture, it imposes a three-die external penalty to the spirit's MDVs for purposes of resisting social attacks to compel behavior.

6. *The Stone-Wrath Saltarello* (2, Conviction, targets' MDV, 24 hours): Enrages spirits within (Essence) miles whose MDVs are overcome against a particular stone structure.

7. *The Burrowing Bolero* (2, Conviction, 1, 26 hours): Cuts a tunnel through earth or stone wide enough for an adult to pass through. The tunnel extends one foot per success on the roll for each hour spent dancing.

8. *The Ravine's Homage* (2, Conviction, 3, 29 hours): Opens a chasm underfoot seven miles deep and one foot in diameter per success. Stanewald's ability to walk on air protects her from falling in, but others who learn this dance aren't similarly protected.

9. *The Smoldering Tarantella* (3, Conviction, 2, three days): Births a small fumarole that vents small rocks and volcanic gases high into the air. This effect lasts for one year per success.

10. *The Divinity-Dissolving Dance* (3, Conviction, 1, five days): Scours the divine blood from a God-Blooded child of an earth elemental (no more than one year old per success).

11. *The Earthshaker Dance* (3, Conviction, 2, seven days): Produces a powerful local earthquake with a radius of (Essence) miles that lasts until the dance ends.

12. *The Dance of Earth and Fire* (3, Conviction, 3, seven days): Slowly dissolves a stone structure the size of a manse into white-hot magma. Those inside suffer environmental damage as if in a bonfire every action until they escape the structure.

WULFTHRYTH

If Wulfthryth dies but Stanewald does not, she resurrects him at midnight on the next new moon.

Str/Dex/Sta	Per/Int/Wits/Will	Health Levels	Atk (Spd/Acc/Dmg/Rate)	Dodge DV/S
14/3/10	3/1/4/5	-0x3/-1x3/-2x2/-4/1	Trample: 3/6/12L/1	5/5L/10B

Abilities: Athletics 4 (Ride Forever +3), Awareness 3, Dodge 4, Martial Arts 2, Presence 6 (Intimidation +2)

Spirit Charms:

Landscape Travel—Gallop at double speed

Materialize—Costs 40 motes

Second (Ability) Excellency: Athletics, Dodge

Essence: 3 **Essence Pool:** 55

Attacks:

Stone-Breaking Fist: Speed 5, Accuracy 13, Damage 10L, Parry DV 7, Rate 3

Boulder-Exploding Kick: Speed 6, Accuracy 12, Damage 14L, Parry DV 5, Rate 2

Gate-Shattering Touch: Speed 5, Accuracy 13, Damage 20L, Parry DV 7, Rate 1

Soak: 15L/17B (Shadow body, 13L/13B)

Health Levels: -0/-1/-1/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Dodge DV: 10 Willpower: 8

Essence: 8 Essence Pool: 120

Other Notes: Stanewald possesses three unique supernatural attacks: The Boulder-Exploding Kick, the Gate-Shattering Touch and the Stone-Breaking Fist. In addition to functioning as listed in the demon's attack traits, all three attacks inflict double damage against rock, stone construction, earth elementals and gods of earth and stone. Stanewald must meditate for five minutes (one long tick) prior to using her Gate-Shattering Touch. She may take no other actions during this period.

When confronted by shattering or tumbling rock, Stanewald tends to become distracted. She suffers a three-die internal penalty to all dice pools in such cases.

The sound of Stanewald's voice permanently renders fire dust inert, and her feet hover just above the earth, never actually touching the ground.

DEMONS OF THE FIRST CIRCLE

AALU, THE CANNIBAL BUREAUCRATS

DEMON OF THE FIRST CIRCLE,

PROGENY OF THE MINISTER OF THE IVORY TASSEL

An aalu's child-sized body and patterned wings resemble those of a locust, though the details remind one uncomfortably of certain desert spiders. Its many pale eyes are blind. The aalu know only sound and scent, though both senses are exceedingly keen. These gregarious creatures populate many branches of the Demon City's labyrinthine bureaucracies, for nothing pleases them so much as record-keeping. They have little use for pen or ink. Instead, they weave fully drafted documents of silk directly from their spinnerets. An aalu's offices are inevitably festooned with cobwebs, all of them hung thickly with documents in an arcane, organic filing system.

Their offices thrum with strident chatter as the aalu gabble to one another in their own tongue, one well suited to the obfuscation and minutiae endemic to their trade. A dull hum underlies that chatter, coming from their constantly grinding mandibles as they eat one another's silken memoranda. Blind as they are, the aalu cannot read. Instead, they eat written material and digest its meaning. This power is not limited to their own kind's silk, and more than one sorcerer has cut the Gordian knot of seeking a

single fact among many books by feeding whole libraries to a summoned aalu.

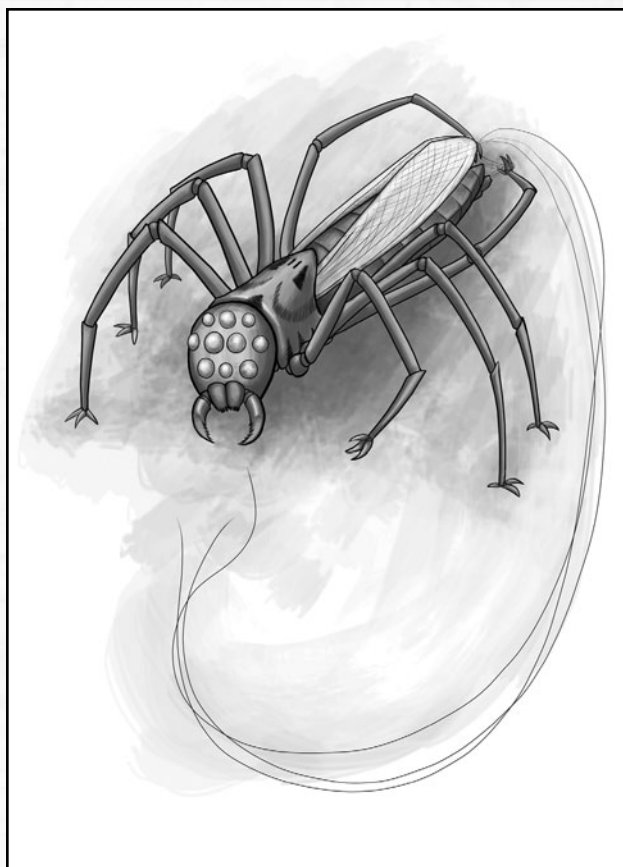
The cannibal bureaucrats take their name from their most solemn ritual. When one of their own kind dies, its officemates gather to compose elaborate poems to celebrate its passage. Consuming one another's poems sends them into an ecstatic state. In the resulting orgiastic frenzy, they devour their fellow's corpse and copulate with one another upon the bier.

Summoning: (Obscurity 3/4) The aalu serve primarily as bureaucrats, analysts and blind sentinels. Dynastic occultists occasionally invoke them to procure their magnificent calligraphy. When an infestation of bookworms or termites ravages a great library or archive, an aalu may find its way there from the Demon City to join the feast. For each day that a cannibal bureaucrat does not consume writings composed by someone other than itself, it gains a point of Limit.

Motivation: To perform bureaucratic functions in full accordance with the appropriate regulations.

Attributes: Strength 1, Dexterity 4, Stamina 2; Charisma 1, Manipulation 3, Appearance 1; Perception 4, Intelligence 4, Wits 3

Virtues: Compassion 3, Conviction 4, Temperance 1, Valor 1



Abilities: Athletics 2, Awareness 5 (Taste +3), Bureaucracy 4 (Records +2, Regulations +1), Craft (Air) 2 (Calligraphy +3), Craft (Wood) 2 (Paper-making +3), Dodge 3, Integrity 2 (Persuasion +1), Investigation 1 (Archives +2), Linguistics (Native: Aalu, Others: Old Realm) 1, Lore 3, Martial Arts 1, Occult 2, Performance 1, Socialize 2

Backgrounds: Backing 1, Resources 0–3

Charms:

Benefaction—Weaves a prayer strip with talismanic power

Divine Prerogative—The laws of Cecelyne

Domain Manipulation Scenario—Speeds or slows bureaucratic activity

Hoodwink—Babbles in baffling bureaucratic jargon

Materialize—Costs 45 motes

Measure the Wind—Smell the power of others

Plague of Menaces—Locusts and spiders

Spice of Custodial Delectation—Proper stamping and processing of forms

Subtle Whisper—Confuses and disorients someone who enters its office

(Element) Dragon's Embrace—Wood; Grants the power to absorb information by eating documents, but the scent of writing is so alluring that the recipient must succeed on a Temperance roll to refrain from doing so. (The aalu is permanently under the effect of this Charm at no cost.)

First (Ability) Excellency—Awareness, Bureaucracy, Investigation, Socialize

Second (Ability) Excellency—Awareness, Bureaucracy

Join Battle: 8

Attacks:

Bite: Speed 6, Accuracy 4, Damage 1L, Parry DV —, Rate 3

Kick: Speed 5, Accuracy 4, Damage 4B, Parry DV 1, Rate 2

Clinch: Speed 6, Accuracy 4, Damage 1B, Parry DV —, Rate 1, Tags P

Soak: 2L/3B (Chitinous body, 1L/1B)

Health Levels: -0/-1/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Dodge DV: 5 **Willpower:** 7

Essence: 2 **Essence Pool:** 55

Other Notes: All aalu are blind. The preternatural sharpness of their other senses reduces the usual -4 external penalty from blindness to -1 (factored into their Accuracy ratings above).

The aalu's knack for weaving silken memoranda is a natural ability, not a Charm. A summoned aalu derives its Resources by creating and selling blank silk of the highest quality. This counts as Resources 3 in urban centers such as Malfeas where literacy is valued. Its Resources rating drops in less cosmopolitan areas.

BAIDAK, THE EMPTY PAWNS

DEMON OF THE FIRST CIRCLE,

PROGENY OF THE PLAYER OF GAMES

It is unwise for mortals to wager too brashly against Sigereth, for those who cannot pay their debts become wholly hers. She remakes them into the baidak, her honor guard, who serve her forever in the Demon City. Baidak resemble the mortals from whom they were made, but their flesh becomes yellowed ivory, stylized and inhumanly smooth, inlaid with an elaborate brazen panoply emblazoned with Sigereth's mon. All share a uniform height and build, and they move in regimented array, more akin to clockworks than living creatures.

Although they are deft in battle, Sigereth's pawns are no more than automata (see **The Books of Sorcery, Vol. I—Wonders of the Lost Age**, pp. 96–97), incapable of acting on their own initiative. As such, they are easy to deceive but impossible to suborn, and they serve unquestioningly until death. When using Abscissic binding rules (see **The Books of Sorcery, Vol. IV—The Roll of Glorious Divinity I**, pp. 79–84, or **The Books of Sorcery, Vol. V—The Roll of Glorious Divinity II**, pp. 31–40), baidak always take the Slave template.

It is within Sigereth's power to undo the baidak transformation, restoring her creatures to their mortal lives. A summoner cannot compel her to do so, however. One who would release a baidak must wager against Sigereth in one of her games. On rare occasions, a baidak's conditioning crumbles on its own, allowing it to recall its mortal life. This does not restore the demon to mortality, and those who are not reconditioned by Sigereth generally go mad.

Summoning: (Obscurity 3/3) Summoned in quantity, baidak make most excellent soldiers, and sorcerers call upon them to form small but elite military units. They also serve as bodyguards. Baidak never appear in Creation without being summoned. Even if circumstances exist to allow it, they lack the initiative to take advantage. A baidak ordered to think and act independently cannot do so, but gains a point of Limit.

Motivation: To serve the will of Sigereth.

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 4, Stamina 4; Charisma 1, Manipulation 1, Appearance 3; Perception 2, Intelligence 2, Wits 2

Virtues: Automaton: Never fails Valor checks, never makes others

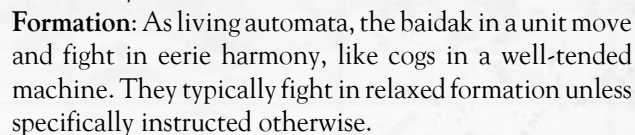
Abilities: Archery 3, Athletics 3, Awareness 3, Dodge 3, Integrity 5 (Obedience to Sigereth +10), Linguistics 3, Martial Arts 3, Melee 3, Presence 1, Resistance 1, Ride 1, Sail 1, Thrown 3, War 3

Backgrounds: Backing 1

Charms:

Call—Other baidak





"PROMOTED" BAIDAK

Sigereth employs the Endowment Charm to augment her baidak for specific purposes. As most of her augmentations must be reinforced once per week, she maintains only a handful at any given time. She has developed over 200 varieties of "promoted" baidak. A few of them are detailed here.

FERS BAIDAK, THE SILVER COUNSELORS

These infernal viziers stand as slender as reeds, their ivory bodies chased with silver filigree. Their eyes contain a terrible wisdom, for they are more than mere automata. They understand the nature of their enslavement to Sigereth, yet this interferes not a whit with their love for her. A fers baidak's uncanny mind allows it to gauge the likely outcome of a tactic or stratagem. As such, a demon augmented in this manner remains forever an advisor to the Player of Games, and only the rarest of circumstances inspire her to send one forth from the map room of her Palace of Ineluctable Victory.

Enhancements: +2 Intelligence, Foretell the Future (probable result of a battle), Sense Domain (anomalies in a battle it has planned for)

Virtues: Reception 2, Transmission 2, Stability 5, Power 1

KYOSHA BAIDAK, THE COPPER LANCERS

Taller and broader than others of its ilk, the kyosha baidak's ivory bodies are laced with verdigrised copper. They each bears an infernal lance tipped with emerald fire that trails a pennant of sweet-smelling violet smoke. This lance emits streamers of green flame after the fashion of a fire lance or firewand at a cost of two motes per attack.

Enhancements: +1 Melee, +1 War, Large mutation (see *Exalted*, p. 288), Third Melee Mastery, Infinite Melee Mastery

Attacks:

Infernal Lance: Speed 5, Accuracy 7, Damage 15*L/10**L, Parry DV 5, Rate 2, Tags 2, L, R

* Charging/Braced

** Stabbing

Fire Streamer: Speed 5, Accuracy 9, Damage 10L, Range 150 (max range), Rate 2, Tags 2, F

SANG BAIDAK, THE STONE COLOSSI

These basalt-crust soldiers loom like elephants over the battlefield. Each stands roughly 12 feet tall and possesses sufficient strength to crush ordinary mortal foes. Sigereth deploys them as living siege engines. They slowly pound even the strongest walls to gravel with their great bronze-shod hammers, or they assault distant foes by flinging boulders as large as a man's torso.

Enhancements: Armored Hide mutation (see *Exalted*, p. 289), Giant mutation (see *The Compass of Celestial Directions*, Vol. II—*The Wyld*, p. 148)

Attacks:

Mattock: Speed 5, Accuracy 6, Damage 19B/4, Parry DV 2, Rate 1, Tags 2, O, P, R

Boulder: Speed 5, Accuracy 2, Damage 12L, Range 150, Rate 1

BISCLAVARETS, THE SHADOW EATERS

DEMON OF THE FIRST CIRCLE, PROGENY OF THE SHADOW-LOVER

Mara begot the bisclavarets upon the hour of twilight, "the hour between the dog and the wolf." In that hour, as dawn or dusk stains the sky with the blood of night, the shadow eaters cast off their old skins and assume new forms. Beneath these guises, their true faces are leathery muzzles webbed with darkness, pierced with iron-gray eyes like naked blades. Although they take the shapes of men and beasts, their true nature lies between. Shreds of mortal intellect inform their bestial minds. They can speak, imitating the patterns of civilized discourse, but this is mere mimicry. Folk who converse with one soon observe that something fundamental is missing from its thoughts, though most assume mental deficiency rather than recognizing its inhuman nature.

Bisclavarets in animal form enjoy such sustenance as mortal flesh and blood, the liver and spleen of wolves, dove's feathers and the eggs of serpents. Those in mortal shape pursue a more restricted diet, feeding solely on honey or, by preference, mortal shadows cast by moonlight. Victims upon whose shadows they sup lose the ability to sleep. Madness ensues within a fortnight as waking nightmares ravage the victim's brain. Certain remedies exist to restore normal sleep, but a mortal victim's shadow never returns, nor is he ever truly whole.

The bisclavarets are creatures of decay. Each nestles a rot within its soul that it cannot contain. Physically, this rot manifests as putrefaction. A shadow eater's nest grows damp and rank with mold, while even the freshest



garments appear tattered and worn the moment one dons them. (They crumble to shreds and dust within days.) Mentally, although they crave human contact, they cannot curb their darker impulses. These impulses begin with simple tricks and pranks aimed at scaring a mortal companion or passerby. As the bislavaret loses control, it escalates to outright psychological abuse and physical torment. Such relationships often end with the shadow eater climbing onto the back of a “friend” and forcing him to run until he collapses of exhaustion, or compelling him to destroy his home and harm his loved ones solely for its amusement.

Summoning: (Obscurity 1/3) Bislavarets are summoned as spies and assassins. Sorcerers occasionally employ them to impersonate others, but their flawed intellect inevitably reveals such a masquerade. When trained animals turn on their masters, the mix of mortal and animal blood opens a crack through which a shadow eater may wriggle into Creation. A bislavaret gains a point of Limit every day it fails to wrack an unsuspecting mortal with terror.

Motivation: To share the company of mortals it can torment.

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 4, Stamina 2; Charisma 3, Manipulation 3, Appearance 2–4; Perception 2, Intelligence 1, Wits 2

Virtues: Compassion 2, Conviction 4, Temperance 1, Valor 2

Abilities: Athletics 2, Awareness 2, Dodge 1, Integrity 1, Larceny 5, Linguistics 3, Martial Arts 4, Melee 2, Performance 2, Presence 1, Resistance 3, Stealth 4, Survival 2, Thrown 2

Backgrounds: Backing 1

Charms:

Fruit of Living Essence—Allows the demon to devour a person’s shadow (a Crippling effect that leaves the victim unable to sleep and condemning him to a life of waking nightmares)

Harrow the Mind—Compels its victim to perform painful and demeaning tasks

Hoodwink—Playing tricks and noises in the dark

Malediction—Hinders its prey’s ability to flee

Materialize—Costs 45 motes

Paralyze—The demon grapples its prey’s shadow as a Hold effect, reducing her non-reflexive dice pools by three

Shapechange—At dawn or dusk, it may assume any human or animal shape ranging in size from dog to horse (though not a specific person or animal); indefinite duration

Stoke the Flame—Instills fear

Tracking—Shadow eaters are expert hunters

First (Ability) Excellency—Larceny, Martial Arts, Stealth, Survival

Third (Ability) Excellency—Larceny

Join Battle: 4

Attacks:

Punch: Speed 5, Accuracy 9, Damage 4B, Parry DV 5, Rate 3

Kick: Speed 5, Accuracy 8, Damage 7B, Parry DV 3, Rate 2

Clinch: Speed 6, Accuracy 8, Damage 4B, Parry DV —, Rate 1, Tags P

Animal Forms:

As appropriate to the animal in question (see **Exalted**, pp. 346–350, for examples)

Soak: 3L/4B (Tough hide, 2L/2B)

Health Levels: -0/-1/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Dodge DV: 4 **Willpower:** 6

Essence: 3 **Essence Pool:** 60

Other Notes: If a bislavaret drains all of a target’s temporary Willpower with *Fruit of Living Essence*, it completely devours the victim’s shadow. An Essence-user’s shadow slowly returns as she regains Willpower, but a mortal’s shadow is forever lost. A mortal whose shadow has been devoured by a bislavaret can have his normal sleep pattern restored by a potion of honey, purple amaranth petals and snakebud tree serpent venom prepared by a

knowledgeable thaumaturge (a Resources •• purchase in the East; Resources ••• elsewhere). The victim will never entirely return to normal, however (reflected by him regaining one less Willpower than normal after a full night's sleep).

DEMJEN, THE QUICKENERS OF ORES

DEMONS OF THE FIRST CIRCLE,

PROGENY OF THE JEWELLED AUDITOR

The fragrance of the sea rises from the demjen. Their ichthyoid bodies wriggle sinuously through both water and air, while finlike filaments drift around their bodies like seaweed or smoke. Plates similar to seashells, ridged with grooves of a pale green hue, enclose their elegant limbs, and their persimmon-hued eyes gleam with a sly, yet sensitive, intellect.

Although they prefer to dwell in humid places that remind them of Kimberly's tidal pools and coral atolls, demjen most often find employment in the bowels of Malfeas. There, in the dark places, their cool, liquid song invigorates the veins of buried brass, agglomerating and animating fragments of metal into small arthropods called chalcothetes. These simple beings serve their masters with childlike devotion. Each gladly digs and carries for its parent, only to be smelted down itself when its usefulness has ended. A demjen typically maintains one or two chalcothetes as personal companions, employing the Endowment Charm to enhance their minds and bodies over time. The demjen may view a chalcothete companion as one might a pet or a friend, and even feel remorse when the time comes to sacrifice the thing for Essence.

Some demjen train their chalcothetes for other purposes, crafting them into squads of miniature brazen soldiers. Others equip their chalcothetes with musical instruments—from sitars and sanxians to drums, marimbas and cymbals—and enter the service of their betters to sing away the Silent Wind. Employing a demjen for this purpose is a sign of great wealth and decadence.

Summoning: (Obscurity 2/3) A summoned demjen's chalcothetes come forth along with it, and it may enliven any of Creation's ores to make more. Sorcerers command the quickeners of ores to mine such ores or to put their chalcothetes to use as a military unit or labor force. On rare occasions, demjen appear when ancient clockworks are unearthed, making them a known danger to scavenger lords. A quickener of ores gains a point of Limit each day that it does not spend a full hour immersed in water.

Motivation: To give life to unworked metal.

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 4, Stamina 3; Charisma 4, Manipulation 4, Appearance 3; Perception 4, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

Virtues: Compassion 3, Conviction 4, Temperance 2, Valor 2



Abilities: Athletics 1, Awareness 2, Bureaucracy 2, Craft (Earth) 3 (Mining +3), Dodge 4, Integrity 2, Linguistics 2, Lore 1, Martial Arts 2, Occult 1, Performance 4 (Singing +2), Presence 2, Resistance 4, Sail 2, Socialize 2, War 2 (Chalcothetes +2)

Backgrounds: Backing 1, Followers 1–2

Charms:

Bread of Weak Spirit—Chalcothetes

Call—Chalcothetes

Endowment—Chalcothetes

Eye of Inspiration—Chalcothetes

Host of Spirits—Creates chalcothetes from ore

Landscape Travel—Swim at double speed

Materialize—Costs 55 motes

Mind-Knife Sacrament—Chalcothetes

Shatter—Its song fractures stone

Words of Power—The lithic timbre of its voice inflicts damage on its enemies

First (Ability) Excellency—Craft, Performance, War

Second (Ability) Excellency—Craft, Performance

Third (Ability) Excellency—Craft, Performance

Join Battle: 5

Attacks:

Punch: Speed 5, Accuracy 7, Damage 2B, Parry DV 4, Rate 3

Kick: Speed 5, Accuracy 6, Damage 5B, Parry DV 2, Rate 2

CHALCOTHETES

A chalcothete resembles a three-foot-tall insect or crustacean cobbled together from rough scraps of metal (usually Malfean brass) encrusted with bits of rock. Older chalcothetes can be distinguished by their green patina of age, though bright metal gleams around their joints and faceted eyes. A typical chalcothete has the intellect of a two-year-old child. Eager to please, it serves its maker in all things, even performing self-destructive acts—though it complains plaintively as it dies. When a demjen perishes, its chalcothetes crumble back into the ore from which they were made.

At any time and across any distance, a demjen may sacrifice one permanent Willpower to give one of its chalcothetes the spark of life. The recipient gains independence from its maker, and it loses the compulsion to serve—though the habit of obedience might remain. Any blessings with which it has been Endowed linger as long as it lives, and it does not die with its master. Even in death, few demjen endow their chalcothetes, but a few free chalcothetes can be found in the Demon City.

Motivation: To serve the demjen that gave it life.

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 4, Stamina 3; Charisma 3, Manipulation 1, Appearance 1; Perception 2, Intelligence 1, Wits 2

Virtues: Compassion 3, Conviction 2, Temperance 2, Valor 2

Abilities: Athletics 2, Awareness 2, Craft (Earth) 3, Dodge 2, Martial Arts 2, Performance 2, Resistance 2, War 2

Join Battle: 4

Attacks:

Kick: Speed 5, Accuracy 6, Damage 5B, Parry DV 2, Rate 2

Clinch: Speed 6, Accuracy 6, Damage 2B, Parry DV —, Rate 1, Tags P

Soak: 5L/4B (Made of metal scraps, 3L/1B)

Health Levels: -0/-1/-2/-4/Incap

Dodge DV: 3 **Willpower:** 4

Essence: 1

Other Notes: Chalcothetes trained to perform a task have up to five additional dots distributed among relevant Abilities by the Storyteller. A demjen's long-term companion typically has Intelligence 2, and some have Perception 3 and/or Essence 2. All independent chalcothetes have awakened Essence, and most acquire spirit Charms from demons.

Clinch: Speed 6, Accuracy 6, Damage 2B, Parry DV —, Rate 1, Tags P

Soak: 6L/5B (Hard shell, 4L/2B)

Health Levels: -0/-1/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Dodge DV: 6 **Willpower:** 7

Essence: 4 **Essence Pool:** 75

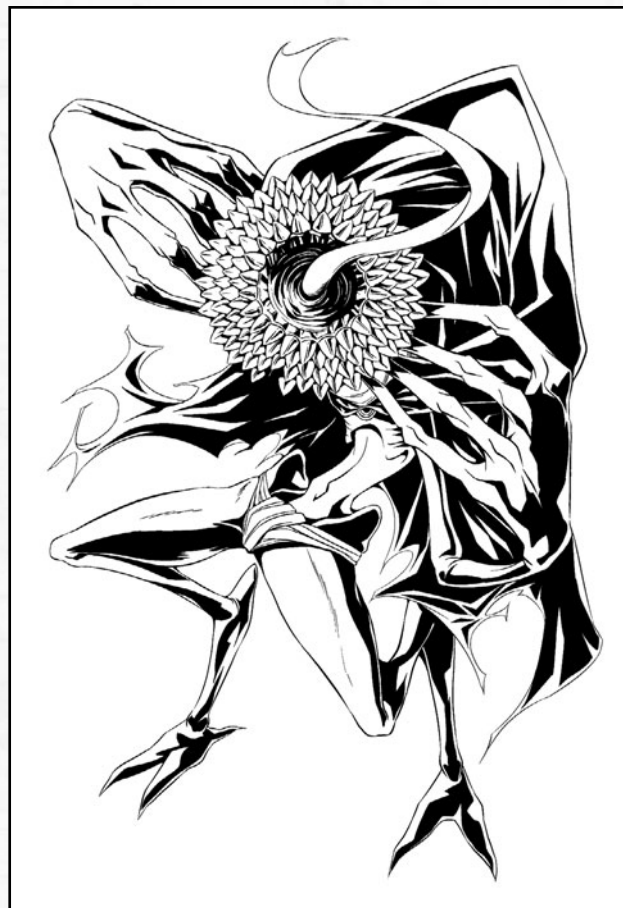
Other Notes: A demjen entering Creation brings its chalcothetes with it, and any binding on the demjen also binds the chalcothetes. A typical summoned demjen is accompanied by one chalcothete majordomo with Intelligence 2. In addition, roll one die. If the result is 7+, it brings that many ordinary chalcothetes.

GALLMAU, THE HOODED LANTERNS

DEMONS OF THE FIRST CIRCLE,

PROGENY OF THE ANSWER TO THE EARTH

These creatures dwell in the catacombs beneath the Demon City, surfacing to sell their services as guides and living lamps. Lean and angular beneath its cowed robes, a gallmau is a seven-foot-tall humanoid that can fold itself into far tighter spaces than one might expect, given its size. Its grayish-brown pebbly skin stretches tightly over its bones, and its many-fingered hands bear sharp claws, while its elongated feet give it a jackal's gait. The gallmau's long muzzle exhibits a blank expanse of skin, save for a



lamprey-like mouth that emits a pale glow. When it wishes to illuminate its surroundings, it grasps its lips and draws them back, peeling away the skin from its head like a hood. Its snout rises and unfurls into a flower of ivory fangs, with a blazing blue-white tongue lashing at its heart.

Although they dislike the light of Ligier and the Unconquered Sun, the gallmau fear flame most of all. Fire melts the flesh from their bones like burning tallow. For that reason, scavenger lords trawling Creation's deep places bear torches and oil lamps—even when they possess more efficient Essence-powered sources of light—as protection from gallmau that have slipped the bonds of Malfeas.

The hooded lanterns feel a compulsion to breed, though their method of reproduction appalls those not of their ilk. In a place lit only by its own tongue, beyond the glow of fire, sun, moon and stars, the gallmau impregnates itself with the gouged-out teeth and severed tongue of a dying demon or mortal. Those who currently retain a gallmau's services are off limits as victims, but all others are fair game. An hour later, it gives birth to an eyeless snake that grows into a new demon within a year. The sorcerous bindings upon a summoned gallmau do not extend to its progeny, which all too often escapes to trouble Creation's nights.

Summoning: (Obscurity 1/3) Sorcerers summon gallmau to track their enemies or to guard against other hooded lanterns. On rare occasions, one appears in Creation where a mortal in a lightless place suffocates on his own tongue. A gallmau must always breed when it can. For every full day it fails to do so, its player rolls a die, with a success adding a point of Limit.

Motivation: To create more of its kind.

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 4, Stamina 4; Charisma 1, Manipulation 3, Appearance 0; Perception 2, Intelligence 2, Wits 4

Virtues: Compassion 1, Conviction 4, Temperance 2, Valor 3

Abilities: Athletics 3, Bureaucracy 1 (Bargaining +2), Awareness 2, Dodge 3, Integrity 2, Investigation 3 (Underground +3), Larceny 3, Linguistics 1, Martial Arts 3, Occult 2, Presence 1, Resistance 4, Stealth 5, Survival 3 (Underground +3)

Backgrounds: Backing 1

Charms:

Call—Communicates with others of its kind

Harrow the Mind—Persuades a victim that it is leading her along the route she desires

Landscape Travel—Add one die to Dexterity in constricted tunnels

Materialize—Costs 45 motes

Measure the Wind—Tastes the Essence upon the air with its tongue

Stoke the Flame—Instills fear of the dark

Touch of Saturn—A gallmau's bite inflicts rabies (see **Exalted**, p. 353)

Tracking—Marks those it strikes

First (Ability) Excellency—Resistance, Stealth

Second (Ability) Excellency—Survival

Third (Ability) Excellency—Investigation

Join Battle: 6

Attacks:

Bite: Speed 5, Accuracy 8, Damage 4L (+ rabies if using *Touch of Saturn*), Parry DV —, Rate 1

Claw: Speed 5, Accuracy 8, Damage 4L, Parry DV 5, Rate 3

Clinch: Speed 6, Accuracy 8, Damage 4B, Parry DV —, Rate 1, Tags P

Soak: 5L/9B (Scaly hide, 3L/5B)

Health Levels: -0/-1/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Dodge DV: 5 **Willpower:** 7

Essence: 2 **Essence Pool:** 55

Other Notes: Flames deal aggravated damage to a gallmau, which it cannot soak. Treat the immature spawn of the gallmau as a coral snake (see **Exalted**, p. 347) whose bite carries rabies rather than inflicting poison.

GETHIN, THE HARVESTER OF RARITIES

DEMONS OF THE FIRST CIRCLE,

PROGENY OF THE LIVING TOWER

Octavian devised the gethin to seek out rare and precious things to fill his treasury and fuel the forges of his artificers. Now they serve many masters, for they have bred beyond his ability to control. Their talents, though narrow, allow them to fulfill a range of functions. Some are explorers and gatherers, others assassins and thieves, while still others perform as exotic demon courtesans.

In its natural state, a gethin appears as an upright, man-sized salamander swathed in oily black plumage, but it can borrow the shape of anyone who meets its enormous vermilion eyes. It borrows a measure of its victim's memory and personality as well. A gethin in another's guise can scarcely be distinguished from the original, except by the telltale traces of black oil that it leaves behind. The gethin uses its stolen visage to infiltrate and obtain whatever treasures it seeks. Meanwhile, the victim of its face-theft wanders dazed and empty. With only fragments of identity and memory, she only half-exists. Even her loved ones scarcely notice her presence.

For each gethin, there exists a single soul treasure, a thing that forms its heart's desire. It doesn't know where the treasure is located or even what it looks like, but it will recognize it unerringly when it finds it, so it seeks the treasure in the course of its duties. If a gethin finds its soul treasure, it embraces the thing and weeps tears of joy that turn to stone, enclosing both within a chrysalis



of malachite. The two meld and divide, and two newborn gethin crawl from the chrysalis five days later, unbound by any master or summoner.

Summoning: (Obscurity 2/3) Summoners generally deploy gethin as spies and thieves. A harvester of rarities occasionally crawls forth from Malfeas when a twin impersonates her sibling for malicious purposes. Each day that a gethin is prevented from exploring unfamiliar places to seek its soul treasure, it gains a point of Limit.

Motivation: To seek out its soul treasure.

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 4, Stamina 4; Charisma 3, Manipulation 5, Appearance 1; Perception 4, Intelligence 2, Wits 5

Virtues: Compassion 2, Conviction 4, Temperance 3, Valor 4

Abilities: Athletics 2, Awareness 4, Bureaucracy 1, Dodge 2, Integrity 1, Investigation 4, Larceny 4, Linguistics 3, Lore 2, Martial Arts 1, Occult 1, Performance 3 (Dance +2), Presence 1, Ride 1, Sail 1, Socialize 2, Stealth 4, Survival 3

Backgrounds: Backing 1

Charms:

Essence Plethora—10 extra motes

Hoodwink—The gethin entrances others with its shining eyes

Landscape Travel—Gethin swim with inhuman swiftness, leaving a trail of black oil upon the water

Materialize—Costs 55 motes

Memory Mirror—Recalls memories from the being whose identity it has stolen

Mirror of the Infinite Wardrobe—Copies the appearance of the being whose identity it has stolen

Scourge—Steal identity: Arcane Fate, -1 Intelligence

Tracking—Knows the location of the being whose identity it has stolen

First (Ability) Excellency—Investigation, Larceny, Socialize

Second (Ability) Excellency—Investigation, Larceny

Third (Ability) Excellency—Socialize

Join Battle: 9

Attacks:

Punch: Speed 5, Accuracy 6, Damage 3B, Parry DV 4, Rate 3

Kick: Speed 5, Accuracy 5, Damage 6B, Parry DV 2, Rate 2

Clinch: Speed 6, Accuracy 5, Damage 3B, Parry DV —, Rate 1, Tags P

Soak: 3L/7B (Oily plumage, 1L/3B)

Health Levels: -0/-1/-1/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Dodge DV: 5 **Willpower:** 8

Essence: 3 **Essence Pool:** 80

Other Notes: A gethin's Scourge Charm steals the identity of a creature with a lower Essence rating that meets its gaze. Other demons know of this power. A Creation-born student of the supernatural may recall the danger on a (Wits + Occult) roll at difficulty 3. Avoiding the gaze is trivial unless one interacts directly with the gethin—either peacefully or in combat—in which case one must make a reflexive (Temperance) check each action at difficulty 1. The gethin must be in its natural form to use this ability.

Stealing a creature's identity redirects all divinations aimed at that creature to the gethin. Lacking an identity, the target becomes only half real. Treat the target as suffering the effects of the Sidereals' Arcane Fate (see **Exalted**, p. 335). These are Shaping effects. This state of affairs remains until the sun rises, the spirit cancels the ability or one of the two participants dies.

HERANHALL, THE FERVID SMITHS

DEMONS OF THE FIRST CIRCLE,

PROGENY OF THE BLOOD OF THE FORGE

Dwarfish and deformed, the heranhall labor for days at a time in the smithies of Malfeas, working brass and black iron until their scarlet hides smolder with the heat. Then they move on to exhibit the same stamina and dedication in the towers of the neomah and the other flesh pits of the Demon City, for their nature is as passionate as their forge fires.

The skills of the heranhall bring most into the service of demons of the Second Circle. Fervid smiths eagerly



accept additional tasks from other clients if those tasks pique the demons' interest. One's master might object in strenuous terms to the loss of productivity, but this does not trouble the heranhal, for its only loyalty is to its craft. Many a patron has sent riches and hard-won reagents to a heranhal's forge, only to have the smith sell the finished product to another—or casually offer it as a love-gift to a demon courtesan.

The lore of demonology refers to six secret crafts practiced by the heranhal. Sources differ as to the nature of these crafts. Most agree, however, that heranhal have the tricks of drawing the threads of time into harp- and bowstrings; crystallizing Ligier's light into green sun-metal; smelting the livid alloy named hepatizon from bronze, blood and bile; and blowing soulglass from ghosts dissolved in molten sand from Cecelyne. While such products do not possess inherent magical properties, they tend to be of exceptional quality, and artificers find them useful as exotic ingredients for artifacts and infernal relics.

Summoning: (Obscurity 2/3) Sorcerers typically summon heranhal to forge metal goods. Fervid smiths are sometimes drawn to Creation when mortals engaged in coitus are burned by red-hot iron. For every full day that it is denied sexual pleasure, a heranhal gains a point of Limit.

Motivation: To forge great works of demonic craft.

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 6; Charisma 3, Manipulation 1, Appearance 1; Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 4

Virtues: Compassion 2, Conviction 3, Temperance 1, Valor 4

Abilities: Athletics 2, Awareness 1, Craft (Air) 2 (Secret Crafts +3), Craft (Fire) 4 (Secret Crafts +3), Dodge 3, Lore 3, Martial Arts 3, Melee 3, Occult 3 (Art of Alchemy +1, Art of Enchantment +2), Performance 1 (Forge Chanteys +2), Presence 1 (Seduction +2), Resistance 4 (Heat and Flames +3), Socialize 1 (Carousing +2)

Backgrounds: Backing 1

Charms:

Affinity (Element) Control—Fire; The heranhal may use only the Elemental Corruption and Elemental Resistance functions of this Charm

*Malediction—*The heranhal utters curses against those who offend him

*Materialize—*Costs 45 motes

Ox-Body Technique

*Sheathing the Material Form—*The demon's hide turns to enchanted brass

*Stoke the Flame—*Inspires others with the heranhal's own gluttonous or lascivious passions

*First (Ability) Excellency—*Craft, Dodge, Socialize

*Second (Ability) Excellency—*Resistance

*Third (Ability) Excellency—*Craft, Socialize

Join Battle: 5

Attacks:

Punch: Speed 5, Accuracy 7, Damage 4B, Parry DV 4, Rate 3

Kick: Speed 5, Accuracy 6, Damage 7B, Parry DV 2, Rate 2

Clinch: Speed 6, Accuracy 6, Damage 4B, Parry DV —, Rate 1, Tags P

Black Iron Hammer: Speed 5, Accuracy 7, Damage 12B/2, Parry DV 4, Rate 2

Soak: 6L/9B (Toughened hide, 3L/3B)

Health Levels: -0/-1/-1/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Dodge DV: 4 **Willpower:** 7

Essence: 2 **Essence Pool:** 55

Other Notes: None

NANEKE, THE READERS OF FORBIDDEN TEXTS

DEMON OF THE FIRST CIRCLE,

PROGENY OF THE MASTERFUL SCHOLAR

Of the countless demon races, there are many whose sole purpose is to deal in the lore of the demon world. These beings haunt the great glass libraries of Malfeas, seeking the truths placed there by Orabilis. Most of the demon scholars fear to read too deeply, lest they awaken Orabilis's ire, but the naneke have no such fear. Burning for the touch of Orabilis, they plumb the uttermost depths of Malfean lore.

A naneke appears as a hunchbacked mortal with the head of a praying mantis. The demon's skin glows



the pale gold of old parchment, shot through with a fine craquelure, and its long-nailed hands glitter with countless tiny barbs. Naneke dress simply, often wearing no more than a caftan of yellow or buff-colored cloth and sandals of scarlet bamboo. Rarely does one appear without at least one satchel laden with books and scrolls. Any wealth a naneke obtains goes to acquire new knowledge, such as texts forbidden to demon scholars or access to glass libraries whose masters charge undue fees for admission.

This shared obsession leaves the naneke with few scruples and no shame. They don't hesitate to sell out friends and allies in exchange for a desperately needed cipher key or fragment of hidden wisdom. Few balk at trading secrets with gods, Abyssals, Fair Folk or other foreign powers. They show restraint only when their lives stand at risk. They fear death not for its own sake, but because the dead do not know Orabilis's touch. It is for this reason alone that they respect Cecelyne's laws, for Lucien's reach is long and his knives are sharp.

Summoning: (Obscurity 3/3) Sorcerers consult the naneke for their lore or to direct them to sift through books and libraries for hidden knowledge. When lore that has been lost for an Age is brought into the light of day, a naneke may find his way from Malfeas to peruse its mysteries. For each day that a reader of forbidden texts fails to peruse a new source of knowledge, it gains a point of Limit.

Motivation: To absorb such knowledge and achieve such wisdom as to attract the attentions of Orabilis.

Attributes: Strength 1, Dexterity 2, Stamina 2; Charisma 1, Manipulation 2, Appearance 1; Perception 4, Intelligence 4, Wits 2

Virtues: Compassion 1, Conviction 5, Temperance 2, Valor 1

Abilities: Awareness 1, Bureaucracy 1, Craft (Wood) 1 (Bookbinding +2), Dodge 1, Integrity 2, Investigation 3 (Library Research +3), Linguistics 3, Lore 4, Martial Arts 1, Medicine 1, Occult 4 (Demons +1, Malfeas +2), Presence 1, Stealth 1, (up to five additional dots distributed among all Abilities by the Storyteller, indicating subjects of additional study)

Backgrounds: Backing 1

Charms:

Divine Prerogative—Cannot be diverted from its quest for knowledge

Hoodwink—Recites baffling koans

Host of Spirits—Doppelgangers read and research en masse

Landscape Travel—Climbs walls and ceilings

Materialize—Costs 50 motes

Spice of Custodial Delectation—Research

First (Ability) Excellency—Bureaucracy, Integrity, Investigation, Linguistics, Lore, Occult

Third (Ability) Excellency—Integrity

Any two other Charms—Chosen by the Storyteller, these powers represent additional knacks discovered in the libraries of Malfeas. On rare occasions, these may include Terrestrial Circle spells that aid in acquiring knowledge, such as the Eye and the Mouth, Fugue of Truth, Incantation of Effective Restoration or Theft of Memory

Join Battle: 3

Attacks:

Punch: Speed 5, Accuracy 4, Damage 1B, Parry DV 3, Rate 3

Kick: Speed 5, Accuracy 3, Damage 4B, Parry DV 1, Rate 2

Clinch: Speed 6, Accuracy 3, Damage 1B, Parry DV —, Rate 1, Tags P

Soak: 1L/2B

Health Levels: -0/-1/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Dodge DV: 3 **Willpower:** 8

Essence: 2 **Essence Pool:** 60

Other Notes: If a naneke's player botches a roll to track down or comprehend obscure or esoteric lore, the demon draws an inference that leads it to understand one of those things known only to the Yozis. This permits Orabilis to lay its touch upon the naneke and even enter Creation to do so, burning it to a point of light and casting it into the Malfean sky. Orabilis rarely lingers once this is done. Sorcerers are advised not to antagonize him, but to leave him to his work.

RADEKEN, THE MADLING HELLSTORMS

DEMONS OF THE FIRST CIRCLE,

PROGENY OF THE VITRIOLIC DRAGON

Iyutha bred the radeken out of some twisted variation on the maternal instinct. Despite her need to warp and destroy, she craves children to raise, but she rears them on a diet of cruelty rather than love. She takes pride in their hate and watches fondly over their prodigies of destruction. Should a madling hellstorm exhibit sentiment or compassion, she descends upon it in her wrath and heaps scorn and reproach upon its head until it learns better.

In its natural state, a madling hellstorm resembles an unwholesome hybrid of dragon, great cat and scavenger bird, ponderous

but unexpectedly swift. Radeken rarely remain in that shape, however. They prefer to travel as masses of dark clouds reeking of blood and brine. Even in their elemental forms, however, their evanescent flesh continually curls into shapes of a reptilian, feline or avian cast. In any shape, a madling hellstorm's voice is rough and harsh as rolling thunder.

Unlike their mother, radeken are simple creatures wholly ruled by their appetites. They crave the smells of smoke and blood. Some obtain these things directly through murder and mayhem, while others follow armies or gather around factories and slaughterhouses. An unbound radeken in Creation often establishes itself in a small community as a petty tyrant-god, demanding burnt offerings as protection against its wrath.

Radeken steal the weather that they cannot create. Hungry for meteorological power, a madling hellstorm brushes up against a wind or storm and pulls a part of that weather into itself. Some accumulate iron snow or bezoar hail from clouds of omen weather, while others fill themselves with arrowheads or blazing light from one of Adorjan's four daughter winds. Although a few dare to encompass Hegra's psychedelic rains, none swallow the scarlet breath of the Silent Wind, for even radeken perish at her touch. In Creation, they rely on more mundane phenomena: lightning and hail, or the clouds of cinders and scalding steam that rise from mortal industry.

Summoning: (Obscurity 1/2) Sorcerers typically call upon radeken to aid in battle or to speed a sailing vessel on its way. When wind-driven water extinguishes some vast conflagration, such as a forest fire or a volcanic eruption, a madling hellstorm sometimes gusts into Creation to howl amidst the smoke and steam. For each day that a radeken





is denied the smell of a gallon of spilt blood or the smoke from a burning tree, it gains a point of Limit.

Motivation: To howl and rage with the stolen strength of a storm.

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 4, Stamina 6; Charisma 1, Manipulation 1, Appearance 1; Perception 2, Intelligence 1, Wits 5

Virtues: Compassion 1, Conviction 3, Temperance 1, Valor 5

Abilities: Athletics 3, Awareness 1, Dodge 5, Martial Arts 3, Performance 2 (Demanding Sacrifices +3), Presence 3 (Intimidation +2), Resistance 5, Stealth 1 (In Storms +3), Survival 2, War 1

Backgrounds: Backing 1

Charms:

*Affinity (Element) Control**—Air; Absorbs up to three barrels of weather; may use only the Elemental Damage and Elemental Weapon functions of this Charm

Blessed (Element) Body—Air

Elemental Rejuvenation—Storms

*Essence Bite**—Stolen weather; typically inflicts four dice of lethal damage

Material Tribulation Divestment—Only to dodge attacks

Materialize—Costs 55 motes

Ox-Body Technique

Principle of Motion—A madling hellstorm may bank up to eight actions

Materialize—Costs 55 motes

Shapechange—Become a bestial-seeming cloud of dark vapor

Words of Power—Thunderous roar

First (Ability) Excellency—Athletics, Martial Arts, Resistance

Second (Ability) Excellency—Dodge

Join Battle: 6

Attacks:

*Essence Bite**: Speed 5, Accuracy 7, Damage 4L, Parry DV 4, Rate 2

*Affinity Air Control**: Speed 5, Accuracy 12, Damage 12L, Rate 4

* Damage from *Essence Bite* and *Affinity Air Control* is as appropriate to the nature of absorbed weather. Non-injurious weather, such as Hegra's psychedelic rain or the Blinding Wind, emulates that weather's effects instead of dealing damage

Soak: 11L/14B (Elemental nature, 8L/8B)

Health Levels: -0/-1/-1/-1/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Dodge DV: 6 **Willpower:** 8

Essence: 3 **Essence Pool:** 70

Other Notes: A radeken may emulate the effects of any weather pattern it has absorbed. Doing so takes a miscellaneous action and requires physical contact, subjecting

the madling hellstorm to the weather's effects. It may employ its *Affinity Air Control* attack and/or *Essence Bite* six times before exhausting the absorbed weather.

TINSIANA, THE SCORPION DEMONS

DEMON OF THE FIRST CIRCLE,

PROGENY OF THE GUARDIAN OF SLEEP

These chitinous horrors are hated and feared throughout Creation's South. Each appears as a burly mortal from the waist up with scorpion-like chelae instead of hands; the lower half of its body is that of a giant scorpion. As a people, they are proud and vain. Accoutering themselves in opulent apparel, they demand deference from those they encounter. Defiance rouses them to violence. Except when drawn forth singly by a sorcerer's summons, tinsiana travel in threes, the better to cow and overpower those who would stand against them.

Scorpion demons serve as warriors, interrogators and enforcers. They are deadly beyond measure. Rather than placing their faith in weapons of brass or black Malfean iron, tinsiana rely upon their claws and their venomous stingers, the latter delivering poison that paralyzes the body while leaving the mind free to dwell on the horrors to come. Tinsiana take pleasure in inflicting pain and can prolong a victim's life through years of exquisite torture.

When hard-pressed, a tinsiana may forsake its body in the form of a palm-sized scorpion the color of ruby. As the abandoned body dies, the tinsiana's lessened form crawls into the mouth of a willing, sleeping or otherwise immobile mortal, where it works its way into the brain and slowly takes possession of its host. Once it extinguishes the host's will, the scorpion demon slowly devours the body from the inside, regaining its strength. When its new body is fully formed, it bursts from its husk of stolen mortal flesh, as powerful and deadly as ever.

Summoning: (Obscurity 2/4) Sorcerers summon scorpion demons as bodyguards, hunters and killers. Some use them specifically to possess and hollow out a victim, though the tinsiana dislike being bereft of their bodies and resent those who command them to do so. When three mortals die in a sandstorm, a trio of tinsiana may break free of the demon prison in their place. For this reason, it is customary among the desert tribes of the South not to travel in groups of three. Each day that a tinsiana does not inflict great pain on another sentient being, it gains a point of Limit.

Motivation: To dominate and torment the weak.

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 4, Stamina 4; Charisma 4, Manipulation 3, Appearance 2; Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 5

Virtues: Compassion 1, Conviction 4, Temperance 3, Valor 5

Abilities: Archery 2, Athletics 4, Awareness 3, Bureaucracy 1, Dodge 3, Integrity 2, Linguistics 2, Lore 1, Martial Arts 4, Medicine 1 (Poisons +2), Melee 2, Occult 1, Presence 3 (Interrogation +1, Intimidation +1), Resistance 2, Socialize 1, Stealth 1 (Moving Silently +2), Survival 2 (Deserts +3), War 2

Backgrounds: Allies 2, Backing 1

Charms:

Essence Plethora—10 extra motes

Form Reduction Technique—Abandons its demon body in the form of a small scorpion

Hollow Out the Soul—When all of a mortal victim's Virtues and Willpower are reduced to 0, the tinsiana may tear free of its frame in a new body

Landscape Hide—Beneath the sand or inside a human body

Landscape Travel—Scuttle over sand as though it were solid ground

Materialize—Costs 60 motes

Ox-Body Technique

Possession—Takes over a host by climbing into its body

Touch of Saturn—Sting delivers paralytic venom (Poison effect); its effects on mortals persist even after the Charm's duration expires

Tracking—Senses the movements of those who survive its sting

Weather Control—Acting in concert, three tinsiana may raise a sandstorm

First (Ability) Excellency—Athletics, Martial Arts, Presence

Second (Ability) Excellency—Resistance, Survival

Join Battle: 8

Attacks:

Claw: Speed 5, Accuracy 8, Damage 6L, Parry DV 3, Rate 2

Stinger: Speed 5, Accuracy 8, Damage 4L (+ poison if using Touch of Saturn*), Parry DV —, Rate 1

Clinch: Speed 6, Accuracy 8, Damage 4B, Parry DV —, Rate 1, Tags P

* (Damage 3L, Toxicity 3, Tolerance —/—, Penalty -5)

Soak: 6L/6B (Chitinous exoskeleton, 4L/2B)

Health Levels: -0/-1/-1/-1/-1/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Dodge DV: 5 **Willpower:** 9

Essence: 3 **Essence Pool:** 85

Other Notes: Sometimes, a tinsiana lays a clutch of three fist-sized black eggs. There is roughly a 10 percent chance that a summoned scorpion demon will do so in a given year. When bathed in a mortal's life-blood, an egg hatches to reveal a tiny scarlet scorpion that seeks out a host in the manner of a full-grown tinsiana using Form Reduction Technique. If it successfully hollows out a victim's soul and breaks free of its flesh, it becomes a full-grown adult scorpion demon.

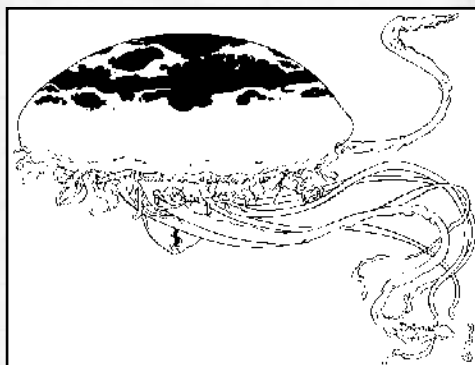
INFERNAL BEASTS

Surprisingly, demons of the First Circle do not form the bottom of the infernal hierarchy, for even they have their inferiors. Most common are infernal animals. Designed to thrive in the unholy environs of the Demon City, these animals resemble their Creation-formed counterparts, feeding and breeding and, where appropriate, serving the needs of their infernal masters. Behemoths also lurk throughout the demon prison, ranging in nature from slaves and prey to swaths of infernal landscape.

ANIMALS

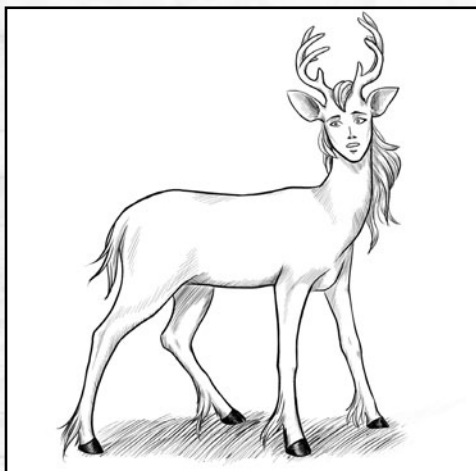
KHOMFAI, THE WIND-OOZE

These aerial jellyfish, whose largest specimens rival Creation's whales, drift languidly across the skies of the Demon City. A khomfai's translucent body gleams blue and pink, and tentacles of many colors trail from its nether end, snaring brass plants and unwary demons



alike to cram into its maw. Khomfai possess a simple, yet alien intellect that can be tamed and put to commercial or military use. Demons suspend gondolas from domesticated wind-oozes. Hooks and grapnels find little purchase on a khomfai's skin, though, so these gondolas hang from dozens of brass cables looped over the beast's back, slowly carving their way into its gelatinous body. The khomfai's flesh knits itself back together in their wake, but an unju or other flier must keep casting new cables across the beast's back, lest all the cables cut through the khomfai and the gondola plummet to its doom.

MIDWRYTH, THE EXQUISITE PREY



Originally bred from mortal stock, these cervine creatures have human faces, minds and emotions. Demon citizens hunt them for their hides—soft and rich and shot through with patterns of luminous color—and for the cruel joy of the chase. As the midwryth lack speech, they can express themselves only through song. Pain and suffering heighten the song's beauty, making the hunt all the merrier for their pursuers. Cecelyne's law bans lesser demons from the hunt on pain of death. Most midwryth dwell in the Malfean forests, where infernal safaris and luminata-poachers winnow their numbers. Those that wander into the streets of the Demon City meet swifter ends. Powerful demons occasionally snare midwryth alive. The creatures do not reproduce in captivity, but torture wrings magnificent music from them.

PARAMBIR, THE INFERNAL PACHYDERMS

The parambir's barrel-like body resembles that of a tailless elephant. Its unnaturally wide head seems more like two rhinoceros heads squeezed together, however. It has two beaklike mouths, both equipped with short, curving tusks and a horn, with a long trunk between them. Horns, tusks and trunk enable the beast to lift and carry heavy loads, while providing many attachment points for tools or weapons. A parambir has three eyes—one on either side of its head, and one in the middle. A bony frill rises at the back of the head to shield the creature's neck, providing a natural seat for a mahout and a convenient base for a howdah. The creature's leathery hide is usually colored vari-

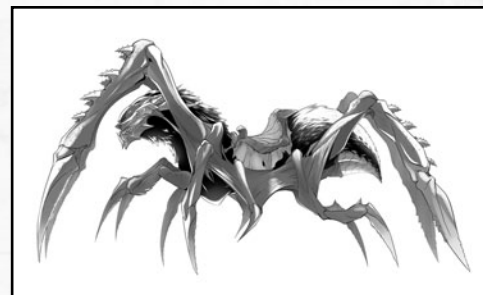
ous blue-green shades. Normally stolid creatures, parambir grumble in low voices that never quite become intelligible. They also seem to enjoy being set by their masters to charge, gore and trample other demons.



PEGHEDU, THE SKITTERING STEEDS

Few mounts serve as effectively in the labyrinthine Demon City as these ghastly creatures. A dozen elongat-

ed insect legs extends from the peghedu's thickly furred equine body, and its adamant-tipped claws dig deep into the brass and black



stone of the Demon City. When directed by a skilled rider bearing a crop of amphelisia leather, a skittering steed scuttles through the teeming brazen streets, clambers up and down walls and even scrambles along the undersides of crowded causeways. A hood covers a peghedu's eyes as it travels, for these catacomb-spawned creatures hate the light. Feral colonies breed beneath the city streets, and when the Ebon Dragon passes, they swarm forth to feed on demon flesh.

RIWANNON, THE LIVING PAVILIONS

As much flowers as beasts, flocks of these creatures dwell in the poorer reaches of the Demon City. A riwannon's outer carapace is flat black but for its many scattered eyes, which usually shine a vibrant blue, while its pink, rugose underside emits a reptilian musk. Seven



broad, flat limbs, each 10 feet in length, extend from a riwannon's cephalopod body like flower petals. With these limbs outstretched, it drifts on the air like a dandelion seed. Living pavilions have a symbiotic relationship with various races of demon serfs, arranging their limbs to become animated tents in exchange for nourishment and Essence. Those that go without food consume their tenants, while those without tenants simply hunt from the skies, pouncing upon prey from above.

SOURN, THE OBEDIENT WHERRIES

These marine steeds resemble horse-sized hybrids of squid and manta. Their scaly skin glistens a repugnant



brown tinged yellow and green, with a pale underbelly. While a sourn's rippling fins propel it across the acidic waves, its tentacles

can curl to provide a seat for a rider and hold him in place. A rider controls the sourn using reins clipped to especially pain-sensitive portions of the beast's head. As a final benefit, the sourn's tentacles coat its rider with mucus that confers the same protection against acid that the sourn itself enjoys, reducing environmental lethal damage from acid by four dice. (It does nothing against aggravated damage, though.) The beast swims as fast as a horse gallops, but on land it only flops and flounders. A sourn's long tail carries a steel-hard spike of brass with which the creature defends itself.

UNJU, THE BIRDS OF BURDEN

Featherless avians with manlike bodies and leathery 12-foot wingspans, the unju throng the Malfean skies in their role as aerial porters. In exchange for shelter, food, trinkets and liquor, they haul up wealthy commoners and in-



fernal grandees in sky-chairs and aerial charabancs, wafting them high above the crowded thoroughfares of the Demon City. Unju speak clearly enough through their scarlet beaks

and can bargain and dicker as well as any demon. They have little stomach for combat, but their talons can inflict savage wounds. Flocks of wild unju nest in abandoned spires across the Demon City, stealing stray objects and haranguing passersby.

BEHEMOTHS

HALKOMELEM, THE ENIGMA IN RED AND GOLD

When He Who Bleeds the Unknown Word entered the Primordial War, he assumed the shape of a dragon of living calligraphy. He flew on wings of poetry; his fangs dripped with satire; he wore armor of endlessly folded layers of impenetrable legalese. In his breast, his true name pulsed like a star. Despite his ineffable splendor, the Solar Exalted tore him from the sky and shattered his name-heart. As he died, he scribed his own nature upon the fabric of the world as a dying man might write his last thoughts in his own blood. That scribble, that corrupted copy, is Halkomelem, a triple-jawed serpent of imperishable crimson paper 100 yards long, its body crawling with golden script in ten thousand tongues. When the gods bound the Yozis and their offspring into Malfeas, the behemoth followed. Now it soars, inscrutable, through the Demon City's skies, shedding pages from its flanks in a glittering scarlet rain.

Motivation: Learn.

Attributes: Strength 14, Dexterity 6, Stamina 16; Charisma 4, Manipulation 2, Appearance 4; Perception 6, Intelligence 8, Wits 4



INFERNAL BEASTS

Name	Str/Dex/Sta	Per/Int/Wits/Will	Health Levels	Atk (Spd/Acc/Dmg/Rate)	Dodge DV/S
Khomfai	12/4/12	3/2/2/2	-0x6/-1x6/ -2x6/-4/I	Slap: 5/7/12B + poison*/3, Grab: 6/6/12B + poison*/3	0/4L/16B

* (Damage 1B, Toxicity 3, Tolerance —/—, Penalty -4)

Abilities: Athletics 5 (Flight +3), Awareness 2, Integrity 1, Linguistics 1, Martial Arts 2, Presence 5, Resistance 4, Survival 3

Midwryth	2/4/3	3/2/4/2	-0/-1x2/-2/-4/I	Kick: 5/5/5L/1	3/0L/3B
Abilities: Athletics 3, Awareness 4, Dodge 3, Investigation 2, Martial Arts 1, Presence 1, Resistance 2, Stealth 2 (Motionless +3), Survival 4					

Parambir	14/3/10	2/1/2/5	-0x3/-1x3/ -2x2/-4/I	Gore: 5/6/10L/2, Trunk Clinch: 6/8/7B/1, Trample: 3/7/14L/1	1/5L/10B
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Abilities: Athletics 4, Awareness 3, Integrity 2, Martial Arts 3 (Clinch +2), Presence 4, Resistance 5, Survival 3

Peghedu	3/6/3	2/1/2/2	-0/-1/-2/-4/I	Claw: 5/7/2L/3	4/1L/4B
Abilities: Athletics 4 (Climbing +1), Awareness 2, Dodge 2, Integrity 1, Martial Arts 1, Presence 1, Resistance 1, Stealth 1, Survival 1					

Riannon	8/2/8	5/2/3/4	-0x2/-1x2/ -2x3/-4/I	Slap: 5/5/8B/3, Grab 6/4/8B/3	2/4L/8B
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Abilities: Athletics 3, Awareness 4, Dodge 2, Integrity 2, Linguistics 1, Martial Arts 2, Presence 3, Resistance 5, Socialize 1, Stealth 2 (Silent Flight +3), Survival 2

Sourn	4/3/4	2/2/4/3	-0/-1x2/-2x2/-4/I	Tail: 4/6/6L/1	3/2L/4B
Abilities: Athletics 3, Awareness 2, Dodge 3, Integrity 1, Martial Arts 3, Presence 2, Resistance 2, Survival 2					
Other Notes: The sourn and its rider gain +5L soak vs. acid or -5L damage from acid-based environmental effects					

Unju	5/4/6	3/2/3/3	-0x2/-1x2/ -2/-4/I	Claw: 5/7/5L/2, Grab 6/7/4B/1	3/0L/4B
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Abilities: Athletics 4 (Lifting Heavy Burdens +3), Awareness 3, Bureaucracy 1 (Haggling +2), Dodge 3, Integrity 1, Investigation 1, Larceny 1, Linguistics 1, Martial Arts 3, Presence 2 (Invective +2), Resistance 2, Socialize 2, Survival 1

Virtues: Compassion 2, Conviction 3, Temperance 5, Valor 2

Abilities: Athletics 6, Awareness 4, Bureaucracy 3, Dodge 5, Integrity 10, Investigation 3, Linguistics 10+, Lore 9 (Primordial Age +3), Martial Arts 4, Occult 7, Performance 3, Presence 6, Resistance 5, Socialize 4

Essence Powers:

Hunger for Knowledge—When the Enigma in Red and Gold consumes a sentient creature, it learns everything the creature ever knew. Its flanks immediately sprout hundreds of new pages inscribed with that knowledge in runes of gold.

Scarred with Understanding—A silver scar marks Halkomelem's flank where it endured the touch of Orabilis. As such, it grasps a secret once known only to the Yozis. This could be almost anything: a rite to compel the Incarnae, a Yozi's hidden vulnerability or a plan to escape the demon prison.

Written on the World—Having been inscribed by a Primordial upon the shinmaic substrate of the cosmos, Halkomelem cannot be permanently killed by ordinary means. If destroyed in battle, it reconstitutes itself from its scattered pages over a period of months or years. Only power on par with the Yozis and the Incarnae can kill it, although a Solar could conceivably do so with a Solar Circle sorcery designed solely for that purpose.

Join Battle: 8

Attacks:

Bite: Speed 6, Accuracy 9, Damage 14L, Parry DV —, Rate 1

Tail Slap: Speed 5, Accuracy 10, Damage 20B, Parry DV 4, Rate 1

Clinch: Speed 6, Accuracy 10, Damage 14B, Parry DV —, Rate 1, Tags P

Soak: 16L/32B (Imperishable paper body, 8L/16B)

Health Levels: -0x5/-1x20/-2x20/-4x5/I

Dodge DV: 10 Willpower: 9

Essence: 9

Other Notes: Every page that falls from Halkomelem's flanks contains a single fact or passage in a lost language. Most of the knowledge found therein is of little importance, but a single-minded gathering of these pages could result in the acquisition of ancient and valuable secrets, at the Storyteller's discretion.

STRANGERS AND PEERS

Some of Hell's inhabitants hail from other realms of existence. Few travel there of their own will; most are slaves or outcasts of one sort or another. Still, the lords of Malfeas are many and their motives diverse. Creation-born servants have their places in certain corners of the Demon City, and where mortal strength is insufficient, the Yozis augment the flesh and the soul.

MORTALS

Far more mortals than one would think wind up in the towers and alleys of the Demon City. Some wander in through the Endless Desert, while others fall victim to the wiles of infernal cults. Mortals who survive the toxic air and hungry natives are scarred by the experience. Those few who find their way home to Creation rarely speak of the terrors they saw beneath the mad Green Sun.

SLAVES/CULTISTS/COURTIERS

Most mortals in the Demon City endure torment and penury. Countless slaves suffer beneath the whips of demon masters. They dwell in squalor in labor camps or prayer mills, sealed away lest they be poisoned by the demon prison's air or captured in raids by rival demons. A few demon masters—out of kindness or eccentricity—maintain their mortal servants in comfort, even luxury. Some prefer the flavor of worship offered by pampered



MORTAL TRAITS

Ordinary mortals in Malfeas use the appropriate trait packages for folk of the appropriate type (see *Exalted*, pp. 278–283) with some modifications based on their experiences. Constant exposure to the dark wonders of Hell grants a dot of Occult, with one-dot specialties in Demons and Malfeas.

cultists, while others find the same joy in monitoring their mortal courtiers' loves and intrigues as children do in observing mice disport themselves in a cage.

Most mortals enslaved to demons use the trait package for Farmers/Townsmen/Citizens/Slaves as a base, although virtually anyone can find himself trapped and enslaved in the Demon City. Each gets an additional dot in Performance, with a two-dot specialty in Entertaining Demons.

FUGITIVES

Those few free souls who find a niche for themselves amidst Hell's slums perform heinous acts in order to purchase shelter, food and the drugs they need to survive the toxic miasma that rises from the brazen streets. Some trade one form of servitude for another by bartering themselves to First Circle demons for protection. Others conceal themselves like rats in the city's brass-chased walls, emerging only to steal what they need to survive. Runaways who cross paths often stay together, united by their shared humanity and desperation, forming tiny mortal colonies amidst the sea of demonkind.



Depending on their skills and experience, fugitive mortals use the trait package for Common Outlaws, Rebels or Raiders as a base. They get an additional dot in Larceny and Stealth.



YOZI-KIN/HELLSPAWN

When an infernalist earns the favor of a lord of Hell, she might receive an endowment of demonic power and Essence. These artificial Demon-Blooded, mockingly known as Yozi-Kin, serve as advisors and thaumaturges in infernal courts, where they hold positions of power unimaginable to the slaves kept penned in the prayer mills of Malfeas. Most hold themselves aloof from lesser mortals, both out of coldness of heart and to avoid thinking of how they themselves might have fallen to such a state, had they not won their masters' esteem.

Where the Yozi-Kin gain power from infernal patrons, Hellspawn inherit their potent blood from a demon parent. Whereas Creation-born Hellspawn are raised among humans, those born in Malfeas are reared by demons. By mortal standards, they are both eccentric and cruel.

For a typical Demon-Blooded, use the trait package for God-Bloods as a base. Yozi-Kin have Compassion 1 and an Occult specialty in the Art of Demon Summoning +3, while Hellspawn have Temperance 2. Both gain Artifact 2, Backing 1, Demonic Inheritance 2 and Demonic Patron 2 (see **The Manual of Exalted Power—The Infernals**, pp. 61-62). The warping effects of infernal power grant the Demon-Blooded four to 10 points each of positive and negative mutations (see **The Compass of Celestial Directions, Vol. II—The Wyld**, p. 144) related to the demon that sired or improved him. Examples follow:

Aalu: *Poxes:* Enhanced Senses (hearing and smell); *Deficiencies:* Mood Swings (mania), Ugly; *Afflictions:* Tiny; *Debilities:* Blindness, Diet (silk paper), Fragile, Slow Healing, *Abominations:* Wings

Erymanthus: *Poxes:* Claws, Fangs, Fur, Large; *Deficiencies:* Atrophy (Intelligence), Hungry; *Debilities:* Diet (fresh blood)

Mara: *Poxes:* Hooves, Longevity, Night Vision, Wood Adaptation; *Deformities:* Creature of Darkness

Octavian: *Deficiencies:* Atrophy (Manipulation), Ugly; *Debilities:* Delusions (of grandeur); *Blights:* Armored Hide, Giant; *Deformities:* Creature of Darkness

GHOSTS

In Hell, even death does not always offer escape. One encounters ghosts as often as living mortals in that bleak place. Some who die in the Demon City linger there, while slavers bring others from Creation and the Underworld. Demons value the dead as they value the living: not as equals, but as commodities, tools and victims.

GHOSTLY SLAVES/COURTIERS/CULTISTS

The lords of Hell gather the dead from many sources. Ritual suicide conveys the shades of infernal cultists from Creation, while mortals in Malfeas find that death offers no escape from their imprisonment. Most demons prefer

GHOST TRAITS

Much like mortals, ghosts in Malfeas use the appropriate trait packages for whatever sort of folk they were before they died (see *Exalted*, pp. 278–283) with appropriate modifiers. Each ghost gains one dot of Occult, with one-dot specialties in Demons and Malfeas, along with a number of Arcanoi.

All ghosts have awakened Essence. Ordinary ghosts have Essence 1, while more powerful ghosts have Essence 2 or higher. Calculate a ghost's Essence pool as follows: $(\text{Essence} \times 10) + (\text{Willpower} \times 3) + [(\text{sum of all Virtues}) \times 2]$. More information on ghosts and their powers appears in the second half of *The Books of Sorcery*, Vol. V—*The Roll of Glorious Divinity II*.

Ghosts do not regain Essence normally in Malfeas. The one exception is Calibration, as the walls between the worlds grow thin on those five days, allowing them to regain Essence at half the standard rate. Ghosts must find alternative sources of Essence to power their Arcanoi.

to own ghosts rather than mortals. Despite their inability to breed, the dead lack mortal fragility and mortal needs, yet they offer their masters as much Essence as the living.

Ghosts are more difficult to imprison than mortals, though. In spite of Cecelyne's law against learning Arcanoi, the dead often teach one another surreptitiously or master such magics on their own, then use them to escape before their masters catch on and destroy them.

Enslaved ghosts were typically Farmers/Townsmen/Citizens/Slaves, while cult leaders generally use the Savants/Elders/Thaumaturge trait package. Such ghosts gain an additional dot in Performance, with a two-dot specialty in Entertaining Demons, and a few surreptitiously acquired Arcanoi.

Arcanoi:

Common Arcanoi: Moon's Cold Glow, Ox-Body Technique, Scent of Sweet Blood

RENEGADE GHOSTS

Some ghosts escape their masters and flee into the city. Their hunger for Essence leads them down many paths. Some hunt minor demons and infernal animals for the Essence in their blood, while others use the Essence-Measuring Thief Arts to prey upon their own kind. The most humane join forces with mortal fugitives from whose prayers they glean Essence. Most fugitive ghosts make a practice of exchanging knowledge of the few arts they have puzzled out on their own. Over the centuries, folk traditions of Arcanoi have developed in parallel with those discovered in the Underworld, supported by occasional exchanges of information with teind-slaves knowledgeable in advanced techniques.



Renegade ghosts commonly use trait packages for Rebels, Raiders or Mortal Heroes as a base. They gain Cult 1, Craft (Moliation) 2 and an additional dot in Larceny and Stealth. A typical renegade ghost has Essence 2 and knows six Arcanoi.

Typical Arcanoi:

Common Arcanoi: Moon's Cold Glow, Ox-Body Technique, Pyre Smoke Form, Scent of Sweet Blood

Shifting Ghost-Clay Path: Waxen Ghostly Flesh

Tenacious Merchant's Way: Jangling Coin Pouch Sense

TEIND-SLAVES

Whereas most ghosts in the Demon City have known nothing since their deaths but servitude to their demon masters, those known as teind-slaves dwelt in the Underworld for some time before the Deathlords or the Lintha sold them into infernal servitude. Demon masters value such slaves for the Arcanoi they learned in the Underworld. While the laws of Cecelyne forbid ghosts to learn Arcanoi, nothing bans them from prior knowledge of such techniques or from employing such knowledge on their masters' behalf, and their masters turn a blind eye to magical studies if they increase a servant's utility. Skilled teind-slaves serve as warriors, spies, assassins and thieves.

Teind-slaves may use any mortal trait package as a base, for the teind brings in slaves from a wide range of backgrounds and levels of power. They gain Backing 1, Craft (Moliation) 3, Craft (Pandemonium) 3 and an additional dot in Performance and Socialize. A typical teind-slave has Essence 3 and knows 10 Arcanoi.



Typical Arcanoi:

Common Arcanoi: Ox-Body Technique (x2)

Chains of the Ancient Monarchs: Soul Anchor, Essence Binding, Essence Lasso Form

Shifting Ghost-Clay Path: Waxen Ghostly Flesh, Yielding Spirit Form, Steeling the Spirit

Terror-Spreading Art: Corpse-Fed Radiance, Black Breath of the Abyss

INFERNAL EXALTED

Even before their defeat and imprisonment, the Yozis had turned Exalted heroes to their own cause. Some Exalted serve out of ambition, while others from shared hatred for those who rule Creation. A few deem the cause of the fallen Primordials to be just and worthy of support. Whatever their reasons, they come to the Yozis to be transformed, their bodies and souls warped into the image of those fallen titans.

THE ORCHID-CONSUMING GUARDIAN, SENESCHAL OF THE CONVENTICLE MALFEASANT, GREEN SUN PRINCE

Once, the Orchid-Consuming Guardian served as shaman to a village in the forests of the East. He had a name, a family, a life. But as his power grew, so too did a ruthless streak in his nature. He cursed those who crossed him; he met ghosts and little gods with threats and force when diplomacy would have served. One minor demon sought revenge for the indignities he visited upon it. Persuading resentful neighbors to breach the wards on the man's home, it entered in the night, kidnapped his daughter and absconded with her to the Demon City.

Furious, humiliated and miserable, the man who would become the Guardian sought a path into Malfeas to rescue his daughter. He made black bargains and found a way. The secret diary of Lytek, God of Exaltation, states that as the man stood on Hell's threshold, a Solar Exaltation trembled in the god's cabinet, ready to empower him with the might of heroes. But the man turned back from the brink. He abandoned his daughter to the terrors of the Demon City. Having mortgaged his soul to dark powers, he balked to save his skin, and those dark powers smiled upon him. A demon carrying an Infernal Exaltation came to him in that hour, elevating him into the new-formed ranks of the Green Sun Princes.

Where other Infernals serve their masters in Creation, the Orchid-Consuming Guardian rarely leaves the Demon City. As seneschal of the Conventicle Malfeasant, he chairs gatherings of the Infernal Althing, and he spends the rest of his time coordinating logistics for his more active brethren and weeding out spies of rival demon lords from the Conventicle's staff. When not occupied by his duties, he still seeks his daughter, who somehow evaded her kidnapper.



and escaped into the madness of Malfeas. Although the trail is cold, enough of his old self remains that he still struggles to save her, refusing to admit that she could be dead.

The Guardian's face is broad and dark beneath a fall of hair as green as Ligier's light. His rare smiles flash with rainbow fire; his teeth are gemstones, strong enough to grind the metallic vegetation that comprises his peculiar diet. Though he favors austere garb in the colors of slate, straw, charcoal or clay, the crooked brass rod he bears as his staff of office blazes with brilliant gemstones, while the armor of blue Yozi-glass that he wears in battle glows with a furious inner light.

Motivation: Rescue his daughter from whatever cranny of Hell now holds her.

Urge (Pyrrian): Punish deviation from the rules and purpose of the Conventicle Malfeasant.

Caste: Defiler

Anima Banner: A blazing white globe orbited by lesser emerald spheres.

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3; Charisma 5, Manipulation 3, Appearance 2; Perception 4, Intelligence 5, Wits 3

Virtues: Compassion 2, Conviction 2, Temperance 3, Valor 3

Abilities: Awareness 2, Bureaucracy 4 (Malfean Ministries +1), Dodge 2, Integrity 3, Investigation 4, Linguistics (Native: Forest-tongue; Others: Old Realm) 1, Lore 3,

Martial Arts 3, Medicine 1, Occult 5, Performance 3, Presence 3, Socialize 3, Survival 1

Backgrounds: Artifact 4, Backing (She Who Lives in Her Name) 2, Cult 1, Infernal Manse 3, Influence (Malfeas) 3, Resources 5, Savant 2, Unwoven Coadjutor 2

Charms: Analytical Modeling Intuition, Counter-Conceptual Interposition, Essence-Dissecting Stare, Factual Determination Analysis, First She Who Lives in Her Name Excellency, Hardened Devil Body, Hellscream Chakra, Mind-Hand Manipulation, Sorcerous Enlightenment of She Who Lives in Her Name, Will-Crushing Force

Mutations: Diet (tin)

Spells: Slave-Spawn Summons

Join Battle: 5

Attacks:

Punch: Speed 5, Accuracy 7, Damage 2B, Parry DV 4, Rate 3

Kick: Speed 5, Accuracy 6, Damage 5B, Parry DV 2, Rate 2

Clinch: Speed 6, Accuracy 6, Damage 2B, Parry DV —, Rate 1, Tags P

Telekinetic Blow: Speed 5, Accuracy 11, Damage 4B, Parry DV 6, Rate 4, Range 10

Telekinetic Clinch: Speed 6, Accuracy 11, Damage 4B, Parry DV —, Rate 1, Range 10

Telekinetic Blade: Speed 5, Accuracy 11, Damage 4L*, Defense 6, Rate 4, Range 10, Tags P

* Aggravated to creatures of the Wyld.

Soak: 12L/12B (Infernal reinforced breastplate, 10L/9B, Hardness: 8L/8B, -1 mobility penalty, 1 fatigue value)

Health Levels: -0/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/-4/Incap

Dodge DV: 5

Willpower: 6

Essence: 4

Personal Essence: 18

Peripheral Essence: 39 (44)

Committed Essence: 5

Other Notes: The Guardian wears a tainted orichalcum hearthstone amulet inset with a hearthstone that reduces the cost of his Slave-Spawn Summons spell by eight motes. An agata's soul is woven into his own; it shares peculiar insights into its own kind, providing a two-die bonus to all social rolls against demons.

TEPET HARADA, THE EMERALD SHADOW, DRAGON-BLOODED AKUMA

Most young Dynasts find their station in life more than satisfactory. Are they not the Princes of the Earth, strong and fit, wealthy and indulged, admired and respected—nay, all but worshiped—by the folk of the Realm? Yet, there are always exceptions. Some find their responsibilities arduous; others see their riches as an obstacle to enlightenment. And then there are those possessed by ambition, those as yet unsatisfied with their station.

Tepet Harada numbered among the ambitious. A precocious youth, he pressed his talents to the utmost



under familial pressure and easily outdid his classmates at the House of Bells. So accustomed was he to success that he could not fathom the source of his failure when his early attempts at court intrigue were slapped down by far older and more seasoned Dynasts. Unwilling to wait however many years it would take to match their experience and connections, Harada turned to forbidden lore. When the opportunity to sell his soul for power arose, he did what he had always done. He reached out for the power without heed for the consequences, and though he burned his hands upon damnation, he wears the scars proudly.

If only he could display those scars, and the infernal fires that left them, to his peers! But his new masters torment him. An agent on the Blessed Isle would be invaluable to them, but so much does he crave such a post that they deny it to him out of spite. They keep him in Malfeas, sending him on petty errands and thwarting his efforts to leave the Demon City, solely to watch him squirm. Soon, though, their vindictive nature will give way to practicality, and he will return to the Scarlet Empire as their puppet. It's all part of the Ebon Dragon's plan...

At first glance, Harada appears much as he did before the Investiture—young and well formed, with proud aristocratic features and nut-brown hair. But his limbs have grown gaunt, he moves with outlandish grace, and his once-green eyes have darkened to black.

Urge: To obey the Ebon Dragon in all things. Aside from an Intimacy to the Ebon Dragon, he has—for the

moment—been left with his former Intimacies toward his mother, his brother Aekino, House Tepet and his ambitions to gain power and prestige in the Realm.

Aspect: Wood

Anima Banner: A cascade of falling green leaves.

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 6, Stamina 2; Charisma 3, Manipulation 3, Appearance 4; Perception 2, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

Virtues: Compassion 1, Conviction 5, Temperance 2, Valor 1

Abilities: Archery 6 (Unsuspecting Target +2), Athletics 4, Awareness 2, Bureaucracy 1, Dodge 3, Integrity 2, Investigation 2, Larceny 4, Linguistics (Native: High Realm; Others: Low Realm, Old Realm) 2, Lore 1, Occult 2, Presence 6, Socialize 1, Stealth 6

Backgrounds: Artifact 3, Breeding 3, Connections (House of Bells) 2, Demonic Inheritance 5, Demonic Patron 5, Manse 1, Reputation 1, Resources 3

Dragon-Blooded Charms: Auspicious First Meeting Attitude, Ears of the Snowy Owl, Observer Awareness Method

Infernal Charms: First Ebon Dragon Excellency, Hollowing Essence Venom, Life-Blighting Emptiness Attack, Loom-Snarling Deception, Witness to Darkness

Demonic Mutations: Creature of Darkness

Join Battle: 5

Attacks:

Punch: Speed 5, Accuracy 7, Damage 2B, Parry DV 4, Rate 3

Kick: Speed 5, Accuracy 6, Damage 5B, Parry DV 2, Rate 2

Clinch: Speed 6, Accuracy 6, Damage 2B, Parry DV —, Rate 1, Tags P

Knife: Speed 5, Accuracy 7, Damage 4L, Parry DV 3, Rate 3

Hellflame Piece: Speed 5, Accuracy 13, Damage 8L, Range 10, Rate 1, Tags F, S

Jade Long Powerbow: Speed 5, Accuracy 13, Damage 9L*, Range 400, Rate 3, Tags 2, B

* Uses frog crotch arrows; doubles lethal soak of target's armor.

Soak: 6L/5B (Jade chain shirt, 5L/3B, Hardness: 2L/2B)

Health Levels: -0/-1/-1/-2/-2/-4/Incip

Dodge DV: 6 **Willpower:** 7 **Essence:** 3

Personal Essence: 14 **Peripheral Essence:** 26 (34)

Committed Essence: 8

Other Notes: The demon that administered the Investiture of Infernal Glory flensed Harada's soul of his mastery of the sword, replacing it with inhuman expertise as an infiltrator and archer-assassin. Harada nonetheless recalls the broad outlines of his history, and he often succumbs to the instinct to draw a blade rather than make use of the talents he actually possesses. His powerbow is set with a monkey stone (see **Exalted**, p. 383).

The fifth of five books dedicated to the supernatural locales of the **Exalted** setting, this supplement focuses on Malfeas, Hell of the **Exalted** world. Prison to the Yozis and their demon spawn, Malfeas is a twisted place formed from the very flesh of the defeated leader of the Primordials and containing the remainder of his vanquished cohorts. Imprisoned since the dawn of the First Age, these incomprehensible beings have bided their time, waiting for their chance to escape, claim vengeance on the gods and their champions and regain dominion over Creation. And with the birth of the Infernal Exalted and the corruption of the one who leads them, that chance is now. Will Creation's Exalted be able to set aside their differences to end this threat, or will the akuma among them sabotage the Exalts' efforts from within?

A setting book featuring:

- Details of several locales of the Demon City, many of which are living aspects of the Yozis themselves
- A myriad of demonic luminaries and demon-beasts for use in any **Exalted** series
- Everything players and Storytellers need to play series based in the prison of the damned



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