

AGAINST the DARKNESS



A Roleplaying Game Of
Vatican Horror And Conspiracy

Tabletop
ADVENTURES



AGAINST The DARKNESS™

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In This Book

Why in the world do we need another game system? Well, perhaps “need” isn’t the right word, but *Against the Darkness* was conceived as a rules-light system that would allow people to buy the game, learn the rules, generate characters, and begin playing all in the same day. It works just as well for a quick game to provide a night’s diversion or to create a campaign of terror and intrigue in the endless war between good and evil. The rules themselves are not complex because nothing can kill a well-crafted atmosphere of horror and suspense quite as thoroughly as stopping to hunt for something in the rulebook. *Against the Darkness* provides a coherent structure around which to play while at the same time allowing maximum flexibility for roleplaying and story development.

In this rulebook, whether you are a player or a Game Master, you will find everything you need to understand the rules, create characters, and begin playing. In addition there is a short section on some of the differences between running a horror adventure and running the more familiar type of action adventure, and also thoughts on running a campaign of terror and intrigue using the *Against the Darkness* rules system.

Please note – we said that you would have everything in here that you needed to begin playing. This is very different from saying that we have covered every situation that may arise, or have covered all of the abilities, character types, powers, or game experiences that can be played in this genre. In play testing we were able to play action-oriented adventures, light-hearted/humorous adventures, and also horrifying adventures. This variety is supported by the general framework of the rules. Whatever the Game Master or players want to do, this game framework can be modified to allow you to do it. All you need is to be familiar with the general difficulty levels and the players’ desires. If a player wants to do something that fits within the Game Master’s and players’ conceptions of what should be possible in the game, then the GM can assign a difficulty level to the task, identify what Skills are appropriate and let the players roll. *Against the Darkness* is meant to be your game and is here for your enjoyment. Feel free to modify it with house rules and new Archetypes to your heart’s content.

Disclaimer: *Against the Darkness* is a game and not an accurate simulation of any church or theology. While we have endeavored to give the game a “realistic” feel to keep it interesting and aid in the players’ suspension of disbelief, a great deal of poetic license has been used to make it fun and exciting. *Against the Darkness* does not claim to accurately reflect any real-world religious thought, belief, or practice nor is it an exercise in comparative religion or satire. This is a game, and its portrayals of church organizations, persons and situations are fictional and not intended to represent real-world structures, theology, or situations.

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Header and Footer text includes excerpts of English translations of the Rite of Exorcism from “The Rituale Romanum” originally written in 1614 under the authority of Pope Paul V.

Three sources were used for the scripture texts in this work: the King James Version; The Holy Bible, New International Version; and the New American Standard Bible. Please refer to the appropriate copyright statement governing the use of each text.

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Scripture Texts of Word Art:

(Listed in order of appearance.)

- Ephesians, chapter 6, verse 12, King James Version
- Romans, chapter 12, verse 2, New American Standard
- Psalms, chapter 55, verses 5 and 8, New International Version
- Isaiah, chapter 40, verse 31, King James Version
- Second Timothy, chapter 1, verse 7, King James Version
- Matthew, chapter 10, verse 16, New International Version
- Psalms, chapter 144, verses 5-6a, New International Version
- Psalms, chapter 144, verse 1, New International Version
- Psalms, chapter 55, verses 5 and 8, New International Version
- Lamentations, chapter 3 verse 6, King James Version
- Psalms, chapter 55, verse 11, New International Version
- Scripture Reference – Page 3 – Revelations, chapter 12 verses 3-4 and 7-9; New International Version
- Scripture Reference – Page 40 - Genesis, chapter 6 Vvrses 1-2.

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Welcome to the Darkness

If you gaze for too long into the abyss, know that the abyss also gazes into you.

- Friedrich Nietzsche

Against the Darkness is a game that allows you to dance upon the edge of the abyss and attempt to drive the darkness back into its depths. To do this, however, you must first enter into the shadows where evil dwells. Once there you may come to realize that the illusions by which we tend to live are but a fragile façade that only survive because of the heroes who face the dread terrors and stand against the darkness.

From whence do these terrors come?

Then another sign appeared in heaven: an enormous red dragon with seven heads and ten horns and seven crowns on his heads. His tail swept a third of the stars out of the sky and flung them to the earth. ...And there was war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back. But he was not strong enough, and they lost their place in heaven. The great dragon was hurled down—that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him.

In *Against the Darkness*, the demonic forces began as rebellious angels in Heaven itself and the conflict is perpetuated because Satan is not a good loser.

No one in *Against the Darkness* knows for sure why this war began, but it is commonly believed that it had something to do with pride – Satan was the most beautiful and powerful angel ever created. Whatever the cause, the result is that Satan and his demons seek to destroy God’s Creation, and they have a special enmity for humanity, who God loves. To work against the evil powers of destruction and corruption that gnaw at his beautiful creation God has, throughout time, raised up people to wield a portion of Divine power. Today these are the Justiciars and their power to combat evil comes directly from the Creator.

The campaign world for the characters of *Against the Darkness* is primarily set in the 21st century, but in many ways it is much as the people of the Middle Ages believed the world to be. It is a world where demons, monsters, and sorcery are not just stories to frighten children. They are a grim reality that brings

horror to the most normal of settings in our world. The characters live in our world of business, football, amusement parks, and sitcoms. However, they come to realize that this world of enlightenment, reason, and political correctness is just a Pollyanna fiction that conceals an ageless war being waged between the servants of God and the powers of darkness.

In this exciting game of modern Vatican horror, conspiracy, and investigation, the creatures of myth and nightmare prey upon an unsuspecting humanity. The public at large believes the world to be a world governed by science and reason. It is, literally, the world in which the player (not the character) lives. It is a world that would quite possibly incarcerate someone in an insane asylum if they dared to profess to do battle with demons. Only an elite but steadily shrinking cadre of holy defenders knows the truth and battles the forces of darkness, bringing light and strength to a threatened world.

In *Against the Darkness*, the heroes can be Modern Templars, Treasure Seekers, Dispassionate Experts, Sacred Hunters, Blessed Non-believers or others, who face unspeakable evil with faith, knowledge, determination, and miraculous powers. Adventures can take the characters anywhere in the world, from a desert mission among forgotten ruins to a split-level in suburbia, but no mission is ever accomplished without cost. Despite the miraculous powers and knowledge that the heroes wield, the soul-searing combat endured when battling a true demon is a terrifying proposition. Death, crippling injury, or insanity are likely outcomes and all too often victories are but fleeting moments in the timeless war between good and evil.

Once you have entered the world of *Against the Darkness*, you may become aware that there is as much substance to the world of shadow as most people believe there to be in the material world of science. With this revelation you can never again go back to pretending that the world of the five senses is the only one that matters. Time will tell whether you are consumed by the abyss or whether you are able to stand against the darkness.

Welcome to my world,
The Evil Overlord

The Aftermath

The charnel smell was far too fresh for an abandoned tomb. The child was here. He could hear him. At least he thought it was the boy. The strange mewling whimpers were a sound that should not be coming from human vocal cords and, despite the heat of the day, they made tiny bumps rise on his arms. But if it was the missing boy then at least he was capable of making noise. Which was better, Father Venditto found himself thinking, this sorrowful keening or the catatonic retreat of his sister into the safety of her own mind? The shadows were too deep to see into and since it was daylight he had not brought a flashlight with him in his search for the lad. What could have tempted the boy to enter this forgotten tomb and why hadn't the family been told that it was hidden in these woods when the property came to them?

He heard Reverend Danvers, the local Episcopal priest, entering behind him.

"You may want to wait outside," he told her.

"Not a chance," she said. All she could see of Father Venditto was a vague shape and the white collar of his shirt. "The boy is from my parish and I will find ... Sweet Jesus, what is that sound? Is that him?" She urgently pushed through the opening.

Whatever Father Venditto was going to say to his colleague caught in his throat as he felt the hairs on the back of his neck rise. He turned as the child's cry became frantic and the priest saw something gathering in the shadows...or perhaps it was the shadows...but no it had substance...or did it? "Hail Mary, full of grace," it had to be a just a shadow. "Blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus," please let it be just a shadow, he thought. "Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death." He tried to finish but his throat had become so dry that the words sounded more like a perverse croaking. It had become so cold...

"Pietro!" Angela Danvers was shaking him.

Father Venditto looked sheepishly around. Several people on the plane were looking at him and others were pointedly looking away.

"You were having a nightmare," Angela said. Leaning close to him she whispered, "Was it the tomb?"

Pietro nodded and looked at the glistening black rosary in his hands. The nightmares were not supposed to come when he fell asleep saying the rosary.

He looked up and saw that the stewardess had come to check on him.

"We'll be landing in Algiers soon. Can I get you anything in the meantime?" she asked, a worried smile upon her pleasant, unknowing face.

"Yes, some water would be nice," Pietro tried to smile as he realized how dry his throat was. The stewardess hurried off. It seemed to help her to have something that she could do, he thought.

"Will you be OK?" Angela asked. Her Catholic colleague nodded. After the nice young woman returned with the water, Angela excused herself and moved to the facilities in the back of the plane. The stewardess, now busying herself at the hostess station, looked up as she passed.

"Reverend?" She addressed Angela and the Episcopal priest thought that maybe next time they traveled she wouldn't wear her collar. To just be Angela for a day, instead of Reverend Danvers, might be nice.

"Yes, Karen?" Angela made a point to remember people's names.

"Is the Father all right?"

Angela thought for a moment before answering. "It is a post-traumatic stress response."

"Oh, is he a war veteran?"

Angela looked over the tops of the heads of the other passengers and saw the back of Father Pietro Venditto's head, bowed slightly over his shaking hands.

"Yes."



... for we wrestle ~~not~~ against flesh and blood
but against principalities, ~~against~~ powers,
~~against~~ the rulers of the darkness of this world,
against spiritual wickedness in high places.



Chapter 1: Basic Game Mechanics

Characters in *Against the Darkness* are Justiciars (jus-tih-shee-ers), dispensers of divine justice to the supernatural things in the world. Most are priests or other persons with full-time vocations in the Catholic Church, though there can be exceptions.

Character Creation

Creating a Justiciar is a simple process with four main steps:

- Assign build points or randomly roll values for the four Attributes
- Assign 4-6-6-8 Task Resolution Dice to Attributes
- Use Skill Points to select Skills and Miracles
- Add personal information about the character

Read through the information on all the Attributes and the Skills and Miracles associated with them. Next take a look at the Resolution Dice. Get an idea in mind of what you want your character to be like, and then use the process to develop the character you want.

An alternate method is to use a character Archetype. (see Appendix 1) These are ready-made Justiciars which represent the most common types of heroes in this world. They are prepared with Attributes, Resolution Dice, Skills and Miracles; all you have to do is add a few details.

Attributes

The four Attributes are:

- **Corpus** (Body): Corpus is a measure of physical strength, speed, endurance, and beauty. Corpus also provides an indicator of the character's current health; as the Justiciar is damaged, the current Corpus score drops.

- **Mentus** (Mind): Mentus measures how well a being thinks, learns, and reasons. It measures both knowledge and innate intelligence.
- **Spiritus** (Spirit): Spiritus governs force of personality, will power, and social interactions.
- **Fidelis** (Faith): Fidelis represents the character's belief, hope, and genuine faith. It is also a measure of the character's sanity and stability. Fidelis is under constant attack from demonic forces, and can be damaged in spiritual combat.

Build Methods

All Attributes begin at 1, which is considered the low end of the human norm, and max out at 7, which is the peak of human accomplishment. (Of course, the non-human beings and monsters in *Against the Darkness* are not limited to the human maximum.)

The primary method of character generation is the **point build method**. Each of the four Attributes starts at 1, and each build point spent increases an Attribute by 1 point. For standard games, the starting character has 10 points to spend on Attributes. At least one point must be assigned to each Attribute unless otherwise specified by the Game Master.

If you prefer a **randomly generated** character, simply roll a d6 for each Attribute and add the result to 1 to birth a new character.

Character Creation—Point Build Method

Susan uses the **point build method** to create a character. She decides her character, Sister Yvonne, will not be very strong or fast, but will have exceptional faith. Susan wants to assign 5 build points to Yvonne's Fidelis, leaving her 5 points to distribute among the other Attributes. She puts 1 point in Corpus and 2 each in Mentus and Spiritus, then takes a look at the results. Adding the points to the starting value of 1 in each Attribute gives Sister Yvonne: Corpus 2; Mentus 3; Spiritus 3; Fidelis 6. Realizing that a Corpus of 2 means that her character can only be wounded twice before dying, Susan decides that perhaps 2 in Corpus is not high enough. She rearranges her build points to put 2 in Corpus and only 4 in Fidelis, giving Yvonne a result of: Corpus 3; Mentus 3; Spiritus 3; Fidelis 5.

God, Creator and defender of the human race, who made man in your own image, look down in pity on this your servant † now in the toils of the unclean spirit, now caught up in the

fearsome threats of man's ancient enemy, sworn foe of our race, who befuddles and stupefies the human mind, throws it into terror, overwhelms it with fear and panic.

Task Resolution Dice

Not everyone has the same strengths, and all people, no matter how skilled they are, have their weaknesses. Three types of Resolution Dice are used: d4, d6 (used for two Attributes), and d8. Obviously, using the d8 Resolution

Character Creation—Random Generation Method

Steve, who considers himself to have above average luck, decides to use the **random generation method** of building his character, Father Rickhart. He rolls 1d6 four times, adds 1 (the starting value in each Attribute) and assigns them to the Attributes in the order rolled. Steve's first roll is a 3, for a Corpus of 4. Next he rolls 5, for a Mentus score of 6, and a 4, for a Spiritus score of 5. Steve's luck holds through his last roll, a 4, giving a Fidelis score of 5. Result for Father Rickhart: Corpus 4; Mentus 6; Spiritus 5; Fidelis 5.

Overall, Father Rickhart's Attribute scores are higher than those of Sister Yvonne. However, by rolling randomly, Steve took the risk that Rickhart could have one or more scores of a mere 2. (On the other hand, he had the chance of having the scores be 7 in each Attribute. It's been known to happen.) Also, Rickhart's highest score is in Mentus, which is not the Attribute Steve wanted to emphasize in his character. He was looking forward to having a tough demon fighter, but now has Corpus as his lowest Attribute score.

Die gives the Justiciar the greatest chance of success. During character creation, the player must decide which Resolution Die will be associated with each Attribute. This Resolution Die will always be used to settle rolls involving this specific Attribute. Once chosen, Resolution Dice can never be changed.

The player assigns a d8 Resolution Die to one of the character's Attributes, a d6 each to two Attributes, and a d4 Resolution Die to the remaining Attribute. This instantly establishes the character's innate strengths and weaknesses. Justiciars can only use Miracles associated with the Attribute with the d8 Resolution Die. (Miracles are indicated by bolded, italicized text in the Skills and Miracles list beginning on page 7, or pages 15-26). Supernatural creatures may choose their Miracles (or Blasphemies, for creatures of Darkness) from any category, regardless of which Attribute has the d8 Resolution Die.

Task Resolution

The Resolution Die is an important part of Task Resolution. The same method is used in every situation. To determine whether your character succeeds at a task, total up the relevant Attribute and Skill or Miracle rank (plus any Specializations; see page 7, or pages 15-26), and then roll the Resolution Die. The total is then compared to a target number in any situation where the Justiciar is not directly competing with another being. When opposed by another person or creature, both parties roll and their results are compared to determine the winner.

Using this mechanic, there may be a number of things that a Justiciar will not be able to accomplish alone, whether a neophyte or veteran. Working in a group can

often be very important as different abilities will make the group stronger. It is also possible to assist someone in a task, if you have the same Skill. Even if you do not have the same Skill, you can still help by using "corporate prayer" to request divine aid for the person doing the task. (see page 34).

Assigning Resolution Dice

Sister Yvonne has Attributes of Corpus 3; Mentus 3; Spiritus 3; Fidelis 5. Susan wants to build a character powerful in faith (Fidelis), and is looking forward to being able to use all the Miracles associated with that Attribute. She assigns the d8 Resolution Die to Fidelis. Being nervous about the possibility of Yvonne being wounded in combat (because she considers herself to be rather unlucky at times), Susan decides to assign one of the d6 Resolution Die to her Corpus. Considering that she would rather Yvonne be strong at mental tasks, Susan assigns the other d6 to Mentus, and the d4 to Spiritus.

Corpus 3 + d6; Mentus 3 + d6; Spiritus 3 + d4; Fidelis 5 + d8

Father Rickhart has Attributes of Corpus 4; Mentus 6; Spiritus 5; Fidelis 5. Steve really likes the idea of playing a combat powerhouse (even though Corpus is his character's lowest Attribute), so he decides to assign his d8 Resolution Die to Corpus. He figures Rickhart's Mentus is already pretty good, and assigns the d4 to that, leaving a d6 each for his Spiritus and Fidelis.

Corpus 4 + d8; Mentus 6 + d4; Spiritus 5 + d6; Fidelis 5 + d6

Repel, O Lord, the devil's power, break asunder his snares and traps, put the unholy tempter to flight. By the sign † of your name, let your servant be protected in mind and body.

Keep watch over the inmost recesses of his heart; rule over his emotions; strengthen his will. Let vanish from his soul the temptings of the mighty adversary. Graciously grant, O Lord, as

Skills and Miracles

Each Attribute has a number of Skills and Miracles—unique special abilities—associated with it. Everything a Justiciar can do, whether as mundane as driving a car or as majestic as casting out demons, operates within the same basic framework.

Spending Skill Points

Skills and Miracles all begin at 0 and are purchased in the same manner; a starting character has 30 Skill Points that can be spent to purchase Skills and Miracles related to any of the four Attributes. (Skills and Miracles are described in detail.) Characters may also spend starting Skill Points to improve an Attribute.

Skills and Miracles by Attribute:

(Miracles listed in bold and italics. ‡ indicates Opposed tasks.)

Corpus

- Combat - fighting ability ‡
- ***Endurance - resistance to pain and injury*** ‡
- Mechanics - operate, build, and repair machines ‡
- ***Pyrokinesis - mentally start or control fires*** ‡
- ***Raw Physicality - feats of strength*** ‡
- Speed - perform tasks and move quickly ‡
- ***Transformation - limited shapeshifting*** ‡

Mentus

- ***Animation - create artificial servants***
- ***Genius - supernatural intelligence and memory***
- Hard Science - understanding of a specialized scientific subject
- Investigation - detective work and forensics ‡
- Knowledge - understanding of a specialized social or religious topic
- ***Occultism - understanding of magic*** ‡
- Technical - mastery of complex electronics ‡
- ***Telepathy - reading and influencing minds*** ‡
- Translation - understand languages

Spiritus

- Cunning - negotiation, influence, or manipulation ‡
- ***Divination - see or affect the future***
- ***Ghostliness - turn invisible or intangible*** ‡
- Medicine - heal physical (Corpus) injuries ‡
- Psychology - heal non-physical (Fidelis) injuries ‡
- ***Telekinesis - move objects mentally*** ‡
- Wealth - business skill and/or disposable income ‡

Fidelis

- ***Discernment - see through lies and illusions*** ‡
- ***Divine Intervention - incredible luck***
- ***Ecological Dominance - control plants and weather***
- ***Exorcism - cast out possessing demons*** ‡
- ***Holy Aura - a divine protective field***
- ***Sacrificial Healing - risk injury to heal others***
- ***Stewardship - command animals*** ‡
- ***Wrath - destroy enemies through faith*** ‡

Point costs are as follows:

- **1 Skill Point per rank for each Skill (or Specialization)**
- **2 Skill Points per rank for each Miracle (or Specialization)**
- **3 Skill Points per Attribute point**

Skills and Miracles have a maximum of 7 ranks, similar to Attributes. A person with one rank in a Skill has passing familiarity with a task, with knowledge equal to a dedicated hobbyist. Someone who has 7 seven ranks in a Skill is a world renowned expert in the subject. Miracles are ranked similarly; the higher the rank in a Miracle, the more raw divine power the Justiciar can bring to bear.

Specializations

Justiciars who have maxed out a Skill (achieving the perfection of 7 ranks) can still pump more points into an ability by becoming Specialists. A character can add a maximum of 7 ranks of Specializations in a single Skill. Each rank of Specialization allows the character additional expertise, but in a narrow, player-defined area. Suggestions for Specializations are included in the Skill descriptions. The player can decide to maximize one Specialization or specialize to a lesser degree in several areas of a Skill, but the total cannot be more than 7 ranks of Specializations per Skill. Some Miracles also allow Specialization; see the descriptions of the individual Miracles for more information. Specializations cost the same amount per rank as the associated Skill or Miracle. Note that no Specializations can be added to a Skill or Miracle which has less than 7 ranks.

Keep in mind that demons and other nonhumans do not have to follow any of these rules during their character creation!

we call on your holy name, that the evil spirit, who hitherto terrorized over us, may himself retreat in terror and defeat, so that this servant of yours may sincerely and steadfastly render

you the service which is your due; through Christ Our Lord. I adjure you, ancient serpent, by the judge of the living and the dead, by your Creator, by the Creator of the whole universe, by

Using Miracles

A Miracle can be used a number of times per day equal to its number of ranks. Each additional use past this limit results in the Justiciar suffering one point of Corpus or Fidelis damage. In times of great need, the faithful warrior can sacrifice health or sanity to save lives. (Excess use of a Corpus Miracle causes Corpus damage; all other Miracles cause Fidelis damage.)

Using some Miracles requires an activation roll, which is never considered a trivial challenge. The player rolls Attribute + Miracle + Resolution Die against a difficulty set by the GM. Some activation difficulty levels are given in each Miracle's description. Success means the ability activates and can be used for a single action or a scene. Failure means the power does not activate, but that use is still spent for the day.

Once activated, the effects of many Miracles last a scene. A scene is a cinematic concept; it can last hours, or, in a battle, perhaps be over in a minute. (see Time, page 11). Other Miracles are effective for a single action during combat. Refer to the individual Miracle descriptions for specific information.

Miracles are referred to as "Blasphemies" when possessed by demons and villains. The mechanics are identical, but a demon's "Unholy Aura" is likely to look and feel dramatically different than the "Holy Aura" of the demon hunter facing it. A Justiciar's Miracles are a testament of faith and willpower; a demon's Blasphemies are a profane insult to God and all that is good in the universe.

Untrained Skills

What happens when your character is faced with a challenge for which he or she is completely unprepared and totally untrained? Simple. Roll the relevant Attribute + Resolution Die and hope for the best. Natural talent and skill can take a character fairly far in the world, though eventually all the natural aptitude in the world won't mean a thing without the proper training.

Miracles cannot be used untrained. They are supernatural powers granted through faith and the unknowable will of God. You either have access to a Miracle or you do not.

Adding Skills and Miracles

Susan plans to focus on the Miracles associated with Fidelis, Sister Yvonne's area of strength. However, she knows Yvonne needs some Skills other than miraculous ones. Susan has 30 Skill points to use, and starts by taking two ranks each in four Miracles: Discernment, Ecological Dominance, Exorcism, and Holy Aura (16 points total). She also takes two ranks each in some Mentus Skills: Investigation, Knowledge, Technical, and Translation (8 points; 24 points total). Concluding that Yvonne had better have some capability in Combat, Susan takes two ranks in that also. (2 points, 26 total). To use her final Skill points, Susan increases her Knowledge to 4 (2 more points) and her Ecological Dominance to 3 (also 2 points; 30 total). Sister Yvonne has several Skills and Miracles, without being very strong in any. Her list of Skills and Miracles:

Corpus 3 + d6 – Combat 2

Mentus 3 + d6 – Investigation 2, Knowledge 4, Technical 2, Translation 2

Spiritus 3 + d4 – none

Fidelis 5 + d8 – Discernment 2, Ecological Dominance 3, Exorcism 2, Holy Aura 2

Steve plans to have Father Rickhart be strong in combat. He is allowed to take Miracles under Corpus, because that is the Attribute to which he assigned the d8 Resolution Die. He starts with Raw Physicality at 4 ranks, and Endurance at 2 (12 points total). Next he takes 5 in Combat, and 3 in Speed (8 points; 20 total). Figuring Rickhart or his companions may be injured at some point, Steve decides on 3 ranks of Medicine. He also takes 1 each in Cunning and Wealth (5 points; 25 total). With 5 Skill Points left, Steve decides to raise Father Rickhart's Combat Skill to 7 (2 points; 27 total). The remaining 3 points he will put into some type of Specialization under Combat.

There is no specific list of Specializations for each Skill. These are limited only by Steve's imagination and his GM's common sense. Steve suggests 2 ranks in fighting blind, and 1 rank in fighting undead creatures, in case he gets a chance to encounter zombies or skeletons (3 points; 30 total). These Specializations are both agreeable to his GM, so Steve makes a note of them. Should Father Rickhart ever have a chance to fight zombies in pitch darkness, he will be able to stack these Specializations, since they would both apply.

At a later time, when Rickhart has earned additional Skill Points through his experiences, Steve could add more Specializations to his Combat ability. However, he can only add 4 more points of Specializations, because that would total 7, which is the maximum Specializations per Skill for humans.

Steve has probably achieved his desire; Father Rickhart should be excellent in Combat. The cost, though, is that his other Skills are not strong. Rickhart's list of Skills and Miracles:

Corpus 4 + d8 – Combat 7 (blind fighting +2; fighting undead +1),
Endurance 2, Raw Physicality 4, Speed 3

Mentus 6 + d4 – None

Spiritus 5 + d6 – Cunning 1, Medicine 3, Wealth 1

Fidelis 5 + d6 – None

Him who has the power to consign you to hell, to depart forthwith in fear, along with your savage minions, from this servant of God, who seeks refuge in the fold of the Church. I adjure

you again † not by my weakness but by the might of the Holy Spirit, to depart from this servant of God, whom almighty God has made in His image. Yield, therefore, yield not to my

Customizing a Character

Making a character unique is more than just choosing hair color or deciding on height and weight. What is the character's background? In *Against the Darkness* in particular, what is the person's religious history? Baptized as an infant, altar boy, and straight on into the priesthood? Or a darker path – a troubled childhood, dabbling in the occult and getting more than you bargained for, being oppressed by demons until they were banished by an elderly nun from the parish school whom you never expected to have that kind of power. Now you hope to use the insight you gained from years of pain, and the amazing power divinely granted to you after you joined the Church, to fight back against evils that you *know*, with a certainty few can match, are very real.

This type of background can be used to explain why your character has particular Skills and Miracles, and the reason for becoming a Justiciar in the first place.

Against the Darkness gives another way to customize your character. Just as each person has a unique set of Miracles granted, each individual's Miracles can have a distinct feel or flavor. For example, one Holy Aura may be a faint purple shield, with the odor of polished metal. Another person's may be shimmering blue with a hint of incense. As a second example, a Justiciar's Pyrokinesis may be a brilliant white flare that cracks like thunder and smells of smoke and ozone, while another's is the usual fiery red, but seems to be accompanied by a barely audible chord from an invisible organ. In contrast, a demon's Pyrokinesis could be black flame that smells of sulphur, its Unholy Aura could be dark smoke that rises and thickens in an instant to protect against an attack.



Another way to customize a character is to define his or her professional background, vocation and relationship to the Church. Most people are familiar with certain roles in the Church: priests and nuns, bishops, maybe monks. However, the Catholic Church is much broader. Centered in the Vatican City, an independent country, the Church has diplomats, bureaucrats and also civil authorities around the world. It even has a delegation and observer

status in the United Nations. In addition it maintains its own research, investigatory, educational, and scientific facilities. There is a place in the Church for both people who make it their life and those to whom it is merely a part of life. As one of the largest organizations in the world, the Catholic Church includes theologians, museum curators, financial specialists, contemplatives (persons who spend most of their time in prayer or meditation), ambassadors, and lawyers. It may have professionals with expertise in art, computers, antiquities or linguistics.

Justiciars might be any of the above, or more. Since miraculous powers are granted as God chooses, people in less prominent positions are at least as likely to be gifted as important leaders.

Justiciars may be librarians, medical professionals, sextons (persons who care for church buildings and grounds), teachers, college professors, organists or choir directors, tour guides, administrative assistants, drivers, or cooks. They could also hold less common positions such as military chaplains, crisis center counselors, members of the elite Swiss Guard, aide workers, or infectious disease specialists.

The Catholic Church trains its priests and nuns to fill many of these roles but it employs lay people (those who are not committed to a religious life) in them as well.

... and do not be
conformed
to this world, but
be transformed
by the renewing of your mind

own person but to the minister of Christ. For it is the power of Christ that compels you, who brought you low by His cross. Tremble before that mighty arm that broke asunder the dark

The Joining

"I don't understand." Angela stood up from behind her desk and walked around her chair to look out the office window. "Why would this order....what did you say it was?"

"The Order of Saint Michael the Archangel," Father Venditto answered. His Italian accent was strong but he spoke English quite well.

"Why would they want me?" Reverend Danvers continued, "I am Episcopal, not Catholic. A simple parish priest."

"Simple?" Father Venditto responded. He also stood up but did not move to the window. He sensed she needed space. This was always a difficult moment, and it was hard to know whether someone would accept the new paradigm or retreat into the familiar. If she retreated and began explaining away the creature they had faced and the power she had wielded then he would have his answer. He decided to press the issue home; one way or another he wanted an answer. "You study martial arts and Kendo. That is not common in a priest, and the Kharismata is strong with you. I felt your power in the tomb when that boy was in trouble. The enemy felt it too. They know who you are now and that God's power is with you and that you are not afraid to fight them. They don't like that."

"They?" she said turning quickly upon him. "It is God's power, not mine."

"Surely you don't imagine that this is a one-time incident? And God gives the Kharismata to whom He will."

"Seminary had pretty much convinced me that the faith had grown beyond this stuff. That ... demons," she seemed to stumble over the word, "were a belief of primitive society to explain psychological dysfunction that they did not understand. And the Kharisma..., well we just didn't talk much about the 'gifts' except as something in the Biblical stories."

"And what do you believe now?" Father Venditto asked.

"I don't know." She looked down. "Why me?"

Father Venditto sensed that this was not really the same question that she had asked before.

"It is not our place to judge why. Perhaps it was because you were needed for such a time as this." He looked past her and out the window into the garden and his thoughts went to his former mentor. "It seems there are so few of us left."

"Is that why they are willing to overlook that I am not Catholic? They need warm bodies?"

"The Order has ever been more concerned with the realities of conflict rather than ecclesial politics." He returned to focus on the here and now. "And yes, we need help. This conflict takes a heavy toll. Most of the Church doesn't even know that we exist."

"But now I know," she said, looking at him without fully raising her head.

"Yes, now you know."

"Aren't you afraid that I will tell someone about this secret order?" She looked at him directly now.

"Reverend Danvers," he said. "Who exactly would you tell? And who would believe you?"

"Yes, indeed." She smiled and he knew then that she was with them. "Call me Angela."

Father Venditto extended his hand to her as if they were meeting for the first time.

"I am Pietro."



prison walls and led souls forth to light. May the trembling that afflicts this human frame † the fear that afflicts this image of God, descend on you. Make no resistance nor delay in

Playing the Game

Task Resolution

The Resolution Die is an important part of Task Resolution. The same method is used in every situation. To determine whether your character succeeds at a task, use the following procedure:

Total up the relevant Attribute and Skill or Miracle rank (plus any Specializations), and then roll the Resolution Die. The total is then compared to a target number in any situation where the Justiciar is not directly competing with another being. In the case of a contested roll, all involved parties make a task resolution roll and the highest total wins the contest.

Unopposed Checks:

Attribute + Skill/Miracle Rank + Specializations + Resolution Die
vs.
Target Number

Opposed Checks:

Attribute + Skill/Miracle Rank + Specializations + Resolution Die
vs.
Opponent's Attribute + Skill/Miracle Rank + Specializations + Resolution Die

Task Difficulty

Tasks range in difficulty from so easy there's no need to roll, to things so difficult that their accomplishment is truly amazing. The levels of difficulty involved in unopposed task resolution are:

- Trivial
- Easy
- Moderate
- Hard
- Wondrous

Here is a simple rule of thumb regarding Skill checks: If it is a common task that you can do yourself in the real world, it is probably not necessary to roll dice to see if a Justiciar can do it in-game; these are Trivial tasks. Going online to check the show times at your local movie theater doesn't require a Technical roll, nor does safely making the morning commute each day require a Mechanics roll. Once you start adding complications, or if there is a risk associated with failure, stress and uncertainty enter the picture and you are forced to start rolling the dice. Your morning

commute might not normally require a check, but when an enraged demon wakes from his thousand-year imprisonment, the heavens open up with a deluge, and a tanker truck careens into your lane...then it's time to start rolling the bones.

Time

Time both in and out of combat is referred to as scenes. A scene can last as long as dramatically necessary; it is any period of time which feels like a satisfying chapter in a larger story. Scenes can last minutes or hours; in battle, a single scene could consist of a barroom brawl, which is over in less than a minute. Extended interrogations or conversations would also be considered a scene. Scenes typically shift when the player characters decides to do something dramatically different from what they are already doing, when they enter a new area, or upon the dramatic arrival of a new party.

Terror Check

When facing supernatural horrors, one's will, faith, and even sanity can be stretched to the breaking point and beyond. The Terror Check simulates this and provides a game mechanic for its resolution. Terror Checks are rated by difficulty and determined to be Easy, Moderate, Hard, or Wondrous tasks. A Terror Check is triggered whenever the characters face a situation which (in the Game Master's opinion) could bring about fear, revulsion, and/or terror in a normal modern human. The GM sets the difficulty for the Terror Check based on... well, on how terrifying a situation is. Finding yourself alone, locked in an abandoned house with strange noises in the

Task Difficulty and Skill Checks

Something haunts a forest spring in central Europe. Recently two children disappeared near there; local authorities asked for help from the church and Sister Yvonne was sent. Using her Investigation Skill, she learned that the spring was supposedly cursed 400 years in the past and is actually the habitation of a demon. Now Yvonne is trying to research the story of the curse. She believes she has found the key, a handwritten book in an archaic Slavic language. Does she have the knowledge necessary to find the important sections and recognize the information she needs?

This is an unopposed check. Sister Yvonne will use her Translation Skill, and Mentus, its associated Attribute. The total will be her Mentus (3) + Translation Skill (2) + the Resolution Die (d6). Susan rolls a 4, giving 3 + 2 + 4, or a total of 9. In this case, the GM rules that the roll is not successful. Yvonne will need to find a local expert to help with the translation, acquire some better resource materials, or think of some other way to get the information she needs.

departing from this man, for it has pleased Christ to dwell in man. Do not think of despising my command because you know me to be a great sinner. It is God † Himself who commands

you, the majestic Christ † who commands you. God the Father † commands you, God the Son † commands you, God the Holy † Spirit commands you. The mystery of the cross commands †

attic could be frightening as suddenly discovering an open portal to Hell. Failing a Terror Check may result in anything from freezing in place and missing an opportunity to act to dropping everything you're holding and running away, to succumbing to temporary insanity as your mind refuses to deal with the horrors it's experiencing.

Combat and Damage

Combat is direct, usually violent, conflict between the Justiciars and their opponents. It can include attacking from a distance, with a modern pistol or machine gun; attacking close range with a knife or perhaps an antique mace, or even using your fists – although that's often not the best choice. Combat is an opposed roll, with the totals of the attacker and defender compared to see who does damage or who slips away.

Initiative

So, who shoots first? Just roll an opposed check using the Speed Skill. The person (or demon, or whatever) with the highest total acts first, followed by the creature with the next highest total, and so on. Combat continues within this pattern until combatants are taken down or retreat. Each time a turn comes around, a Justiciar or opponent can perform any single action that takes only a few seconds to resolve: throw a punch, speak a few words, dive for cover, open a door, fire or reload a weapon, begin first aid, or survey the scene for any previously unnoticed advantages, among other things. (Don't have the Speed Skill? Just do it as an "untrained" roll—Corpus + Resolution Die—and hope for a good result.)

Damage

Any successful attack in combat does 1 point of damage. A physical attack – gunshot, blow

with a fist, cut by long black claws – does Corpus damage. A mental or spiritual attack, such as by Telepathy, or occultic magic, does damage to Fidelis. At 0 Corpus, a character or creature is dead. (Note that Miracles such as Endurance can modify this; see page 15.) At 0 Fidelis, a character is dead or hopelessly insane.

Item Advantages

So, if any successful attack does 1 point of damage, what role do weapons play? Weapons and armor are important because they can grant the Justiciar unique Advantages

... and trembling fear has beset me; horror has overwhelmed me. And I would hurry to my place of shelter, far away from the tempest and storm.

depending on the type of item involved. A weapon or protective device can have more than one bonus, and it may be possible that multiple bonuses will be applicable to a given situation. However, no item can ever have more than +7 Advantages total.

Some examples are:

- Pistols: +1 Advantage in attacking at long range.
- Shotguns: +1 Advantage against unarmored enemies and +1 Advantage at close range.
- Rifles: +2 Advantage against opponents at long range.
- Silver ammunition: Additional +1 Advantage against demons and lycanthropes.

Combat and Initiative

Father Rickhart and Sister Yvonne are combating a minor demon in a parish church. Yvonne's Exorcism forced it out of the woman it was possessing, and now it is up to Rickhart to make it retreat back to Hell. The creature, now visible and shaped somewhat like a large hairless monkey with a grotesque face and oddly proportioned limbs, is not interested in going hand-to-hand with Father Rickhart and tries to escape. In an attempt to damage the demon from across the long church, Rickhart draws his pistol, which is loaded with blessed, silver bullets.

Steve rolls on Father Rickhart's Speed Skill to see who takes the first turn: Corpus 4 + Speed 3 + d8 results in a total of 9. The GM know this well exceeds the demon's total of 6, so Rickhart attacks first.

Corpus 4 + Combat 7 + 1 (pistol, range) +1 (silver bullets) + d8. Steve rolls a 5, for a total of 18.

This is an opposed roll, as the demon tries to avoid the attack. The GM checks the demon's statistics, rolls, and gets a result (10 total) that is not high enough; the demon is damaged for 1 point of Corpus. Next it is the demon's turn to attack, which it does with a stinking ball of black fire. Father Rickhart tries to avoid it by ducking behind something solid. (He uses his Speed: Corpus 4 + Speed 3 + d8.) Rolling a 7 gives a total of 15, higher than the demon's total, so the attack fails and Rickhart gets to take another shot.

you. The faith of the holy apostles Peter and Paul and all of the saints commands † you. The blood of the martyrs commands † you. The continence of the confessors commands † you.

The devout prayers of all holy men and women command † you. The saving mysteries of our Christian faith command † you. Depart then, transgressor. Depart, seducer, full of lies and

Healing

Getting damaged is all too easy in *Against the Darkness*. Any time a Justiciar in physical combat fails to fend off an attack (fails an opposing roll against an attacker), the person is injured, losing a point of Corpus. Mental or spiritual combat works in a similar way, but damages Fidelis. Unfortunately, healing is not as easy.

Corpus Damage

Corpus damage can be healed by a Medical check, or allowed to heal naturally over a period of days or weeks. The difficulty of the Medical check depends on how badly the victim is injured; see the Medical Skill (page 35). The method of healing makes no difference to the recovery of lost points. At 0 Corpus, the character is dead. (Note that Miracles such as Endurance can modify this; see page 15.) Again a Medical check can possibly make a difference, although the chance is slight.

Fidelis Damage

Similarly, Fidelis damage can be healed by a Psychology check. Fidelis damage can heal over time, but it takes months and years rather than weeks. The difficulty of a Psychology check for healing depends on how badly the victim has been spiritually (or mentally) damaged; see the Psychology Skill (page 23). The method of healing makes no difference to the recovery of lost points, except that points are recovered *much* more quickly through counseling (Psychology Skill) than they are naturally. At 0 Fidelis, a character is hopelessly insane. It may be possible for the Psychology Skill to heal that type of damage, but it is unlikely and there may still be repercussions.

Typically, a player will not be allowed to play a character that is insane, though a GM may make an exception. No player will be allowed to play a character that is dead except under very unusual circumstances.

Character Improvement

Justiciars can improve their Skills, increase the potency of their Miracles, and even improve their Attributes after a mission, assuming they survive. Skill Points are earned for experience, and these can be used to expand a character. In addition, new Skills can be learned, and new Miracles developed. Costs for advancement are:

- **1 Skill Point per rank for each Skill**
- **2 Skill Points per rank for each Miracle**
- **3 Skill Points for each Attribute Point**



cunning foe of virtue, persecutor of the innocent. Give place, abominable creature, give way, you monster, give way to Christ in whom you found none of your works. For He has already

The History

"Jus-ti-shier? Justiciar? What is that?" Rev. Danvers asked. "I've never heard that term."

"It's not commonly used in the Church," Pietro replied. "But it has a long history."

"Well, Pietro, it wasn't just a rhetorical question," Angela looked up at Father Venditto from the book on the Order of Saint Michael the Archangel that she was reading. It wasn't publicly available so it was entirely new to her. "I'm thinking 'small encyclopedia article' of explanation here, not 'dictionary definition'."

Father Venditto smiled. She certainly had an interesting way about her.

"Well the idea dates back to the Judges of Israel. The Hebrew word for judge means "protector" and they were the people who had the temporal authority and presence of the grace of God to execute that authority on the earth."

"You mean like Samson and his great strength," Angela volunteered, "Or Deborah with her strong personality and discernment."

"Yes, exactly," Pietro continued, as if he were giving a lecture, and Angela realized that he probably had indeed given this lecture before.

"They had the Kharismata, the power of the gifts of God. It was given to them by the Spirit of God just as the Apostles received it, just as you and I have. They could manifest divine power into temporal situations. They have been around throughout the history of humanity, although not all may have realized that they had that power or what it was."

"That doesn't say anything about the word 'Justiciar'," Angela asked. "As far as I can tell it's not Hebrew or Latin."

"No, it's not," Pietro continued.

Angela could tell that he had a keen interest in little-known facts and she was beginning to regret that she had asked for more information. She wondered if it was too late to go back to the dictionary definition.

"The term is Old French and dates back to the Norman Pope and the foundation of the Order of Saint Michael the Archangel in the Middle Ages. Using the Latin term for judge would have confused the Justiciars with other officials of the Church, and with the prejudice against the Jews at that time they certainly weren't going to use the Hebrew word. Therefore they drew on the Norman influence and called those first warriors, who represented the Church in the fight against Darkness, Justiciars. Historically, they were often political and judicial officers in the Norman kingdoms or high-ranking officers of the royal court. It is also Old French for "judge," so that is where the connection to the Biblical Judges came in."

"And you still use the term?"

"The Church is, after all, very fond of its traditions," Pietro said.

As Pietro drew another breath, Angela turned quickly back to her book. That was enough history lesson for the moment.



... for we wrestle
not against flesh and blood
but against principalities, against powers,
against the rulers of the darkness of this world,
against spiritual wickedness in high places.



Chapter 2: Skills and Miracles

The Attributes and their related Skills & Miracles

Corpus (Body)

Corpus is a measure of physical strength, speed, endurance, and beauty. Corpus also provides an indicator of the character's current health; as the Justiciar is damaged, the current Corpus score drops. Since the current Corpus score is used in Task Resolution, physical damage affects the use of any Skills associated with Corpus.

Combat

This Skill gives skill in all forms of combat, grants tactical-reasoning abilities that border on precognition at higher ranks, and makes the weapon in a Justiciar's fist, be it sword, gun, or something odder, an extension of his or her faith and will.

Trivial Tasks: Speak knowledgeably about military tactics or history. Clean and repair most weapons.

Easy Tasks: Conceal small weapons while in appropriate clothing. Modify weapons (guns, swords, or the like) for improved combat capabilities (more Specialties). Use military weaponry. Predict an adversary's tactics, this use is opposed by the enemy's Combat abilities or Cunning.

Moderate Tasks: Repair or modify military weaponry.

Hard Tasks: Conceal bulky or oddly shaped weapons. Simultaneously use two weapons. Trick shots. Using exotic or archaic weapons.

Wondrous Tasks: Never run out of ammo during a battle. Blind fighting. Ensure you always have a weapon hidden (somewhere uncomfortable) on (or in) your body, regardless of how carefully you are searched, through a combination of luck, expertise and sleight-of-hand tricks.

Opposed Tasks: Combat covers both offense and defense in battle, and an opponent can use his own

Combat Skill to avoid an adversary's attacks. Characters can also use this Skill to spot concealed weapons.

Suggested Specializations: Combat experts can specialize in fighting a specific foe, in a certain type of location, or with a specific weapon, such as Uzis, short swords, nunchucks, or any other weapons the player wishes to designate.

Endurance

This Miracle lets the Justiciar ignore the demands of the body, shrugging off pain, fear, hunger, or thirst, surviving conditions that would kill an ordinary man, and even ignoring death temporarily. This Miracle can also be used to attempt to prevent Terror. (see page 32).

Easy Tasks: Ignore pain: for a scene, when making Skill checks the Justiciar acts as if he has his maximum Corpus score, regardless of wounds. Ignore starvation or thirst for a day. (Normal humans can lose a point of Corpus per two days without food, and a point of Corpus per day without water.)

Moderate Tasks: Ignore the effects of an environment that would kill an ordinary human in a matter of hours, such as extreme heat, radiation, or cold. This Miracle lasts for a day.

Hard Tasks: Ignore the effects of an instantly fatal environment (hard vacuum, pressure equal to the ocean floor, lava, open flames, etc.) for a single scene. Each attempt to survive that environment for an additional scene increases in difficulty by +2.

Wondrous Tasks: Remain "alive" for a scene after being reduced to 0 Corpus; during this time, the Justiciar acts as if she has her full Corpus. Each additional scene increases the difficulty of the survival attempt by +2.

Opposed Tasks: Endurance can be used to help avoid damage in combat; the Justiciar uses this Miracle as a "body-hardening defense" to reduce the chances of injury. The difficulty is Easy versus one opponent, Moderate against more than one opponent. Success gives a +2 to defense for a scene.

stripped you of your powers and laid waste your kingdom, bound you prisoner and plundered your weapons. He has cast you forth into the outer darkness, where everlasting ruin awaits

you and your abettors. To what purpose do you insolently resist? To what purpose do you brazenly refuse? For you are guilty before almighty God, whose laws you have transgressed.

Suggested Specializations: Survive a particular stimulus, like heat or torture. Act heroically, ignoring damage when attempting to save innocents. Activate Endurance when enraged or frightened.

Mechanics

This Skill represents expertise in using and repairing machines, as well as measuring ability behind the wheel or in the cockpit.

Trivial Tasks: Speak knowledgeably about mechanical matters or the latest vehicles. Normal city driving. Use basic tools.

Easy Tasks: Drive in less than ideal conditions, like bad weather. Basic auto repair. Pilot most light aircraft.

Moderate Tasks: Pilot military vehicles or commercial aircraft

Hard Tasks: Modify a car for greater performance. Evasive maneuvers, such as driving during a chase. Formation flying.

Wondrous Tasks: Trick driving, like popping wheelies. Invent new vehicles. Jury-rig a damaged machine without the proper tools or spare parts.

Opposed Tasks: Assuming the Justiciar plans to ram the bad guys, he or she uses the Mechanics Skill rather than Combat to scrape some paint. Vehicular combat uses this Skill.

Suggested Specializations: Mechanics can specialize in fixing, driving, or even stealing a kind of vehicle. Any kind of gear or vehicle can be chosen as a specialty.

Pyrokinesis

This barely controlled Miracle allows the Justiciar to generate and control active flame.

Easy Tasks: Create a flame burst that fills a room, doing damage to all within, including the Justiciar. This attack automatically does 1 Corpus per use of the power, and a burning area does an additional 1 point of Corpus damage per scene. Snuff out or control a normal fire, such as a candle or lamp.

Moderate Tasks: Control this ability for more delicate work, such as welding or lighting a cigarette. Snuff out or control a normal fire, such as in a fireplace. Snuff out or control very small fires of supernatural origin. Create a fireball to be used as an attack on a single target. The user can make a preliminary roll to add additional Specializations to this attack, after declaring the number of points of Specialization to be added. The task difficulty is 13

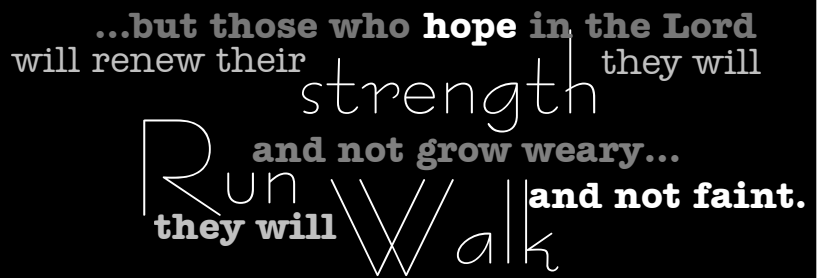
+1 per point of Specialization attempted. Next the user carries out the attack, including any Specializations added by the prior roll. The preliminary roll and attack roll together count as one use of the power.

Hard Tasks: Create a flame burst that does not injure the caster. Snuff out or control a normal fire, such as a large bonfire or small fire in a building. Snuff out or control a small supernatural fire, such as in a fireplace.

Wondrous Tasks: Control a flame burst to such a point that certain people and objects within the blast radius are not injured. Snuff out or reshape a normal fire such as a forest fire or burning building. Snuff out or control a supernatural fire the size of a large bonfire or small fire in a building. Affecting a larger supernatural fire would require a proportionately higher Wondrous roll.

Opposed Tasks: Quick-thinking pyrokinetics can generate a wall of flame that vaporizes incoming projectiles. This use of the power negates a single set of attacks.

Suggested Specializations: Pyrokinesis is a difficult ability to master; most Justiciars focus on learning greater control, rather than increasing this Miracle's already devastating combat potential.



...but those who hope in the Lord
will renew their strength they will
and not grow weary...
Run they will Walk and not faint.

Raw Physicality

Justiciars with this gift are modern Samsons, capable of astounding physical feats.

Easy Tasks: Lift several hundred pounds at once or carry a lesser, but still impressive, weight all day. Break wood or similar material.

Moderate Tasks: Lift a thousand pounds. Break bricks or similar material.

Hard Tasks: Lift nearly a ton. Run nearly as fast as a cheetah for short sprints. Bend or break most metals.

Wondrous Tasks: Lift 2–3 tons (an average automobile) overhead. Destroy the structural supports of most buildings.

You are guilty before His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, whom you presumed to tempt, whom you dared to nail to the cross. You are guilty before the whole human race, to whom you

proffered by your enticements the poisoned cup of death. Lord, fill your servants with courage to fight manfully against that reprobate dragon, lest he despise those who put their trust in you,

Opposed Tasks: Like Endurance, this ability can be used in combat as a “body-hardening defense.” Difficulty is Easy versus one opponent, Moderate against more than one opponent. Success gives a +2 to defense for a scene. Raw Physicality can be used instead of Combat by a person whose style focuses on brute force or violence. Activation for use as a general combat ability is a Moderate task and lasts for one scene.

Suggested Specializations: Lifting, throwing, combat applications, or acting heroically during fear or excitement.

Speed

This ability measures the Justiciar’s running speed, reaction time, and acts as a catch-all test anytime someone attempts to do something requiring sharp reflexes or split-second timing.

Trivial Tasks: Lead a sprinting race.

Easy Tasks: Run a mile in 9–10 minutes. Change ammo clips in a single action.

Moderate Tasks: Run a mile in 6-7 minutes. Grab your hat from under a falling rock or closing door.

Hard Tasks: Desperately grabbing for a handhold when falling. Throw back a ready-to-blow grenade. Leap across an ordinary-sized room.

Wondrous Tasks: Run a mile in under 3 minutes. Reload a revolver in a single action. Performing an Olympic-caliber high-jump.

Opposed Tasks: Speed determines initiative in combat. Fast Justiciars can also use this ability to duck out of the way of most dangers.

Suggested Specializations: Running, leaping, acting first in combat.

Transformation

With this power, the user can temporarily change form. The shapeshifter could be a master of disguise or a combat-hungry were-creature. A Justiciar can only use this power with the Game Master’s permission.

Easy Tasks: Changing minor physical features, but not race, gender, or body type.

Moderate Tasks: Altering race, gender, and/or body type. Transformation to an animal equal in size/mass to a human. The Justiciar can ‘Combat Shift,’ granting themselves a +1 or greater Specialization bonus to Combat (which could be to offense or defense, depending on how it is described) that lasts

for a scene. Difficulty for Combat Shifting is 13 + 1 per point of Specialization added.

Hard Tasks: Transformation to a different-sized creature. Transformation when at 3 Corpus or fewer. If the user of this power has a maximum Corpus of 3 or less, everything is at least a Hard task.

Wondrous Tasks: Making an unnoticed physical transformation when closely observed. Transformation into a demonic, monstrous or angelic form.

Opposed Tasks: Not applicable. Discernment may be used to identify a transformed person.

Suggested Specializations: Transforming into a specific person or creature, transformation during a particular time, in a special place.

Mentus (Mind)

Mentus measures how well a being thinks, learns, and reasons. It measures both knowledge and innate intelligence.

Animation

With this power, the user gains the supernatural ability to imbue un-living matter with life, or a semblance thereof. To use this power as outlined a construct must be prepared in advance. Failure does not destroy the construct. Success animates a construct for an indefinite period of time. As an alternative a Justiciar can animate whatever is at hand, but this has uncertain effects and last for just a scene. This is left up to the Game Master’s discretion.

Beings powered with this ability may resemble their mundane counterparts exactly (whatever that might be), resemble robots or sculptures, or be composed of bones or energy; their appearance is determined by their maker at the time of animation. A Justiciar can use this power only with the Game Master’s permission.

Easy Tasks: Animate a tiny homunculus or familiar no larger, smarter or tougher than an average housecat. The thing is loyal to its maker, who can only have one such familiar at any time, though he or she can develop familiars for other people.

Moderate Tasks: Animate a larger being that is “built” as if it were a character. The product of this procedure is built with Attribute points equal to ½ the total number of Attribute points (rounded down) with which its maker was built and has 5 points of Skills, but no Miracles. The being is loyal to its animator if treated well.

Therefore, I adjure you, profligate dragon, in the name of the spotless † Lamb, who has trodden down the asp and the basilisk, and overcome the lion and the dragon, to depart from

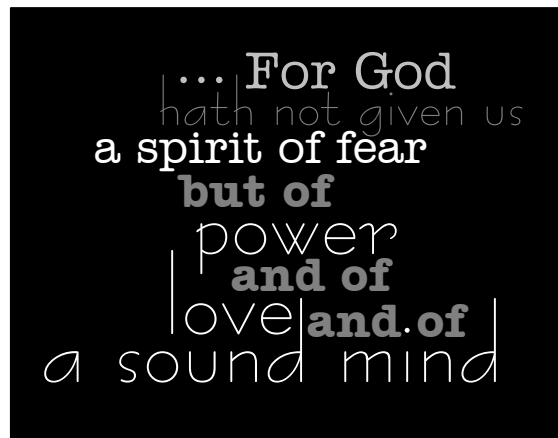
this man,† to depart from the Church of God. † Tremble and flee, as we call on the name of the Lord, before whom the denizens of hell cower, to whom the heavenly Virtues and Powers and

Hard Tasks: Animate a humanoid construct “built” as if it were a starting character. This being is built with Attribute points equal to its maker’s starting total, and has up to 20 points of Skills and Miracles, although it may not have Miracles from Fidelis. The construct will initially be loyal to its animator, but may eventually turn on him or her, or pervert its maker’s wishes to serve its own ends. It has an innate longing to exercise its own will. A person may only have one humanoid servant at any one time, but may make humanoids “owned” by others.

Wondrous Tasks: Animate a humanoid construct that is completely loyal to its maker and whose will perfectly mirrors that of the one who brought it into existence. Such a being will not stray from its maker through rebellion or disagreement, but will actively pursue its maker’s purposes and goals.

Opposed Tasks: Not applicable.

Suggested Specializations: Animating a particular type of construct; making animals or humanoids; making constructs for a specific purpose, or from a particular material; animating in a specific place of power.



Genius

This power grants supernatural mental capacity and a phenomenal memory.

Easy Tasks: Instantly memorize a page or two of detailed data. Memorize every detail of a scene. Use the Genius Miracle in lieu of any unknown Skill.

Moderate Tasks: Memorize a complex travel path. Perfect recall of an event the Justiciar did not use this ability to record.

Hard Tasks: Predict an adversary’s next move in combat. Applied brainpower: with a successful activation roll, the user can add the Mentus Attribute twice on the next Mentus Skill task.

Wondrous Tasks: Use this power to duplicate a “psychic” ability such as Telepathy or Telekinesis, for a one-time use. Use this power to create a revolutionary, potentially world-altering technology.

Opposed Tasks: Not usually applicable.

Suggested Specializations: Genius related to a certain skill, profession, or subject.

Hard Science

This wide-ranging Skill covers the Justiciar’s general knowledge of virtually every science that is not directly related to living beings or mechanics. Includes skills like physics, geology, architecture, engineering, and meteorology, among many others.

Trivial Tasks: Speak knowledgeably about the sciences.

Easy Tasks: Solve college-level math or physics problems. General research.

Moderate Tasks: Notice the physical traces of supernatural activity.

Hard Tasks: Locate resources or spot future advantages thanks to your scientific skills. Determine the composition of an unknown material (by examination, or at the molecular level using instruments). Use scientific skills to gain minor clues about a scene or situation as with the Investigation Skill.

Wondrous Tasks: Solve problems like Fermat’s Equations which baffled scholars for decades. Invent a revolutionary, world-altering new technology through extensive experimentation or research.

Opposed Tasks: Not applicable.

Suggested Specializations: Scientists can specialize in any discipline and can choose to focus on lab work or field research.

Investigation

Investigation measures how good the Justiciar is at finding clues, detecting lies, noticing minor details, and how knowledgeable the character is at general police procedure.

Trivial Tasks: Perform an Internet search. Look up business facts.

Easy Tasks: Observe crime scene details. Quickly deduce the circumstances of minor crimes. Recognize gang symbols.

Moderate Tasks: Research a criminal history or business records. Spot ambushes. Notice small details. Recognize anomalies in environment or behaviors. Identify whether accelerants were used in a crime.

dominations are subject, whom the Cherubim and Seraphim praise with unending cries as they sing. Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Sabaoth. The Word made flesh † commands you,

the Virgin's Son † commands you, Jesus † of Nazareth commands you, who once, when you despised His disciples, forced you to flee in shameful defeat from a man, and when He had

Hard Tasks: Obtain a clue: On a successful Investigation roll, the Justiciar receives a clue from the GM. Clues could include general physical descriptions of a suspect, an indication of motive, the presence and type of supernatural involvement, or data about the type of weapon used. Each additional clue attempted during the same investigation increases the difficulty by +2.

Wondrous Tasks: Deduce the details of a crime almost instantly. Deduce the weaknesses of a specific demon or monster if of an unknown type.

Opposed Tasks: Investigation can be used to counter a suspect's attempts at Cunning. Attempting to clean up a crime scene requires an opposed Investigation check with the detective; success for the detective means the criminal has left behind potentially incriminating evidence. Success for the criminal means no evidence will be found.

Suggested Specializations: Investigators focus on different types of crime scenes, crimes, victims, or investigatory methods such as forensic profiling, fingerprints, DNA comparison, biometric analysis, trace evidence analysis, or ballistics, to name just a few.

Knowledge

Knowledge is a broad Skill similar to Hard Science or Investigation. This Skill measures knowledge of history, religion, politics, local gossip, broad scientific theories, and current events. General knowledge of the supernatural and common legends is covered by this Skill, as are bureaucracy (church hierarchy or government of regions familiar to the character), cultural practices, and other social and anthropological topics.

The main difference between Knowledge of the supernatural and the Occultism Miracle is that those with knowledge speak theoretically, whereas those with Occultism are capable of action through divine empowerment. Occultism also produces more specific, complete, and accurate information than the Knowledge Skill. In short, a low rank of the Occultism power is equal, if not superior, to even a high level in this Skill. The main benefit of Knowledge is that though occult research takes time (and possibly money), it does not fatigue the Justiciar or require divine inspiration—only elbow grease and a decent occult library.

Trivial Tasks: General historical knowledge of one's home country. Recognize current political figures. Correctly address a dignitary. Recognize pop culture references. Recognize international signs.

Easy Tasks: Complete processes for a permit. Distinguish between an authentic leader and a figurehead.

Moderate Tasks: Know the most efficient way to get information from an organization. Know the underlying causes and factions in wars and other world-changing historical or political events. Identify various apostasies and their associated false theologies. Recognize basic occult or gang symbolism.

Hard Tasks: Make predictions regarding current events based on historical knowledge. Surmise motivations of current political figures. Recognize arcane, historical, or religious symbols.

Wondrous Tasks: Have detailed knowledge of historical events from periods of history where little is known. Know personal motivations of historical figures. Anticipate actions of current political figures. Quote extensive sections of obscure or historical documents.

Opposed Tasks: Not usually applicable.

Suggested Specializations: History or politics of a particular country or time period. Bureaucracy of a specific organization. Subcategories of the supernatural.

Occultism

This power allows the Justiciar to use faith to produce results similar to magic or sorcery, as well as making the Justiciar knowledgeable about most supernatural beings, organizations, and effects.

Easy Tasks: Recognize real magical effects as well as stage magic or fraud. Speak expertly about the supernatural and magic.

Moderate Tasks: Find information about important magical and occult figures. Supernaturally reduce or remove an opponent's Specializations for a scene, in which case the difficulty is 12+1 per point of Specialization to be temporarily negated.

Hard Tasks: Summon a demon for negotiation about a boon without prior control over it. (This is not a sanctioned practice for most Justiciars!) Use supernatural means to grant yourself or someone else Specializations for a scene. Difficulty is 14+1 per point of Specialization attempted. User must state exactly what Specialization is to be granted.

Wondrous Tasks: Discover a demon's true name, thus gaining temporary or permanent control over it. Instantly kill a human or destroy a demon through sorcery. A Justiciar who uses this ability to kill a human automatically loses 1 point of Fidelis.

Opposed Tasks: An opponent cannot directly oppose the effects mentioned above. However, if the opponent is using a version of Holy Aura, the offensive power and the Aura engage in spiritual combat to see if the attack is

cast you out you did not even dare, except by His leave, to enter into a herd of swine. And now as I adjure you in His † name, begone from this man who is His creature, It is futile to resist

His † will. It is hard for you to kick against the † goad. The longer you delay, the heavier your punishment shall be, for it is not men you are condemning, but rather Him who rules the

successful. This power can be used in place of Exorcism in an attempt to banish a demon.

Suggested Specializations: Research into a particular phenomenon or school of magic (like necromancy, white magic, or voodoo); magic worked during certain periods or in special places of power.

Technical

This Skill represents expertise in using and repairing computers, electronics, communications, and security equipment.

Trivial Tasks: Speak knowledgeably about the latest technology. Using basic tools and equipment: computers, electronics, communications gear. Turn on/off your own security system or electronics.

Easy Tasks: Set the time and date on a VCR. Morse code and ham radio operations. Change a voicemail greeting.

Moderate Tasks: Troubleshoot and identify problems with a system. Repair electronics with the correct tools and parts. Correct errors in software code. Computer hacking. Break into a security or computer system; overriding basic commands in those systems. Reprogram an office phone system. Know locations of satellite systems.

Hard Tasks: Repair damaged computer systems or equipment with items at hand rather than correct tools and parts. Program complex software using reference materials. Hack most military or corporate mainframes. Replicate a TV broadcast. Induce error into a GPS system.

Wondrous Tasks: Write a virus on the spot to gain access to or control a computer or gain information. Reconfigure equipment to use it for a task other than that for which it was intended.

Opposed Tasks: Could be opposed by the Technical Skill of another individual – security system developer, computer programmer, etc.

Suggested Specializations: Computers, either repairing them or hacking them. Communications systems: television, radio, satellite. Security systems.

Telepathy

Telepathy allows the wielder to read, alter, and even control the minds of other thinking creatures.

Easy Tasks: Read superficial thoughts of an unaware target, gaining trivial data about that person. Communicate mentally with willing people in or out of sight to a distance of a few miles.

Moderate Tasks: Implanting or altering minor memories in a target, erasing the memories of the preceding scene in a target. Communicate mentally with willing people at a distance up to 1000 miles. Use an intimate understanding of a target to allow the Justiciar to add his or her Telepathy score on the next Cunning, Psychology, or Investigation check against that person.

Hard Tasks: Beginning mental combat with any sentient being. Attempting deep mental probes of an unwilling target or attempting to discover intensely personal, highly guarded data from the target. Communicate mentally with willing people anywhere in the world. Reduce or remove a target's Skills or Skill Specializations. Difficulty for the activation roll is 13+1 per point to be removed for one scene.

Wondrous Tasks: Control the minds of several subjects simultaneously. Extend your control through television, radio, or the Internet. Establish mental contact with a vastly powerful supernatural creature, such as a demon-princess or heavenly being. Permanently delete a target's Skills or Skill Specializations. Difficulty for the activation roll is 17 +1 per point to be deleted permanently. (The Skill can be learned again according to the usual rules for improvement.)

Opposed Tasks: All alterations of a subject's mind give that target a chance to resist. An opposing roll with Telepathy would be the first choice, but normally this is an unskilled check using Fidelis or Mentus, whichever is better. However, a target could also make a check using Holy Aura. If a Telepath fails an opposed role, his or her mind may be affected by that of the person being probed. This may mean taking on characteristics of the subject probed, becoming overwhelmed by another's mental or emotional state, becoming limited in functions by the contact, or having one's mind entangled with the other mind so that the Telepath cannot withdraw from the contact. The wielder must make an activation check before engaging in mental combat when using Telepathy.

Suggested Specializations: Some Telepaths focus on healing damaged minds, while others act as mental spies or interrogators. Others avoid the risks of full telepathic contact and act as communications experts among their teams.

Translation

Rather than track individual language skills, Translation measures how quickly and easily the Justiciar can understand foreign languages and how easy it is for them to decode forgotten texts.

Trivial Tasks: Carry on a simple conversation in a common foreign language. Read a document written in a common foreign language.

living and the dead, who is coming to judge both the living and the dead and the world by fire. God of heaven and earth, God of the angels and the archangels, God of the prophets and

Apostles, God of the martyrs and virgins, God who have power to bestow life after death and rest after toil, for there is no other God than you, nor can there be another true God beside

Easy Tasks: Translate unknown text in a common foreign language in several days, assuming access to decent research materials. Carry on an abstract, technical, or philosophical conversation in a common foreign language. Recognize and crack a standard cipher.

Moderate Tasks: Carry on an abstract, technical, or philosophical conversation in a difficult foreign language. Translate unknown text in a difficult foreign language in several days, assuming access to decent research materials. Translate an obscure or archaic text.

Hard Tasks: Communicate with someone speaking an unusual or obscure language, or someone speaking a dead or forgotten language. Translate text without access to proper research materials. Crack a modified cipher, such as a rail fence or scytale cipher.

Wondrous Tasks: Translate a completely unknown or alien language; translation of angelic or demonic text. Translate the Rosetta Stone. Break the World War II Enigma Code.

Opposed Tasks: Could be opposed by the Translation Skill of a cipher maker.

Suggested Specializations: Specific languages or language groups, regional dialects, field research, xeno-linguistics, or supernatural languages. Deciphering specific types of codes or ciphers, or specific encryption methods.

Spiritus (Spirit)

Spiritus governs force of personality, will power, and social interactions.

Cunning

Cunning represents the Justiciar's skill at negotiating and influencing or controlling others. It is diplomacy and persuasion. In the case of the enemy, it also indicates proficiency at manipulating, lying, or seducing others. Not too surprisingly, most Justiciars find this Skill more useful than their priestly vocation would otherwise suggest.

Trivial Tasks: Typical business negotiations.

Easy Tasks: Smooth over a simple misunderstanding. Conduct a complex business negotiation. Convince friends or neutral parties of good intentions, despite evidence to the contrary. Attempt a seduction.

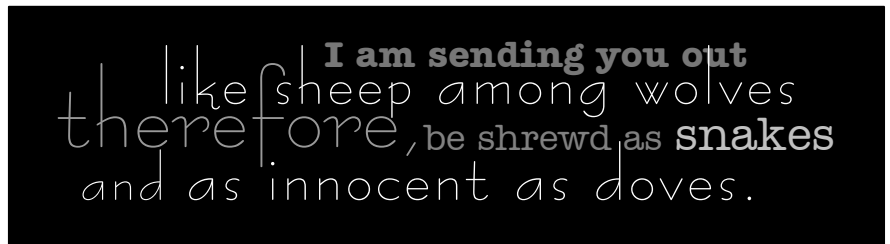
Moderate Tasks: Convince an ally to back your political position. Outwit or sidestep an opponent, through misdirection or subterfuge. Professional criminal deception. Deceive most police interrogators.

Hard Tasks: Negotiate a truce. Get a serial killer to confess. Convincingly lie to expert interrogators during torture.

Wondrous Tasks: Trick a demon into revealing its true name. Help opposing countries craft an accord or diplomatic agreement.

Opposed Tasks: All uses of this skill are considered opposed and can be countered by Cunning, Investigation, or Psychology. Discernment also opposes this skill.

Suggested Specializations: Specific types of conversation, focusing on a particular kind of mark, or using a specific strategy in conversations.



Divination

Divination is a meta-game ability. At any time, even in combat, the Justiciar can use this Miracle to ask for divine revelation (from the GM, of course) for the answer to a single question. The GM answers this question truthfully and responses are more meaty than the hints a player character would receive by using Investigation, Knowledge or Hard Science. No roll is necessary to activate this ability; each question is considered one use of this power

Another way the Justiciar could use the Divination ability is to add a minor detail to any future encounter. An example of this application would be the character declaring "It will be raining when we encounter the real killer." The GM must take this into account, but can twist this statement as she sees fit. In the example, the GM might describe the intense rainstorm that is raging outside when the Justiciar encounters the four or five different suspects who could be the killer at a crowded restaurant. Another person could use Divination to describe that the vampire the group is trailing will slip on some rubble during a climactic battle, losing an action or two.

Divination has no Specializations and a character is limited to one use per day per rank in this Miracle.

you, the Creator of heaven and earth, who are truly a King, whose kingdom is without end, I humbly entreat your glorious majesty to deliver this servant of yours from the unclean spirits,

through Christ our Lord. Therefore, I adjure you every unclean spirit, every spectre from hell, every satanic power, in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, who was led into the desert

Ghostliness

With practice, the Justiciar can separate soul and body, or can separate fully from the world. He or she can be silent, invisible, or as untouchable as the wind.

Easy Tasks: Short-range astral projection; the Justiciar's consciousness briefly leaves his or her body and may move around to observe the nearby area undetected. During this scene, the Justiciar can travel as much as a mile away from his or her body, scouting unnoticed. During this time, the Justiciar's physical body is comatose and helpless.

Moderate Tasks: Stealth; by using this Miracle, the Justiciar remains unnoticed by most checks to perceive something (such as Investigation or Cunning); this may last for a scene as long as he or she takes no significant actions. Become intangible, just long enough to avoid a second of danger, such as a gunshot.

Hard Tasks: Full invisibility for a scene; turn invisible unnoticed while observed. Make yourself undetectable to another sense, like scent or electronic detection. Becoming intangible long enough to move through an average wall.

Wondrous Tasks: Use intangibility to pass through a reinforced structure, like a bank vault or bunker. Be simultaneously intangible and invisible. Use intangibility as a weapon, by materializing objects into a victim or a solid object, or selective dematerialization of any portion of an item he or she is touching. These abilities cannot be extended to make others either intangible or invisible.

Opposed Tasks: When in need, the Justiciar could use intangibility to avoid an attack, provided he or she can make the activation roll.

When using Ghostliness, your astral self is able to see, be seen by and potentially communicate with ghosts or spirit beings. Discernment can be used to see an astral projection, hidden, intangible or invisible person or creature.

Suggested Specializations: Focus on one aspect of stealth, like invisibility, silence, or non-detection by scent or electronics. Develop proficiency passing through specific materials.

Medicine

With this Skill, the Justiciar can heal damage to the Corpus. A person who has been hurt for fewer than half of his or her Corpus points (a minor injury) can be treated with first aid (an Easy task). If a person has lost half or more of Corpus points (a major injury), treatment is more difficult. A successful Medicine check restores one Corpus point to the treated character.

Trivial: Basic understanding of biology and life sciences.

Easy Tasks: First aid – treat a minor injury.

Moderate Tasks: Paramedic care – treat a larger injury, or multiple injuries (half or more than half of Corpus points) In less urgent situations this could be thought of as surgery. Do first aid (treat a minor injury) while under stress due to time or circumstances.

Hard Tasks: Provide first aid or paramedic care (treat minor or major injuries) in combat or without supplies.

Wondrous Tasks: Medically resurrect someone who has been reduced to 0 or fewer Corpus points, restoring the individual to one Corpus point. Genetic engineering. Discover a cure for an epidemic disease.

Opposed Tasks: Not applicable.

Suggested Specializations: Specific branches of medicine; treat a category of wounds (like burns, heart problems, or gunshot wounds).

Psychology

Similar to medicine, this Skill allows the Justiciar to repair damage to a patient's sanity, represented by Fidelis. A person who has lost fewer than half of his or her Fidelis points (a minor loss) can be helped with a morale boost (an Easy task). If a person has lost half or more Fidelis points (a major loss), treatment is more difficult. A successful Psychology check restores one Fidelis point to the treated character.

Trivial: Basic knowledge of psychology, sociology, and anthropology. Listen with empathy.

Easy Tasks: Boost morale – help someone recover after minor Fidelis loss. Give helpful advice. Help someone see another's point of view.

Moderate Tasks: Recognize supernatural influence, as opposed to clinical insanity. Exhortation – treat someone with major Fidelis damage, in which half or more points have been lost. Boost the morale (treat a minor loss) of someone still in a stressful situation. Counsel a couple contemplating divorce or help settle a parish disagreement.

Hard Tasks: Provide a morale boost or exhortation (treat minor or major Fidelis loss) in combat, or in some situation that might threaten mental stability (discovering something horrible, becoming isolated or being placed in extreme danger, etc.). Outline a clear negotiation path to help opposing parties settle a long-standing difference.

Wondrous Tasks: Treat someone who has fallen into absolute insanity (0 or fewer Fidelis points), restoring that individual to one Fidelis point. Persuade a stubborn parishioner or dogmatic thinker to change his or her opinion. Change the worldview of a supernatural creature.

after His baptism by John to vanquish you in your citadel, to cease your assaults against the creature who He has formed from the slime of the earth for His own honor and glory,

to quail before wretched man, seeing in him the image of the almighty God, † who by His servant, Moses, cast you and your malice, in the person of Pharaoh and his army into the

Opposed Tasks: Applicable only if the patient actively resists treatment, which is likely if the subject has become insane.

Suggested Specializations: Treating special types of patients; dealing with those harmed by supernatural trauma.

Telekinesis

This Miracle allows the Justiciar to move objects without touching them, using only divinely supplied power.

Easy Tasks: Move small, unattended objects, like coins or keys, within line of sight. Multiple minor uses such as this in a single scene count as one use. Telekinetically open unlocked containers or pushing buttons.

Moderate Task: Telekinetic lock picking. Move small things that cannot be seen, or move a large object or a person which can be seen. Each movement counts as a use of this Miracle.

Hard Tasks: Use a telekinetic parry to intercept an attack or attack with a telekinetic force-bolt; either use counts as a daily use of this Miracle. Move a large object or a person which cannot be seen. Move large objects while under extreme stress, during combat, or while opposed.

Wondrous Tasks: Telekinetically move something larger than a person. Telekinetic flight, which lasts for a scene and allows the character to progress at about the speed of a running person. Height is limited by breathable air; distance is left to the GM's discretion under the above limitations.

Opposed Tasks: Attempting to directly move a person using Telekinesis gives that victim a chance to oppose the Miracle by using Combat, Raw Physicality, their own Telekinesis, or another appropriate protective ability such as Holy Aura.

Suggested Specializations: Many telekinetics focus on either combat or non-combat applications of this power. Some choose to favor brutal telekinetic punches and body slams; others work on generating force fields or improving the range of their limited flight capability. Flight improvements can include increasing height or duration of flight, increasing speed of flight, or combining flight with force-barriers thereby allowing underwater or high atmosphere movement.

Wealth

The Wealth Skill represents the Justiciar's finances or those financial resources entrusted to his or her care, as well as the character's knowledge of big business and the stock market. Success on a Wealth check indicates a purchase went well. However, failure on a Wealth check for a Hard or Wondrous task results in removal of a rank of this skill, as the character's business reputation is damaged during the failed attempt.

Trivial Tasks: General business and finance knowledge. Purchase inexpensive objects, worth up to several hundred dollars. Set up a business.

Easy Tasks: Purchase objects worth up to \$5,000 dollars. Complete or read a balance sheet, income statement or basic business paperwork without assistance.

Moderate Tasks: Discover proprietary or "insider" knowledge. Purchase things equal to most high end electronics (\$10,000), a new vehicle (up to \$30,000) or a new home (\$150,000 to \$500,000). Many illegal purchases, including drugs and many weapons. Determine excellent stocks to purchase. Predict what the bond or stock market will do in a given situation.

Hard Tasks: Acquire something expensive and restricted. Purchase luxury items worth up to hundreds of thousands of dollars. Purchase commercial real estate, parish real estate or a business. Win a competitive bid. Manipulate hedge funds on the stock market. Set up public stock offerings.

Wondrous Tasks: The hostile takeover of a major corporation. Purchase military hardware. Sell or fence famous relics or art treasures. (Any of these could be opposed tasks.)

Opposed Tasks: If two competing businessmen square off in the boardroom, they use the Wealth skill to settle matters. Competitive bidding or a hostile takeover can be opposed by a Wealth check, or a Psychology check in the case of a public relations war.

Suggested Specializations: Legal or illegal wealth, a specific industry, finance laws of any country, raw purchasing power.

Fidelis (Faith):

Fidelis represents the character's belief, hope, and genuine faith. It is also a measure of the character's sanity and stability. Fidelis is under constant attack from demonic forces, and can be damaged in spiritual combat.

Discernment

Discernment grants the Justiciar the ability to pierce any illusion, see through any deception, and recognize evil for what it truly is.

Easy Tasks: See ghosts, astral travelers, and other, normally invisible creatures. Instantly detect lies.

Moderate Tasks: Recognize the true being of someone transformed. Detect an invisible person or creature or one undetectable in some other way.

Hard Tasks: Distinguish between different types of supernatural creatures – ghost or demon, for

depths of the sea. Yield to God, † who by the singing of the holy canticles on the part of David, His faithful servant, banished you from the heart of King Saul. Yield to God, † who condemned

you in the person of Judas Iscariot, the traitor. For He now flails you with His divine scourges, † He in whose sight you and your legions once cried out.

example. Detect the residual presence of magic and the supernatural at a scene, even years later, if the initial impression was strong or traumatic enough. Recognize and counter usually unstoppable abilities like Occultism, allowing the character with Discernment to make an opposing roll.

Wondrous Tasks: Discover a deep, personal secret or discover a demon's true name without the necessity of an opposed roll.

Opposed Tasks: Discernment can be opposed by Cunning.

Suggested Specializations: Focus on hunting a specific kind of enemy or identifying particular classes of demons or other unearthly creatures.

Divine Intervention

Like Divination, Divine Intervention is a meta-game ability, representing the person's favor in the eyes of God. A player whose character has this ability can call for the re-roll of any die roll (made for the player's own character, another character, or an opponent or other being) immediately after it occurs. The player of the character using the Miracle then accepts the result more favorable to him or her. Divine Intervention does not require a roll to activate, has no Specializations, and a character is limited to one use per day per rank in this Miracle.

Ecological Dominance

The Justiciar commands the natural world through the power of faith and the power of God. With this ability, the Justiciar can alter the weather, control and shape plants, and perform other natural miracles.

Easy Tasks: Alter the weather in the immediate area of the Justiciar in minor ways: increase or decrease temperature up to five degrees, create or eliminate a light drizzle, change sleet to snow or vice versa. Accelerate a plant's growth.

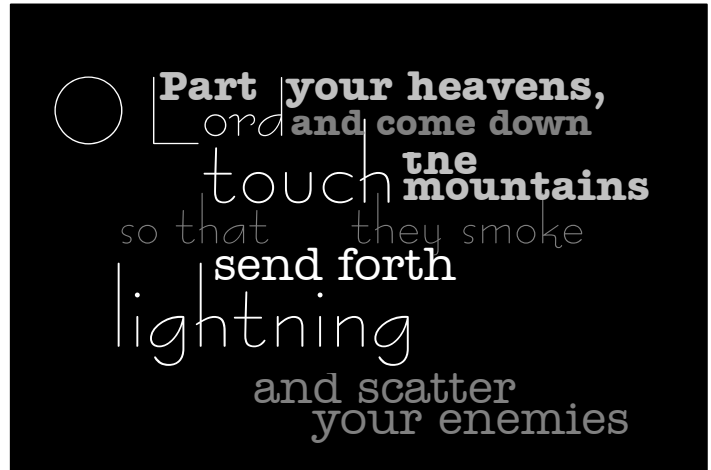
Moderate Tasks: Cause plants to entangle an opponent. Mutate a plant to increase its size, crop yield, physical features, or growth rate. Alter weather in a several hundred-foot radius of the Justiciar in minor ways, or alter the weather in more dramatic ways at close range.

Hard Tasks: Drastically alter weather by calling minor storms (which appear in a scene) or calming them, alter temperature by ten degrees. Command plant creatures, or exorcise plant-based demons. Recognize places of natural magic and power such as ley lines and ancient ritual sites.

Wondrous Tasks: Attack an adversary using weather control such as targeted micro-tornados or lightning bolts. Affect up to a mile area with weather control. Calm or create a full-size storm.

Opposed Tasks: Not typically applicable.

Suggested Specializations: A specific environment, type of weather, or plant.



Exorcism

Faith and will allow the Justiciar to cast out demons or, if they remain, to annihilate them utterly.

Easy Tasks: Recognize demonic possession, occult symbolism, and differentiate true cases of possession from frauds, drugs, or insanity.

Moderate Tasks: Bless an area, thereby preventing demons from entering for at least 1 day. Add a Skill Specialization to a person or Advantage to a weapon for a scene. The Specialization or Advantage must relate to directly confronting evil; difficulty is 12 +1 per Specialization or Advantage attempted.

Hard Tasks: Deduce a demon's true name after a lengthy spiritual battle. Break most demon possessions. Bless weapons so they do Fidelis damage rather than physical damage.

Wondrous Tasks: Sanctify an area so that demons can never enter. Exert control over a demon using its true name. Directly confront Satan or another major demon.

Opposed Tasks: Exorcisms are opposed by the demon's "Fidelis" check or its Exorcism check if applicable.

Suggested Specializations: Specializing in exorcism rituals of a specific religion, exorcism of a certain class of demon or undead.

"What have we to do with you, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? Have you come to torture us before the time?" Now He is driving you back into the everlasting fire, He who at the end of

time will say to the wicked; “Depart from me, you accursed, into the everlasting fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels.” For you, O evil one, and for your followers there

Holy Aura

A nimbus of holy energy surrounds the character, protecting them from physical and spiritual harm. Holy Aura is an automatic Miracle; it activates whenever it is needed to protect the Justiciar, to a maximum of the number of times per day that the Justiciar has ranks in the Miracle. The character does not need to be aware of the attack. Holy Aura can also be activated consciously. Once activated, Holy Aura remains active for the remainder of the scene. The Justiciar can willingly forego protection for a scene or a portion thereof. However, if Holy Aura has been activated and dropped, reactivation in the same scene counts as another use of the power.

Holy Aura protects from Telepathy, Occultism, and other mental attacks by allowing the character to make a Holy Aura check as an opposing roll. Holy Aura also acts as armor, activating as an opposing roll to a Combat check when needed. Holy Aura can be specialized, focusing on defending against particular threats.

Sacrificial Healing

This Miracle genuinely deserves to be called sacrificial. At will, the Justiciar can take up another being’s mental or physical suffering (read: Fidelis or Corpus damage). While risky for the Justiciar, the wounded person is instantly and completely healed. However, unless the healer makes a successful Sacrificial Healing check, he or she suffers the full damage of the person healed. Success means the healer takes no damage. Difficulty is based on how wounded the patient is.

Easy Task: Heal a patient who has lost only 1 Corpus or Fidelis point.

Moderate Task: Heal a patient who has half or more Corpus or Fidelis remaining.

Hard Task: Heal a patient who has less than half Corpus or Fidelis remaining.

Wondrous Task: Heal a patient who is at 0 or fewer Corpus or Fidelis.



Stewardship

Man, in particular the Justiciar, has dominion over the animals. He or she can speak to and command animals at will thanks to this Miracle.

Easy Tasks: Basic veterinary skill (which can also be covered by various applications of the Knowledge or Medicine

Skills). Recognize natural and supernatural animals.
Moderate Tasks: Speak with any mammal as if it were a sentient being to gain clues or plan strategy. Summon small animals, which usually appear in a scene.

Hard Tasks: Speak to and command non-mammals. Telepathic contact with most animals or shapeshifters. Heal an animal’s wounds.

Wondrous Tasks: Command animalistic demons. Resurrect a dead animal.

Opposed Tasks: Applicable only if a supernatural animal attempts to resist command, or when rebuking animal demons.

Suggested Specializations: Some stewards focus their energies and devotion on a certain type of animal, or in protecting a certain part of the natural world.

Wrath

The Justiciar becomes the physical embodiment of the righteous rage of God, and can call upon divine power to destroy evil.

Easy Tasks: Call upon divine power to destroy an adversary’s weapons (for example, turning swords and staves into snakes).

Moderate Tasks: Call upon divine wrath to inflict an attack upon an opponent. This attack automatically receives a +1 Specialization when used against demons or the undead. The Justiciar can make a preliminary roll to add additional specializations to this attack. The Check Difficulty is 13+1 per each point of Specialization added. Next the Justiciar carries out the attack, including any Specializations added by the prior roll. The preliminary roll and attack roll together count as one use of this power.

Hard Tasks: Call upon divine wrath to inflict a plague or epidemic upon an opposing group, resulting in the loss of one Corpus point per scene until the opponents are healed or die. This task can be opposed by Medicine, Holy Aura or Endurance.

Wondrous Tasks: Using Wrath to instantly destroy a demon or other threat.

Opposed Tasks: All uses of this power are opposed as normal for a divine/magical attack.

Specializations: Using Wrath against a specific type of demon, against a specific class of humans, or by focusing divine power through a specific weapon or plague.

will be worms that never die. An unquenchable fire stands ready for you and for your minions, you prince of accursed murderers, father of lechery, instigator of sacrileges,

The Past

"What's wrong, Pietro?" Angela asked as the other priests were filing out of the briefing room. "Is there something about Algiers, or this Dr. Jones that we are to meet there?"

"Oh, no," he shook his head as he stood up and began gathering his notes into his satchel. By now the room had cleared except for the two friends. "I am sure Algiers will be delightfully hot this time of year and Dr. Jones is a fine archaeologist. A bit of an adventurer, but I have worked with him before. He is adept at finding and recovering rare artifacts and he has never let the order down in the past."

"Then what is it?" Angela reached out and touched his arm. He looked at her and with a sigh he sank back down, a collection of notes still in his hand. "Pietro?"

"The last time I saw Dr. Jones was two years ago in Istanbul," Pietro began. "I went with my mentor, Father Marcus Wellington, and Father Robert Giuscard to meet with him there." His mind went back to the event which had vividly seared itself into his memory.

Jones had been on the trail of the Ring of Saint Stephen, which was said to contain a relic from the saint. Just as Saint Stephen was able to see truly into Heaven, the ring would let its wearer see truly as well. The mission was plagued from the beginning, though. Others interfered, and an eccentric collector beat Dr. Jones to the ring. Traveling with Dr. Jones to the collector's estate at Istanbul, we prepared to offer a handsome sum of money for the ring. In the study, we discovered a black-clad man stooped over the prone body of the rich eccentric. Robert gasped and the man spun around. The assassin's gun blazed out and Father Marcus fell, wounded in the shoulder. Dr. Jones fired back and the assassin tumbled backwards over the collector's body. Robert and the good doctor went forward to check the body as I knelt and examined Father Marcus' wound, which seemed minor.

"Here's the ring." Jones tossed it to Robert and holstered his pistol as he looked around the bizarrely decorated room.

"And another ring," Robert said raising the hand of the assassin. "No wonder we have had such a time... Illuminati!"

"That explains a lot," Dr. Jones agreed. "There are quite a few occult relics here," he observed. "I don't like it."

"Wait!" my old friend Marcus sat up suddenly, grabbing at my coat. "Something is here, Pietro. Quickly – the ring!"

Father Giuscard donned the ring and scanned the room. Almost immediately he screamed and staggered back, then fell to his knees covering his eyes. I ran toward him, but he began crawling away, his eyes wide with terror. I turned then and looked, but saw nothing. In that moment, Giuscard scrambled to his feet and fled through the French doors onto the balcony. Still panicked, he hurled himself over the railing and fell to the flagstones below. Inside the room, Father Marcus clutched his cross and began a ward to protect those of us remaining. He wove a web of holy light so powerful that the air glistened with a crackling white radiance. Without the power of discernment we were not able to see whatever it was, but Marcus could eventually perceive that it was gone. We hurried to tend to Father Giuscard, and found him unconscious upon the stones of the courtyard, the ring loose on his hand.

"Eventually he regained consciousness," Father Venditto finished, "but he was quite mad and is now a resident of Saint Theresa's." He shook his head and looked down at his papers. "No one knows if he can ever be healed, nor do we know what he saw when he donned the ring."



... for we wrestle
not against flesh and blood
but against principalities, against powers,
against the rulers of the darkness of this world,
against spiritual wickedness in high places.



Chapter 3: Advanced Mechanics

Creating Parties

In *Against the Darkness*, characters cannot be strong in everything. Even if a person has the human maximum of 7 in all Attributes, he or she still will not have access to Miracles in every area.

For any adventure, a GM may be able to think of a list of Skills and Miracles that could be useful during play. Many things can be accomplished more than one way. Many can be done adequately by a less-skilled person. However, some tasks in the course of an adventure will need to be successfully accomplished, and a GM should try to be sure that the group of characters involved will be able to do so. The play of the game can really benefit from teamwork, as people cooperate and use their strengths to bolster each other's weaknesses. A GM could encourage this tendency by suggesting ways to build a balanced party, or at least a party with a wide range of Skills and Miracles.

On the other hand, players often have very decided ideas about what they want to play. If everyone in a group of heroes ends up being a strongman and pyrokinetic, the GM should suggest that a variety of Skills might be helpful in dealing with things that cannot simply be beaten or blown up. If there seems to be really only one way to handle a situation, the GM needs to be sure that the Skill or Miracle necessary is represented in the group, or is available through a helpful non-player character contact.

Against the Darkness is geared more toward group than individual play, with the opportunity that gives to complement others' strengths. The game system is flexible enough, thought, that it can be used with a group of almost any size

Character Archetypes

The following are a list of standard character types. While many players will want to custom build their own heroes, or GMs their non-player characters, these ready-made Justiciars represent the most common types of adventurers in this world. Each of the Archetypes below is also available as a mini-character sheet in Appendix Two – a complete character, ready to use; all a player (or GM) needs to do is a little customization. Give the person a name, describe his or her appearance, and add a little background or some individualized effects to create a unique character.

Almost all of the Archetypes are designed using the standard point-build method; the few more-powerful exceptions are listed in a separate section. They are designed for use in a high-powered scenario such as the Nephilim Campaign. (see page 40).

Anointed Assassin

The Anointed Assassin is a specially trained soldier who kills for the good of the Church. The character is stealthy, mysterious, amazingly deadly, and extremely clandestine. Only a handful of high-level Vatican officials even know of this deadly killer's existence, and even fewer can call upon his services. Roleplay this character as a stylish killer straight out of a gun-fu movie, complete with thousand-dollar suits, customized handguns, and high-tech gadgets; speak very little, but say something meaningful every time you open your mouth. Or go the other route and accept the challenge of playing a faithless, jocular killer working for a somber, philosophical secret society.

Blessed Non-Believer

While the Blessed Non-Believer may work with the Justiciars for the good of humanity, he or she is not part of the Catholic Church and may or may not even share Christian beliefs with the other characters. Whether the Non-Believer is a charismatic Baptist politician, a Muslim *imam* committed to his own faith, a young Wiccan girl with a gift for divination, or an atheist philosopher and

model of vileness, promoter of heresies, inventor of every obscenity. Depart then, † impious one, depart, † accursed one, depart with all your deceits, for God has willed that man should

be His temple. Why do you still linger here? Give honor to God the Father † almighty, before whom every knee must bow. Give place to the Lord Jesus † Christ, who shed His most

scholar who achieves amazing things through his own unshakable convictions, the Non-Believer is an outsider. The character does not know the Vatican's power structure, internal politics, or the intricacies of its rituals; on the other hand, the character brings fresh eyes and an interesting new perspective to any problem. Play up this character's 'exotic' spiritual heritage, strange (to the other Justiciars) beliefs, and the possible rivalry or prejudice between the character and the Church.

Blood of the Lord

The Blood of the Lord can be a direct descendent of Jesus Christ, the product of a conjectured secret union between the Christ and Mary Magdalene, or a descendent of the ancient Nephilim. The character may be completely unaware of his or her divine heritage, and unprepared for a world of demons and angels. Alternately, a character may have been trained from birth to pursue supernatural evil or groomed to take a leadership position in the Church. Personalities can range from confused "civilians" suddenly possessed of powers they fear and can't understand to arrogant princelings who believe the world is theirs by right of divine blood.

Callous Inquisitor

The Callous Inquisitor cares little for the individual—only Truth matters. Whether it is a truth of the Faith or the truth of who committed a murder does not matter to the Inquisitor, just the relentless pursuit of absolutes. The Inquisitor is a master at questioning people, learning information they would rather keep well hidden. Ferreting out secret sins or names of unknown demons are equally of interest. Inquisitors can be cold and unfeeling, but at their best, they are truly gifted investigators, capable of solving any mystery.

Devil Haunted

The Devil Haunted character became a Justiciar because he or she knows firsthand the pain and suffering the Damned can cause. Once upon a time, the Devil Haunted character was possessed by a demon, and though a Justiciar saved the character, the experience left deep scars, both physical and mental. It also left the haunted character with the ability to fight back against supernatural evil. A Devil Haunted character can be somber and may even be psychologically damaged, but is truly dedicated to ridding the world of the evil that stole a portion of his or her life. The haunted character depends on his or her supernatural powers, but also fears their consequences and spiritual implications. The thought frequently occurs: is the demon taint really gone?

Dispassionate Expert

After a half dozen possessed children, the details all start to blur together. The Dispassionate Expert is a healer, the occult is a disease, and bedside manner is not important. The Expert knows the situation, knows the countermeasures, speaks the rituals, and sets down to work without a wasted word or obvious display of emotion. Behind a cold-hearted demeanor, though, the Dispassionate Expert is a person of great faith and compassion; the work is just too pressing to spend time on any distraction.

Magus of the Lore

Very few modern people know the secrets of true magic, but the Magus of the Lore is one of them. The Magus of the Lore is steeped in ancient mysteries and obscure philosophies, and blessed by a connection to the divine so profound that he or she can perform miracles as powerful as even the most blessed saint. Magi are keenly intelligent, deeply philosophical, and able to look at a problem from all angles, not just those that are a part of orthodox faith. To their critics, Magi of the Lore know far too much about demonology and black magic, but the Magi always counter that knowledge is a weapon never to be discarded.

Modern Templar

The Modern Templar is a soldier of the Lord, a modern-day knight trained in combat, police tactics, vehicles and investigation. The Templar has a host of skills and talents at his disposal, and uses these gifts in service of the Vatican's aims, both publicly and covertly as needed. The Templar



might work as a priest or Church bureaucrat, or may be assigned as a bodyguard to an important Church official. Duty, honor, faith, and valor are the most important aspects of the Templar's character.

Neophyte

The Neophyte is a young cleric new to the fight against demonic evil, still untested and with conviction that sometimes wavers. The Neophyte still struggles with memories of the freer civilian life, with the new life of faith, with relatively recent vows of celibacy and obedience, and with the knowledge that demons and Hell are real, not just philosophical concepts.

precious blood for man. Give place to the Holy † Spirit, who by His blessed apostle Peter openly struck you down in the person of Simon Magus; who cursed your lies in Annas and

Saphira; who smote you in King Herod because he had not given honor to God; who by His apostle Paul afflicted you with the night of blindness in the magician Elyma, and by the mouth

Sacred Hunter

The Sacred Hunter is an expert at tracking, hunting, and destroying monsters, undead, and demons of all kinds. Steeped in ancient lore, long-standing warrior traditions, and bizarre superstitious beliefs, the Sacred Hunter lives for the challenge of the hunt and the thrill of battle. The Sacred Hunter may seem a strange, anachronistic presence in the modern world, a relic of a more ancient version of the Church. However, despite a slightly medieval outlook, the Sacred Hunter is more than capable of using modern tactics and weapons in the war on evil.

Treasure Seeker

The Treasure Seeker is part archeologist, part thief, and part faithful pilgrim, seeking out relics important to the Church. A master of obscure trivia, dead languages, and the science of finding archeological reality in ancient Biblical accounts, the Treasure Seeker's motivation can range from the spiritual to the mercenary. One may be a deeply religious scholar, while another is a money-hungry thrill seeker.

Waking Dreamer

The Waking Dreamer is plagued by an incomprehensible power that cannot be controlled. Assailed by horrible, terrifyingly enigmatic visions at random intervals, the Dreamer hears from the clergy that these dreams are revelations from God: the Dreamer is a prophet, and can hone these visions to hunt down demons. The Waking Dreamer has become a hero out of a sense of duty and isolation; the other Justiciars are the only people who understand, the only ones not afraid or disquieted (hopefully) by the Dreamer's visions. So the Dreamer hunts demons reluctantly, constantly afraid of slipping into madness.

Powerful Character Archetypes

The following character types are more powerful than standard characters. They are either built with more points, or they are nonhuman, which allows characters to assign Miracles from any Attribute. Any changes from standard character creation are noted at the end of the archetype write up. Any of these characters can be used by the Game Master as a ready-made non-player character or adversary; likewise, many of the monsters depicted in the Indiculum Maleficiorum (see page 57) can be adapted for use as characters with Game Master approval.

Cynical Veteran

The Cynical Veteran has been at the job too long and is starting to become jaded and hard-hearted. Innocent faith has given way to black humor, personal vices, and bitterness. The Veteran is angry, at the Church for showing him these horrors, at himself for wasting his life in a war against evil

that can never be won, against the demons that he fights, even against the ordinary humans venal and weak enough to give the demons a foothold in the world. The Cynical Veteran is still a hero, though. He might curse his superiors under his breath, break the old vows on occasion, and drink too much, but he carries on knowing the good he can still do and the threat of the enemy.

Difference from standard character creation: The Cynical Veteran is built with 20 additional Skill Points.

Earth-chained Angel

The Earth-chained Angel is a divine power that has come to Earth for purposes of its own. Some angels willingly leave the glory of Heaven for a time to accomplish some great mission on the mortal plane, out of love or duty, or perhaps to better understand the human condition and the will of God. The Earth-chained Angel is very powerful and possesses many innate abilities. The Angel is an astoundingly beautiful winged being of light and flame who sometimes carries a flaming sword.

Special Powers: The Earth-chained Angel can fly at will with huge feathered wings; when the creature uses any of its supernatural powers, mystical symbols glow at the ends of the feathers. An Angel can fly about as fast as a modern sports car can travel (around 120 mph maximum) with unlimited range, and a maximum height above the ground of about one mile.

Difference from standard character creation: The Earth-chained Angel is nonhuman and has Miracles from many different Attributes. The Angel is built with 15 additional Skill Points.

Paragon Soul

The Paragon Soul is a modern-day saint, perfect in word, faith, and deed. The Paragon Soul's abilities come from his or her unshakable faith and pure heart. The Paragon Soul may be a legalist, a genuinely good-hearted idealist, or a naive innocent. In any case, the Paragon Soul's effectiveness as a demon hunter may be compromised by his or her innate goodness; despite the Paragon's divine power, he or she is too good to ever truly understand evil.

Difference from standard character creation: The Paragon Soul is built with 20 additional Skill Points.



of the same apostle bade you to go out of Pythonissa, the soothsayer. Begone, † now! Begone †, seducer! Your place is in solitude; your abode is in the nest of the serpents, get down and

crawl with them. This matter brooks no delay, for see, the Lord, the ruler comes quickly, kindling fire before Him and it will run on ahead of Him and encompass His enemies

Repentant Demon

The Repentant Demon once preyed upon humanity like the rest of its fellows. Somewhere along the way, though, the demon changed. Perhaps the fallen angel remembered what it once was. Now instead of trying to destroy the Justiciars, it sought them out and joined the team in penance for its misdeeds. The Demon may be redeemed, but its heritage of blood and pain is never far from its thoughts, and its life is a daily struggle to forget the old habits. The Demon's specific look is up to the player; this Archetype can accommodate nearly anything from flaming red giants with onyx horns to reformed vampires and tamed werewolves.

Special Weaknesses: The Repentant Demon is especially vulnerable to holy objects and blessed weapons, despite its conversion. Anyone attacking the Demon with a silver weapon, blessed weapon, or religious artifact receives a free +1 Specialization on all attack rolls made against the Demon.

Difference from standard character creation: The Repentant Demon is nonhuman and has Miracles from many different Attributes. The Repentant Demon is built with 15 additional experience points.

Using Variants

In the Optional Rules (see page 40), several possibilities are given for character creation other than that given in the basic rules. Characters can be generated with more or less build points, randomly with different sizes of dice, with more Skill Points, or by using Skill Points according to a different system. Any of these are perfectly valid methods, as long as they fit with the feel you as the GM desire for the game.

Your discretion is the ultimate authority in deciding whether to use any particular facet of the rules. If Repentant Demons don't fit your conception of who would fight on the side of good, then don't use that Archetype, regardless of what your players have read or seen. If certain uses of a Miracle offend your suspension of disbelief, rule them out. The system will survive; it is casual enough to stand many adjustments. As long as the changes will make your game better, you should feel free to add or take away from the rules as you see fit.

Skills/Miracles

Using Miracles

A Miracle can be used a number of times per day equal to the number of ranks a Justiciar has in it. Each additional use past this limit results in the Justiciar suffering one

point of Corpus or Fidelis damage. (excess use of a Corpus Miracle causes Corpus damage; all other Miracles cause Fidelis damage.)

Activating some Miracles requires an activation roll, and is never considered a Trivial task. The player rolls against a difficulty set by the GM. Many examples of difficulty levels are given in the description of each Miracle, but not everything is covered. Difficulty could also be affected by terror, attempting to activate during combat or while under stress, or other circumstances. In general, activating a Miracle in combat is one level more difficult than activating it under normal conditions unless otherwise suggested in the Miracle description. Success means the ability activates and can be used for a single scene or event. Failure means the power does not activate, but that use is still spent for the day.

Some Miracles have specific activation difficulties listed. This is most often the case when a Miracle is being used to try to add (or subtract) Specializations. Miracles affecting Specializations are: Pyrokinesis, Transformation, Occultism, Telepathy, Exorcism, and Wrath. In using these Miracles to add Specializations, the requirement of first having 7 ranks in a Skill or Miracle is ignored. Pyrokinesis and Wrath add Specializations to the same attack, so there is no need to name particular Specializations. Transformation gives Specializations to Combat, but only for the person using the power. Occultism and Exorcism can grant Specializations for Skills (but not Miracles) to the wielder or others; Exorcism can even be used to grant an Advantage to a weapon. (Specializations or Advantages added by these Miracles must be named specifically.) Occultism and Telepathy can be used to reduce or remove Skills or Skills Specializations, but not Miracles or their Specializations. Abilities to be removed can be named generally, and the GM can deal with them as appropriate.

Untrained Skills

If a character has no training in a Skill which he or she is attempting to use, simply roll the check with a Skill rank of 0. (Attribute + Resolution Die + 0 vs. target number)

In general, Miracles cannot be used untrained. They are supernatural powers to the characters; one either has been granted a power or one has not. However, a generous Game Master could rule that a person who has the ability to use some Miracles (a Justiciar) may attempt to use an "untrained Miracle." The in-game assumption would be that in an extreme situation, a person could request the divine power on a one-time basis. Whether or

in flames. You might delude man, but God you cannot mock. It is He who casts you out, from whose sight nothing is hidden. It is He who repels you, to whose might all things are subject.

It is He who expels you, He who has prepared everlasting hellfire for you and your angels, from whose mouth shall come a sharp sword, who is coming to judge both the living

not the use was successful, the Justiciar would suffer damage as if he or she had that Miracle but has exceeded its number of uses for the day. (see "Using Miracles," above).

Specific Miracle Details

Endurance – This Miracle can be used to attempt to prevent Terror. Make an Endurance roll, and note the result. When a Terror check might be needed, any Difficulty below the result of the Endurance check is an automatic success. This counts as one use of the Miracle and lasts for one scene.

Transformation – If the user of this power has a maximum Corpus of 3 or less, everything is at least a Hard task.

Animation – To use this power as outlined, a construct must be prepared in advance. Failure does not destroy the construct. Success animates a construct for an indefinite period of time. As an alternative, a Justiciar can animate whatever is at hand, but this has uncertain effects and lasts for just a scene. Of course, GM discretion prevails.

Task Resolution and Opposed Rolls

It doesn't matter whether a Justiciar is desperately trying to evade pursuers in a rented Acura while blasting through narrow Italian streets, translating an ancient manuscript that might finally shed light on the real reason for the Deluge, knocking out a possessed cultist who is swinging a meat cleaver, or tracking a corrupt priest's movements from parish to parish over the last few decades; the same task resolution method is used in every situation. To determine whether a character succeeds at a task, use the following procedure:

Task Resolution and Opposed Roles:

Unopposed Checks:

Attribute + Skill/Miracle Rank + Specializations + Advantages/bonuses + Resolution Die
vs.
Target Number

Opposed Checks:

Attribute + Skill/Miracle Rank + Specializations + Advantages/bonuses + Resolution Die
vs.
Opponent's Attribute + Skill/Miracle Rank + Specializations + Advantages/bonuses + Resolution Die

In opposed checks, the character (or being) with the highest total wins the contest.

Task Difficulty

Tasks are rated by their difficulty; the range of target numbers for each difficulty :

- **Trivial: A roll is not required.**
- **Easy: 8-11**
- **Moderate: 12-14**
- **Hard: 15-17**
- **Wondrous: 18+**

Each Skill and Miracle lists numerous examples of difficulty levels. However, no list can cover even a fraction of the possibilities. How do you decide the level of difficulty of something that's not included in the charts? Use the examples given to approximate the difficulty of other tasks. The GM is the ultimate authority on such things. If a player disagrees, discuss the issue after the game and make a note for the next time.

Notice that each level is a range. When setting a difficulty level, you don't have to use the lowest point of that level as the success point. Something can be Easy with a difficulty of 8, or with a difficulty of 10. Some tasks are just harder than others. In addition, Wondrous has no top limit! A Wondrous task could have a difficulty of 18, 28, or 38. Keep in mind that tasks over 22 will be almost impossible for a single person to accomplish, even with exceptional abilities.

In addition to setting the difficulty numbers, a GM can award Advantages (or penalties) for favorable (or unfavorable) circumstances. The players would not necessarily be aware of these possible adjustments.

Terror Check

When facing supernatural horrors, the will, faith, and even sanity of the characters can be stretched to the breaking point and beyond. The Terror Check simulates this and provides a game mechanic for its resolution. A Terror Check is triggered whenever the characters face a situation which (in the GM's opinion) could bring about fear, revulsion, and/or terror in a normal modern human.

Remember that although *Against the Darkness* assumes that these horrors are real and that there is a constant battle being waged between the powers of light and darkness, a confrontation with these creatures is a rare occurrence and the world at large appears to be oblivious to the battle going on around them. The people encountered in *Against the Darkness* also will not generally be conscious of the extent and scale of the war being fought. Even those who are aware of the battle between light and darkness (such as the player characters) may not

and the dead and the world by fire. Almighty God, we beg you to keep the evil spirit from further molesting this servant of yours, and to keep him far away, never to return.

At your command, O Lord, may the goodness and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ, our Redeemer, take possession of this man. May we no longer fear any evil since the Lord

have the experience of a seasoned veteran in facing the supernatural horrors. Further, encountering a new horror can be a devastating experience for a character who thought that they had “seen it all.”

Terror Check Difficulty Levels

Trivial – A Trivial situation could be exposure to rats, snakes, bats, spiders, heights, cramped places or many other things—normal fears that would not cause terror unless a person has a phobia, so no check is necessary.

Easy - An Easy Terror Check could be a response to a dramatic feeling of isolation or a sudden realization that a person is alone or cut off from expected help. It could also be a situation that reminds the character of the inherent weakness and frailty of the human condition. Examples of this could be the unexpected discovery that the phones, transportation, or other links to the outside world and help are no longer available. It could also be prompted by the discovery of a decaying or bloody body in a crime scene.

Moderate - A Moderate Terror Check could be a response to a horrific scene of violence, mutilation, or torture, or to the revelation of a dimensional portal or gate to the netherworld. It could be caused by an encounter that makes the characters realize that all of their preconceived notions were not only in error but were terribly—and horribly—wrong, or any other paradigm shift in an unpleasant direction.

Hard - A Hard Terror Check could result from a confrontation with previously unencountered monsters or abominations, a vision of Hell, or the realization that the victim in a horrific scene is actually a loved one or trusted friend.

Wondrous - A Wondrous Terror Check is necessary when a person is actually facing demonic forces or transported to Hell.

The Miracle of Endurance can be used to attempt to prevent Terror. Make an Endurance check and note the result. When a Terror check might be needed, any Difficulty below the result of the Endurance check is an automatic success. This counts as one use of the Miracle and lasts for one scene.

Modified Terror Checks

Making a successful Terror Check means that subsequent checks, for a similar cause, will be made at the next easier level than would otherwise have been the case. For this reason, it could be beneficial for characters to record

what types of terror they have successfully faced. In general Terror Checks that involve scenes of loved ones and trusted friends should be made at one level more difficult, at the Game Master’s discretion. A GM may require success in a Terror Check before allowing recovery from a failed Terror Check.



Failure of Terror Checks:

Terror checks are rolled against a target number. For example, if the target number was 11 and the character rolled a 9, failing by 2 points, the character is stunned and loses an action. Additional possible results are shown.

1-3 points: Stunned—lose 1 action

4-6 points: Shaken—lose 1 action; all Miracles at -1 for remainder of scene

7-10 points: Panic—retreat as next action [may drop items or equipment: 1-2 on 1d6]; lose 1d6 actions; all Miracles and Skills at -1 for remainder of scene

11-13 points: Flee—retreat from scene immediately [may drop items or equipment: 1-4 on 1d6], may only return at GM discretion; if returned to the scene, all Miracles at -2 and Skills at -1 for remainder of the scene

14-16 points: Faint—lose consciousness [may drop items or equipment: 1-4 on d6]; unable to take any action for remainder of scene or until revived by a first aid (Easy Medicine) roll; if revived, all Skills and Miracles at -2 for remainder of scene

Is with us, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

St. Michael the Archangel, illustrious leader of the heavenly army, defend us in the battle against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the world of darkness and

17+ points: Emergency—GM choice

Heart attack: lose 1 point of Corpus, lose consciousness [may drop items or equipment: 1-5 on d6]; unable to take any action for remainder of scene or until revived by a Paramedic (Moderate Medicine) roll – this roll restores consciousness but no points of Corpus; if revived all Skills and Miracles are at -2 for remainder of scene; all physical Skills and Miracles are at -1 in addition.

Catatonia: lose 1 point of Fidelis, become non-functional as if losing consciousness [may drop items or equipment: 1-5 on 1d6]; unable to take any action for remainder of scene or until revived by an Exhortation (Moderate Psychology) roll – this roll restores consciousness but no points of Fidelis; if revived all Skills and Miracles are at -2 for remainder of scene; all non-physical Skills and Miracles are at -1 in addition.

Initiative

So, who shoots first? *Against the Darkness* is too basic a game to keep track of combat using individual rounds. To determine who goes first in combat, roll an opposed check using the Speed Skill. The character with the highest total acts first, followed by the character with the next highest total, and so on. Combat continues within this pattern until combatants are killed or retreat. Each time the characters act, they can perform any single action that takes only a few seconds to resolve: throw a punch, speak a few words, dive for cover, open a door, fire or reload a weapon, begin first aid, or survey the scene for any previously unnoticed advantages, among other things.

Item Advantages and Combat:

No matter what, any successful attack does one point of damage, so what role do weapons play in *Against the Darkness*? They are basically props, allowing an already combat-savvy veteran to deal damage in a different way. Weapons and armor are important because they grant the wielder Advantages: the ability to hand out or resist hurt in interesting new ways.

Most weapons have a point or two of Advantages, giving them their unique character. Armor Advantages protect the wearer from a particular kind of harm. Better

equipment can have very high Advantages, but no single item can have more than +7 Advantages of all types. Some examples of weapons and armor are listed.

Item Advantages “stack” with Combat Skills and Specializations. This can be very important for Justiciars when they go up against some of the tougher demons. Item Advantages also “stack” with each other when in a situation that meets multiple conditions. The following are only some examples; you may create as many Advantages as you desire, up to the limit of +7 per single item.

Sample Item Advantages

Weapons

- **Bows:** +1 Advantage in attacking opponents at long range. +1 Advantage against armored opponents.
- **Pistols:** +1 Advantage in attacking opponents at long range.
- **Machine Guns:** +1 Advantage in attacking foes at long range. +1 Advantage when attacking first.
- **Shotguns:** +1 Advantage against unarmored enemies. +1 Advantage at close range.
- **Rifles:** +2 Advantage against opponents at long range.
- **Knives:** +1 Advantage at close range. Additional +1 Advantage against victims unaware of the attack.
- **Swords:** +1 Advantage at close range. +1 Advantage against humans.
- **Silver-loaded pistols:** Additional +1 Advantage against demons and lycanthropes.
- **Iron weapons:** Additional +1 against minor supernatural creatures
- **Maces and mace-like weapons:** +2 against armored opponents.

Armor

- **Heavy Leathers:** +1 vs unarmed attacks or knives.
- **Kevlar Vests:** +2 vs gunfire.
- **Plate or Chain Mail:** +2 against swords, and unarmed attacks.
- **Firefighter’s Gear:** +2 vs fire.

Benefits of Teamwork

The way that *Against the Darkness* is created means that, in general, no one character will have all of the Skills or Miracles that are necessary to complete a mission successfully. Most often, only a team of Justiciars working together for a common purpose will have the power to defeat the forces of Hell. As any Justiciar would tell you, every believer is only a part of the whole; it is only together that the Church is truly the metaphorical Body of Christ. Jesus promised his disciples that “where two or more are gathered in my name, there I shall be also.”

the spirit of wickedness in high places. Come to the rescue of mankind, whom God has made in His own image and likeness, and purchased from Satan’s tyranny at so great a price.

Holy Church venerates you as her patron and guardian. The Lord has entrusted to you the task of leading the souls of the redeemed to heavenly blessedness. Entreat the Lord of peace

So how does this play out in game terms? Well, suppose a team of Justiciars is called out to a Hopi reservation to cast a demon lord out of an 11-year-old innocent. The Justiciars expect that none of them alone is strong enough to succeed but that together they will meet the challenge. They might face this daunting task by using either Aid or Corporate Prayer.

Aid

When faced with an exceptionally difficult challenge, a team of Justiciars can work together to overcome obstacle. Any number of characters can reasonably attempt the same task, but the Game Master is free to impose real-world, common-sense limits. Any number of investigators might attempt to trace shady campaign funds, but if the heroes are trapped in a burning elevator and are trying to pry open the door, the Game Master could rule that only one or two characters can participate.

To Aid another, the characters aiding must make a Skill check for the same task at Moderate difficulty. (It is not possible for an untrained person to Aid in a Miracle.) Coordinated actions can take two or three times longer than a regular action if the task might present difficulty in coordinating more than one person. Each success in Aid grants a +1 bonus to the Skill or Miracle check of the character being aided, to a maximum Advantage of +7.

The risk of using Aid is that any failure can cascade, distracting the other participants. A character receives a penalty to the Aid task equal to the number of immediately preceding failures. If Person A misses the check, Person B receives a -1 penalty. If Person B succeeds despite the penalty, Person C receives no penalty. However, if Person B fails also, then Person C receives a -2 penalty, and so on.

Corporate Prayer

If a character chooses, he or she may use faith (rather than skills) to assist another. This is done through Corporate Prayer – one or more characters praying for the success of another’s attempted action. To do this, characters may attempt no other action at that time, because of the need to maintain a spiritual center (or focus) as they petition for divine aid for their comrade. Each person who wants to add support through prayer makes a Fidelis check.

Each successful check results in a +1 Advantage to the acting character’s roll. (The maximum Advantage for Corporate Prayer is +7. This is a bonus over and above whatever other Specializations or Advantages the acting character may have.) The difficulty of this roll depends upon the circumstances in which it is made. In non-threatening situations (such as trying to decipher a code hidden in an ancient tome) a character needs to make an Easy roll. In

situations where the characters are in danger, success in Corporate Prayer requires a successful Moderate roll.

As an optional rule, the GM may decide that any character rolling his or her maximum possible on the Fidelis check automatically succeeds in Prayer. This gives even characters with low Fidelis a chance to be of assistance. However, this option can result in characters with weaker Fidelis actually having a better chance to help than someone with a higher score. A GM might offset this benefit by allowing a maximum roll to succeed only at certain times – such as when God is “taking a special interest” in the outcome of the encounter because of its pivotal nature in a campaign, or when special “divine favor” is granted because, in the opinion of the GM, the characters are about to be annihilated without it! In such a case the GM might say something like “You feel the power of God flowing through you (or present among you) in a special way, so for now any maximum roll on a Corporate Prayer check is a success.”

Damage and Healing

Getting damaged is all too easy in *Against the Darkness*. Any time a character or monster fails to successfully oppose an attack roll, that character or monster is damaged, losing 1 point of either Corpus or Fidelis depending on the nature of the attack. Physical attacks cause Corpus damage while Mental or Spiritual attacks generally damage Fidelis. (An exception would be something like Wrath, which could well manifest as a physical attack such as fire, lightning, or a searing ray of power.)

Corpus Damage

At 0 Corpus, the character is dead (note that Miracles such as Endurance can modify this).

Natural recovery time and the difficulty involved in healing someone using Medicine are based upon how seriously the victim is wounded. During the recovery period others can attempt to heal the wounded person. Successful Medicine checks would speed recovery. Any points recovered this way ‘stack’ with natural healing.

An Easy Medicine check can be used to restore points to slightly wounded characters, think of this as first aid. A character with more than half of his or her Corpus points remaining; she can be treated with first aid and recover 1 Corpus point. A single Justiciar can attempt first aid once per day on the same person.

A Moderate Medicine check can be used to restore points to characters who have half or less of their Corpus points remaining. This can be viewed as paramedic care (in an urgent situation) or minor surgery (in long-term care), and

to cast Satan down under our feet, so as to keep him from further holding man captive and doing harm to the Church. Carry our prayers up to God’s throne, that the mercy of the Lord

may quickly come and lay hold of the beast, the serpent of old, Satan and his demons, casting him in chains into the abyss, so that he can no longer seduce the nations.

It restores 1 point of Corpus. Sometimes paramedic care can be a Hard task. A single Justiciar can attempt paramedic care (or minor surgery) once per day on the same person. Paramedic care can also be used to 'stabilize' a dying character for a scene, until other medical care can be used to actually repair the damage. This is an Moderate task, but restores no points of Corpus to the victim.

A Wondrous Medicine check can be used to restore points to characters that have been reduced to 0 Corpus or fewer; think of this as major surgery. It restores the person to 1 point of Corpus. A single Justiciar can attempt this task once per week on the same person.

Corpus recovers naturally on the following timeline:

Corpus Recovery –

- **1st point: 1 week**
- **2nd point: +4 days**
- **3rd point: +2 days**
- **4th and following: +1 day per point**

Fidelis Damage

At 0 Fidelis, the character is hopelessly insane. He or she may become suicidal or homicidal, wallow in an alcoholic stupor, or descend into catatonia. The GM may allow the player to retain control of the character but make no mistake about it, that person is no longer part of the battle against evil. At best, he or she is a mad wretch, waiting for death; at worst, an enemy agent within the heroic camp.

Optional Rule: Once healed from such a severe mental or spiritual injury, the GM could assign the character a trigger that sends the character into temporary insanity if a similarly horrific scenario is ever encountered. For example, a pyrokinetic whose mind was flayed by a sadistic vampire looking for information would lapse into pyrokinetic overkill whenever he encounters a vampire, causing massive damage to everything; someone else may temporarily retreat into a catatonic state until the related threat has passed.

An Easy Psychology check can be used to restore points to characters with slight Fidelis damage (think of this as morale support.) If a character has more than half of her Fidelis points remaining, she can be treated with morale support and recover 1 Fidelis point. A single Justiciar can attempt morale boosting once per day on the same person.

A Moderate Psychology check can be used to restore points to characters who have half or less of their Fidelis points remaining. This can be viewed as exhortation (in the short term) or counseling (in the long term), and it restores 1 point of Fidelis. A single Justiciar can attempt

to exhort or counsel the same person once per day. Exhortation can also be used to 'stabilize' a character who is losing his or her sanity (0 Fidelis points), until stronger efforts can be used to actually treat the damage.

A Wondrous Psychology check can be used to restore points to characters who have been reduced to 0 Fidelis. It restores the person to 1 point of Fidelis. A single Justiciar can attempt this task once per week on the same person.

Fidelis recovers naturally, but on a much longer timeline than Corpus. Fidelis may, at the GM's discretion, require long-term care (a successful Psychology roll by another Justiciar) to regain fully.

Fidelis Recovery –

- **1st point: 1 year**
- **2nd point: +6 months**
- **3rd point: +3 months**
- **4th and following: +1 month per point**

During the recovery period for both Attributes, other Justiciars can attempt to heal the wounded person. Successful Medicine or Psychology checks would speed recovery. Any points restored in this way 'stack' with natural healing.

Character Experience:

As they survive their encounters with the dark and fantastic, Justiciars increase in skill and knowledge. After a few sessions, even a green recruit can identify the signs of demonic possession and becomes more confident in his own God-given talents. Any character who survives an adventure receives experience in terms of Skill Points, which can be spent to improve Skills and Miracles, or obtain new ones. Using Skill Points, characters can purchase abilities in the same manner as during character creation, either spending the points immediately for minor benefits or saving points to enhance an Attribute or add another divinely-granted Miraculous power.

The Game Master decides how many points to assign at the end of each game session. Typically, you should assign from 1 to 4 points. Additional points are possible, especially as rewards for excellent roleplaying, quick tactical thinking, overcoming a major adversary, or scoring a major victory. The Game Master might decide to award fewer points (or even no experience points at all) if the Justiciars act out of character, are wantonly violent, or allow innocents to come to harm. Costs for advancement are:

- **1 Skill Point per rank for each Skill**
- **2 Skill Points per rank for each Miracle**
- **3 Skill Points for each Attribute Point**

In the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and God, we steadfastly proceed to combat the onslaught of the wily enemy. We cast you out, every unclean spirit, every satanic power,

The Confrontation

"We're too late – they've broken the seal," Pietro called, over the roar of wind from deep within the North African cavern.

"That doesn't make sense," Angela shouted. "If they are truly Islamic why would they unleash a demon of hate? Don't they serve the God of Abraham?"

"They serve hate, Reverend Danvers, and if they are able to maintain control of that thing there's going to be a whole new dimension to the War on Terror," Dr. Jones shouted back. "I don't think we can deal with this anymore."

"Nonsense!" Captain Al-Barak bellowed. "Enough of this foolishness. We are a civilized people, Dr. Jones. Despite this superstitious nonsense, these terrorists are enemies of the state and enemies of the civilized world and we will deal with them as we planned to do when we arrived." He shouted to his men in Arabic to advance and they cocked their weapons and began moving down the passage. They had not gone far when they stopped short as a hideous, inhuman yowling reverberated through the depths. The priests and Dr. Jones exchanged glances, then looked at the Algerian police who were stopped in their tracks. A cacophony of screams rose up from below, noises that no human voice should be able to make. The priests had the uncomfortable feeling that the shrieks, which were abruptly ending in mid-note, were indeed being made by humans – those who had summoned the creature.

"No worries, Dr. Jones," Angela said, her voice barely audible above the din. "I don't think they are able to control it."

"I am so relieved," the doctor rejoined sarcastically. "The free world can rest in peace. Guess we can go now."

Their observations were interrupted as the Algerian police began firing down the passage, but after a violent initial eruption of gunpowder and lead, the police turned and ran. Whatever it was, the bullets had had little or no effect on it.

"We cannot leave," Pietro shouted. He drew forth his blessed cross and began to pray, weaving a web of holy light across the corridor as he had seen Father Marcus do so many times before. The web looked all too thin when the misshapen abomination lumbered up out of the shadows. With a scream it threw itself against the barrier and several of the strands of light shimmered and winked out. The young Italian priest prayed with greater intensity and re-wove the failing barrier.

"It's not going to hold," Dr. Jones roared, raising his pistol and taking aim.

"No, Dr. Jones," Angela grabbed his arm. "That is not the way."

"What are we going to do – ask it to wait here while we go for a UN Peacekeeping force?"

"There is no time to explain," Angela shouted and held out her hand to him. "Pray with me; pray for Father Venditto that he may stand against this terror." She thought that Dr. Jones looked at her as if she had lost her mind, but he did indeed take the hand she proffered. As she began her prayer Angela noted in the back of her mind that although Dr. Jones prayed with her, he did not put his pistol away. She smiled secretly and in a way her heart felt lighter because of it.

For his part Dr. Jones thought that the reverend's voice had an angelic quality as it lifted in prayer, and although her words were different than Father Venditto's, he marveled that after a moment of discord their prayers seemed to take on an odd symmetry like a melodious descant in a song of hope. He was lost in the beauty of the harmony and his part in it when he suddenly realized that it had ended; he felt a moment of odd sadness. Before him the web of light that warded the corridor blazed like the light of the sun.

"What happened?" Dr. Jones asked. Father Venditto and Reverend Danvers both looked exhausted and he momentarily felt faint himself.

"It has retreated," the priest stated. "Thanks to your assistance it could not break through. But we must contact the Vatican. We will need help to hunt it down and banish it once again to Hell."



... for we wrestle
not against flesh and blood
but against principalities, against powers,
against the rulers of the darkness of this world,
against spiritual wickedness in high places.



Chapter 4: Adventures and Campaigns

If you wish to run isolated adventures with *Against the Darkness*, to provide variety for your gaming group, that is a wonderful idea. The easy to learn, casual structure of the rules will make it easy to pull out the game, teach it to people, and begin playing all in the same night. However, if you want to run a complex campaign with ongoing characters over a long period of time – you can do that as well! There are some things that you need to know whether you are going to run a single game or an ongoing campaign.

Running an *Against the Darkness* adventure or campaign will vary with the type of results or effect you want to get, so before you start it would be a good idea to decide what kind of game you and your players want to play. Do you want an action-oriented campaign with heroic battles? Do you want to have quests for lost items of great mystical power? Do you want to have a suspenseful horror campaign against demonic forces? Perhaps you want to have a game of political intrigue marked by eminent men and dark back-room deals. You can do any and all of these things with *Against the Darkness*.

First, let us look at the tone of the adventure.

Atmosphere

Adventures can be light-hearted, serious, apocalyptic, or a combination thereof.

In a humorous adventure, the players are playing their way through a spoof of horror movies and tales that you have seen or read. Whether someone plays a teenage demon hunter with a keen fashion sense or a klutzy hero who strikes up a relationship with a slightly dysfunctional spirit, you have a situation where the seriousness of the game is overshadowed by the light-hearted fun. There are a lot of options out there in a humorous adventure; it really doesn't matter how the world is going to end as long as they are going to die laughing. Whatever you decide to do, there should be a lot of laughing and fun and players should have

a chance to do pretty much whatever they want as long as it does not spoil the fun of the other players.

In play testing we tried an optional rule, “Always the Right Tool”, that allows the hero with the Combat Skill to draw out whatever weapon he or she wants (see page 42). In the course of the adventure one hero produced everything from a .44 magnum, to a flamethrower, to a super-absorbent roll of paper towels, all from under the same trench coat. It was an hilarious adventure but it did not exactly inspire fear in the players. Still, since *Against the Darkness* uses a more casual system than some games (even in the combat mechanic), it was easy for the player to describe the action as he wished without upsetting the game balance. Even though he was declaring himself to have a flamethrower, it still did only one point of damage, and so to, by the way, did the roll of paper towels when “mopping up the demons.” The feel of the game, however, varied dramatically according to how the action was described. This is just one of many examples of how you can use the casual structure to get the effect you wish.

In a serious adventure, the characters are facing real dangers and the conflict, investigation, and intrigue become the driving force of the game. In serious adventures the heroes may enjoy some humorous moments but overall the dangers are real and the stakes are high, at least for the individuals involved. An example here could be a situation such as a possessed child or a monster that has come to plague a location or town. The situation is serious and the consequences for the priest, child, doctor, and/or community may be grave but the world is not going to end one way or the other. If the hero dies another may need to come, but all will probably be all right with the world. The battle against the darkness is rather like plugging leaks – remedying situations that are askew to return lives to normal.

In the apocalyptic adventure, your players get to experience the world that the Evil Overlord's players have struggled in for decades. All may seem fine at first glance, but the farther the characters go into the game, the more they come to realize that something is terribly, —and horribly—wrong. The fiction pieces in this book

every onslaught of the infernal adversary, every legion, every diabolical group and sect, in the name and by the power of our Lord Jesus † Christ. We command you, begone, and fly far from

the Church of God, from the souls made by God in His image and redeemed by the precious blood of the divine Lamb. † No longer dare, cunning serpent, to deceive the human race,

use a backdrop of apocalyptic adventure. In it the heroes of the light are (or at least seem to be) dwindling in a grim struggle against a rising tide of darkness that can reach major proportions. This campaign is not so much plugging leaks as it is trying to hold onto the boat in the midst of a raging storm. The situation is grim and (whether the world at large realizes it or not) the universe could end if the heroes are unable to accomplish their goals. It is an epic battle between good and evil with nothing less than the fate of the all humanity in the balance.

Once you have decided the basic atmosphere and feel that you want in the game, you should decide the type of game that you want to run. You need to consider several questions. How common are the Justiciars in your world? Are they independent investigators for hire, normal people who have stumbled upon a horrible secret, or are they representatives of a secret order? If they are part of a secret order, are they assigned to specific areas under an archbishop or national government (such as the mysterious “men in black”) or do they serve great international organizations such as the Vatican, NATO, or Interpol? Who calls the Justiciars into situations? Do they stumble upon clues that drag them into a great mystery, or are they assigned their investigations? You should also decide upon the basic types of activity, enemies, and/or challenges that your players and their characters will face. What follow are four examples of campaign types, but they should in no way be considered the only ones available.

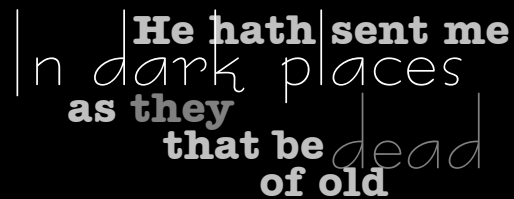
Campaign Types:

Practically speaking, wherever your imagination wishes to go, *Against the Darkness* can take you there. Here are some examples that you may wish to build from but in no way should you consider your options limited to these campaigns. Feel free to mix and match or to draw freely from whatever stories or movies that strike the fancy of the players or GM. The examples proceed in what could be a rising kevek of power among the player characters, however, a great deal of variety in power levels exists in each type.

A GATE OF EVIL

In this campaign type the characters are in an area such as a small town, a coastal region in New England, a rural setting in the Midwestern part of the United States, an Indian Reservation in the Arizona desert, or even your own hometown. The Justiciars have discovered that for some reason this area is a gateway to the supernatural, and monsters, demons, and ghostly presences abound in this area. In this type of campaign there is an interesting

contrast between the general air of ‘normalcy’ and the underlying menace of evil that festers beneath the façade. Such a campaign could represent a situation in which the Church has scattered special defenders throughout the world at these gates. There they watch and wait for the enemy to try to exert power on the material plane. Another explanation is that the heroes are local persons who have gathered around the parish priest because they have come to realize that something is wrong. Instead of a secret hierarchy of the Church supporting them, the characters are alone and trying to get by as best they can with their own understanding of faith, their individual wits, and desperate determination. The focus of this campaign could simply be an episodic series of “here is where you find evil this week,” or an adventure series in which the Justiciars are seeking to discover the explanation for the gate of evil in this region and have dedicated themselves to closing it.



He hath sent me
In dark places
as they
that be
dead
of old

Adventure Ideas: In a “Gate of Evil” campaign, the Justiciars could face a demon-possessed youth, car, or even a location like a house, cave, or well. They could live on the edge of a swamp or deep cave complex from which all manner of evils sally forth to ravage the town. They could face servants of evil, dark witchcraft, or Satanists who move into the area – apparently attracted by the gateway, even if they don’t know why.

Recommended Character Archetypes: Blessed Non-Believer, Devil Haunted, Dispassionate Expert, Modern Templar, Neophyte, Waking Dreamer

Recommended Optional Rules: Fading of the Light; Holy/Unholy Ground; Human Expertise; Ordinary Heroes

HIERARCHY OF CONSPIRACY

In this campaign there are secrets hidden that were never meant to be seen by the uninitiated. The Vatican, the Illuminati, a hidden society of demons or vampires or other secret society is key to the mysteries and stories that unfold for the players. A Hierarchy of Conspiracy campaign may include suppressed prophecies, blasphemous books of occult lore, secret gospels, ancient

To persecute God’s Church, to strike God’s elect and to sift them as wheat. † For the Most High God commands you, † He to whom you once proudly presumed yourself equal..

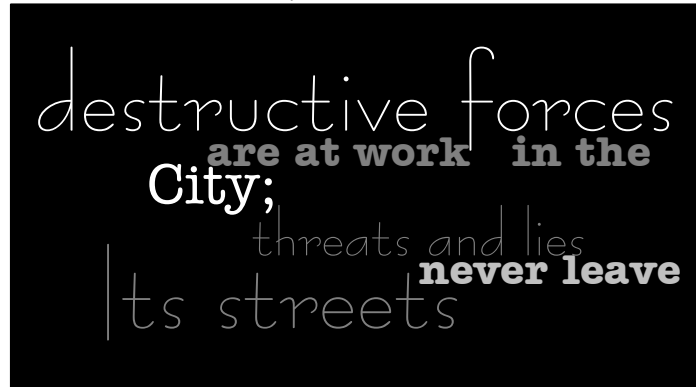
He who wills all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. God the Father † commands you. God the Son † commands you. God the Holy † Spirit commands you, Christ †

relics, or forgotten mysteries that are being fought over by the hidden power brokers of the world. Whether you have a good church vs. an evil secret organization or a church fractured by rogue factions that may have traded faith for temporal power, you have a world of secrecy, blackmail, terror, and assassination as the secret networks try to tip the status quo in their favor. In a Hierarchy of Conspiracy campaign, the world is always in danger and the Justiciars never really know who to trust as they discover plans within plans and realize that even people who seem to be on their side may not be telling them everything. In this campaign the heroes may never actually come to face to face with the true powers that they battle or even the mysterious figures for whom they ultimately work. The secret masters of the world are the true players of this game and the Justiciars are pawns in a deadly game of intrigue and mystery.

Adventure Ideas: As agents in a Hierarchy of Conspiracy campaign, the Justiciars may search for the true Grail or a powerful relic that both sides seek. They could be attempting to suppress evidence (manufactured or real) of a heretical nature, or represent an ancient organization such as the Knights Templar. Trust should be hard to come by, while faith and loyalty are used by the powers that be as a way of manipulating the weak or uninitiated. Despite this the Justiciars retain their amazing powers, because their faith is pure enough to rise above the petty jealousy and intrigue of the secret factions, to tame a world of shadows, and bring the truth to light. Other Justiciars, however, could be deep-cover agents of the enemy and may be part of the conspiracy of evil working for their own or their patrons' nefarious ends. Others who seem to be foes, however, could be well-intentioned faithful of the Church who have been misdirected into bungling into or hindering the heroes' activities. Whatever they do, the characters must be careful and discerning in their activities.

In a Hierarchy of Conspiracy campaign, the Justiciars could discover strange cloned children with unusual powers scattered across the United States, from a mad scientist/priest's effort to clone Jesus to speed the end of times. They might also discover highly trained assassins in service to the Church who are trying to influence the world for good by doing evil. Another scenario could

involve tracking down a lone computer hacker who has discovered a terrible secret, or discovered and deciphered the Last Prophecy of Our Lady of Fatima. The Justiciars could be trying to stop the hacker from revealing a secret the world is not ready to know, or perhaps they seek to protect the hacker from the insidious Illuminati who seek the elusive information for themselves.



Recommended Archetypes:

Anointed Assassin, Blessed Non-Believer, Blood of the Lord, Cynical Veteran, Dispassionate Expert, Magus of the Lore, Modern Templar, Neophyte, Paragon Soul, Treasure Seeker, Waking Dreamer.

Recommended Optional

Rules: Human Expertise; Ordinary Heroes

URBAN GOLGOTHA

Demons are drawn to atrocity and pain. Murder, rape, genocide, or torture may not require a demon to incite them, but the suffering unleashed in places where great evil has been done attracts the hellish parasites like flies to a carcass. The presence of a demon sucks the life and wholeness from a place and a chill fills the stinking, insect-laden air. Wounds will not heal in such a place, and lights flicker ominously in the presence of the damned. The Justiciars who wield divine light from imperfect and fragile vessels are a sinful humanity's only defense against a darkness that the world at large cannot comprehend and doesn't really believe in.

The Urban Golgotha campaign is probably the main concept upon which *Against the Darkness* was founded. This campaign is a darker and more horrific experience of our own world, featuring grim visions that reveal the world as a corrupt, hopeless, and decaying place which has lost its way and belief in the holy. It is a world devoid of joy and wholeness, and lacking any sense of true justice. Inspired by grim moves about exorcisms, heavenly wars and fallen angels, and books such as those written by Stephen King and H.P. Lovecraft, this campaign reveals the dark manifestations of the demonic upon the earth. Purity and goodness are rare and precious things, to be protected wherever they are encountered.

Elaborate stories in this campaign may take a back seat to building the proper atmosphere, and Game Masters would be well advised to pay careful attention to the section on running a horror adventure. In this campaign,

commands you, who humbled Himself, becoming obedient even unto death, to save our race from the perdition wrought by your envy, who founded His Church upon a firm rock, declaring

that the gates of hell should never prevail against her, and that He would remain with her all days, even to end of the world. The sacred mystery of the cross † commands you

description and ambience are all important and GMs may wish to look into other products that could help establish such a feel. Descriptions of bullet-ridden hallways, garbage on the street, occult symbols scrawled in obscene graffiti, bloodstained fetishes, and pungent smells could all be useful in establishing the proper mood. Games are likely to focus more on suspense, horror, mystery, and exploration of the unknown. There will be more quests to secure and safeguard forbidden knowledge, or to recover and search through the mysteries of ancient tomes or riddles than there will be raging firefights with the minions of evil. Game Masters running an Urban Golgotha campaign should borrow liberally from the most disturbing parts of the most terrifying horror fiction that they have encountered.

Adventure Ideas: In this campaign type, the characters may be freeing a possessed innocent or helpless community from the clutches of the demonic. To do this they may need to search ancient tomes and legends to reveal the secrets that will turn the tide in their favor and reveal to them the true identity of what they are up against.

Justiciars might venture into crumbling, gang-infested housing projects to track down and defeat an Asian raksha who holds the gang and community in its horrific grasp, unleashed by a disastrous and ill-conceived ritual. They could also be called to a mass grave in war-torn Sudan which has become the scene of brutal murders and mysterious happenings. International aid workers and forensic teams sent to identify the dead are plagued with further murders and creeping insanity, bringing the

secular authorities to their wits' end. The culprit could be possessing spirits, demons, or undead carrion eaters, but that is for the heroes to discover. Another adventure could be at the site of brutal murders and horrific accidents on a demon-haunted oil rig. The rig just happens to be built above the location of a Spanish galleon that sank carrying a cursed Aztec treasure, and the drilling has unleashed something horrible. A further opportunity could come from the discovery of something horrible in an archeological dig in Antarctica, dating back to some Antediluvian evil.

Recommended Character Archetypes: Blessed Non-Believer, Cynical Veteran, Devil Haunted, Dispassionate Expert, Neophyte, Paragon Soul, Sacred Hunter, Waking Dreamer

Recommended Optional Rules: Holy/Unholy Ground, Fading of the Light.

NEPHILIM CAMPAIGN

“When men began to multiply upon the earth and daughters were born to them, the sons of heaven, the Nephilim, saw how beautiful the daughters of man were, and so they took for their wives as many of them as they chose.”

From these unions a race of mighty humans rose in the earth, and this is the idea behind the Nephilim campaign. These are the most powerful and influential humans to walk the earth, exhibiting superhuman powers of strength, intelligence, and/or charismatic persuasion. This is a world inhabited by powerful psychics, reality-bending mages, angels fallen to earth, bizarre experiments, genetic manipulations, and repentant demons. Unlike the frail protagonists of an Urban Golgotha campaign, these heroes are powerful enough to go toe to toe with demons and win.

A Nephilim campaign has more than its share of demons, ravenous undead, and amazing powers and this is the focus of the campaign. Obvious sources of inspiration here are movies and comics of fallen angels, repentant demons, and mighty relics found by heroic archeologists. Humor and action may, but don't necessarily have to, replace the grim horror of other campaigns and, if the game begins to drag, the GM may wish to have something attack or blow up to start the action going again

Heroes of the Nephilim campaign are larger than life and should probably be more powerful than typical Justiciars. GMs may wish to grant additional points during character creation to simulate this. (see Variant Characters, page 41).



along with all the mysteries of Christian faith. † The blood of martyrs and the devout prayers of all holy men and women command † you. Therefore, accursed dragon and every diabolical

legion, we adjure you by the living † God, the true † God, by the holy † God, to cease deluding human creatures. Begone, Satan, father and master of lies, enemy of man's welfare

Adventure Ideas: In a Nephilim Campaign Justiciars could be demon-hunters that are quite infamous in Hell for their effectiveness and place in the conflict. Such a campaign could feature gateways to Hell that have been discovered in ancient archeological sites, or conflict with demons who have been summoned and are behind the chaos of world events. Other situations could be creatures of myth and legend that are actually ancient or alien terrors the characters must face and defeat, or evil necromancers who have risen from the dead and seek to possess a fresh body to regain life and again enjoy all of the pleasures of living. Perhaps the Justiciars face a secret society of vampires, demons, or alien-serving disciples that is responsible for many of the inexplicable occurrences of history. Perhaps the campaign revolves around the finding of a great treasure, such as the Ark of the Covenant, or Pandora's Box. Just about any



legend that sparks the GM's imagination can be used in the Nephilim Campaign.

Recommended Character Archetypes: Blessed Non-Believer, Blood of the Lord, Cynical Veteran, Devil Haunted, Earth-chained Angel, Magus of the Lore, Neophyte, Paragon Soul, Repentant Demon, Sacred Hunter, Treasure Seeker.

Recommended Optional Rules: Defended by Monsters; Epic Heroes; Highly Skilled and Fully Loaded

Optional Rules:

Variant Characters:

Higher- and Lower-Powered Games

You're a tough, battle-hardened champion of the divine, facing down demons that would send ordinary men and women screaming to their deaths. You're good with your fists, deadly with the .45 Browning you wear under your cassock, and your faith shelters you in times of trouble, letting you command the rain and the wind to do God's bidding.

Or maybe not.

Maybe you're a 13-year-old girl who's just seen her parents torn apart by a *wendigo*, or you are a drunk priest who must suffer through a crisis of faith, assailed by a dark spirit. On the other hand, you might be a fallen angel with a flaming sword and skin that can survive small arms fire who seeks bloody vengeance on the forces of Hell. Depending on the type of game you want to play, your heroes might vary greatly in power. Some character-point "benchmarks" and their implications on the campaign are given below.

Ordinary Heroes

These characters have 8 build points. If using random character generation, players should roll d4 and add that to the starting value of 1 for each Attribute. Attributes can be 1, or even in extreme cases, 0. A paraplegic demon hunter, an insane psychic rescued from a cruel asylum, or a reprogrammed cultist who hates God for letting him down are all examples of characters that might have a 0 in 1 Attribute. Characters aren't likely to survive their first encounter with a major demon, and even a minor demon (or evil, gun-toting human) can wreak havoc on an unprepared team. Don't think of heroic tales, instead think of suburbanites battling vampires, witches, or zombies. Bring plenty of replacement character sheets – you will need them

Heroes

Use the standard character creation methods: 10 build points or d6 added to the starting value of 1 for each Attribute. Minimum Attributes are usually 2, but can be 1 if the player's character concept requires weakness in a specific Attribute. Characters can survive encounters with minor demons with a little luck, but careless tactics can spell doom. Justiciars can face major supernatural powers, but death and insanity are very real threats, and no major demon is ever slain without some great, dramatic sacrifice. A handful of heroes die or suffer crippling

Give place to Christ, in whom you found none of your works. Give way to the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church, which Christ Himself purchased with His blood.. Lord Jesus

Christ, who said: “Ask, and you shall receive, seek, and you shall find, knock, and it shall be opened to you”, we beg you to heed our prayers, and grant of your divine charity, that we may

injury each adventure, but some survive, to train their If you want a more “superheroic” or cinematic game, you can add a couple of build points to the starting number. Twelve points is recommended for high-powered action-oriented games, producing characters above the norm, but with enough weaknesses for the heroes to remain interesting and occasionally vulnerable. You can also increase the number of Skill Points, creating any level of game that feels right.

Epic Heroes

These have 15 (or even more) build points to spend during character creation. If using random generation, roll 1d8 and add to the starting value of 1 for each Attribute. Characters may or may not be human and can include fallen angels, repentant demons, advanced psychics, and mutants, homunculi, or cyborgs. If your players come up with a concept and you approve, include it in the story. Minor demons aren’t a real threat to the heroes, though they can still disgust and disturb, and threaten loved ones and allies. Fights with minor demons could quickly become a game of “can you top this?” as the various players try to out do each other, to see whose character can rack up the most (or coolest) kills. You can throw major demons as well as world-shaking plots, cults, and conspiracies into the game on a regular basis and expect the heroes to survive, mostly intact.

Take a look at the Nephilim Campaign (see page 40) for tips on running this kind of game.

Always the Right Tool

A Justiciar with the Combat Skill can attempt to produce any weapon needed, even if that seems to result in pulling it out of nowhere. This is a Combat task of Wondrous difficulty, and has no limit to the number of times it can be used in a scene.

Defended by Monsters

If any Justiciars are not fully human, the Game Master might have to explain how normal humanity responds to the unnatural things in their midst. One option is to simply never pursue the issue; after an initial moment of shock, the civilians they defend simply accept the Justiciars without question or horror, despite them having 20-foot wingspans or being wreathed in cold blue fire. Another option is to require that the supernatural characters carry magical devices and relics that grant bonuses to their Cunning Skill for the purposes of concealing what they truly are.

replacements in the fine art of devil-slaying.

Fading of the Light

Hunting demons is a horrific experience for even the most faithful soul. Very few Justiciars, even those who survive a demon’s teeth and claws, last more than a few years in service; most commit suicide or go mad after only a handful of missions. Success in combat in the heat of the moment can still leave a person vulnerable to post-traumatic stress later, when there is time to reflect.

If you choose to use this optional rule, have each Justiciar make a Moderate Fidelis roll (or other difficulty, at the GM’s discretion) at the conclusion of each adventure. Failure means that the horrors the person has seen affected his or her mind, and the Justiciar suffers one point of Fidelis damage. A word of warning: this could reduce the effective lifespan of a character, and may result in less powerful characters in the long term.

Highly Skilled and Fully Loaded

Game Masters running a higher-power game might decide that during character generation all Skills *and* Miracles cost only a single point. This means you will likely have heroes with lots more raw firepower, so be careful. Or not! This rule is perfect for a Nephilim campaign games (see page 40), but might be inappropriate for a lower-key psychological horror game.

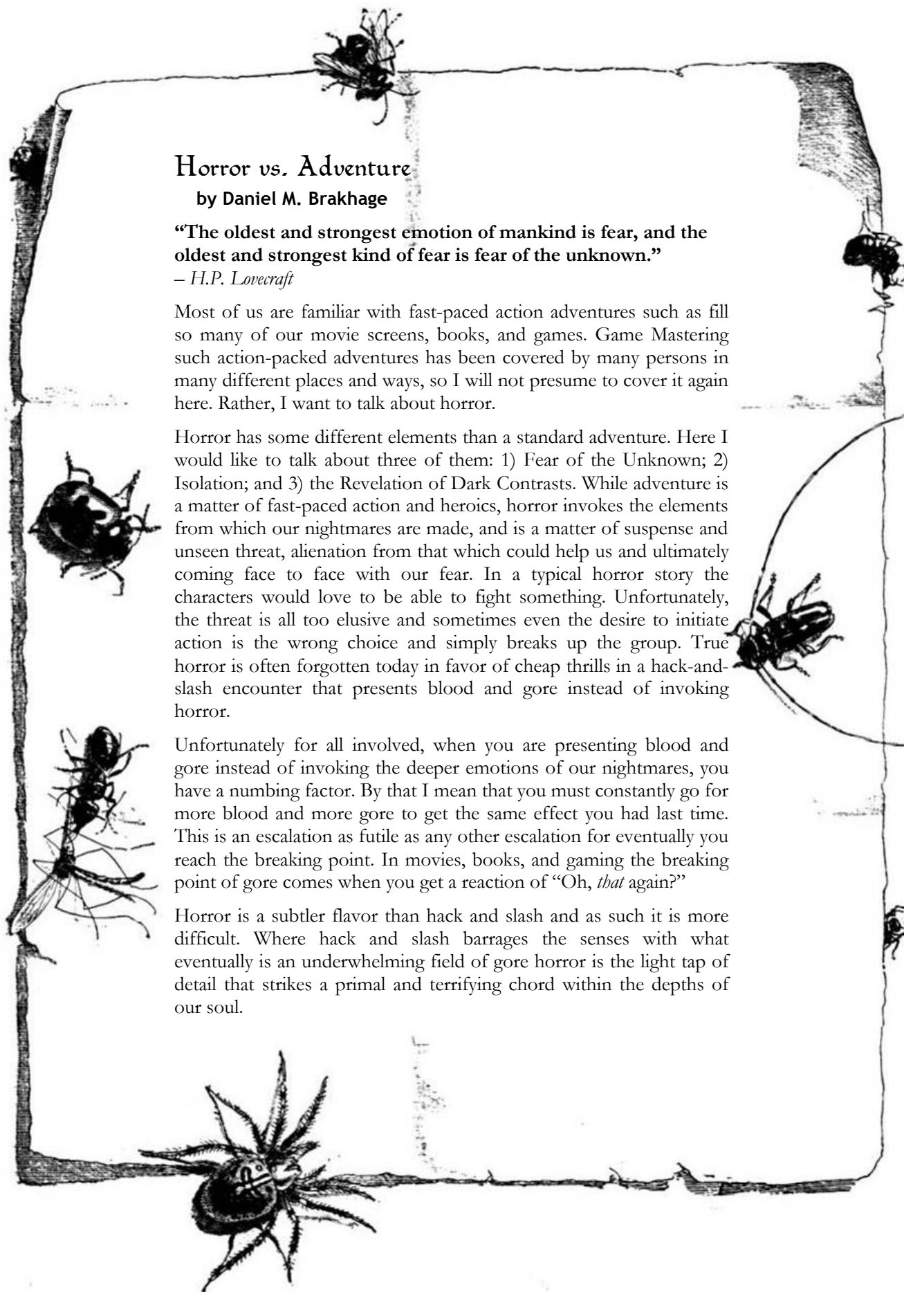
Holy/Unholy Ground

A Justiciar who is on hallowed ground receives +1 to +3 (GM’s discretion) on all rolls. Conversely, on ground that is specifically unholy, Justiciars receive -1 to -3. At the GM’s discretion demons or unholy creatures can receive penalties on holy ground and bonuses on unholy ground.

Human Expertise

Characters in some campaign could be “ordinary humans” who are not able to perform Miracles. If you choose to use this option, inform the players at character creation. Rather than receiving a d8 Resolution Die, they can instead receive a third d6 Resolution Die and an additional 15 Skill Points to start, which can be spent on acquiring Skills and specializations or improving Attributes. This makes characters better trained, but with less “raw power” to bring to bear. This can be an ideal option for an espionage-oriented campaign, for instance.

ever love you with all our heart, word and deed, and never cease to praise you. Help us, O Lord, always to love and revere your holy name, for you never cease to guide those whom you have firmly established in your love; who live and reign forever and ever. Amen



Horror vs. Adventure

by Daniel M. Brakhage

“The oldest and strongest emotion of mankind is fear, and the oldest and strongest kind of fear is fear of the unknown.”

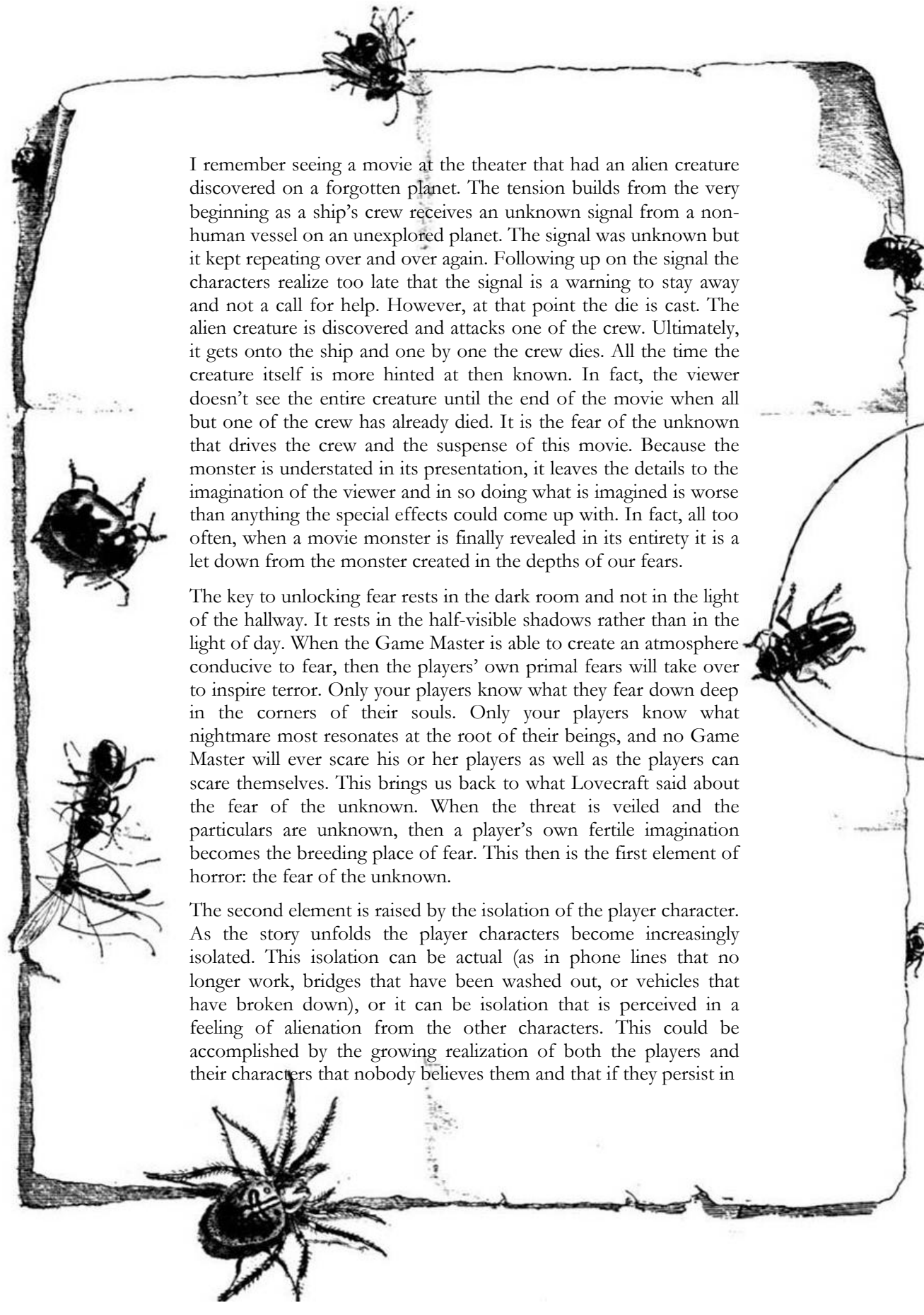
– H.P. Lovecraft

Most of us are familiar with fast-paced action adventures such as fill so many of our movie screens, books, and games. Game Mastering such action-packed adventures has been covered by many persons in many different places and ways, so I will not presume to cover it again here. Rather, I want to talk about horror.

Horror has some different elements than a standard adventure. Here I would like to talk about three of them: 1) Fear of the Unknown; 2) Isolation; and 3) the Revelation of Dark Contrasts. While adventure is a matter of fast-paced action and heroics, horror invokes the elements from which our nightmares are made, and is a matter of suspense and unseen threat, alienation from that which could help us and ultimately coming face to face with our fear. In a typical horror story the characters would love to be able to fight something. Unfortunately, the threat is all too elusive and sometimes even the desire to initiate action is the wrong choice and simply breaks up the group. True horror is often forgotten today in favor of cheap thrills in a hack-and-slash encounter that presents blood and gore instead of invoking horror.

Unfortunately for all involved, when you are presenting blood and gore instead of invoking the deeper emotions of our nightmares, you have a numbing factor. By that I mean that you must constantly go for more blood and more gore to get the same effect you had last time. This is an escalation as futile as any other escalation for eventually you reach the breaking point. In movies, books, and gaming the breaking point of gore comes when you get a reaction of “Oh, *that* again?”

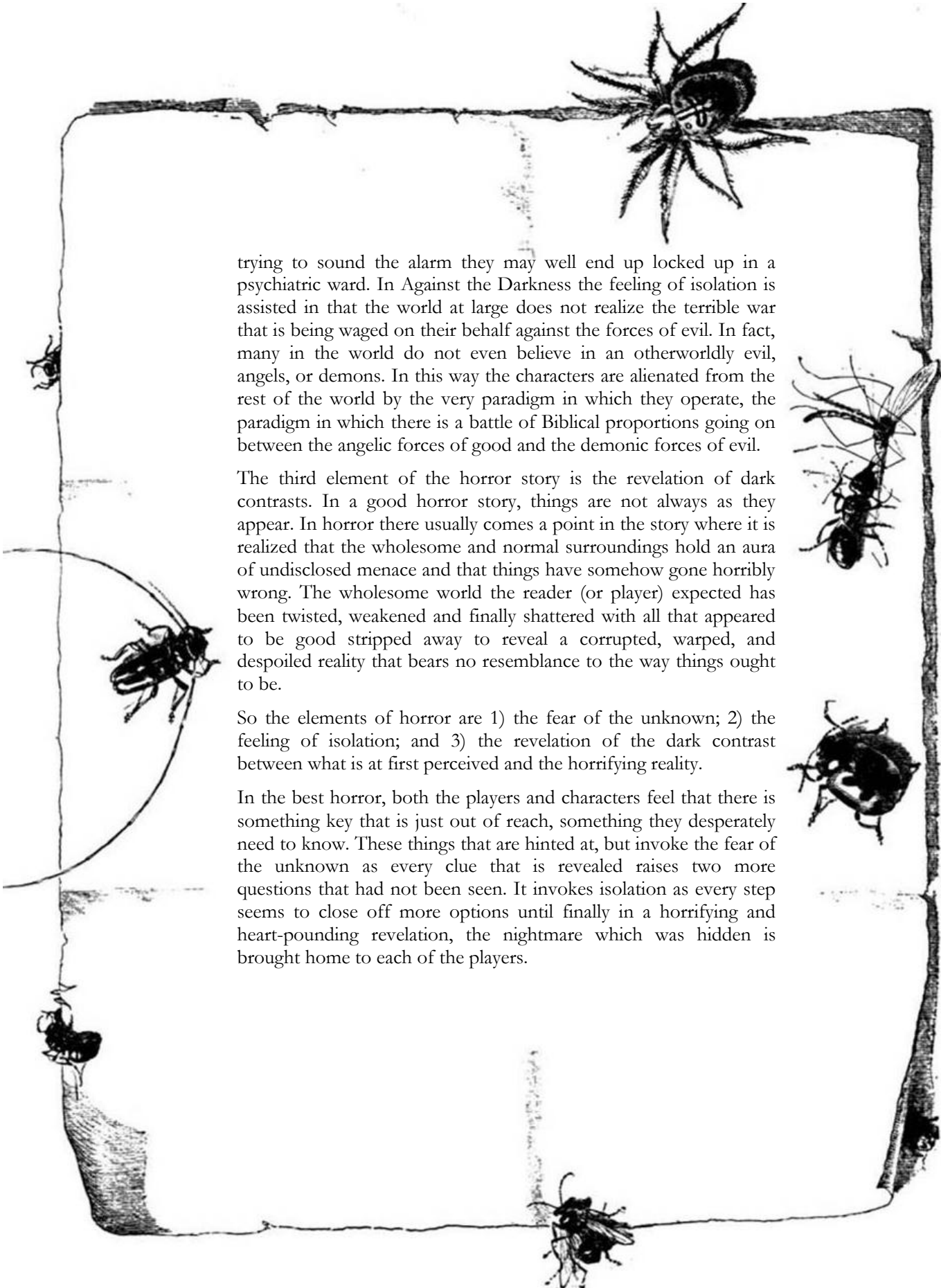
Horror is a subtler flavor than hack and slash and as such it is more difficult. Where hack and slash barrages the senses with what eventually is an underwhelming field of gore horror is the light tap of detail that strikes a primal and terrifying chord within the depths of our soul.



I remember seeing a movie at the theater that had an alien creature discovered on a forgotten planet. The tension builds from the very beginning as a ship's crew receives an unknown signal from a non-human vessel on an unexplored planet. The signal was unknown but it kept repeating over and over again. Following up on the signal the characters realize too late that the signal is a warning to stay away and not a call for help. However, at that point the die is cast. The alien creature is discovered and attacks one of the crew. Ultimately, it gets onto the ship and one by one the crew dies. All the time the creature itself is more hinted at than known. In fact, the viewer doesn't see the entire creature until the end of the movie when all but one of the crew has already died. It is the fear of the unknown that drives the crew and the suspense of this movie. Because the monster is understated in its presentation, it leaves the details to the imagination of the viewer and in so doing what is imagined is worse than anything the special effects could come up with. In fact, all too often, when a movie monster is finally revealed in its entirety it is a let down from the monster created in the depths of our fears.

The key to unlocking fear rests in the dark room and not in the light of the hallway. It rests in the half-visible shadows rather than in the light of day. When the Game Master is able to create an atmosphere conducive to fear, then the players' own primal fears will take over to inspire terror. Only your players know what they fear down deep in the corners of their souls. Only your players know what nightmare most resonates at the root of their beings, and no Game Master will ever scare his or her players as well as the players can scare themselves. This brings us back to what Lovecraft said about the fear of the unknown. When the threat is veiled and the particulars are unknown, then a player's own fertile imagination becomes the breeding place of fear. This then is the first element of horror: the fear of the unknown.

The second element is raised by the isolation of the player character. As the story unfolds the player characters become increasingly isolated. This isolation can be actual (as in phone lines that no longer work, bridges that have been washed out, or vehicles that have broken down), or it can be isolation that is perceived in a feeling of alienation from the other characters. This could be accomplished by the growing realization of both the players and their characters that nobody believes them and that if they persist in



trying to sound the alarm they may well end up locked up in a psychiatric ward. In *Against the Darkness* the feeling of isolation is assisted in that the world at large does not realize the terrible war that is being waged on their behalf against the forces of evil. In fact, many in the world do not even believe in an otherworldly evil, angels, or demons. In this way the characters are alienated from the rest of the world by the very paradigm in which they operate, the paradigm in which there is a battle of Biblical proportions going on between the angelic forces of good and the demonic forces of evil.

The third element of the horror story is the revelation of dark contrasts. In a good horror story, things are not always as they appear. In horror there usually comes a point in the story where it is realized that the wholesome and normal surroundings hold an aura of undisclosed menace and that things have somehow gone horribly wrong. The wholesome world the reader (or player) expected has been twisted, weakened and finally shattered with all that appeared to be good stripped away to reveal a corrupted, warped, and despoiled reality that bears no resemblance to the way things ought to be.

So the elements of horror are 1) the fear of the unknown; 2) the feeling of isolation; and 3) the revelation of the dark contrast between what is at first perceived and the horrifying reality.

In the best horror, both the players and characters feel that there is something key that is just out of reach, something they desperately need to know. These things that are hinted at, but invoke the fear of the unknown as every clue that is revealed raises two more questions that had not been seen. It invokes isolation as every step seems to close off more options until finally in a horrifying and heart-pounding revelation, the nightmare which was hidden is brought home to each of the players.

Appendix I: Sample Characters and Archetypes

People and Places of the Church

In the world of *Against the Darkness*, God has chosen to work primarily through the Catholic Church which is said to have a direct line of authority and succession from the church founded by Jesus Christ through his disciple Saint Peter. The power of the Justiciar is granted by God expressly for the purpose of defeating evil. God alone knows why some Justiciars have some miracles and not others but in theory they all have their purpose and together form a single unity to combat the demonic forces of this present darkness.

Pope – The Pope is the earthly head of the Catholic Church. His primary residence is inside the Vatican. He holds the title of Bishop of Rome and presides at St. Peter's Basilica. Once elected by the Council of Cardinals a Pope serves for life. The Pope commonly dresses all in white, though his official vestments (priestly garments) may vary depending on the occasion. The Pope is referred to as "His Holiness" and addressed as "Your Holiness" or "Most Holy Father."

Cardinal – Cardinals as a group are the chief advisors of the Pope. They may be bishops or archbishops, or members of one of the Tribunals, Councils, Commissions or other groups responsible for the government of the Catholic Church. Cardinals were originally important leaders of churches in Rome, and so anyone named as a Cardinal is given a (now largely honorary) title as a priest or bishop of a Roman church or diocese. There are about 180 Cardinals, although the number varies. Cardinals are named by the Pope and serve for life; in turn, one of the primary responsibilities of the Cardinals as a group is to name a new Pope when necessary. Cardinals commonly dress in black with red trim, but on ceremonial occasions wear scarlet and white. A Cardinal is referred to as "His Eminence" and addressed as "Your Eminence" or "Your Lordship," which is more common in Britain.

Bishop – A bishop oversees a diocese (or bishopric) made up of several parishes (local areas). There are about 2,500 dioceses in the world. An archbishop presides over an archdiocese, which is usually a

populous or historically significant area. Generally an archbishop also has authority over several bishops and their regions, although this is not always the case. The church of a bishop or an archbishop is a cathedral. Bishops commonly dress in black robes or suits but have ceremonial robes of purple and white, or sometimes white and gold. A bishop is referred to as "His Excellency" or "The Most Reverend Bishop So-and-so," and addressed as "Your Excellency" or (again in the British manner) "Your Grace."

Priest – Local churches have a priest (or more than one) to see to the needs of the parishioners – the people of the parish (local area). The priest is responsible for celebrating Mass (the Catholic ritual of worship and Holy Communion) on a daily basis, hearing confessions, and looking after the welfare of their people. Priests commonly dress in black robes or suits; vestments vary depending on the ceremony or season. Priests are sometimes referred to as "Reverend," but are usually referred to and addressed as "Father."

Monk – A monk is a man living as part of a group in a separated community, following the rules of a particular religious order (established group) and taking vows, usually of poverty, chastity, and obedience. They are usually referred to and addressed as "Brother" unless they are also priests. They may live in a monastery or an abbey. Friars are very similar to monks, except that monks generally live a life of contemplation and prayer, whereas friars are active in service to the outside community.

Nuns and Sisters – These terms for religious women are often used interchangeably. A nun lives a religious, contemplative life as part of a group in a separated (or cloistered) community. This community is strictly regulated; many nuns never set foot outside their cloister and any visitors must be approved in advance. A sister serves the outside community, perhaps helping the poor, teaching, ministering to the sick, etc. Both sisters and nuns follow the rules of some particular religious order (established group) and take vows, usually of poverty, chastity, and obedience. They may live in a convent, abbey, or monastery. Both nuns and sisters are usually addressed as "Sister."

AGAINST The DARKNESS

Character Name: Father Thomas Brodie

Position: _____

Archetype: Typical Starting Character

Father Brodie is a fit, brown-haired, white male in his early 30s. He often plays up the stereotype of the California beach bum to put other people off balance, but is far smarter than he appears and is a dedicated cleric. Brodie's Miracles are often accompanied by purple lightning and the scent of incense and sea foam.

ATTRIBUTES (Skills and Miracles: ‡ indicates those tasks which could be opposed)

Corpus 4	d6	Mentus 3	d4	Spiritus 3	d6	Fidelis 4	d8
Combat ‡	3	Animation		Cunning ‡	2	Discernment ‡	1
Endurance ‡		Genius		Divination		Divine Intervention	
Mechanics ‡	1	Hard Science	3	Ghostliness ‡		Ecological Dominance	
Pyrokinesis ‡		Investigation ‡	4	Medicine ‡		Exorcism ‡	3
Raw Physicality ‡		Knowledge	3	Psychology ‡		Holy Aura	1
Speed ‡	2	Occultism ‡		Telekinesis ‡		Sacrificial Healing	
Transformation ‡		Technical ‡		Wealth ‡		Stewardship ‡	
		Telepathy ‡				Wrath ‡	
		Translation	2				

SPECIALIZATIONS:

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AGAINST The DARKNESS

Character Name: Jannat the Coptic

Position: _____

Archetype: Experienced Character

Raised by a secret order in Northern Egypt, Jannat has been trained her whole life to slay monsters. Her muscular, brown body is covered with ritual scars which supposedly offer her some protection from evil. In battle she is a terrifying force; she chants an eerie song and uses her twin maces to bloody effect. She is far more agile than her size would suggest; ballet is a secret passion for her. No one has ever told her that she sobs uncontrollably during battle, and she refuses to acknowledge this in herself. Her Miracles are accompanied by the scent of myrrh and the sound of a keening wind. Jannat has earned 34 Skill Points in play.

ATTRIBUTES (Skills and Miracles: ‡ indicates those tasks which could be opposed)

Corpus 5	d8	Mentus 4	d6	Spiritus 2	d4	Fidelis 5	d6
Combat ‡	7	Animation		Cunning ‡	2	Discernment ‡	
Endurance ‡	5	Genius		Divination		Divine Intervention	
Mechanics ‡	1	Hard Science	1	Ghostliness ‡		Ecological Dominance	
Pyrokinesis ‡		Investigation ‡	7	Medicine ‡	1	Exorcism ‡	
Raw Physicality ‡	4	Knowledge	3	Psychology ‡	2	Holy Aura	
Speed ‡	6	Occultism ‡		Telekinesis ‡		Sacrificial Healing	
Transformation ‡		Technical ‡		Wealth ‡	1	Stewardship ‡	
		Telepathy ‡				Wrath ‡	
		Translation	5				

SPECIALIZATIONS:

Hand to hand combat	1	Missing persons cases	2
Twin Coptic maces	1		

AGAINST The DARKNESS

Character Name: Angela Danvers

Position: Episcopal priest

Archetype: Typical Starting Character

Angela grew up in a religious family. She took up martial arts in high school to keep herself active and kept up her practice even after she finished college. Angela planned to go into business, but a month-long trip to an impoverished part of Central America changed her mind. She realized that many people in the world needed help only the church could provide, and she instead became a minister. A tense situation with a young boy opened her eyes to the reality of supernatural evil in the world and she discovered that she herself has a part to play in opposing it. Her prayers for miracles often sound like chanting or music instead of mere speech.

ATTRIBUTES (Skills and Miracles: ‡ indicates those tasks which could be opposed)

Corpus 4	d6	Mentus 3	d4	Spiritus 3	d6	Fidelis 4	d8
Combat ‡	4	Animation		Cunning ‡	3	Discernment ‡	
Endurance ‡		Genius		Divination		Divine Intervention	
Mechanics ‡		Hard Science		Ghostliness ‡		Ecological Dominance	
Pyrokinesis ‡		Investigation ‡	3	Medicine ‡		Exorcism ‡	4
Raw Physicality ‡		Knowledge		Psychology ‡	2	Holy Aura	
Speed ‡	2	Occultism ‡		Telekinesis ‡		Sacrificial Healing	
Transformation ‡		Technical ‡	2	Wealth ‡		Stewardship ‡	
		Telepathy ‡				Wrath ‡	3
		Translation					

SPECIALIZATIONS:

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AGAINST The DARKNESS

Character Name: Pietro Venditto

Position: Catholic priest

Archetype: Experienced Character

Growing up in Rome, young Pietro was immersed in the Catholic Church. He felt its call on him at an early age, and went from altar boy to seminary student to priest. His stubborn faith and unrelenting opposition to any evil brought him to the notice of his superiors in the Vatican, who quietly steered him to the Justiciars. Pietro's eyes were opened by what he learned about the battle against evil, but his faith was rewarded when he discovered that he, too, had been gifted by God for the battle. The past years have changed him from earnest but naïve, to experienced and determined, a warrior of faith. Golden light usually characterizes his miracles. Venditto has earned 39 Skill Points in play.

ATTRIBUTES (Skills and Miracles: ‡ indicates those tasks which could be opposed)

Corpus 4	d4	Mentus 4	d6	Spiritus 3	d6	Fidelis 5	d8
Combat ‡	4	Animation		Cunning ‡	2	Discernment ‡	1
Endurance ‡		Genius		Divination		Divine Intervention	
Mechanics ‡	3	Hard Science	3	Ghostliness ‡		Ecological Dominance	3
Pyrokinesis ‡		Investigation ‡	5	Medicine ‡	4	Exorcism ‡	2
Raw Physicality ‡		Knowledge	4	Psychology ‡	1	Holy Aura	6
Speed ‡	2	Occultism ‡		Telekinesis ‡		Sacrificial Healing	2
Transformation ‡		Technical ‡		Wealth ‡	2	Stewardship ‡	2
		Telepathy ‡				Wrath ‡	
		Translation	1				

SPECIALIZATIONS:

AGAINST The DARKNESS

Character Name: _____

Position: _____

Archetype: Anointed Assassin

A specially trained soldier who kills for the good of the Church, the character is stealthy, mysterious, and amazingly deadly, and extremely clandestine. Only a handful of high-level Vatican officials even know of this deadly killer's existence, and even fewer can call upon his services. Roleplay this character as a stylish killer straight out of a gun-fu movie, complete with thousand-dollar suits, customized handguns, and high-tech gadgets; speak very little, but say something meaningful every time you open your mouth. Or go the other route and accept the challenge of playing a faithless, jocular killer working for a somber secret society.

ATTRIBUTES (Skills and Miracles: ‡ indicates those tasks which could be opposed)

Corpus 5	d6	Mentus 3	d6	Spiritus 4	d8	Fidelis 2	d4
Combat ‡	4	Animation		Cunning ‡	5	Discernment ‡	
Endurance ‡		Genius		Divination		Divine Intervention	
Mechanics ‡	2	Hard Science		Ghostliness ‡	4	Ecological Dominance	
Pyrokinesis ‡		Investigation ‡	3	Medicine ‡		Exorcism ‡	
Raw Physicality ‡		Knowledge	1	Psychology ‡		Holy Aura	
Speed ‡	3	Occultism ‡		Telekinesis ‡	1	Sacrificial Healing	
Transformation ‡		Technical ‡		Wealth ‡		Stewardship ‡	
		Telepathy ‡				Wrath ‡	
		Translation	2				

SPECIALIZATIONS:

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AGAINST The DARKNESS

Character Name: _____

Position: _____

Archetype: Blessed Non-Believer

While the Blessed Non-Believer may work with the Justiciars for the good of humanity, he or she is not part of the Catholic Church and may or may not even share basic Christian beliefs with the other characters. The character doesn't know the Vatican's power structure, internal politics, or the intricacies of its rituals; on the other hand the character brings fresh eyes and an interesting new perspective to any problem. Play up this character's "exotic" spiritual heritage, strange (to the other Justiciars) beliefs, and the possible rivalry or prejudice between the character and the Church.

ATTRIBUTES (Skills and Miracles: ‡ indicates those tasks which could be opposed)

Corpus 3	d4	Mentus 3	d6	Spiritus 3	d6	Fidelis 5	d8
Combat ‡		Animation		Cunning ‡		Discernment ‡	2
Endurance ‡		Genius		Divination		Divine Intervention	
Mechanics ‡		Hard Science		Ghostliness ‡		Ecological Dominance	
Pyrokinesis ‡		Investigation ‡	1	Medicine ‡		Exorcism ‡	
Raw Physicality ‡		Knowledge	2	Psychology ‡	2	Holy Aura	4
Speed ‡	1	Occultism ‡		Telekinesis ‡		Sacrificial Healing	
Transformation ‡		Technical ‡		Wealth ‡		Stewardship ‡	
		Telepathy ‡				Wrath ‡	
		Translation	2			(one Miracle of choice)	5

SPECIALIZATIONS:

AGAINST the DARKNESS

Character Name: _____

Position: _____

Archetype: **Blood of the Lord**

The Blood of the Lord can be a direct descendent of Jesus Christ, the product of a conjectured secret union between the Christ and Mary Magdalene, or a descendent of the ancient Nephilim. The character may be completely unaware of his or her divine heritage, and unprepared for a world of demons and angels. Alternately a character may have been trained from birth to pursue supernatural evil or groomed to take a leadership position in the Church. Personalities can range from confused “civilians” with powers they fear and can’t understand to arrogant princelings who believe the world is theirs by right of divine blood.

ATTRIBUTES (Skills and Miracles: ‡ indicates those tasks which could be opposed)

Corpus 3	d4	Mentus 3	d6	Spiritus 3	d6	Fidelis 5	d8
Combat ‡		Animation		Cunning ‡	2	Discernment ‡	
Endurance ‡		Genius		Divination		Divine Intervention	
Mechanics ‡		Hard Science		Ghostliness ‡		Ecological Dominance	
Pyrokinesis ‡		Investigation ‡		Medicine ‡	3	Exorcism ‡	2
Raw Physicality ‡		Knowledge	4	Psychology ‡		Holy Aura	3
Speed ‡		Occultism ‡		Telekinesis ‡		Sacrificial Healing	3
Transformation ‡		Technical ‡		Wealth ‡		Stewardship ‡	
		Telepathy ‡		(pick Psychology		Wrath ‡	
		Translation	2	or Wealth)	3		

SPECIALIZATIONS:

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AGAINST the DARKNESS

Character Name: _____

Position: _____

Archetype: **Callous Inquisitor**

The Callous Inquisitor cares little for the individual—only Truth matters. Whether it is a truth of the Faith or the truth of who committed a murder does not matter to the Inquisitor, just the relentless pursuit of absolutes. The Inquisitor is a master at questioning people, learning information they would rather keep well hidden. Ferreting out secret sins or names of unknown demons are equally of interest. Inquisitors can be cold and unfeeling, but at their best, they are truly gifted investigators, capable of solving any mystery.

ATTRIBUTES (Skills and Miracles: ‡ indicates those tasks which could be opposed)

Corpus 2	d6	Mentus 5	d6	Spiritus 4	d4	Fidelis 3	d8
Combat ‡	2	Animation		Cunning ‡	4	Discernment ‡	2
Endurance ‡		Genius		Divination		Divine Intervention	
Mechanics ‡		Hard Science		Ghostliness ‡		Ecological Dominance	
Pyrokinesis ‡		Investigation ‡	7	Medicine ‡		Exorcism ‡	
Raw Physicality ‡		Knowledge		Psychology ‡	2	Holy Aura	
Speed ‡		Occultism ‡		Telekinesis ‡		Sacrificial Healing	
Transformation ‡		Technical ‡		Wealth ‡		Stewardship ‡	
		Telepathy ‡				Wrath ‡	4
		Translation	2				

SPECIALIZATIONS:

One Investigation 1

Specialization of choice

AGAINST The DARKNESS

Character Name: _____

Position: _____

Archetype: Devil Haunted

The Devil Haunted character knows firsthand the pain and suffering the Damned can cause. At one time, the character was possessed by a demon and the experience left deep scars. It also left the haunted character with the ability to fight back against supernatural evil. A Devil Haunted character can be somber or even psychologically damaged, but is truly dedicated to ridding the world of the evil that stole a portion of his or her life. The haunted character depends on his or her supernatural powers, but also fears their consequences and spiritual implications. The thought frequently occurs: is the demon taint really gone?

ATTRIBUTES (Skills and Miracles: ‡ indicates those tasks which could be opposed)

Corpus 5	d8	Mentus 3	d4	Spiritus 3	d6	Fidelis 3	d6
Combat ‡	5	Animation		Cunning ‡		Discernment ‡	
Endurance ‡		Genius		Divination		Divine Intervention	
Mechanics ‡	2	Hard Science	2	Ghostliness ‡		Ecological Dominance	
Pyrokinesis ‡		Investigation ‡		Medicine ‡		Exorcism ‡	
Raw Physicality ‡		Knowledge		Psychology ‡		Holy Aura	
Speed ‡	2	Occultism ‡		Telekinesis ‡		Sacrificial Healing	
Transformation ‡		Technical ‡	2	Wealth ‡		Stewardship ‡	
		Telepathy ‡				Wrath ‡	
		Translation	1				

pick 2 Miracles at 4 each

SPECIALIZATIONS:

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AGAINST The DARKNESS

Character Name: _____

Position: _____

Archetype: Dispassionate Expert

After a half dozen possessed children, the details all start to blur together. The Dispassionate Expert is a healer, the occult is a disease, and bedside manner is not important. The Expert knows the situation, knows the countermeasures, speaks the rituals, and sets down to work without a wasted word or obvious display of emotion. Behind a cold-hearted demeanor, though, the Dispassionate Expert is a person of great faith and compassion; the work is just too pressing to spend time on any distraction.

ATTRIBUTES (Skills and Miracles: ‡ indicates those tasks which could be opposed)

Corpus 3	d6	Mentus 4	d6	Spiritus 2	d4	Fidelis 5	d8
Combat ‡		Animation		Cunning ‡		Discernment ‡	
Endurance ‡		Genius		Divination		Divine Intervention	
Mechanics ‡		Hard Science	2	Ghostliness ‡		Ecological Dominance	
Pyrokinesis ‡		Investigation ‡	3	Medicine ‡		Exorcism ‡	7
Raw Physicality ‡		Knowledge	3	Psychology ‡	1	Holy Aura	
Speed ‡		Occultism ‡		Telekinesis ‡		Sacrificial Healing	
Transformation ‡		Technical ‡		Wealth ‡		Stewardship ‡	
		Telepathy ‡				Wrath ‡	
		Translation	5				

SPECIALIZATIONS:

Exorcising one particular
type of demon 1

AGAINST the DARKNESS

Character Name: _____

Position: _____

Archetype: Magus of the Lore

Very few modern people know the secrets of true magic, but the Magus of the Lore is one of them. The Magus of the Lore is steeped in ancient mysteries and obscure philosophies, and blessed by a connection to the divine so profound that he or she can perform miracles as powerful as even the most blessed saint. Magi are keenly intelligent, deeply philosophical, and able to look at a problem from all angles, not just those that are a part of orthodox faith. To their critics, Magi of the Lore know far too much about demonology and black magic, but the Magi always counter that knowledge is a weapon never to be discarded.

ATTRIBUTES (Skills and Miracles: ‡ indicates those tasks which could be opposed)

Corpus 2	d4	Mentus 6	d8	Spiritus 3	d6	Fidelis 3	d6
Combat ‡		Animation	5	Cunning ‡	1	Discernment ‡	
Endurance ‡		Genius		Divination		Divine Intervention	
Mechanics ‡		Hard Science		Ghostliness ‡		Ecological Dominance	
Pyrokinesis ‡		Investigation ‡		Medicine ‡		Exorcism ‡	
Raw Physicality ‡		Knowledge	4	Psychology ‡		Holy Aura	
Speed ‡		Occultism ‡	5	Telekinesis ‡		Sacrificial Healing	
Transformation ‡		Technical ‡		Wealth ‡	1	Stewardship ‡	
		Telepathy ‡				Wrath ‡	
		Translation	4				

SPECIALIZATIONS:

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AGAINST the DARKNESS

Character Name: _____

Position: _____

Archetype: Modern Templar

The Modern Templar is a soldier of the Lord, a modern-day knight trained in combat, police tactics, vehicles and investigation. The Templar has a host of skills and talents at his or her disposal, and uses these gifts in service of the Vatican's aims, both publicly and covertly as needed. The Templar might work as a priest or Church bureaucrat, or may be assigned as a bodyguard to an important Church official. Duty, honor, faith and valor are the most important aspects of the Templar's character.

ATTRIBUTES (Skills and Miracles: ‡ indicates those tasks which could be opposed)

Corpus 6	d8	Mentus 2	d4	Spiritus 2	d6	Fidelis 4	d6
Combat ‡	7	Animation		Cunning ‡		Discernment ‡	
Endurance ‡	5	Genius		Divination		Divine Intervention	
Mechanics ‡	2	Hard Science		Ghostliness ‡		Ecological Dominance	
Pyrokinesis ‡		Investigation ‡	1	Medicine ‡		Exorcism ‡	
Raw Physicality ‡	4	Knowledge		Psychology ‡		Holy Aura	
Speed ‡	2	Occultism ‡		Telekinesis ‡		Sacrificial Healing	
Transformation ‡		Technical ‡		Wealth ‡		Stewardship ‡	
		Telepathy ‡				Wrath ‡	
		Translation					

SPECIALIZATIONS:

AGAINST the DARKNESS

Character Name: _____

Position: _____

Archetype: Neophyte

The Neophyte is a young cleric new to the fight against demonic evil, still untested and with conviction that sometimes wavers. The Neophyte still struggles with memories of the freer civilian life, with the new life of faith, with relatively recent vows of celibacy and obedience, and with the knowledge that demons and Hell are real, not just philosophical concepts.

ATTRIBUTES (Skills and Miracles: ‡ indicates those tasks which could be opposed)

Corpus 3	d4	Mentus 4	d6	Spiritus 3	d6	Fidelis 4	d8
Combat ‡		Animation		Cunning ‡		Discernment ‡	
Endurance ‡		Genius		Divination		Divine Intervention	
Mechanics ‡		Hard Science	4	Ghostliness ‡		Ecological Dominance	
Pyrokinesis ‡		Investigation ‡	4	Medicine ‡	3	Exorcism ‡	
Raw Physicality ‡		Knowledge	4	Psychology ‡		Holy Aura	
Speed ‡		Occultism ‡		Telekinesis ‡		Sacrificial Healing	
Transformation ‡		Technical ‡		Wealth ‡		Stewardship ‡	
		Telepathy ‡				Wrath ‡	
		Translation	5			one Miracle of choice	5

SPECIALIZATIONS:

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AGAINST the DARKNESS

Character Name: _____

Position: _____

Archetype: Sacred Hunter

The Sacred Hunter is an expert at tracking, hunting, and destroying monsters, undead, and demons of all kinds. Steeped in ancient lore, long-standing warrior traditions, and bizarre superstitious beliefs, the Sacred Hunter lives for the challenge of the hunt and the thrill of battle. The Sacred Hunter may seem a strange, anachronistic presence in the modern world, a relic of a more ancient version of the Church. However, despite a slightly medieval outlook, the Sacred Hunter is more than capable of using modern tactics and weapons in the war on evil.

ATTRIBUTES (Skills and Miracles: ‡ indicates those tasks which could be opposed)

Corpus 3	d6	Mentus 2	d4	Spiritus 3	d6	Fidelis 3	d8
Combat ‡	7	Animation		Cunning ‡	2	Discernment ‡	
Endurance ‡		Genius		Divination		Divine Intervention	
Mechanics ‡		Hard Science		Ghostliness ‡		Ecological Dominance	
Pyrokinesis ‡		Investigation ‡		Medicine ‡		Exorcism ‡	4
Raw Physicality ‡		Knowledge		Psychology ‡		Holy Aura	3
Speed ‡	2	Occultism ‡		Telekinesis ‡		Sacrificial Healing	
Transformation ‡		Technical ‡		Wealth ‡		Stewardship ‡	2
		Telepathy ‡				Wrath ‡	
		Translation					

SPECIALIZATIONS:

Fighting one form of

supernatural evil 1

AGAINST The DARKNESS

Character Name: _____

Position: _____

Archetype: Treasure Seeker

The Treasure Seeker is part archeologist, part thief, and part faithful pilgrim, seeking out relics important to the Church. A master of obscure trivia, dead languages, and the science of finding archeological reality in ancient Biblical accounts, the Treasure Seeker's motivation can range from the spiritual to the mercenary. One may be a deeply religious scholar, while another is a money-hungry thrill seeker.

ATTRIBUTES (Skills and Miracles: ‡ indicates those tasks which could be opposed)

Corpus 4	d6	Mentus 5	d8	Spiritus 3	d6	Fidelis 2	d4
Combat ‡	4	Animation		Cunning ‡	3	Discernment ‡	
Endurance ‡		Genius	2	Divination		Divine Intervention	
Mechanics ‡	2	Hard Science	3	Ghostliness ‡		Ecological Dominance	
Pyrokinesis ‡		Investigation ‡	1	Medicine ‡		Exorcism ‡	
Raw Physicality ‡		Knowledge	3	Psychology ‡		Holy Aura	
Speed ‡	2	Occultism ‡	1	Telekinesis ‡		Sacrificial Healing	
Transformation ‡		Technical ‡		Wealth ‡		Stewardship ‡	
		Telepathy ‡	1			Wrath ‡	
		Translation	4				

SPECIALIZATIONS:

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AGAINST The DARKNESS

Character Name: _____

Position: _____

Archetype: Waking Dreamer

The Waking Dreamer is plagued by an incomprehensible power that cannot be controlled. Assailed by horrible, terrifyingly enigmatic visions at random intervals, the Dreamer hears from the clergy that these dreams are revelations from God: the Dreamer is a prophet, and can hone these visions to hunt down demons. The Waking Dreamer has become a hero out of a sense of duty and isolation; the other Justiciars are the only people who understand, the only ones not afraid or disquieted (hopefully) by the Dreamer's visions. So the Dreamer hunts demons reluctantly, constantly afraid of slipping into madness.

ATTRIBUTES (Skills and Miracles: ‡ indicates those tasks which could be opposed)

Corpus 2	d4	Mentus 3	d6	Spiritus 5	d8	Fidelis 4	d6
Combat ‡		Animation		Cunning ‡	4	Discernment ‡	
Endurance ‡		Genius		Divination	7	Divine Intervention	
Mechanics ‡		Hard Science		Ghostliness ‡		Ecological Dominance	
Pyrokinesis ‡		Investigation ‡		Medicine ‡		Exorcism ‡	
Raw Physicality ‡		Knowledge	4	Psychology ‡		Holy Aura	
Speed ‡	2	Occultism ‡		Telekinesis ‡	2	Sacrificial Healing	
Transformation ‡		Technical ‡		Wealth ‡		Stewardship ‡	
		Telepathy ‡				Wrath ‡	
		Translation	2				

SPECIALIZATIONS:

AGAINST the DARKNESS

Character Name: _____

Position: _____

Archetype: Cynical Veteran

The Cynical Veteran has been at the job too long and is starting to become jaded and hard-hearted. Innocent faith has given way to black humor, personal vices, and bitterness. The Veteran is angry at the Church for showing him these horrors, at himself for wasting his life in a war against evil that can never be won, against the demons that he fights, even against the ordinary humans venal and weak enough to give the demons a foothold in the world. He might curse his superiors under his breath, break the old vows on occasion, and drink too much, but he carries on knowing the good he can still do and the threat of the enemy.

ATTRIBUTES (Skills and Miracles: ‡ indicates those tasks which could be opposed)

Corpus 4	d6	Mentus 3	d6	Spiritus 3	d4	Fidelis 5	d8
Combat ‡	3	Animation		Cunning ‡		Discernment ‡	2
Endurance ‡		Genius		Divination		Divine Intervention	3
Mechanics ‡	1	Hard Science	3	Ghostliness ‡		Ecological Dominance	
Pyrokinesis ‡		Investigation ‡	4	Medicine ‡	3	Exorcism ‡	3
Raw Physicality ‡		Knowledge	4	Psychology ‡	2	Holy Aura	
Speed ‡		Occultism ‡		Telekinesis ‡		Sacrificial Healing	
Transformation ‡		Technical ‡		Wealth ‡		Stewardship ‡	
		Telepathy ‡				Wrath ‡	3
		Translation	5				

SPECIALIZATIONS:

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AGAINST the DARKNESS

Character Name: _____

Position: _____

Archetype: Earth-chained Angel

The Earth-chained Angel is a divine power that has come to Earth for purposes of its own. Some angels willingly leave the glory of Heaven for a time to accomplish some great mission on the mortal plane, out of love or duty, or perhaps to better understand the human condition and the will of God. The Earth-chained Angel is very powerful and possesses many innate abilities. The Angel is an astoundingly beautiful winged being of light and flame who sometimes carries a flaming sword. The Angel can fly about 120 miles per hour with unlimited range and a maximum height from the ground of about one mile.

ATTRIBUTES (Skills and Miracles: ‡ indicates those tasks which could be opposed)

Corpus 4	d6	Mentus 3	d4	Spiritus 3	d6	Fidelis 4	d8
Combat ‡	7	Animation		Cunning ‡		Discernment ‡	
Endurance ‡		Genius		Divination		Divine Intervention	2
Mechanics ‡		Hard Science		Ghostliness ‡	2	Ecological Dominance	2
Pyrokinesis ‡		Investigation ‡		Medicine ‡		Exorcism ‡	
Raw Physicality ‡		Knowledge		Psychology ‡		Holy Aura	2
Speed ‡	5	Occultism ‡	1	Telekinesis ‡		Sacrificial Healing	2
Transformation ‡		Technical ‡		Wealth ‡		Stewardship ‡	
		Telepathy ‡	1			Wrath ‡	3
		Translation					

SPECIALIZATIONS:

Flaming sword 3

AGAINST the DARKNESS

Character Name: _____

Position: _____

Archetype: Paragon Soul

The Paragon Soul is a modern-day saint, perfect in word, faith, and deed. The Paragon Soul's abilities come from his or her unshakable faith and pure heart. The Paragon Soul may be a legalist, a genuinely good-hearted idealist, or a naive innocent. In any case, the Paragon Soul's effectiveness as a demon hunter may be compromised by his or her innate goodness; despite the Paragon's divine power, he or she is too good to ever truly understand evil.

ATTRIBUTES (Skills and Miracles: ‡ indicates those tasks which could be opposed)

Corpus 3	d4	Mentus 3	d6	Spiritus 4	d6	Fidelis 7	d8
Combat ‡		Animation		Cunning ‡		Discernment ‡	2
Endurance ‡		Genius		Divination		Divine Intervention	3
Mechanics ‡		Hard Science		Ghostliness ‡		Ecological Dominance	
Pyrokinesis ‡		Investigation ‡		Medicine ‡	4	Exorcism ‡	
Raw Physicality ‡		Knowledge	1	Psychology ‡	3	Holy Aura	2
Speed ‡		Occultism ‡		Telekinesis ‡		Sacrificial Healing	5
Transformation ‡		Technical ‡		Wealth ‡		Stewardship ‡	3
		Telepathy ‡				Wrath ‡	
		Translation	3				

SPECIALIZATIONS:

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AGAINST the DARKNESS

Character Name: _____

Position: _____

Archetype: Repentant Demon

The Repentant Demon once preyed upon humanity like the rest of its fellows. Somewhere along the way, though, the demon changed. Perhaps the fallen angel remembered what it once was. Now instead of trying to destroy the Justiciars, it sought them out and joined the team in penance for its misdeeds. The Demon may be redeemed, but its heritage of blood and pain is never far from its thoughts, and its life is a daily struggle to forget the old habits. The Demon's specific look is up to the player. The Repentant Demon is especially vulnerable to holy objects and blessed weapons, despite its conversion.

ATTRIBUTES (Skills and Miracles: ‡ indicates those tasks which could be opposed)

Corpus 5	d8	Mentus 3	d6	Spiritus 3	d6	Fidelis 3	d4
Combat ‡	6	Animation		Cunning ‡	4	Discernment ‡	
Endurance ‡	2	Genius		Divination		Divine Intervention	
Mechanics ‡		Hard Science		Ghostliness ‡	2	Ecological Dominance	
Pyrokinesis ‡		Investigation ‡		Medicine ‡		Exorcism ‡	2
Raw Physicality ‡	4	Knowledge		Psychology ‡		Holy Aura	
Speed ‡	4	Occultism ‡	1	Telekinesis ‡		Sacrificial Healing	
Transformation ‡		Technical ‡		Wealth ‡		Stewardship ‡	
(Pyrokinesis or Transformation)	3	Telepathy ‡				Wrath ‡	
		Translation	3				

SPECIALIZATIONS:

Appendix 2: The Indiculum Maleficiorum

A Short List of Evils

From the seething darkness, the servants of evil strike out to destroy all that is good and wholesome in the world. Only the Justiciars and their allies stand against them, but these servants are powerful foes. If one does not proceed carefully it may be the Justiciars who are enveloped by the rising shadow rather than driving back the night by wielding the light of the Divine.

The GM must be aware of the varying power of the demons and how that relates to the power level of the characters. In general, there are four levels of power to consider in the Indiculum Maleficiorum; they are as follows:

POWER LEVEL	DESCRIPTION	EXAMPLES
Low	Weaker than Basic Characters	Undead Pawns
Moderate	Comparable to Basic Characters	Banshee, Lesser Demon, Golem
Strong	Comparable to Experienced Characters	Aswang, Succubus, Werewolf
Formidable	Very Dangerous; You Go First	Raksha, Vampire

Aswang

This is a Philippino demon with a reserved and elusive demeanor, capable of taking either human or animal form, such as a dog, pig, or black bird. It usually appears as a bird-demon, all lice-flecked ebony wings and hollow fangs, or it can take the form of a beautiful Asian woman or a withered crone. It must retain human form during the day (often an attractive Asian individual to entice prey) and may hide in communities working at tasks such as butchering where it can be around dead things. It prowls the night searching for dead bodies or sleeping persons and can sometimes be revealed by its sleepless bloodshot eyes. The Aswang extends a long proboscis into the victim to suck blood while making a “tik-tik” sound. Its attacks are birdlike in nature and its un-Holy Aura appears as a storm of stinking black feathers that swirl around it. When becoming intangible, it literally disappears into its feathers.

Banshee

The Messenger of Death - the Banshee is not so much a ghost as a fey spirit who is said to wail or sing when someone's death is imminent. It often appears in ghostly form or as a young girl dressed in white with long, flowing hair she brushes with a silver comb (an artifact that the banshee may use to lure the unwary to its lair). It has a wail or keening cry that calls the spirits of the living from life to death. This ability can also be used to draw the life from anyone who interferes with the banshee's earthly task. (This is Wrath, taking the form of a wail of

death. Banshees cannot use the Wrath ability during daylight or when on hallowed ground.)

Goetic Demon

The Goetic (or summoned) demon is a typical possessing demon; if visible at all in its true form, it appears like a hairless cat or monkey, branded with obscene occult symbols. It typically speaks all known languages, and is expert with profanity, riddles, and pessimistic or heretical quotations. It uses its cunning to discover embarrassing secrets about potential exorcists and exercises control over vermin, spiders, and insects. A demon is governed by a true name; if this is discovered, it can be used to banish or enslave the demon. An enslaved demon will follow its master's instructions to the letter, but will pervert their meaning, and will always scheme to corrupt or kill its controller.

A Goetic Demon can inhabit a human body by making an opposed Exorcism check against its victim; success means it enters the body and can control it indefinitely. Discovering a Goetic Demon's true name is a Hard or Wondrous Occultism check.

Golem

Golems are humanoid statues brought to life by secret rituals found in the Kaballah (a book of Jewish lore), animated by carving the Hebrew word *emet* on their skull. Defacing this carving so it reads *met* (Hebrew for death)

will destroy the golem. Justiciars can attempt this by making an Combat check against the Golem. This is an opposed task, and the Golem automatically receives a +3 Advantage to resist this attack, reflecting the difficulty of hitting such a small target. Golems are nearly mindless but, unlike undead servants, can learn, think, and plan, even if on a basic level.

Raksha

The Raksha are demons or unrighteous spirits of Hinduism (the male is a Rakshasa and the female a Rakshasi). They are adept at shapechanging and can take any form imaginable, although a frequent choice seems to be that of a muscular humanoid with a tiger-like (or other animal) head. They are powerful in the magical arts (especially in the raising of the dead) and they are masters of corrupting the innocent and faithful. They delight in cemeteries and love to disturb the sacrifices that devout Hindus make to their “gods”. They are deceptive, murderous, conniving, false, and have a taste for human flesh, but they are also brilliant tacticians and strategists whose intricate plans have been the ruin of many a Justiciar or community. While not all Raksha are completely evil, they all seem to enjoy vexing and afflicting humans.

Raksha specialize in damaging magic, or in soul-corrupting or destroying magic. In the area of Wealth, they specialize in blackmail and fraud. The Unholy Aura takes the form of a cloud of flies and gnats. The Exorcism ability is used only to resist Exorcism attempts.

Succubi

A succubus is a coldly beautiful demoness who can take human form, concealing its corpse-cold skin, wickedly fanged mouth, batlike wings, tail, and clawed feet. Despite their unsettling natures, the creatures are amazingly seductive and feed off the sexual energy created in passion and eroticism, as well as basic carnal acts and sadistic perversions. Once a person is too weak to be interesting to the succubus, she will rip out the victim’s throat with her fangs and feed on the waning life force. The Incubus is a male version of a succubus and will have similar stats and proclivities.

Undead Pawn

Haitian zombies, animated corpses, skeletons brought to life by unholy magic—none of these enemies are particularly smart or deadly, though they possess frightening defenses and can withstand incredible amounts of damage before being totally eliminated. Undead are weakened by the presence of holy objects. Any time a character brandishes a holy symbol, religious

text, or similar holy item in the undead’s presence, all future attacks against the creature during the scene are made at a +2 Advantage.

Vampir

Vampirs are strong, clever, and seductive predators, and some of the most physically imposing threats the Justiciars may ever have to face. The creatures are optimized to fight and kill in total darkness, and they do so without hesitation. Though they may pretend human emotions, even love or lust, these creatures are coldly sociopathic predators who view humanity as a challenging game animal at best. Vampirs resemble the creatures they were in life, but have a harder, more sinister appearance. When using their powers, their faces might warp, resembling a vampire bat’s fanged maw and upturned nose.

The Vampir’s Environmental Dominance allows the summoning of fog and shadows, while the Stewardship calls rats, wolves and bats. The Unholy Aura appears as a cloak of blood and shadows.

A Vampir can transform a living being into a dominated vampire servant by draining the victim’s Corpus or Fidelis through successful attack rolls. Vampirs are vulnerable to holy objects. Anyone attacking a Vampir with a silver blessed weapon or religious artifact receives a +1 Advantage. Attacking the Vampir during the day is very easy; all attacks made during daylight against the Vampir receive a +2 additional Advantage. Game Masters can modify the abilities presented to create a different kind of blood sucker, one based on more exotic or obscure myths.

Werewolf

Werewolves are shape-shifting carnivores that live only to hunt and kill. Highly territorial, keen-witted, and deadly, werewolves are almost impossible to kill without silver. Werewolves are very vulnerable to silver. Anyone attacking a werewolf with a silver weapon receives a +1 Advantage on all attacks. However, werewolves have an extraordinary defense against all other types of weapons (receiving a +1 Advantage to oppose other weapon attacks) and a Combat Advantage of +1 fighting under a moon at least half full.

Werewolves can transform to wolf, human, or a hybrid form. Their Stewardship ability works for dogs and wolves only. This depicts a fairly stereotypical were-beast based on European folklore; by adding and deleting abilities, the Game Master can use this monster as the base for any number of shape-shifting super-predators.

AGAINST The DARKNESS

Creature Type: Aswang

Location: _____

Name: _____

A Philippino demon capable of taking either human or animal form. It can appear as a bird-demon, all lice-flecked ebony wings and hollow fangs, or it can take the form of a beautiful Asian woman or a withered crone. It must retain human form during the day and may hide in communities working at tasks where it can be around dead things. It prowls the night searching for dead bodies or sleeping persons and can sometimes be revealed by its sleepless bloodshot eyes. The Aswang extends a long proboscis into the victim to suck blood. Its attacks are birdlike in nature; Unholy Aura appears as a storm of stinking black feathers.

ATTRIBUTES (Skills and Blasphemies: ‡ indicates those tasks which could be opposed)

Corpus 4	d8	Mentus 3	d6	Spiritus 3	d6	Fidelis 5	d4
Combat ‡	7	Animation		Cunning ‡	4	Discernment ‡	
Endurance ‡	2	Genius		Divination		Infernal Intervention	
Mechanics ‡		Hard Science		Ghostliness ‡	3	Ecological Dominance	
Pyrokinesis ‡		Investigation ‡		Medicine ‡	2	Exorcism ‡	
Raw Physicality ‡	1	Knowledge	1	Psychology ‡		Unholy Aura	3
Speed ‡	6	Occultism ‡		Telekinesis ‡		Sacrificial Healing	
Transformation ‡	7	Technical ‡		Wealth ‡		Stewardship ‡	
		Telepathy ‡	1			Wrath ‡	
		Translation	3				

SPECIALIZATIONS:

+1 versus women

+1 vs. pregnant women

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AGAINST The DARKNESS

Creature Type: Banshee

Location: _____

Name: _____

The Messenger of Death - the Banshee is not so much a ghost as a fey spirit who is said to wail or sing when someone's death is imminent. It often appears in ghostly form or as a young girl dressed in white with long, flowing hair she brushes with a silver comb (an artifact that the banshee may use to lure the unwary to its lair). It has a wail or keening cry that calls the spirits of the living from life to death. A Banshee manifests Wrath as a wail of death, to draw the life force from anyone who interferes with its earthly task. Banshees cannot use the Wrath ability during daylight or when on hallowed ground.

ATTRIBUTES (Skills and Blasphemies: ‡ indicates those tasks which could be opposed)

Corpus 1	d4	Mentus 1	d6	Spiritus 4	d6	Fidelis 7	d8
Combat ‡		Animation		Cunning ‡	3	Discernment ‡	
Endurance ‡		Genius		Divination		Infernal Intervention	
Mechanics ‡		Hard Science		Ghostliness ‡	7	Ecological Dominance	
Pyrokinesis ‡		Investigation ‡		Medicine ‡		Exorcism ‡	
Raw Physicality ‡		Knowledge		Psychology ‡		Unholy Aura	
Speed ‡		Occultism ‡		Telekinesis ‡		Sacrificial Healing	
Transformation ‡		Technical ‡		Wealth ‡		Stewardship ‡	
		Telepathy ‡				Wrath ‡	7
		Translation					

SPECIALIZATIONS:

AGAINST The DARKNESS

Creature Type: Goetic Demon

Location: _____

Name: _____

The Goetic (or summoned) demon is a typical possessing demon; if visible at all in its true form, it appears like a hairless cat or monkey, branded with obscene occult symbols. It typically speaks all known languages, and is expert with profanity, riddles, and pessimistic or heretical quotations. It uses its cunning to discover embarrassing secrets about potential exorcists. A demon is governed by a true name; if this is discovered, it can be used to banish or enslave the demon. An enslaved demon will follow its master's instructions to the letter, but will pervert their meaning, and will always scheme to corrupt or kill its controller.

ATTRIBUTES (Skills and **Blasphemies**: ‡ indicates those tasks which could be opposed)

Corpus 3	d4	Mentus 5	d6	Spiritus 4	d6	Fidelis 5	d8
Combat ‡	3	Animation		Cunning ‡	7	Discernment ‡	
Endurance ‡	1	Genius		Divination		Infernal Intervention	
Mechanics ‡		Hard Science		Ghostliness ‡		Ecological Dominance	
Pyrokinesis ‡	1	Investigation ‡		Medicine ‡		Exorcism ‡	1
Raw Physicality ‡		Knowledge		Psychology ‡		Unholy Aura	2
Speed ‡		Occultism ‡		Telekinesis ‡	1	Sacrificial Healing	
Transformation ‡	1	Technical ‡		Wealth ‡		Stewardship ‡	1
		Telepathy ‡				Wrath ‡	
		Translation	6				

SPECIALIZATIONS:

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AGAINST The DARKNESS

Creature Type: Golem

Location: _____

Name: _____

Golems are humanoid statues brought to life by secret rituals found in the Kaballah (a book of Jewish lore), animated by carving the Hebrew word *emet* on their skull. Defacing this carving so it reads *met* (Hebrew for death) will destroy the golem. Justiciars can attempt this by making an Combat check against the Golem. This is an opposed task, and the Golem automatically receives a +3 Advantage to resist this attack, reflecting the difficulty of hitting such a small target. Golems are nearly mindless but, unlike undead servants, can learn, think, and plan, even if on a basic level.

ATTRIBUTES (Skills and **Blasphemies**: ‡ indicates those tasks which could be opposed)

Corpus 7	d8	Mentus 1	d4	Spiritus 1	d6	Fidelis 4	d6
Combat ‡	6	Animation		Cunning ‡		Discernment ‡	
Endurance ‡	4	Genius		Divination		Infernal Intervention	1
Mechanics ‡		Hard Science		Ghostliness ‡		Ecological Dominance	
Pyrokinesis ‡		Investigation ‡		Medicine ‡		Exorcism ‡	
Raw Physicality ‡	4	Knowledge		Psychology ‡		Unholy Aura	
Speed ‡		Occultism ‡		Telekinesis ‡		Sacrificial Healing	
Transformation ‡		Technical ‡		Wealth ‡		Stewardship ‡	
		Telepathy ‡				Wrath ‡	
		Translation					

SPECIALIZATIONS:

AGAINST The DARKNESS

Creature Type: Raksha

Location: _____

Name: _____

The Raksha are demons or unrighteous spirits of Hinduism. They are adept at shapechanging and can take any form imaginable; a frequent choice seems to be that of a muscular humanoid with a tiger-like head. They are powerful in the magical arts (especially in the raising of the dead) and masters of corrupting the innocent and faithful. They delight in cemeteries and love to disturb the sacrifices that devout Hindus make to their "gods." They are deceptive, murderous, conniving, false, and have a taste for human flesh, but they are also brilliant tacticians and strategists. While not all Raksha are completely evil, they all seem to enjoy afflicting humans.

ATTRIBUTES (Skills and **Blasphemies**: ‡ indicates those tasks which could be opposed)

Corpus 4	d6	Mentus 7	d8	Spiritus 6	d6	Fidelis 3	d4
Combat ‡	2	Animation	2	Cunning ‡	6	Discernment ‡	
Endurance ‡		Genius		Divination		Infernal Intervention	
Mechanics ‡		Hard Science		Ghostliness ‡		Ecological Dominance	
Pyrokinesis ‡		Investigation ‡		Medicine ‡		Exorcism ‡	5
Raw Physicality ‡		Knowledge	5	Psychology ‡		Unholy Aura	1
Speed ‡	2	Occultism ‡	7	Telekinesis ‡		Sacrificial Healing	
Transformation ‡	4	Technical ‡		Wealth ‡	7	Stewardship ‡	
		Telepathy ‡				Wrath ‡	
		Translation	7				

SPECIALIZATIONS:

+1 in damaging magic

+1 in blackmail & fraud

+1 in soul-corrupting magic

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AGAINST The DARKNESS

Creature Type: Succubus/Incubus

Location: _____

Name: _____

A succubus is a coldly beautiful demoness who can take human form, concealing its corpse-cold skin, wickedly fanged mouth, batlike wings, tail, and clawed feet. Despite their unsettling natures, the creatures are amazingly seductive and feed off the sexual energy created in passion and eroticism, as well as basic carnal acts and sadistic perversions. Once a person is too weak to be interesting to the succubus, she will rip out the victim's throat with her fangs and feed on the waning life force. The Incubus is a male version of a succubus and will have similar stats and proclivities.

ATTRIBUTES (Skills and **Blasphemies**: ‡ indicates those tasks which could be opposed)

Corpus 4	d6	Mentus 5	d6	Spiritus 7	d8	Fidelis 2	d4
Combat ‡		Animation		Cunning ‡	7	Discernment ‡	1
Endurance ‡		Genius		Divination		Infernal Intervention	
Mechanics ‡		Hard Science		Ghostliness ‡	5	Ecological Dominance	
Pyrokinesis ‡		Investigation ‡		Medicine ‡		Exorcism ‡	
Raw Physicality ‡		Knowledge	1	Psychology ‡	1	Unholy Aura	
Speed ‡	7	Occultism ‡		Telekinesis ‡		Sacrificial Healing	
Transformation ‡	2	Technical ‡		Wealth ‡		Stewardship ‡	
		Telepathy ‡				Wrath ‡	
		Translation	4				

SPECIALIZATIONS:

Sexual Seduction +4

AGAINST The DARKNESS

Creature Type: Undead Pawn

Location: _____

Name: _____

Haitian zombies, animated corpses, skeletons brought to life by unholy magic—none of these enemies are particularly smart or deadly, though they possess frightening defenses and can withstand incredible amounts of damage before being totally eliminated. Undead are weakened by the presence of holy objects. Any time a character brandishes a holy symbol, religious text, or similar holy item in the undead's presence, all future attacks against the creature during the scene are made at a +2 Advantage.

ATTRIBUTES (Skills and Blasphemies: ‡ indicates those tasks which could be opposed)

Corpus 6	d8	Mentus 2	d4	Spiritus 1	d6	Fidelis 1	d6
Combat ‡	2	Animation		Cunning ‡		Discernment ‡	
Endurance ‡	7	Genius		Divination		Infernal Intervention	
Mechanics ‡		Hard Science		Ghostliness ‡		Ecological Dominance	
Pyrokinesis ‡		Investigation ‡		Medicine ‡		Exorcism ‡	
Raw Physicality ‡		Knowledge		Psychology ‡		Unholy Aura	
Speed ‡		Occultism ‡		Telekinesis ‡		Sacrificial Healing	
Transformation ‡		Technical ‡		Wealth ‡		Stewardship ‡	
		Telepathy ‡				Wrath ‡	
		Translation					

SPECIALIZATIONS:

+1 in resisting weapon
damage

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AGAINST The DARKNESS

Creature Type: Vampir

Location: _____

Name: _____

Vampirs are strong, clever, and seductive predators, and some of the most physically imposing threats the Justiciars may ever have to face. The creatures are optimized to fight and kill in total darkness, and they do so without hesitation. Though they may pretend human emotions, even love or lust, these creatures are coldly sociopathic predators who view humanity as a challenging game animal, at best. Vampirs resemble the creatures they were in life, but have a harder, more sinister appearance. A Vampir can transform a living being into a dominated vampire servant by draining the victim's Corpus or Fidelis through successful attacks.

ATTRIBUTES (Skills and Blasphemies: ‡ indicates those tasks which could be opposed)

Corpus 7	d8	Mentus 5	d6	Spiritus 4	d6	Fidelis 4	d4
Combat ‡	7	Animation		Cunning ‡	5	Discernment ‡	
Endurance ‡		Genius		Divination		Infernal Intervention	
Mechanics ‡		Hard Science		Ghostliness ‡	5	Ecological Dominance	1
Pyrokinesis ‡		Investigation ‡		Medicine ‡		Exorcism ‡	
Raw Physicality ‡	3	Knowledge	5	Psychology ‡		Unholy Aura	1
Speed ‡	6	Occultism ‡		Telekinesis ‡		Sacrificial Healing	
Transformation ‡	1	Technical ‡		Wealth ‡	6	Stewardship ‡	2
		Telepathy ‡	3			Wrath ‡	2
		Translation	6				

SPECIALIZATIONS:

+2 fighting in darkness

AGAINST The DARKNESS

Creature Type: Werewolf

Location: _____

Name: _____

Werewolves are shape-shifting carnivores that live only to hunt and kill. Highly territorial, keen-witted, and deadly, werewolves are almost impossible to kill without silver. Werewolves are very vulnerable to silver. Anyone attacking a werewolf with a silver weapon receives a +1 Advantage on all attacks. However, werewolves have an extraordinary defense against all other types of weapons (receiving a +1 advantage to oppose other weapon attacks), and a Combat Advantage of +1 fighting under a moon at least half full.

ATTRIBUTES (Skills and Blasphemies: ‡ indicates those tasks which could be opposed)

Corpus 6	d8	Mentus 3	d4	Spiritus 3	d6	Fidelis 4	d6
Combat ‡	7	Animation		Cunning ‡	4	Discernment ‡	
Endurance ‡	7	Genius		Divination		Infernal Intervention	
Mechanics ‡		Hard Science		Ghostliness ‡		Ecological Dominance	
Pyrokinesis ‡		Investigation ‡	1	Medicine ‡		Exorcism ‡	
Raw Physicality ‡	3	Knowledge		Psychology ‡		Unholy Aura	
Speed ‡		Occultism ‡		Telekinesis ‡		Sacrificial Healing	
Transformation ‡	7	Technical ‡		Wealth ‡		Stewardship ‡	5
		Telepathy ‡				Wrath ‡	
		Translation					

SPECIALIZATIONS:

+2 fighting in full moon

+2 defense vs. weapons

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AGAINST The DARKNESS

Creature Type: _____

Location: _____

Name: _____

ATTRIBUTES (Skills and Blasphemies: ‡ indicates those tasks which could be opposed)

Corpus	d	Mentus	d	Spiritus	d	Fidelis	d
Combat ‡		Animation		Cunning ‡		Discernment ‡	
Endurance ‡		Genius		Divination		Infernal Intervention	
Mechanics ‡		Hard Science		Ghostliness ‡		Ecological Dominance	
Pyrokinesis ‡		Investigation ‡		Medicine ‡		Exorcism ‡	
Raw Physicality ‡		Knowledge		Psychology ‡		Unholy Aura	
Speed ‡		Occultism ‡		Telekinesis ‡		Sacrificial Healing	
Transformation ‡		Technical ‡		Wealth ‡		Stewardship ‡	
		Telepathy ‡				Wrath ‡	
		Translation					

SPECIALIZATIONS:

Appendix 3: Character Creation Summary

Creating a Justiciar has just four main steps:

- Assign build points or randomly roll values for the four Attributes
- Assign 4-6-6-8 Task Resolution Dice to Attributes
- Use Skill Points to select Skills and Miracles
- Add personal information about the character

1. Attributes are measured from 1 to 7. Characters have ten **build** points to distribute between these four Attributes. Each of the four Attributes starts at 1, and each build point spent increases an Attribute by 1 point. If you prefer a **randomly generated** character, simply roll a d6 for each Attribute and add the result to 1

2. Decide what resolution dice to assign to each attribute. You have the following resolution dice available: d4, d6, d6, and d8. Your character will excel in the attribute to which you assign the D8, and will be weakest in the attribute to which the D4 is assigned. You may only assign Miracles to the attribute associated with the d8 resolution die. Once chosen, Resolution Dice can never be changed.

3. A starting character has 30 Skill Points that can be spent to purchase Skills and Miracles related to any of the four Attributes. Characters may also spend starting Skill Points to improve an Attribute. Remember, human characters can only assign Miracles to the attribute with the d8 Resolution Dice, but monsters and villains are not limited by that rule. Like Attributes, point costs are as follows:

- **1 Skill Point per rank for each Skill (or specialization)**
- **2 Skill Points per rank for each Miracle (or specialization)**
- **3 Skill Points for each Attribute Point**

Skills and Miracles all start at 0. They can have a maximum of 7 ranks, but can be further improved by the addition of Specializations. A person with one rank in a skill has passing familiarity with the task, with knowledge equal to a dedicated hobbyist. Someone who has seven ranks in a skill is a world-renowned expert in the subject.

When creating your character, one will need to choose the placement of build points wisely when it comes to Corpus or Fidelis. A character should be aware of the natural healing rates, in order to avoid mishap.

Natural Rate of Healing:

Corpus	1st point : 1 week	2nd point : +4 days
	3rd point: +2 Days	4th and other points: +1 day each
Fidelis	1st point: 1 year	2nd point: +6 months
	3rd point: +3 months	4th and other points: +1 month each

Skills and Miracles by Attribute:

(Miracles listed in bold. ‡ indicates Opposed tasks.)

Corpus

- Combat - fighting ability ‡
- **Endurance** - resistance to pain and injury ‡
- Mechanics - operate, build and repair machines ‡
- **Pyrokinesis** - mentally start or control fires ‡
- **Raw Physicality** - feats of strength ‡
- Speed - perform tasks and move quickly ‡
- **Transformation** - limited shapeshifting ‡

Mentus

- **Animation** - create artificial servants
- **Genius** - supernatural intelligence and memory
- Hard Science - understanding of a specialized scientific subject
- Investigation - detective work and forensics ‡
- Knowledge - understanding of a specialized social or religious topic
- **Occultism** - understanding of magic ‡
- Technical - mastery of complex electronics ‡
- **Telepathy** - reading and influencing minds ‡
- Translation - understand languages

Spiritus

- Cunning - negotiation, influence or manipulation ‡
- **Divination** - see or affect the future
- **Ghostliness** - turn invisible or intangible ‡
- Medicine - heal physical (Corpus) injuries ‡
- Psychology - heal non-physical (Fidelis) injuries ‡
- **Telekinesis** - move objects mentally ‡
- Wealth - business skill and/or disposable income ‡

Fidelis

- **Discernment** - see through lies and illusions ‡
- **Divine Intervention** - incredible luck
- **Ecological Dominance** - control plants and weather
- **Exorcism** - cast out possessing demons ‡
- **Holy Aura** - a divine protective field
- **Sacrificial Healing** - risk injury to heal others
- **Stewardship** - command animals ‡
- **Wrath** - destroy enemies through faith ‡

Character Creation Basics:

- There are four Attributes; values for these range from 1 to 7:
 - Corpus** - Physical abilities and "hit points"
 - Mentus** - Intelligence and brain power
 - Spiritus** - Force of will and personality
 - Fidelis** - Faith and divine power.
- Each Attribute has a Resolution Die assigned to it. The Resolution Dice are 1-d4, 2-d6 and 1-d8. The character excels in the Attribute to which the d8 is assigned, and is weakest in the Attribute to which the d4 is assigned. Miracles can only be performed with the Attribute to which the d8 Resolution Die is assigned. (*This limitation does not apply to monsters or nonhumans.*)
- Each character has Skills and Miracles. Like Attributes, they can rank 1 through 7. A Skill or Miracle with a rank of 7 can be further improved by taking Specializations.

Primary Game Mechanic:

Difficulty Checks:

Attribute + Skill/Miracle Rank + Specialization/Bonus + Resolution Die vs. Target Number (for Unopposed checks) or opponent's total (for Opposed checks).

Healing:

Use Medicine for *Corpus* damage (First Aid, Paramedic Care or Surgery); Psychology for *Fidelis* damage

Working Together:

Use Corporate Prayer (based on *Fidelis*) or Aid (based on any Skill or Miracle).

Task Resolution:

Tasks are rated by their difficulty. The target range for each difficulty is:

Easy Tasks: 8-11

Moderate Tasks: 12-14

Hard Tasks: 15-17

Wondrous Tasks: 18+

Summary of Skills and Miracles by Attribute: (Miracles listed in bold)

Corpus

- Combat - fighting ability
- **Endurance** - resistance to pain and injury
- Mechanics - operate, build and repair machines
- **Pyrokinesis** - mentally start or control fires
- **Raw Physicality** - feats of strength
- Speed - perform tasks and move quickly
- Transformation - limited shapeshifting

Mentus

- Animation - create artificial servants
- Genius - supernatural intelligence and memory
- Hard Science - understanding of a specialized scientific subject
- Investigation - detective work and forensics
- Knowledge - understanding of a specialized social or religious topic
- **Occultism** - understanding of magic
- Technical - mastery of complex electronics
- Telepathy - reading and influencing minds
- Translation - understand languages

Spiritus

- Cunning - negotiation, influence or manipulation
- **Divination** - see or affect the future
- **Ghostliness** - turn invisible or intangible
- Medicine - heal physical (*Corpus*) injuries
- Psychology - heal non-physical (*Fidelis*) injuries
- **Telekinesis** - move objects mentally
- Wealth - business skill and/or disposable income

Fidelis

- **Discernment** - see through lies and illusions
- **Divine Intervention** - incredible luck
- **Ecological Dominance** - control plants and weather
- **Exorcism** - cast out possessing demons
- **Holy Aura** - a divine protective field
- **Sacrificial Healing** - risk injury to heal others
- Stewardship - command animals
- **Wrath** - destroy enemies through faith

... for we wrestle
not against flesh and blood
but against principalities, against powers,
against the rulers of the darkness of this world,
against spiritual wickedness in high places.

AGAINST the DARKNESS

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